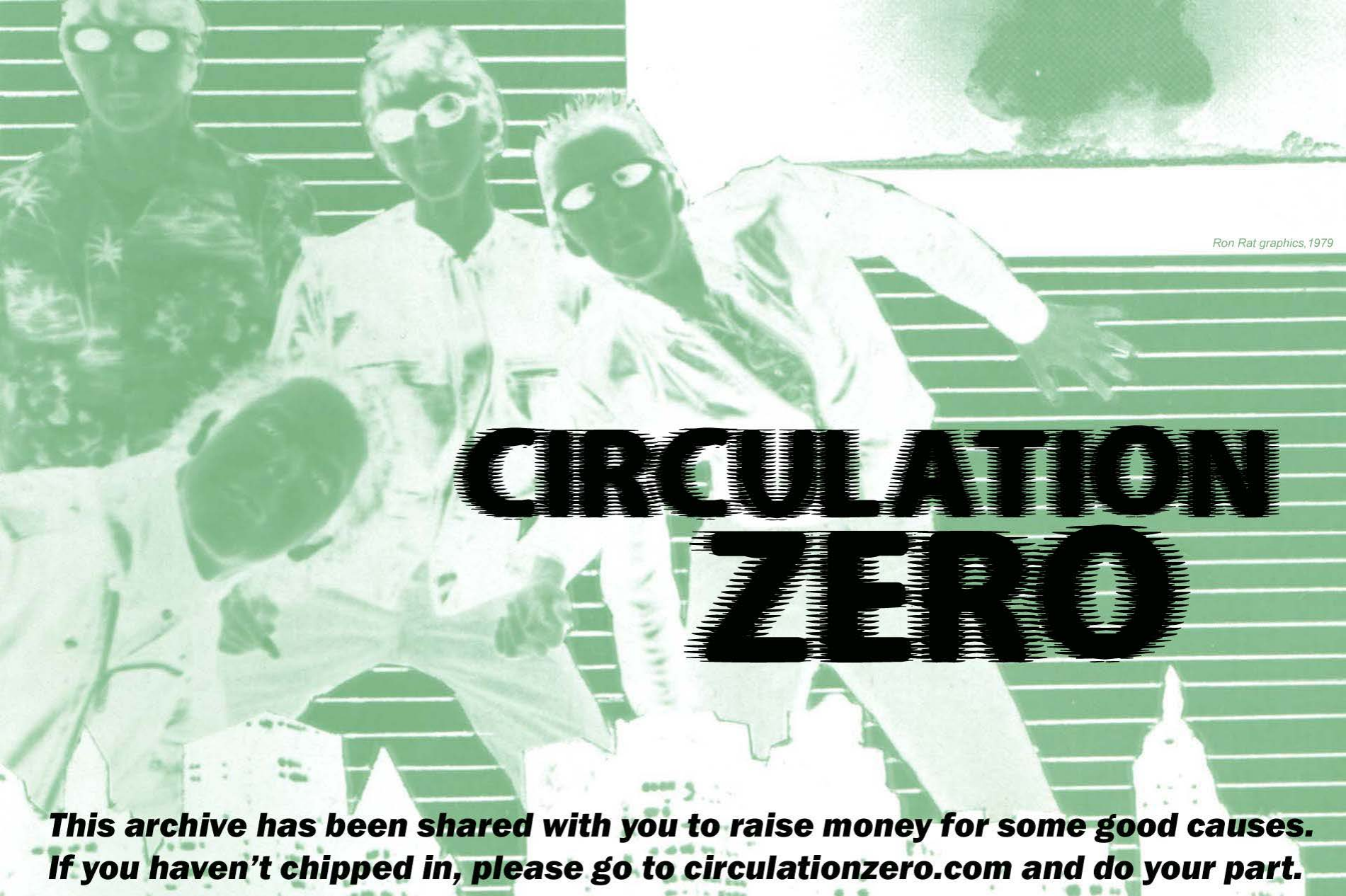

Ron Rat graphics, 1979

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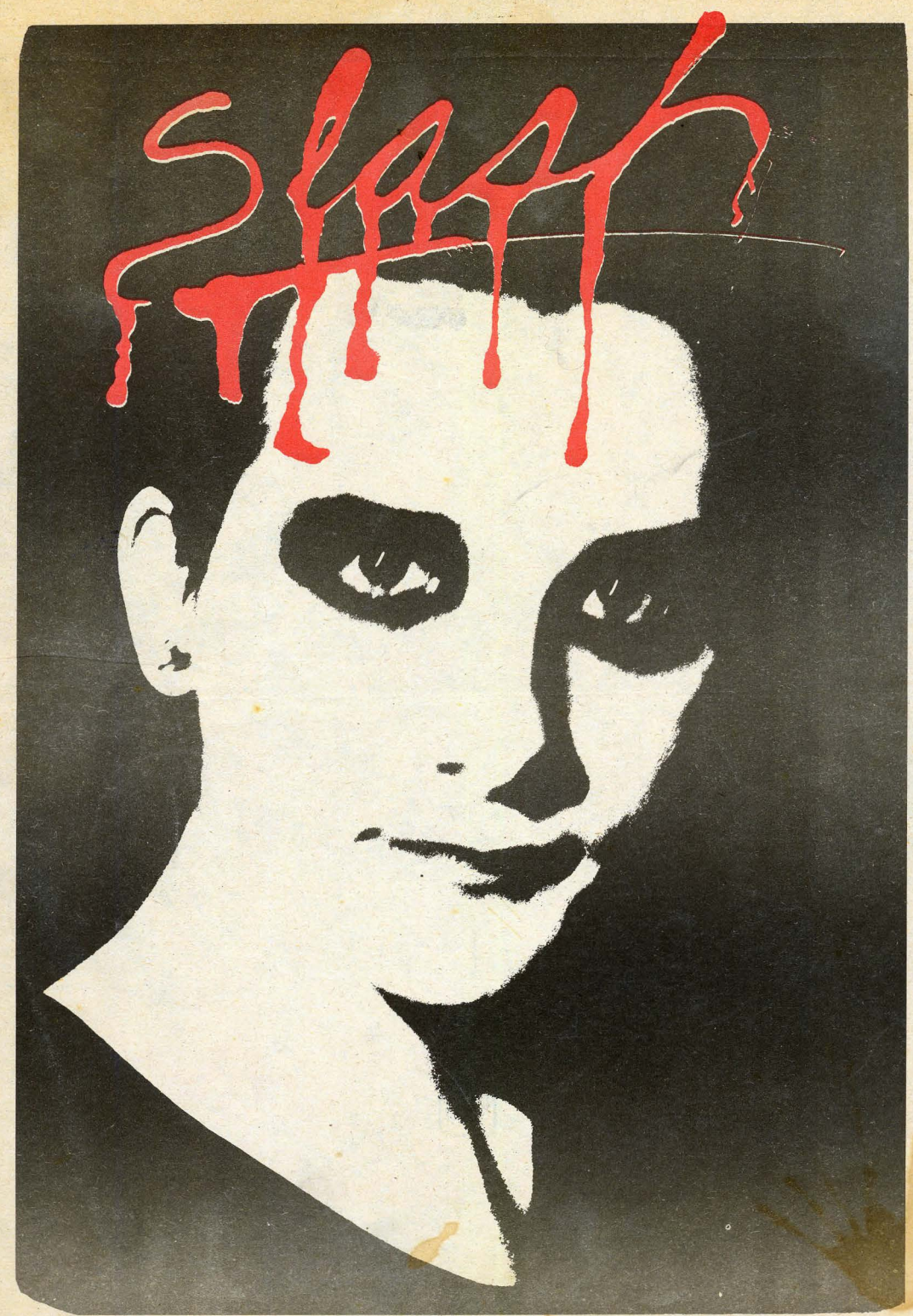

VOLUME ONE NUMBER ONE MAYDAY ISSUE 5/77 FIFTY CENTS

A&M
RECORDS

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COVER: DAVE VANIAN (THE DAMNED)
PHOTO BY MELANIE NISSEN

WRITE KICKBOY!!

HE WANTS YOU TO RESPOND.
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EDITORIAL

SO THIS IS WAR, EH?

This decade's biggest musical fad has been the dreadful dripping sounds of disco music. Up to now. Because lately there've been rumors of strange goings-on on the fringes of the music world. Violence at concerts both on the part of the performers and of the audience, outraged editorials in daily newspapers, foul-mouthed interviews on live TV and frightened record companies dropping contracts faster than a chimp would a hot potato, oddball fashions of slashed clothing, repulsive make-up and bondage paraphanalia, and of course music, dirty primitive music that has little to do with the stuff music stations have been pouring in our ears for what seems to be an eternity.

Today this madness is mostly an English phenomenon, but there are signs that it will not stop there. This publication was born out of curiosity and out of hope. Curiosity regarding what looks like a possible rebirth of true rebel music, hope in its eventual victory over the bland products professional pop stars have been feeding us. May the punks set this rat-infested industry on fire. It sure could use a little brightness!

So there will be no objective reviewing in these pages, and definitely no unnecessary dwelling upon the bastards who've been boring the living shit out of us for years with their concept albums, their cosmic discoveries and their pseudo-philosophical inanities. Enough is enough, partner! About time we squeezed the pus out and sent the filthy rich old farts of rock 'n' roll to retirement homes in Florida where they belong. Let them play at Saturday night dances for the mink and Geritol crowd at the Sheraton hotels, let them remember the old days when they'd rather die than be seen with socialite creeps and being heard talking trash and then let them shit in their pants with envy. As The Clash say, NO ELVIS, BEATLES OR ROLLING STONES IN 1977!

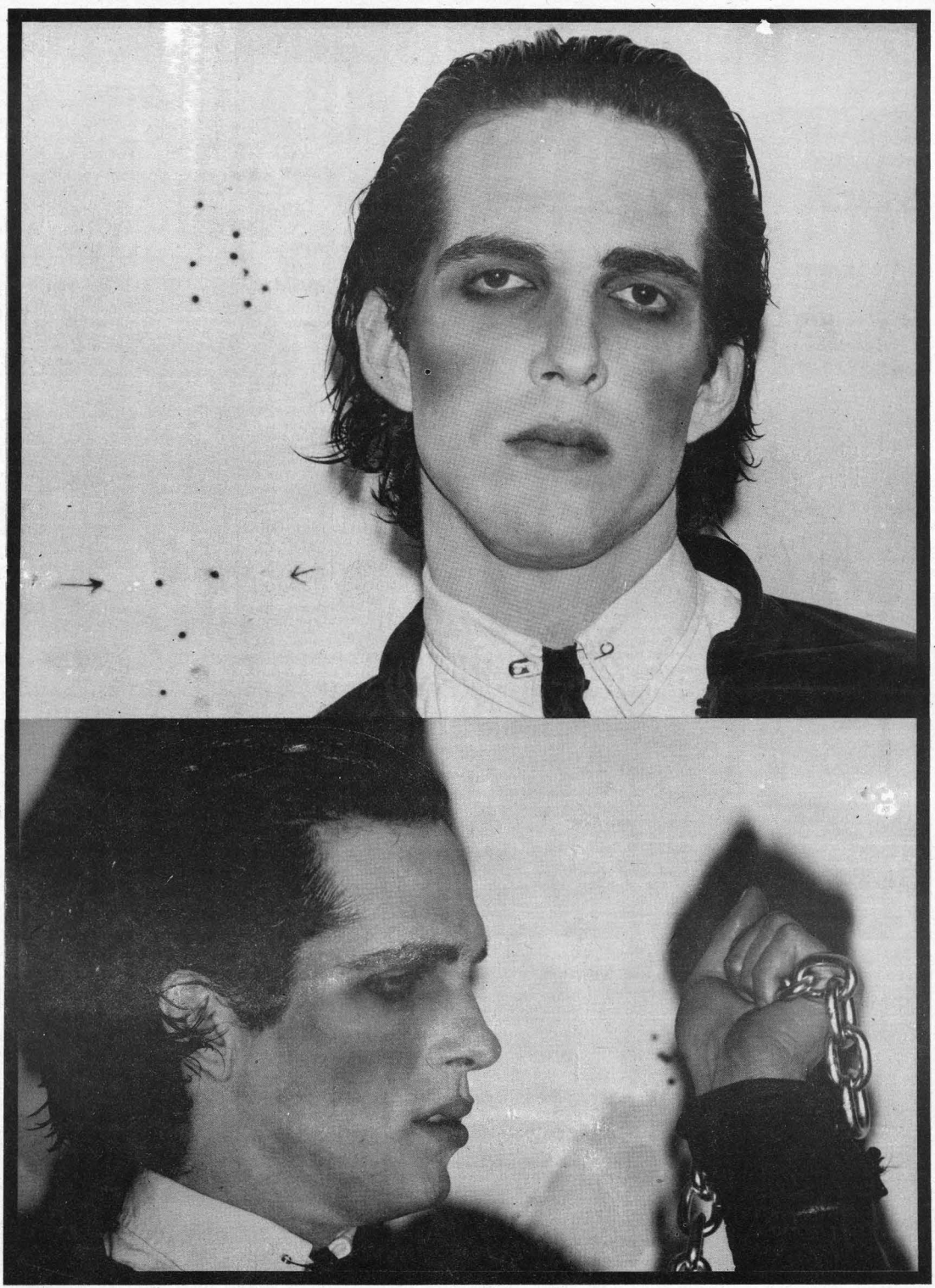


PHOTO: ZACHA/LOVEJOY

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW: THE DAMNED April 17th.

PHOTOS: NISSEN

All the band members were present. Most questions were answered by Rat Scabies (drums) and Captain Sensible (bass). Brian James now and then added some information and a more precise point of view. Dave Vanian (singer) sat in total silence the whole time, gazing into space.

We thank all the band members and Jake Riviera for their total cooperation.

Slash: (to Captain Sensible): How old are you?

Captain: 14!

Slash: What are you doing in America?

Damned: Fuckin' as many women as possible, basically. But we're not allowed to say that. We're here to change the American culture.

S: You can say what you want. This is Slash, and we're not aiming at the general public anyway.

D: That was a joke, but we say what we like . . .

S: There's a lot of curiosity about the London scene . . .

D: About the Sex Pistols?

S: And the others. You guys, the Clash, Siouxzee and the Banshees . . .

D: Don't see why Siouxzee and the Banshees got such a reputation. They've done about 3 gigs . . . they haven't done anything at all.

S: You're the first ones to come out with an album, right?

D: First ones with the first single as well, first ones to come to the States, first ones to do a major tour, first ones to do anything really. The only ones that work constantly.

S: Are you going to be distributed in America?

D: Don't know yet.

S: Any other group in London you think are any good?

D: Johnny Moped and the Morons!

S: What about the Pistols?

D: They're OK. They'd be good if they could play, but they don't play.

S: What's your opinion of American punk? The Ramones? Iggy?

D: Ramones are good. Iggy's good. I don't like Iggy's band . . . I think he's not as self-destructive.

S: Bowie?

D: He should leave Iggy alone. But then again it's good . . . works both ways.

S: He changed his style an awful lot.

D: It's depressing, completely depressing. He likes it 'cause it's depressing.

S: I saw you leave during Television's set at the Whiskey.

D: It was boring. I fell asleep, I almost did.

S: Patti Smith?

D: She talks too much.

S: Takes herself seriously.

D: Yes, she's an artist!

S: Don't you think of yourselves as artists?

D: No!

S: What are you?

D: Yobboes! We make noise . . .tweeterwarpers.

S: What do you think of The Clash?

D: Not a lot! We don't think of The Clash. We wouldn't be thinking of them now if you had not brought it up.

S: Who do you really hate?

D: The Clash (laughter). The Clash's manager. And Malcolm McLaren (The Sex Pistols' manager—Ed.) . . . what else do we hate . . . oh, the American Express advert. I really hate Los Angeles' long cars . . . I really hate crabs, they really get up me shoulders, crabs do . . . right up my hooter.

S: Is the London scene as violent as some papers say?

D: All depends . . . haven't seen much violence there, not much in the clubs. Some gigs, the kids throw bottles . . . no more violent than New York. What is it there, three murders a minute? . . . It's not as violent as that. It's just there are more fights.

S: What musicians do you admire or respect?

D: Me!

S: Any old rock and rollers?

D: Old . . . (unintelligible) . . . he's quite good!

S: What about Mick Jagger?

D: (farting sound) . . .

S: Paul McCartney?

D: Definitely . . . (unintelligible)

S: Pink Floyd?

D: Oh, come on!

S: Elton John?

D: ooooh!

S: Bob Dylan?

D: ooooh!

S: Bay City Rollers?

D: Oh, I like them. If you look at the back of the album cover, I'm dressed like that. (Rat Scabies does indeed wear B.C.R. plaid trousers on the photo. Ed.)

S: How do you feel about some fashion designers picking up on the punk style?

D: Great! Means we'll sell more records. But (Brian James) I hate cunts like McLaren though 'cause they're selling all that stuff, just doing it to make money.

S: He's the one who has the Sex Shop, right?

D: Yeah, he's the manager of the Sex Pistols. The only reason the Sex Pistols were devised was to sell clothes for Malcolm McLaren.

S: They're just models?

D: Yeah. He's fucking insane. He managed me for about a week. Just into McLaren making money he is. He owns everything, the name of the Sex Pistols, their equipment, everything's in his name. At their gigs, man, he used to give Johnny Rotten a quid and his bus fare home, after they done the gig.

S: Nice guy, uh?

D: He's a great businessman. He made the Sex Pistols big . . . whether he makes them rich or not . . . he just gives them the politics, he did that with the New York Dolls, told them to be communists just to get the reaction . . . anything that'll get up your nose . . .

S: Is he gonna snuff them (the Pistols) in the end? It's the only finale, no?

D: That's what I said . . . they can't play any more gigs . . . they'll come out to America sooner or later I guess . . .

S: A&M just dumped them . . .

D: It's like Malcolm bit more than he could chew. Johnny Rotten is so vicious . . . they gone completely crazy! But what are we talking about the Pistols for?

S: Right. What do you think of Hollywood?

D: It's lazy. Too many fat people with Cadillacs . . .

S: Ever played on British TV?

D: Yeah. On "Supersonic." We did one, and the public demand was so great so they did it again. We've been on it about 3 or 4 times . . . too much fucking around in the audience, the bands were not allowed to play.

S: Do you think of yourselves as following the tradition of rock 'n' roll or going against it?

D: What's the tradition of rock 'n' roll?

S: I don't know . . .

What will the music be like in a few years?

D: Don't care. Don't even know what it'll be like next month. We don't think about these things. We're just a group, you know . . . we're just morons. We don't plan anything on stage. A lot of people say we're a stage act . . . there's no act involved, we just do what we do. Nobody ever taught us choreo . . . chorea . . . nobody told us how to work on the floor or nothin'. I have never sat there and thought I'll smash my drums up tonight. If it happens it happens.

S: How did it go in New York?

D: Apparently we went down really great. Played at CBGB.

S: What do you think of American audiences?

D: Too fat! Lazy . . . if they could bring their fucking bed in they would, you know! We did Boston, it was so dead we were sitting down and playing all during our set, and they loved it . . . real idiots!

S: Just like at a symphony concert?

D: Right! Here they sit before your face . . . like being in some geezer's front room . . . that's why we throw things at them sometimes!

S: Any chances of American audiences waking up?

D: Well, when it's a big concert, like Iggy's . . . but clubs . . . it's mental.

S: What do you say to people who call the new music fascist?

D: Rubbish! Maybe the Pistols are a bit like that . . . anarchy and the whole idea is so someone else can take over . . . no . . . there's nothing fascist about it at all. Some of us may wear swastikas at times, but it's not like being

Hitlerists . . . like you like the swastikas because it LOOKS good.

S: Do you feel the movement in Britain is pretty apolitical then?

D: In some people's minds it is political.

S: But is it?

D: It's trying to be. Malcolm and Bernie, the managers of the Pistols and the Clash are trying to do that sort of thing. They got nothing to replace it with . . . even the hippie flower power had something to replace it with. But anarchy, there's nothing to replace that. Anyway, there's nobody to tell us what to do.

S: What's all over your faces on the album cover?

D: Pie!

S: Are you guys comedians?

(No answer.)

Do you enjoy your life or would you rather be doing something else?

D: I'd rather be fucking women. I'd rather have lots of money.

S: What do rock critics think of you in England?

D: They like us. We're like the top band in England.

S: Would you care if they didn't?

D: No.

S: Do music papers have any influence?

D: Of course they do.

S: Which one is the best?

D: Don't know.

S: Which one is the worst?

D: Zig-Zag. Zig-Zag stinks. Chris Leaves (sic) is a cunt. He's a fucking cunt! And he's ugly . . . he's the ugliest bloke in Britain . . . he's so ugly it's not true.

S: Are you a bad influence on the kids?

D: Hope so. No, I don't think we are. We're a failure there. They do the same things we do, we couldn't be an influence.

S: Is America ready for the Damned?

D: Some places . . . somewhere . . . we'll see what it's like Monday and Tuesday, whether Los Angeles is. It'll be as interesting for us as it will be for them.

S: Everybody's so bored.

D: Can't blame them!

S: Have you heard the shit they play on the radio?

D: It's better than English radio though.

S: Bigger choice of crap!

D: But so much crap you're bound to get some of it a bit more decent.

S: How about American TV?

D: Great! Love it! The adverts are really crass . . . the Pepsi Cola ads, the way they slag each other . . . "nine out of ten people prefer Pepsi . . ."!

S: Any plans for a second album?

D: Haven't got the time. The day we get back to England we got a gig at the Roundhouse, then we go straight to France, then Denmark then France then straight on an English tour.

S: Any other group on the tour?

D: I don't know. (To Jake Riviera) Any regular support? How about Moped? (general laughter)

S: What have you done for kicks here?

D: The usual stuff, drinking and drugging and birds. Not a lot you can do, is there?!

S: Gone to the beach?

D: We went there. Pretty boring. All there is is sand. Went on the pier. Couldn't play with the machines, didn't have any money. Did buy a devil fish though.

S: What else you want to talk about?

D: Let's talk about you. (Brian James turns to Captain Sensible and asks:) Are you trying to pick him up? That's what we do for kicks, set Captain Sensible on people for kicks!

S: Is your album available in import sections in this city?

D: Yeah. The guy at the corner liquor store here bought it. I made a cool 3 p out of that!

S: How long did it take to record?

D: All in all, including the mix and everything, 24 hours!

S: Fast album, uh?

D: Yeah, we treated it like a gig . . . but we play the songs twice as fast on stage.

S: Lots of violence in the lyrics . . .

D: Just written off the street. That's where the reality is.

S: Will it turn off American audiences?

D: No. We're off the street, our words are what it is like on the street.

S (to Rat Scabies): Do you write songs? How many have you written?

R: I have written about 5, buy they keep losing the words! I can't remember them. Two of them we play.

S: What about Dave? Dave hasn't said a word.

(Dave just looks the other way. Oh well . . .)

S: Do you plan on using strings on your next album?

D: We're thinking about synthesizers. Never thought about strings. We each gonna have a separate side for our next . . . concept . . . so we can do what we want. It's gonna be about trees, flowers, living in the country (laughter).

S: Eating organic foods?

D: Tell them our philosophy, prof!

S: Are you satisfied with your record company?

D: No, after that fuck-up with the album cover when they put Eddie and The Hot Rods on. That put us off them.

S: What happened?

D: They fucked up and put Eddie and The Hot Rods on the first 2000 albums (general laughter). They're collectors' items now!

S: Who else is on stiff?

D: Lots of one-off deals . . . Elvis Costello is on it. We're the only ones that signed a contract, which we didn't read 'cause the guy of Stiff said it was OK. We just signed them. He got us after a gig when we were drunk. Sign up, boys, I'll make you big big stars, he said. So we did and look what happened: we're in L.A. with no money, sleeping on some cunt's floor. (Laughter. He points at the mattress on the floor.) This is where we sleep by the way.

S: No blankets?

D: Yeah, we got blankets. It's not that desperate. That's why we try to pull birds all the time. To get somewhere proper to stay!

S: In two years you'll be at the Beverly Wilshire!

D: With a bit of luck . . .

S: Is success your main goal then?

D: Oh, certainly! Money's my main goal. It's the end result, isn't it?

S: Does anything else matter?

D: No. Except staying alive.

S: Have you been out to clubs in town?

D: We went to the Orpheum. Went out after 4 minutes . . . you couldn't even smoke in there. At the Whisky, you have all the poseurs up in the balcony . . . middle-aged businessmen in there with their secretaries . . . who wants to play to those?! . . . what's that other shit hole we went to, the one that really stank? Oh yeah, the Rainbow. You got to sit down all the time. You go to the Roxy in England, the whole thing in England, they got it much more sussed.

S: Is this the worst interview you've ever done?

D: No.

S: Good!

D: Some people come along, they don't even know anything about you, they've never heard of you, they've just been told to go down and see you, so they ask you your names, what kind of music you play . . .

S: Anything else to tell our readers, if we have any?

D: Fuck fuck fuck fuck and bollocks and shit and fucking shit bollocks suck my cunt piss off wanker . . . I LIKE SEX, I LIKE DRUGS, I LIKE VIOLENCE!

S: Is that your next single?

D: No, my next single is gonna be called New York gives me spots (laughter), followed by Pickin' spots, which is a very big one for me, at least 6 months ago.

S: So this wraps it up . . .

D: Oh, we like little girls, 13-year-old preferably, in their school uniforms, navy blue knickers and white bobby-sox!

S: Where did you go to school?

D: Borstall! They wouldn't have me at school. I was expelled.

S: Where do you live in London?

D: I don't live anywhere. Sleep on people's floors. Like here. This is quite a palace actually.

S: Do you like Margaret Thatcher?

D: Oh, she's tasty! I'd like to stick my cock in her mouth . . . good blow-job she is . . . good head, Margaret Thatcher! And there's a program called Crossroads (a British soap opera—Ed.) we'd like to dedicate the entire interview to.

S: Would you say England is going down the drain?

D: It's gone! Nearly finished. Sinking fast. That's why we are over here.

END OF INTERVIEW.

Genny (Backstage Pass)

LOCAL SHIT

BABY, THERE'S A BRAND NEW SOUND... IN L.A. (Compiled by Pea, mister Jelly and C.B.)

Backstage Pass, a new girl band from L.A. Members are Miss Del Rey, Spock, Barracuda and Genny, all vocals and respectively on electric piano and keyboards, bass, rhythm, and lead guitars... been together rehearsing four months... have had offers to perform but they're waiting for a permanent drummer

... music: tough, strong, a touch of the early Velvets influence... favorite bands include Kinks, Jeff Beck, Mott the Hoople, The Screamers, The Damned... "Television were boring, they were totally out of key" ...I don't wanna go on stage in Hiking boots and blue jeans"... (good for you!) ..."punk does not only mean safety pins" ..."Pistol and Clash are so serious" ..."Patti Smith too esoteric" ...The girls' last advice was for everyone ot read SLASH, and to write them fan letters. Verstehen?!

...The Motels have broken up ... "musical dirrerences, different directions" their drummer Eddie Darkstar told us ...he and Martha still together, shoppin' for new mates... shouldn't be long...

...bad reports about so-called punk palace on the Strip... the nerve of some people ...punk palace! When will we be able to listen to the music we want in the right place? In London they have the Roxy, in N.Y. they have CBGB, but in L.A. ... there's enough new groups and enough interest...

...and it's growing ...new bands poppin' up all over the landscape... good good signs, all this ...keep your eyes and ears open for... The Brats... the Gods... and... Dirty Diapers... more next time... Be bad!

KICKBOY KICKS BACK

I'm sure you've seen it before, and maybe if you're REAL desperate you've even read it: It's called the Los Angeles PHONOGRAPH, and you get it free (courtesy of KMET, that hotbed of avant-gardism) every time you buy your latest Barbra Streisand LP. There are, of course, a few nice people who write in it (Greg Shaw is one) but all in all it has never been THE publication closest to what is happening. Which does not matter very much and would not deserve these few lines but for the fact that in its April issue it has given a lot of space to an article by a geezer named Mark Shipper, and the article supposedly deals with punk music. And that's where the trouble starts.

Mark Shipper starts by declaring himself THE authority on punk music, which is both funny and pathetic since authority and expertise are not what you would call punk concepts, and goes on to prove that his so-called knowledge of the stuff is for the birds. What Mister Shipper does is take a few bands or singers that have been much talked about lately, label the whole package punk and proceed to write stuff that has absolutely nothing to do with punk, new rock or music.

On Television, Blondie, Eddie and The Hot Rods and Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers (all of them which he seems to like, but it's hard to tell with his cute faggot style of writing) he just misses the point and feeds us the usual "I'm much too intelligent to go for gimmicks but I know what is good" routine, and it's about as convincing as a Billy Graham crusade. On the Ramones, Patti Smith and Lou Reed he is so terrified of having to actually COMMIT himself to a statement that he goes totally bananas and starts to make up little anecdotes, tenth rate puns, ANYTHING that will allow him to "write" about these people without revealing how hopelessly square and out of it he is. You have by now realized that by shoving all these interesting artists under the punk banner the jerk has already shown his true colors, but this is nothing yet.

Not content to seriously call Eddie and The Hot Rods or Television a punk band (both bands would kick your eyes in if you'd dare label them punk in their face) he then launches into what I'm sure he thinks of as his masterpiece, a put-down of the Sex Pistols. It talks about how polite and reserved England was 'til the Pistols' outburst on the BBC (when was the last time you went in an English pub, pal?!), it ridicules the punk style of clothing (every middle-aged fart with problem kids is giggling right along with you, Mark) and it finishes by calling the Pistols' single "a piece of dismal garbage." The asshole should be writing for Time or Newsweek, so sharp is his understanding of the English scene, so great his love of the music. The piece of written garbage ends on a gleeful mention of the fact that the Pistols have no label and no future. You only wish, Mark baby! The world belongs to the Pistols and others like them, and sooner than you think you'll be a gossip columnist for the Christian Science Monitor! There is no room in music mags (even the dismal ones) for creeps of your caliber, 'cause anyone with half an ear and a solid dose of contempt for the establishment (that includes the music world establishment, you fucking sell-out!) knows that the Pistols are not. So stick to the safe stuff (bet you get off on Joni Mitchell!) and don't try to talk about anything new and challenging. THIS IS NO IDLE THREAT.

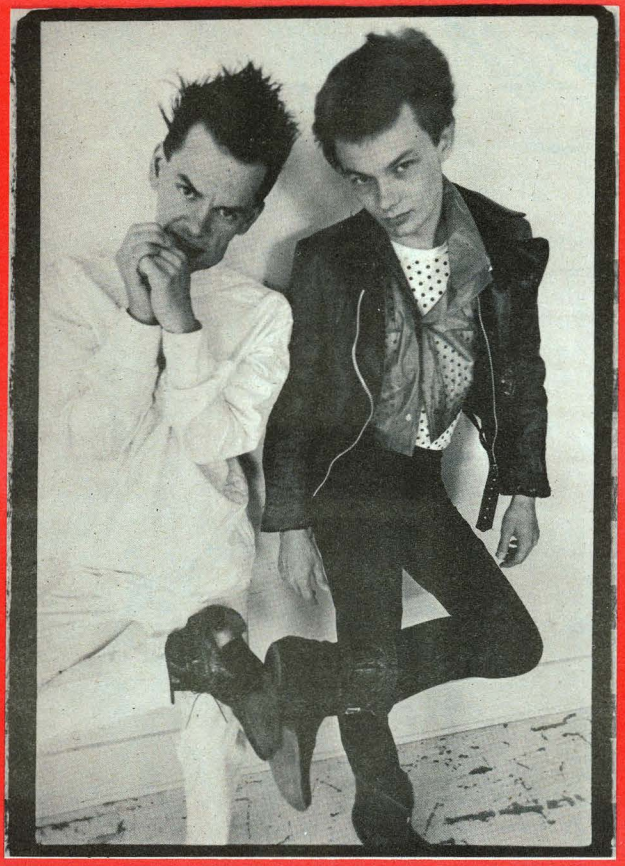
Kickboy Face

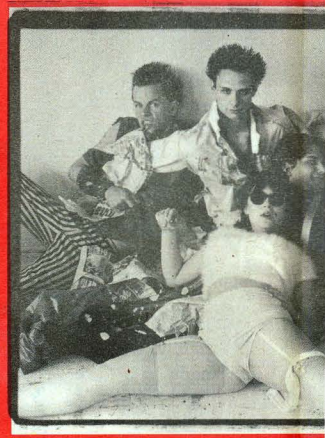
Screamers

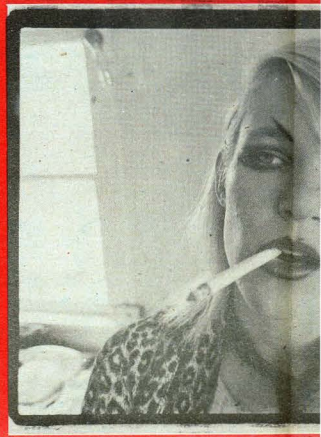
SLASH PRESENTS ... THE FUTURE!

They start with their love song, "Eva Braun". then they do some of their greatest hits, "Going steady with Twiggy", "You don't love me, you love magazine", "Peer Pressure", and the infamous "Master De Dolores". Still don't know who we're talking about, do you? Relax, neither does the rest of the world. But not for long, kiddes! Because Slash, always on the crest of the wave in all avant-garde matters, is proudly announcing an upcoming interview with THE SCREAMERS, L.A's most underground combo. The group that, asked to disscribe thie sound in one word answered "anxiety!", the one and only group in this galaxy to have done away with guitars and other lame gimmicks will very soon chat with us in these very pages, discussing everything from their stage act ("a very controlled nervous breakdown") to punk noise to the Monkees!

They might not look like your average rock n' roll outfit (see the following pages) and may be their song won't hit the charts for a few months but they ARE the future, and the whole deranged SLASH staff would rather sober up for the rest of their lives than ignore new musical directions! So, kiddes, stick with us and learn all about Tomata, Gear, K.K. and David, pioneers of what one of them calls the "NOUVEAU VAGUE SOUND" ...IN SLASH #2.







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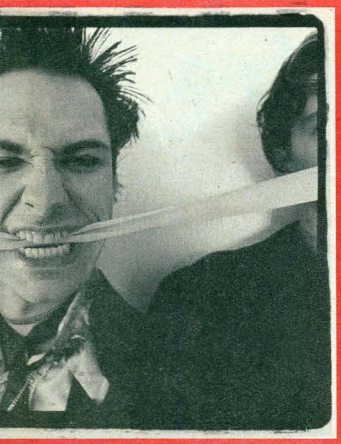
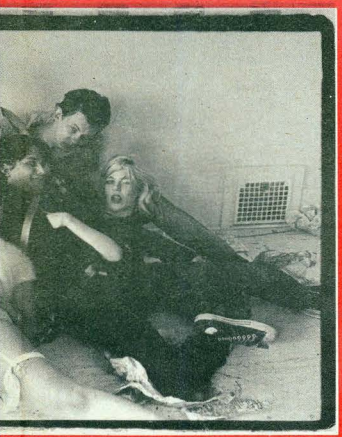
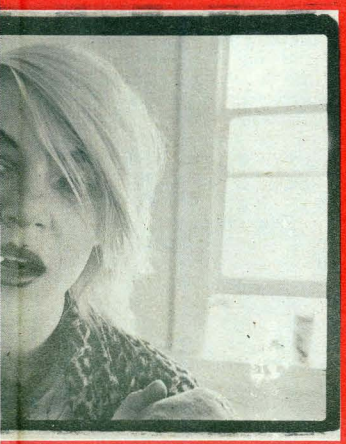






S: NISSEN/SAMIOF

SINGLE REVIEWS

THE CLASH (White Riot/1977). C.B.S. import

May be the most eloquent of the new bands, although certainly not the easiest to listen to. Written by two members of the group (Mick Jones and Joe Strummer), these extremely brief and fast songs (1:58 and 1:40 respectively) say more about the mood of the new scene than any sociological analysis could. "White riot/I wanna riot/white riot/a riot of me own/Are you taking over or are you taking orders?/Are you going backwards or are you going forwards?" sing the boys after a police siren intro. A little bit later the frantic song ends on a British ambulance siren. Side B (1977) features a similar desperate attitude, "in 1977 you're on the never-never/you think it can't go on forever/But the papers say it's getting better/I don't care/'cause I'm not all there/NO ELVIS, BEATLES OR THE ROLLING STONES/IN 1977" sung in even rawer vocal style.* On both sides the music sounds like a souped-up small cylinder bike that won't finish the race. A very arrogant production from a group that knows what it's doing, and knows where it stands ("all the new groups sound like drones," says Joe Strummer). And now the band that had "Hate And War" spray-painted on their jackets is apparently working on an LP. Watch out!

*Our British correspondent warned me their singing makes Johnny Rotten sound like Petula Clark, and right he was.

Jet Lag

PS: I, "the fanzine of the blank generation," announces that the Clash has just signed with Columbia, and Columbia has just confirmed the new to us over the phone. What a treat!

THE VIBRATORS (We vibrate/Whips and Furs). Rak records import

(Le B side n'a rien a voir avec les furets, gros malins d'I wanna be your dog)

Don't let rumors fool you, my little nasties, THIS AIN'T PUNK MUSIC. It's good, it cooks, but it's closer to the rhythm 'n' blues of the Feelgoods than to the sound we all love (well, some of us . . .!). Of the two sides, the B side is the best, faster and more formless than "We vibrate," but it's still good time music, with a very organized progression, clean lyrics and overall boring atmosphere. "We vibrate," the A side, is just another rocking ditty, something someone is bound to make up a new dance step to. More than obnoxious, it's harmless. Give it to your kid sister and look for something a bit less healthy. Like the Saints.

Kickboy face

THE SAINTS (I'm stranded/No time). Power Exchange Polydor import

Don't let the fact that these guys are Australian turn you off. This band has been making a big splash in England, and this single shows why. "I'm stranded" is good, very good, with more than adequate backing and an unusually strong voice (in punk terms, of course) that unfortunately relies on old cowboy/hippie cliches ("stranded far from home . . ." Shit! what's this crap about having a home? Why not a country?!) to tell its story. Thank god the B side is a gem (What is it that makes me go for the B side most of the time? Tell me the truth, doctor!). Called "No Time" (. . .to be messing round with you) it catches you right from the start with its very dirty hook line and sends you in the stratosphere four seconds later when the beautifully murky bass line comes on. It is a truly threatening song, with the singer at his raunchiest (sounds as if he's been boozing and smoking [cigarettes, you nitwits] for three days and three nights) and the instruments all doing their damnedest to obliterate him. My favorite touch is an aborted lead solo that lasts all of two seconds and gets hopelessly cut off by the rest of the crazy pack, and a breathtaking ending that leaves the singer dumb and speechless (where did they go?!). A brilliant cut. Its purity will cut right thru your little private layers of smog. Get it.

Kickboy Face

THE SEX PISTOLS (Anarchy in the U.K./I wanna be me). E.M.I. import

The sweet sound of chaos . . . Johnny Rotten sneering and spitting his absolute refusal of anything that is anything. One long fuzzy overloaded riff that is the greatest rejection of studio rock since god knows when. It is not enough to be aware of the fact that the rock we hear on the airwaves or on our record players (if one still plays the fucking things!) is dead meat, zombie food for idiots in nowhereland, background music airline pilots and young executives move their cellulite asses to on their swinging little weekend get-togethers, not enough to know those fuckers in redneck country have made it "good time music" and use it to boogie in each other's vomit, not enough to know a certain J. Lennon could be seen a while ago at a presidential party (He's a rebel!). One's music must show how ridiculous the past few years have been, one's music must show how incredibly vacuous the productions of the so-called popstars are, one's music must show how disgusting the pretensions of establishment rock are becoming. So fuck the clean licks at the perfect time, fuck the clever changes of rhythm, fuck the vocal harmonies, fuck this, fuck that, fuck, fuck fuck fuck . . . Thank you, the Pistols.

Kickboy face

(Kickboy Face forgot to tell you what it is like to EXPERIENCE the sound of the Pistols, so here's another go. Ed.)

Crazed music. Starts with a gut-splitting riff mixed with diabolical laughter and lets you down two and a half minutes later dishevelled, numb, wasted. Mostly unintelligible lyrics but you know it's not nice. Was able to make out "I wanna be an antichrist, I wanna be an anarchist (of course it rhymes!), I wanna destroy the passer-by (pure poetry, that!), I don't know what I want . . . is this the IRA . . . thought it was just the U.K., or just some other country . . .". Ends the nightmare with a truly manic "I want to destroy . . ." that will cling to your brain the way a good horror picture does. The music is on the same level, mean and very anti. Hardly any leads (vicious rumors in London say they couldn't if they wanted to!), just all-out front noise dedicated to the joys of aesthetic aggression. Play it real loud and heavy on the treble and see your friends flee and your pets drop dead. This goes for B side, too. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ROCK SINGLES SINCE "SATISFACTION."

ALBUM REVIEWS

"THE IDIOT," IGGY POP. RCA. (Sister Midnight / Nightclubbing / Funtime / Baby/ China girl / Dum Dum boys / Tiny girls / Mass production)

"We're what's happening . . . we're an ice machine . . ." (Nightclubbing)

Funny. This guy, whose early music with his band has instigated most of the present punk mentality, this guy who in concert behaves like a possessed puppet has just released the most formal, esoteric, subterranean album you're bound to hear for some time. The bowie influence is more than that: it is an atmosphere that permeates every groove, and, like the Berlin show (where most of the LP was recorded) it turns familiar sights into a landscape of death. Is it the sound of someone who has come back from the dead, or is it the sound of someone who is going there and is trying to take a few traveling companions along? On "Sister Midnight," on "Baby," on "China girl," there is still hope, in spite of the terror that is hovering just above. "Sister Midnight" especially works well, with Iggy endlessly pleading and growling for a way out of his nightmare while the band lays down its ponderous approximation of what could be called robot rock. The music that starts where Diamond Dogs left off. On "Baby" and "China girl" Iggy sounds like Lou Reed and Bowie respectively, not a conscious imitation but an inevitable result since both songs seem to have been written with those creatures' styles in mind.

But it is on "Dum Dum boys" that Iggy's own visions break thru. On this cut his voice is perfect, a chilling sound in itself, as it takes us further than we've ever been to where "the walls close in and (one) needs some noise." Iggy's been there, and I think it's good to have a visionary amongst our disturbed lot. "Mass production" left me cold, but the opening beyond-the-galaxies type of intro is obviously Bowie's signature to the whole project and works well in its way, the message being: it's not that friendly in outer space! "Tiny girl" is kind of nice, a bit depressing. "Nightclubbing" and "Funtime" would revive a dying party as surely as would a funeral march. A must of an album for the more depressed amongst us, the rest will play it only now and then, when the need for a little dose of despair strikes, on a gray useless day.

"MARQUEE MOON," TELEVISION. Elektra

(See no evil/Venus/Friction/Marquee moon/Elevation/Guiding light/Prove it/ Torn curtain.)

Long awaited album from the leaders of the New York scene. From the first notes of See no evil, one knows this group has very little in common with the Ramones and the other hotheads of the noise generation. It is definitely a well thought-out work, closer to poetry than to metal music. Tom Verlaine is a romantic, although a very morbid one. On certain songs it works well, and the combination of surrealistic imagery and very catchy licks will have you humming along with some verses while staring blankly at your kitchen wall. On others Verlaine's visions get lost in the fog and the long directionless instrumental breaks will just annoy you. It is not easy to write about such an ambitious album' cause one cannot help but admire what the man is trying to do, even when it does not do it to you. On each side it is the first song that grabbed me (sure fell in love with the line "Pull down the future with the one you love" in "See no evil") while I became more and more impatient as the album played on. May be it has to do with the inevitable monotony generated by Verlaine's dark brooding thoughts ("Darling, darling' do we part like the seas?/The roaring shell../ The drifting of the leaves . . ./All intent/ Remains unknown" in "Guiding Light"), may be the music lacks the eerie quality one would expect with such lyrics. It is all too present, too close, too predictable. Can't help but think about what Nico/Cale have done with similar moods. A strange album, but not strange enough. Next time.

"LEAVE HOME," THE RAMONES. Sire Records. Marketed by ABC Records.

(Glad to see you go/Gimme gimme shock treatment/I remember you/Oh oh I love her so/Carbona not glue/Suzy is a headbanger/Pinhead/Now I wanna be a good boy/Swallow my pride/What's your game/California sun/Commando/You're gonna kill that girl/You should never have opened that door.)

The kings of blitzkrieg bop have done it again. Don't be mistaken, this ain't punk in the English sense. No nihilistic anger in this collection, you can even dance to it. It's mostly boy-girl stuff (although sometimes of a rather peculiar fashion: ". . .I really love to watch her/watch her headbangin'" with only hints here and there of anti-social feelings (in Glad to see you go: "Gonna take a chance on her/one bullet in the cylinder/and in a moment of passion/get the glory like Charles Manson"). But what the Ramones are superb at is extracting the very essence of the rock 'm' roll we grew up with. By singing in a mixture of styles that range from Buddy Holly to the Beach boys to the Liverpool sound, by pushing their lyrics to moronic heights and concentrating on the backbeat of their tunes they succeed in creating high power capsules of teen music, real little gems that have no other purpose than to make you feel good and silly. Hear their version of California sun and rediscover how exciting it is to run wild with the beat. And whether the Ramones are doing all this for a joke is not the question. They have understood what is wrong with today's rock and proceeded to get back to what we liked before we got twisted by the seventies. 'Cause indeed their main inspiration seems to come from early sixties music (check the Dave clark five/Beatles sound-alike "I remember you") and Joey, their lead singer, readily admits his great admiration of Herman's Hermits. The only difference is in the way they stretch this ancient sound to its most absurd limits, thereby giving it the touch of today. And that is where the Ramones join the shock troops of the punk scene, even though they sometimes seem (only seem) to be looking at the past rather than the future. Like the British adventurists they keep their tunes fast and short (when was the last time you bought an LP with fourteen songs on it?) and the whole thing totally devoid of such boring tricks as leads and solos. All they give us is the wonderfully mechanical driving beat, a bunch of power rhythm chords and very strong inane vocals. Who needs anything else? I don't care if they're minimal, they sure sound great with an early morning beer.

Jet Lag

As a treat to all of you out there, here are the complete lyrics of "Pinhead."

Gabba gabba
We accept you
We accept you
One of us.
I don't wanna be a pinhead no more
I just met a nurse that I could go for.
D-U-M-B
Everyone's accusing me.

NOW
The Tubes
A&M SP-4632

It isn't generally known just how good the Tubes are. Those De Mille-spectacle stage shows and two lavishly produced albums have done a good job of obscuring the brazenly brillent rock & roll band that lives dangerously in the heart and at the outer limits of the whole big schmeer. It's not hard to understand how you might have gone right past the Tubes so far, especially if your only access has been the first two albums. On the other hand, if you haven't picked up on "White Punks on Dope," their great double-edged anthem, or the haunting "Space Baby" (both from the first album, THE TUBES), if you haven't been startled by the shadowy grandeur of "Pimp" or the tendon-snapping mania of "Slipped My Disco" (both from YOUNG & RICH), then you've missed some obvious clues and some terrific rock & roll.

You got no excuse any more, kids, because the Tubes/NOW is the Real Thing, a rock & roll album that sounds as good as the band that recorded it. If the first two albums emitted a sensation of satirical detachment, NOW resounds with the unmistakable spirit of intense

BLEU LEECH

conviction. You'll hear no one-liners or any of the shtik shit you might've expected; the humor is integrated, it's in the music more than in the lyrics, and it's present not out of any gratuitous image-enhancement but because it supports the drama of the songs. In other words, don't expect to laugh with—or at—this album . . .except to stomp, shout, and maybe even be moved by it.

On the first side, the five tracks are linked together by their passion and power. "Smoke" is an anguished celebration of desire amid the debris of the dawn's early light. "Hit Parade" confronts the lonely life with tough talk and gorgeous bitter/sweet harmonies. "Strung Out on Strings" tells the story of a rock & roller struggling to play out his dream through the electric din of every blistering lick you've ever heard (this one is certifiably KILL). "Golden Boy," an elegaic blues, roars with ever-increasing waves of shrieking harps (played by Captain Beefheart and Harry Duncan) and shimmering guitars. And Beefheart's incandescent love song, "My Head Is My House Unless It Rains," is awash with unforgettable intimacy and longing. This side along is enough to convince any authentic rock-lover that the Tubes have got the magic.

The other side of NOW is more lighthearted in mood but just as relentless in its power. High points: "I'm Just a Mess," a classic guitar/harmony Beatle/rocker; "This Town," a brassy Sinatra update; and the climactic "You're no Fun," in which a trivial lovers' spat is suddenly detonated by a group impersonating the Ramones on acid, and when the smoke clears, all that remains is the blinding glare of the Cosmic Bozo, who could care less.

But fuck ultimates—they only come up at the end anyway. Pick up this album and some styrofoam cups, have a little party, stay up all night, and play the record one more time just as the sky's getting light. If you run out of cigs, you can always thank heaven for 7-11.

by Bill O'Lading

"DAMNED," THE DAMNED. Stiff Records. Import

(Neat neat neat/Fan club/I fall/Born to kill/Stab your back/Feel the pain/New rose/Fish/See her tonite/1 of the 2/So messed up/I feel alright.)

"No jeans or mysterty chords . . ." (Neat neat neat)

Produced by Nick Lowe on Stiff Records ("the world's most flexible record company") this LP is the first one of the punk coalition (actually, they all hate each other!) to come out and reach us. Stiff Records is a small British label run by Jake Riviera (also manager of the Damned), Dave Robinson and the Dr. Feelgood gang that specializes in the more off-beat side of the music scene. And they sure picked a winner with this bunch! Recorded with very little regard for the slickness of the sound, may be even with a definite contempt for anything to do with production, this record beautifully manages to convey what the new sound is about. It is sure to infuriate most so-called music lovers as well as just about everyone else, so raw is its approach, so deliberate its refusal to play the game. With the exception of one song (Feel the pain, which could be called their ballad!), the whole thing zooms by at breakneck speed in a blur of cheap supersonic guitars (fuck you, I don't know any other expression!), demented lyrics (what you catch of them) and general chaos. It is sloppier than the first Dolls album and even more exciting. Each song adds more confusion than the one before to the overall effect until your head gives up and you reach for the off switch thinking "who let these goons loose in a studio anyway?!". Well, somebody who sure knows what is needed in this age of studio wizards and electric lullabies, that's who! Don't let the pain and disgust that you might feel upon the first listening fool you. We've been coaxed and brainwashed into a sickening acceptance of sophisticated muzak that passes itself off as the real thing. But them dead days seem to be over, pals. The Damned and dozens of others right behind are gonna twist you around and show you the way out of this slump. Soon you'll be singing along to "Stab your back" (Stab your back, stab your back, stab your back, stab your back, and so on . . .) and laughing your head off when the latest phony heavy-metal combo tries to drill its way into the amorphous blob of cottage cheese that you call your brain! Wake up zombies, this record could save your lives.

Kickboy Face

EDDIE & the HOT RODS — Teenage Depression (Island Records)

With the apparent lack of American tough punk releases (Ramones excepted), the recent release of Eddie & the Hot Rods on Island quicken the pulse. The album is HOT! Like a bitch in heat, it grabs by the teeth & pumps the shit out of you. As urgent as street fight adrenalin, its only weakness is in the borrowed material ('cept for "Get Out of Denver", which sizzles).

This is the stuff that can pull you out of "The Ten Year Stupor," (left-overs from the expanded conciousness generation) that the music business has been wallowing in . . .

Raw energy, aggressive stance, everything this "New Music" is all about . . .

Laurence Talbot

LIVE SOMETIMES CONCERT REVIEWS

PHOTO: SAMIOF

TELEVISION at the Whisky

Here they were, the darling of the critics, the avant-garde rockers from New York. Preceded on stage by The Quick (a most imitative, passe and infuriating little bunch of geezers) they quickly launched into a series of songs off their Marquee Moon Elektra album (see review somewhere in these pages). Verlaine looked tense and worried, the others efficient and distant (Richard Lloyd has a most impressive way of hitting the chords on his guitar, angry but so controlled . . .). The problem was, there was no magic, no electricity, no madness. Perhaps the audience was not the most inspiring bunch to sing songs of despair to (satisfied young execs and their secretaries who certainly have never dreamt of Cadillacs pulling out of graveyards!), perhaps Television need the feedback they get from the lean New York crowd, perhaps I wasn't in the proper mood. I still liked most of it, possibly more out of respect than passion. And respect is not one of the foundations of good rock. But even respect dwindled when I realized they were very seriously doing a rendition of Dylan's "Knocking on Heaven's Door." At this point the members of London's punk outrage THE DAMNED walked out in a flurry of chains and leather—rather unimpressed, I suppose, by America's "new wave" music. So it was over soon afterwards (for all of you trivia collectors, Verlaine broke a string off his transparent guitar and had to finish with a brown substitute), but not before I felt the first pangs of boredom during a particularly pointlesss solo. Could have stayed home and watched television after all! Sorry, had to say it!

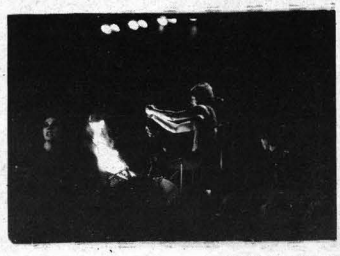


PHOTO: NISSEN

The DAMNED at the Starwood

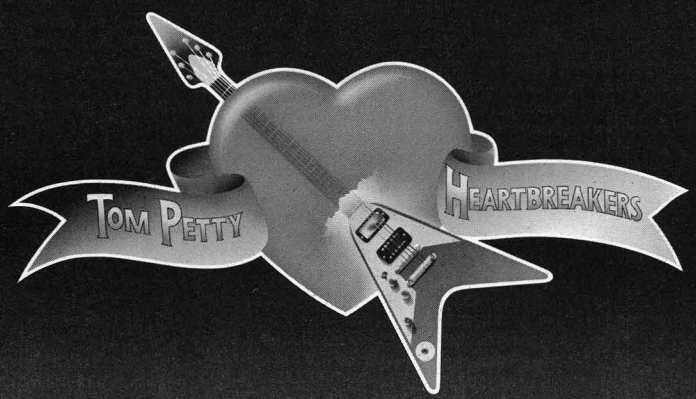
There was expectancy in the air (that's the strange little flickerings one sometimes notices on the edge of one's field of vision) Monday night at the Starwood as one walked around from room to room waiting for the opening set of London's famed degenerates. (Pfff, what a sentence! What's such profound literature doing in this rag?!) Ambling amidst a sizeable crowd (for a Monday night) of weirdos, curious hangers-on and thrill seekers (not forgetting the few obligatory zombies and the even stranger college graduates with their dates), I wondered what we were in for. Having been in possession of the Damned import album for only three days (see review and raves in this issue) I truly felt like a father who has decided to check out (what the heck!) what the kids have been up to on those long weekend outings. Forget the second-hand reports about the latest British attempts at organized looniness, this was going to be the real proof (or disproof) that the limeys are always the best when it comes to the worst (never mind the muddled thinking, keep on reading, peasants!). And so on and so on . . . just a bride on her wedding night. Then they trooped down to the stage, and they sure looked odd. Far left Captain Sensible on bass, tall bloke with neatly cropped red hair, white hardware around his neck, center Rat Scabies (don't look at me!) disappearing behind his drums with just his water rat red hair peeking thru, on the right the charmer of the gang, Brian James on guitar, with all black outfit, black tie more than a bit undone, dyed black hair and, in all positions at once the creature, the monster, the living dead, the teenage Dracula himself, Dave Vanian on vocals! Don't take my word for it. Ask others who were there: A humanoid in our midst . . . He drooled and hissed for a few seconds, ripped off his vinyl face mask and behold: the little android looked as terrifying without! A true adolescent ghoul with greased jet-black hair, translucent flesh and berserk eyes staring out of big black cavities. Before I recovered they were halfway thru the Stooges' "I feel alright" and it was no show for the delicate minded. Like watching a power station blowing its hundreds of circuits in a random pattern. The two guitarists darting back and forth as if they and not their instruments were plugged into the amps, Mister Scabies brutalizing his shaky set and The One That Came From Beyond shouting and marching and shaking his black frock coat as any angry fiend from The Other Side would.

The songs kept pouring out (they do perform faster on stage than on the album) full of unrepressed nastiness, crazed notions and disturbing incoherence. Dave (what a name for a succubus!) gave his most blood-chilling looks at the audience while pacing about in a style reminiscent of an extremely well-controlled epileptic fit, screaming tales of stabbings and other clean fun, the hoodlums with the guitars writhed on the floor and ran around in circles and the brute on the drums kept trying his best to make the whole machine jump its rails. This was it! The dark side of rock, pure trash with no redeeming qualities, the unleashing of the Clockwork Orange generation, Hell on Earth! Hallelujah, I thought, it is all true. These guys have found it and probably others like them, in London town, Philadelphia, Pa., you know the song . . . the way out of boredom, frustrations . . .

The madness ended shortly after an attractive fire display on the drum set while the others kept on finding new ways to make the blood dribble down our ears. There hadn't been one slower song, not one trace of an attempt at making you dance and boogie. Either you submitted yourself to it or stepped back to the bar. And then they were gone as fast as they came, the whole lunacy package disappeared, brain cells reassorted themselves and the heart tried to remember its cruising rhythm. No encores, no cutesy relating to the audience. Hit and run tactics, the only logical approach to their brand of "entertainment." Shit, man, do you realize this is the way it was always supposed to be?!

C.B.

Eat our heart out.



Feast your ears on brave new blood. Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers are more than lean and mean.

They're killers.

Terminal romance on Shelter.

SHELTER RECORDS

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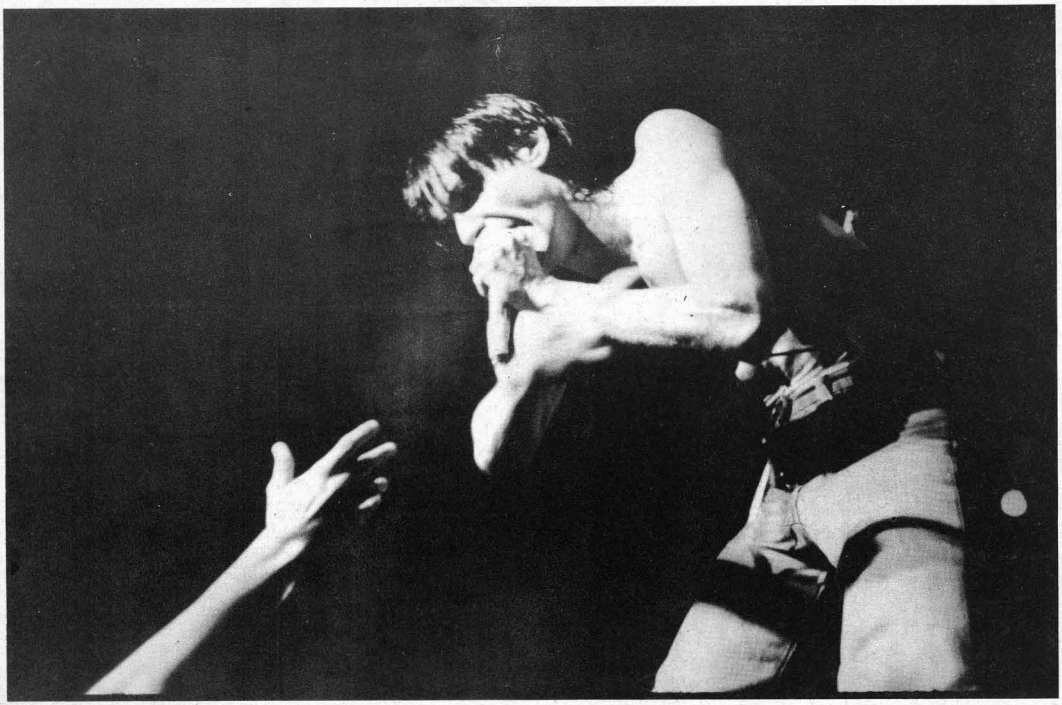


PHOTO: KIT KALIONZES

IGGY POP at the Santa Monica Civic

Anonymous band dressed in black vinyl, mere assistants to The Ceremony. Far right a familiar profile at the keyboards: David Iceman Bowie himself, very cool, hardly there really, no expression behind the smoke of his cigarette. It was going to be Iggy's night, none of that getting together at the mike for the photographers' sake, and it was admirable of Bowie to keep it that way. The man has class! And Iggy's night it was! For more than one hour Mister RAW POWER did it to the audience and to himself. Beyond good or bad music, right into the higher realms of true possession. To see and feel the Iggy perform is to catch a glimpse of another world, where emotions make one bleed and where the music is a palpable form of madness. Very few numbers from "The Idiot" album were included, which maybe suggests that the Iggy-Bowie team might be looser and less restrictive than some feared. Of these new tunes, "Sister Midnight" worked best, the roughness of the live version making it sound even more doomed than the album's. Throughout the show the reaction from the rather dull looking audience was good, and the inevitable encores seemed for once genuine enough. Anyone who has never seen this tortured punk take a five foot leap after the mike stand, collapse in his drummer's set or screech to his mommy from the top of amplifiers that he just shot himself up ("...and it isn't cool!") has not tasted anything. Pain, hopeless love, more than a hint of bondage and sadism. Strong stuff, strictly for the twisted fringe. No Rocky Mountain High for this gang. Opening act was Blondie. Strange combination of oldies appeal and hard rock stance. The band looked like a hopped up Merseybeat combo and their singing bombshell like a cross between a big city streetwalker and any of the Phil Spector female stars (so much that I was dying for them to do "Leader of the Pack," but no luck!). Unimpressed by their music (I have been told by fans, they have to be seen in a club, so this is not a judgment) I watched Deborah Harry for some time (sure has an odd attractive way of moving on stage) but eventually drifted in the pathetically sterile hall for a hot-dog. In there I overheard the following exchange between female boppers:

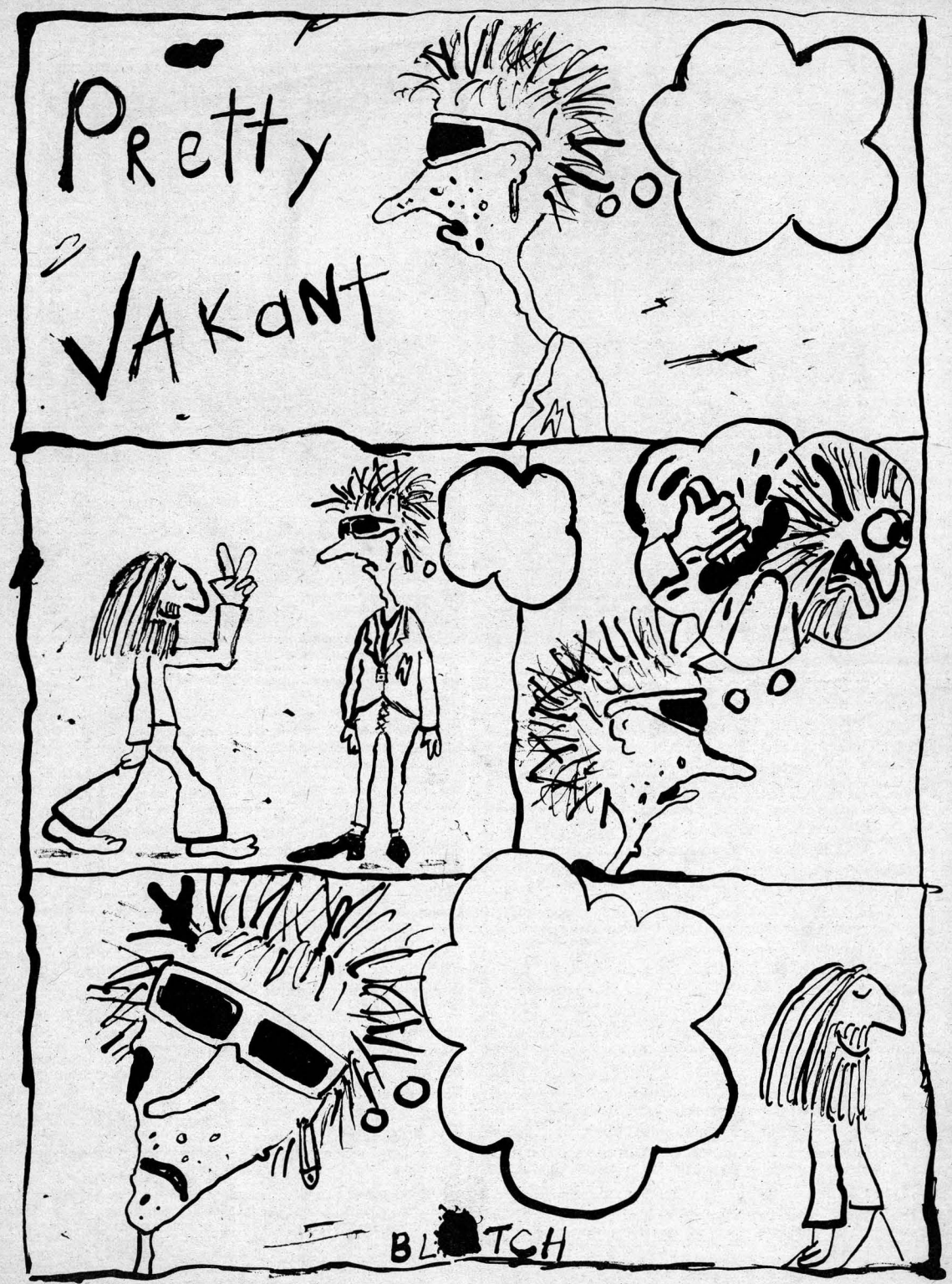
1st bopper: I hope you didn't come here to see Bowie, did you?

2nd bopper: Eecch no! I hope he doesn't come near me. What part of the stage is he gonna be on?

1st bopper: The right...

2nd bopper: Oh good! I'm on the left!

Which goes to show...something.


Pretty
VAKANT
BL TCH

First Album

New Album "Ramones Leave Home"

RAMONES get noticed...

"Just perfect. A."
Robert Christgau, Village Voice & Creem

"*Ramones* is a classic."
Rutgers Daily Targum

"Moronic and brilliant."
Nick Kent, New Musical Express

"This dangerous record must be withdrawn by the company and banned by shops."
Editorial, Scotland Evening Times

"The most amazing new band I've heard yet."
Lisa Robinson, Hit Parader

"My favorite album of the month."
Flo & Eddie, Blind Date, Phonograph Record Magazine

"My favorité group of the moment."
Juke Box Jury, Phonograph Record Magazine

"Great. Fantastic. Stupendous."
Lincoln Park (N.J.) Herald

"El Stinko garbage of the worst kind."
Dayton Journal Herald

"May or may not be the best album so far this year."
Paul Nelson, Circus

"My nomination for the best band in the land."
J. Poet, Rocky Mountain Musical Express

"The best young rock and roll band in the known universe."
Wayne Robbins, Newsday

"The most attractive example yet of this genre of rock."
LA Free Press

"The Ramones are the best new band to come into the public eye this year."
Craig Zeller, Aquarian

"They're great."
Charles Shaar Murray, New Musical Express

"Rotten. No musical promise or any cultural advances or redeeming social values. They deserve to be ignored."
Jim Girard, Cleveland Scene

"The Ramones stink. They have no socially redeeming value. I can't take it."
Mike Diana, Richmond, Va. Daily Press

"*Ramones* sounds more like a greatest hits than a debut album."
Richard Mortifoglio, Village Voice

"Incredible."
Cousin Bruce Morrow, Syndicated Column

"The last time I was insulted by something as bad as the Ramones was when Mary Hartman shot her husband in the crotch with a bow and arrow."
The Drummer, Philadelphia

"The next big trash band."
Walter Dawson, Memphis Commercial Appeal

"Irresistible."
Susan Shapiro, Sounds

"The starkest, first-take quality rock you've ever heard."
Pizza Platters Monthly, L.A.

"Worthless."
John Swenson, Crawdaddy

"The most radical album of the past six years."
Gene Sculatti, Creem

"This is it, America."
Dave Barton, Rock N Roll News, SF

"Degenerate no-talents."
Steve Morrissey, Melody Maker

"Tough rock and roll at its raunchiest."
Chris Carson, Binghampton News

"Truly awful."
James Johnson, London Evening Standard

"For connoisseurs of bone-crunching rock only. All others beware."
Don Shewey, Pop Top, Boston

"An amyl nitrite high."
Mark Jacobson, New York Magazine

"Indeed awesome."
Performance Magazine

"Crap. These boys will never make it."
Thom Gardner, Back Door Man

"The Ramones are best."
Mark P, Sniffin' Glue

"Lyrics of the year—Rock poets of the year."
Sounds

"Best Debut LP of the Year."
Musical Express

"Anyone who hates this record is an asshole."
Phast Phreddie, Back Door Man

"Truly overpowering."
Ian Zodiac, LA Free Press

"A sizzling great...debut of the year."
Blast Magazine

"They're perfect, couldn't be better. Great musicians. Excellent musicians."
Jack Badger, Rock N Roll News, SF

"Recapturing the essence of rock."
Hollywood Daily Variety

"Merde. Je deteste ce disque."
Phillipe Garnier, Rock & Folk, France

"Perhaps the smartest band in America."
Lester Bangs, Creem

"The most hilarious album produced in years."
Melody Maker

"Walls of sound that narcotize all feeling."
Jan Hodenfield, New York Post

"The *baddest* sound around."
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"Humorless poor taste performed by the missing links of rock and roll."
Ken Wilson, Hollywood Press

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Howard Klein, Record Rag, SF

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Bruce Malamut, Music Gig

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Ralph Alphonso, Cheap Thrills

"Uniquely repulsive. Not a scrap of taste. The stuff of which bad myths are made."
Paul McGrath, Toronto Globe & Mail

"Burns holes in the mind."
Wilder Penfield III, Toronto Sun

"The Ramones have done it better than anybody else."
Steven Braitman, (publication untraceable)

"My God, is this really happening?"
Paul Budra, U. of Toronto Varsity

"Undoubtedly the best album of 1976."
Stennie Gunn, Farleigh Dickinson U. Gauntlet

"The Ramones win."
Peter Cowan, Oakland Tribune

"Oh no! This is grossly irresponsible."
Spokesperson for the Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents

"They don't waste their time—they waste yours."
Stephen Ford, Detroit News

"The worst of New York punk bands."
Washington Post

"One hell of a rush."
Bob Sennet, Columbia Spectator

"Shocking material. I'm horrified."
James Dempsey, Member of Parliament, U.K.

"Destined to become a classic because it breaks away from all current standards. The REAL kings of heavy metal."
Marvin Jamerson, Collegiate Times

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George Gesner, (publication untraceable)

"I give it an A."
Tom D'Antoni, Maryland Public Broadcasting

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Howard Wuelfing, Washington Times

"Dildoes are selling and these guys are in synch."
DeFleur, Head Magazine

"The most explosive of the new wave."
Paul Dabalsa, Observation Post, City College of N.Y.

"Music to sniff glue by."
Marty Packin, Asbury Park Press

"The power of 70's heavy metal behind the melodic invention of AM radio mid-60's pop."
Wesley Strick, Blast

"Phew, what a scorcher!"
Kris Needs, Zig Zag

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L E T T E R S

May 10, 1977

Dear Kickboy & Co.,

I just had to write and say how deeply impressed I am by the first issue of SLASH. Immediately I was struck by the quality of the mag's design & layout (don't have to be messy to be punky) but on actually reading the issue I realized the greatest thing of all about SLASH, that you & your writers are the first people to write about "punk" not as outsiders discovering a trend, not as ignorant yobs trying to do to the English language what the Sex Pistols have done to men's clothing styles, but as intelligent critics who realize that there is a coherent value system behind all the occurrences that have been associated with the "punk" movement, who can articulate these values in terms of the various groups and records involved, and therefore make valid criticisms of the music in its own terms. I'm not positive, but I think you're the first to successfully pull this off.

(Greg then mentions what he thinks are the highlights of issue #1—even calling Television "the Grateful Dead in '70s drag"! [which made Kickboy sick with envy at not having thought of it first!], then goes on to carefully explain why he thought the "Kickboy kicks back" bit against Mark Shipper was uncalled for. We will not reproduce his criticism in its entirety [it is quite lengthy] but will give you the main points of his argument. Ed.)

The sentiments expressed (in the "Kickboy kicks back") are basically "right on" but you've really picked the wrong target. Granted the column in question was probably Mark's worst ever... because he failed to say anything meaningful or even be funny... but Shipper's column has always been 100% satire meant to go right over the heads of the idiots in places like Kansas City that make up most of PRM's readership... There was a time, 1971 and '72, when Mark Shipper was one of only a handful of people in the world to really fight against the horrible music of that era, and thereby help bring about the punk revival everybody now takes for granted... It was either me or Mark... who actually coined the phrase "punk rock." Did you know that? In 1971!... His fanzine FLASH (was) the only 'zine besides Teenage Wasteland Gazette that had any honest punk moxie before the '76 generation... The point is, Mark Shipper is not the enemy... the people you really want to butcher in their sleep are the editors and writers of Rolling Stone, the program directors of KLOS, the real die-hard hippies... To attack people like Shipper is simply not called for, when there are people like Rick Wakeman (who fucked up the Pistols' A&M deal) who deserve it so much more.

...Anyway, I thought you'd appreciate being corrected on that point...but it's a very minor flaw in what is unquestionably a gem of a first issue. Put me down as a wholehearted supporter of everything you're trying to do...I'd like to help you spread SLASH around as widely as possible.

Best of luck,
Greg Shaw (Bomp Records)

Thanks, Greg. Kickboy mumbled somethin' about the enemy being everywhere, and how the fuck can we judge people if not by their writing? But even he loved your letter, and the interest you've taken in our adventure. As to Rolling Stone, the die-hard hippies and other Rick Wakemans, don't worry. IT'S COMING THEIR WAY!!

Oh Kickboy!... I picked up your rag at a chick's house. I don't usually read R-R crap papers, but this chick was busy trying out her new douchebag or something, and her TV was busted, and I was bored. You guys bitch about always hearing the same shit on the radio, and then all you talk about is the fucking Sex Pistols every 3rd word. I've never heard their record, they never play anywhere, and no record company (including the quote small unquote) wants them. The Sex Pistols are the BIGGEST CUNTING HYPE in music history, and from what I see, you've been sucked right up in the same asshole, and following right behind are Television (pukey PSEUDOS) and The Damned, also being yakked about, when they can't even entertain their fans, except for their pets in N.Y. I don't even think you know about the really GOOD new bands, like Orphanage, or the Teardrops or Berlin Brats, etc. etc. etc. Open up your eyes and ears and MAYBE your paper will make a couple of issues.

Fuck hype!
Fuck R n R papers!!
Fuck you, Kickboy!!!

Jaime Chalif

(There is also a 3rd grade style drawing of a naked girl with a voice coming out of her crotch saying, "Hi! my name is Kickboy! Eat me! Eat me! Eat me! mmmm..." —Ed.)

Dear Pizza Face!

Thank you for your charmin' letter. Always nice to know we've reached the elementary schools. Now to reply to your complex accusations: If the Pistols are the hype you say they are, how come you've never heard them? Pretty strange for a hype, wouldn't you say? I mean, it wasn't hard to hear what Bruce Springsteen sounded like a while back, was it? I think that's what a hype is. And saying that no record company wants them, now what kind of argument is that? (Anyway, you're late: Virgin Records wanted them, and got them. Now you can bitch in a different direction.) And where are they hiding, those good new bands you're mumbling about? Instead of sending along a drawing of your mother you could have mailed us information, pics, maybe even a review of one of their performances. That would have been constructive, don't you think? "Fuck rock 'n' roll papers" is fine with us, 'cause a rock 'n' roll paper we ain't. When we know what we are we'll announce it. Now go back to your homework.

Kickboy

Dear SLASH:

GREAT first issue! It's even better than we hoped (and that's super!).

You definitely are the hottest thing around —Unbeatable!

Faithfully waiting impatiently for the next issue,

Much love & thanks,
BACKSTAGE PASS

(Handlettered by Spock—and that's an awful lot of emotion for me, you realize.)

Spock

Dear Slash:

Your magazine is GREAT—particularly the photos. Most of all though, I LOVE your stance. The New Wave IS HERE. Anyway, I wrote a piece which you might like (or might not!). It's included in the letter. I won't pretend to be an expert on Iggy or to be able to interpret his life. However, I was witness to a part of the hell he went through in '73-'75. So perhaps this article can help some of us who only saw Iggy for the first time at the Civic understand why he did not fully live up to his legend.

Have a real cool time,
Jade Zebest
5810 Fulcher Ave.
N. Hollywood, CA

(Here are extracts from Jade's article on Iggy, which we're sorry we cannot run in its entirety):

There has been a lot of criticism recently of Iggy Pop's performance at the Civic... The critics are probably right. No band, no performer can ever live up to the spectacle—the sheer energy, the guttural violence of the Stooges' '73/'74 tours... I'd never been close to such anger expressed in such raw musical terms before, or since... It was like something black and rotten had exploded inside Pop's brain, and we, the audience, had just ***happened*** to see the explosion...

...I finally met Iggy in the summer of '74. My roommates brought him home one morning... He looked awful... His formerly silver hair had been cropped short (remember this was pre-Sex Pistols), and haphazardly dyed red. He was fucked up (I later learned that he'd visited his pusher before he came over). We turned on our tape recorder and let him start talking. It was sad. He sang "crystal ship" and cried on the part, "the days are short and filled with pain"... He tried to piss in one of our ashtrays, but the piss wouldn't come... He passed out before he could make the door. Later he was busted on Hollywood Blvd. He had been on his way to a recording session... He got beaten up at one of Bowie's concerts at the Amphitheatre. Iggy was headed in Jim Morrison's direction... Iggy has grown out of the violence and I don't miss it, it (the violence) almost annihilated him. So to the critics I say "Fuck off"... Diluted Iggy is better than NO Iggy. Let his violence be in his words. They're stronger anyway.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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WRITE KICKBOY!!

HE WANTS YOU TO RESPOND. (HE THRIVES ON ABUSE). LETTERS WILL BE PUBLISHED. ADDRESS LETTERS IN CARE OF THIS PAPER.

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EDITORIAL

(STILL) BITCHIN', RAVIN' and RANTIN'!

Oh, Los Angeles . . .! I am surprised that the real new wave bands scattered here and there haven't moved to more attractive locations (N.Y., Seattle, Boston, Toronto, anywhere!) where experiments are a part of the scene and boogie is not the only sound you can listen to on Saturday nights. And this is supposed to be the recording capital of the world! But even this city may wake up soon. There are new music concerts coming up, some of the British contingents may visit our lazy shores, and I have decided not to pack my suitcase 'til September. Let us wait and see what the summer will bring.

Speaking of status quo, we didn't know we'd be running head-on into it so soon. You see, it appears it's just not done to advertise in new publications. Especially if them new publications insist on standing by what they say and refuse to wink at mediocrity. How naive of us! But there are exceptions, companies who have kept a little sense of adventure, people who can perceive what's going on a little better than their computerized colleagues, and some plain crazies who will try anything new. Hence numero dos, thanks to all involved (and please remember that when you see a few words of thanks in these pages, they represent genuine gratefulness on our part and not the usual pat on the back blurbs).

But SLASH #2 is old news! SLASH #3, 4, 5 are coming, and can anyone predict what we'll be drooling about by issue #12?! We're about to bring you so much madness and excitement I don't see how you can stand it! Don't let anyone tell you everything will soon be back to normal, by which they mean boring and depressing. Those days are over, and there soon will be alternatives to the general lameness of the scene*. Who cares about the raised eyebrows and the disapproving shrugs from the reactionary elements that have been controlling parts of the field? The new music is bursting out, and contracts or no contracts, record deals or no record deals, acceptance or no acceptance, it will be played and heard and no matter what, we will be there, and so will you. Welcome to SLASH, the paper that doesn't take no for an answer!

Finally, a few words of advice before we let you dive into the local and international punkdom extravaganza (okay, "new wave" for you purists): If you have just inherited, drop us a word and a check (see instructions somewhere in here) and make sure you receive the next 12 issues. Then trade in all those creaky albums you'll never play again for some NEW sounds. Who knows, boredom might even disappear!

*Be ready for the coming SLASH-BOMP concerts and other mysterious events . . .

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COVER: JOHN DENNEY (THE WEIRDOS)
PHOTO BY MELANIE NISSEN

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Local Shit

Disillusionment with the L.A. scene: A recent "Punk Concert" in Santa Monica was so boring that I found myself hoping for a riot! Entering an elevator from a subterranean garage to the top of the Roman Inn (formerly Ramada, Ramona, etc.), I had visions of some real bizarreness, but found myself rubbing shoulders with a thousand residents of Surf City all doing the Tuinal shuffle in their rainbow zoris . . . Strictly Apathyville! The whole mess was a blur of young bourgeoise —overcrowded, overheated & overpoliced by hopped up security guards, just looking for reasons to act like asswipes. The only thing I got for my three bucks was a real promising set by Backstage Pass & a few hard looks from some rather tough looking leather girls . . .

Edwin Heaven, manager of the Nuns, says that San Francisco has quite a scene—Mabuhays (a former Puerto Rican dive) has gone punk, and interest has grown to the point that people are left standing in the streets (where we all belong!). If panty-whipped S.F. can generate that kinda energy, where does that leave L.A.??

Overseas Shit: The Pistols, after their little scuffles with A&M and EMI, have again signed with a record co. This time it's Virgin in England & Berkeley in France. The boys only made over $100,000 on this one! (No word yet as far as American distribution.)

Back in Los Angeles: (yawn) Hit the Starwood on a Sunday night, the line-up sounded good—Lynx, Felony & Shock, but after 10 minutes of Lynx (the lead singer in a white poly/blend jumpsuit acting like an old fey), and then waiting hours to hear Felony play the blase, the SLASH staff couldn't take it . . . ended up at Pancho's eating Mexican food (sorry we missed Shock, hope they're as good as the enchladas) . . .

. . . soon after this issue reaches the stores and stands a three night new-wave marathon at the Whisky will feature the Zeroes, the Zippers, The Dills, La Rue, the Weirdos, the Screamers, Backstage Pass and possibly, from San Francisco, The Nuns. These three shows are produced by Kim Fowley and should attract enough attention to induce other clubs to follow . . . Greg Shaw is about to produce The Weirdos' first single on his Bomp label . . . probably will be out in August, and probably will be a scorcher, too . . . Rod "the Perv" is now the official drummer for Backstage Pass . . . and rumors have it that Jake Riviera, manager of The Damned and big shot at Stiff Records is quite interested in them, and that there is the possibility of a contract with Phil Spector, with maybe an album coming out of the deal . . .

SLASHFASHION: What to wear on a Saturday? First what not to wear—burn your flared pants, denim coordinates & anything else left over from your Earthshoe phase. After discarding all those useless items, stand and face yourself in the mirror . . . look vicious, mean, uncaring . . . remember, it's your STANCE that's all important . . . dig up some pegged pants & some cruel looking shoes (kats, pointy toes—kittens, spike heels), then rape the shit out of the ugliest shirt you've got (tape it, tear it, adorn it with anything that's offensive!). Don't forget your hair (see Screamers interview for tips). Myself, I prefer a nice white cotton shirt with a narrow tie (I know it sounds like the '50s, but what's a poor boy to do?). If you've a little money to spend, move quickly to Grannys on Sunset—they've got all the stuff from Malcolm's shop Seditionaries in London . . . insane clothing!!

SLASH PARTY: The Screamers packed the first Slash event, 500 crazies packed the studio to witness their debut performance—celebs in abundance, Kim & Rodney (of course), Greg Shaw, Technocats, Weirdos, Chevy Chase (who mumbled that now famous quote, 'Is Gay Punk?"), and so many more it's not even worth mentioning . . . (except that I should mention that John Pohl, in a drunken stupor, wrote us a check for $25 for some reason or other). Thank you, John! . . .

The party by all accounts was a huge success (only wish I could remember), the corner liquor store had a record Saturday night, Kim Fowley got laid, nobody died & the Screamers played (note, it was also Tomata's birthday, he's finally turned 17) . . .

PUNK LOVE: Heard the rumors about Genny (Backstage Pass) & Cliff Langer (Deaf School)? We have . . .

SUBSCRIBE: Send us five dollars!! Now!! You should, you know (or we might get Kickboy on your ass!) . . .

WHAT'S IN A LABEL: For some reason I can't or don't want to lose the term Punk Rock from my musical vocabulary—New Wave sounds like an art movement (which I would probably argue that it is). But after listening to groups like Devo & The Residents, I realize that Punk is not a broad enough term . . . Got any ideas? Send them to us & we'll steal them from you . . .

LIVE AT THE WHISKY:
DEAF SCHOOL and Corky Laing

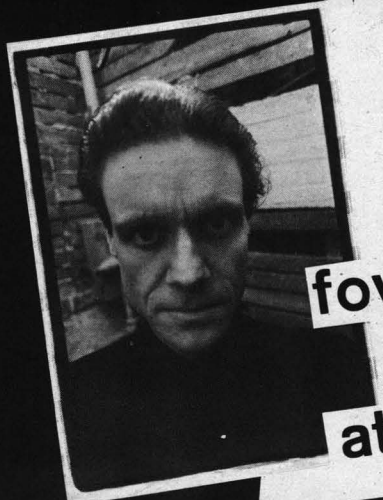
First, let's get something straight: Corky Laing was the headliner, with Deaf School as the supporting act. Whoever planned this one at Warner Brothers is either insane, does not give a shit about music or is very shrewd. The last possibility meaning that Corky Laing made Deaf School come on like musical geniuses, which they readily agree they are not! Corky Laing and others like it are the very reason this angry little rag came out: tired blues licks, boring stage antics and endless drum solos (with two drummers at times, no less!) cannot be what the kids want to hear. It is what the music establishment wants them to buy, nice and safe and totally irrelevant. If there is an audience for the stuff, I just hope we never run into each other.

But enough bitching, let's be positive! Deaf School is the newest oddball british combo, eight sweet loonies (including one she-loonie) who take everything they've been hearing ever since they were born, mash it up together, shake it a few times and serve it to you upside down, all hot and steamy and just slightly bizarre. Visually it fluctuates between a surrealistic revival act (with a lead singer doing stylized Elvis antics with more than a touch of Charlie Chaplin in it, and the slightest trace of a cartoon Adolf Hitler for good measure) and a more contemporary hard-core approach, demented rock 'n' roll for these strange limbo days. Almost frightening but never out of hand, as they seem to hesitate in following where the music is taking them. They even do a parody of a european 'chanteuse,' with the Reverend Max Ripple (the Andy Warhol look-alike of the bunch) on accordion and Bette Bright on smoke-stained vocals, and even though the humor of it is evident it breaks up the tightness of their act and takes away the credibility of their rocking moments. But it was altogether a pretty impressive debut from a band that is definitely bursting with potential (how fucking condescending I get sometimes!).

P.S. Their two british albums (which the band is not that satisfied with anyway) got released here as a double album by Warner.

??

Now you can't say you've never heard of them! Buzzcocks, Richard Hell, Berun Brats, The Mumps, Backstage Pass, The Zeros, Subway Sect, The Stranglers, The Pleasers, The Slits, Generation X, Dirty Diapers, The Bizarros, The Dead Boys, Iron Maiden, Wire, The Police, Penetration, The Diodes, The Criminals, X-Ray Specs, The Normals, The Knobs, The Drones, Kubie and the Rats, Slaughter and the Dogs,Eater, The Screamers, The Viletones, The Cards, The Lurkers, The Furys, The Nuns, Sham 69, The Stinky Toys, Chainsaw, The Zips, Angel Face, Suburban Studs, Squeeze, The Criminals, Short Ice, The Saints, The Weirdos, Suicide, Void Oids, The Models, The Radiators, The Feelings, The Ham, De-Evolution, The Only Ones, The Rubber City Rebels, The Outsiders, The Rejects, The Dils, Alternative T-TV, Arthur Comics, Crime, White Boy, Cortinas, The Low Numbers, Siouxsie and the Banshees, Johnny Moped, The Jolt, Asphalt Jungle, Flesh Rocket, Hot Box, The Fans, Fair Warning, Body, Stray Baby, The Mutants, The Zippers . . .(and it's growing!)



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WEIRDO'S

MELANIE

SLASH met THE WEIRDOS at a rehearsal studio on Hollywood Blvd. The interview took place on the floor after a quick but very impressive set.

THE WEIRDOS are:
John Denney: Vocals
Dix Denney: Lead Guitar
Cliff Roman: Vox Guitar
Dave Trout: Bass
Nickey Beat: Drums

Slash: How long have you people been looking the way you do?
Weirdos: Couple hours. I got in a car accident.
Slash: What are your main musical influences?
Weirdos: Don't ask that!
Slash: What are your main fashion influences?
Weirdos: Winos . . .old ladies.
Slash: What if you guys are a success?
Weirdos: So what!
Slash: Give us a break! Obviously you have nothing to do with what's going on in England at the present time?
Weirdos: None of us have ever been there . . .we would've been the Weirdos anyway.
Slash: None of you have seen the pictures? . . .Y'know, sometimes, when it's late at night . . .and you read interviews?
Weirdos: Alright, alright, yeah. Once I looked at a photo of Johnny Rotten, but it was just for a second.
Slash: But that second counted an awful lot didn't it?
Weirdos: (No answer)
Slash: It's OK, you know.
Weirdos: I saw a picture of The Damned.
Slash: OK, so you wouldn't describe yourselves as punk rock?
Weirdos: No, we're dummies, man.
—Adult rock.
—We're all full grown adults.
Slash: You mean punk rock is immature?
Weirdos: Listen, we're almost to the 1980s. Everybody else is in the dark ages.
Slash: Do you sing your own songs?
Weirdos: Yes.
Slash: Next question will be totally meaningless to you if we ask you what are your favorite English bands at the present time, right?
Weirdos: Well, we haven't seen anybody.
Slash: What do you guys do during the day . . .Is anyone on welfare?
Weirdos: Stealerdealer.
—Wheel of Fortune.
Slash: Would you like to be on the Gong Show?
Weirdos: No.
Slash: I saw a great '50s revival band who got gonged—three sax and a girl singer.
Weirdos: I saw this really good country western band . . .
Slash: They got gonged?
Weirdos: No, they won!
Slash: Are you anarchists?
Weirdos: Only in the UK.
Slash: How do you think your way of dressing would affect the passer-by?
Weirdos: Businessmen will look like this in the '90s.
Slash: So you're a futuristic business band?
Weirdos: Elementary school kids will look like this in about ten years.
Slash: Ten years? . . . Two years!
Weirdos: We just wanna get in Vogue.
Slash: When do you think you'll get in Vogue?
Weirdos: Probably after we get on the cover of TV Guide.
Slash: OK . . . It wouldn't hurt to admit being influenced by the English wave.
Weirdos: I admit.
—My grandfather was English.
Slash: The set we saw tonight, is it a typical example, or were you just relaxing and is actually what you do on stage more aggressive?
Weirdos: Oh yeah, decidedly so.
Slash: How far does it go?
Weirdos: Twelve point seven.
Slash: Would you actually attack your audience?
Weirdos: If they attacked us.
Slash: Well, suppose you got a totally indifferent audience?
Weirdos: We play louder . . .either they stay or we just very flatly ask them to leave.
Slash: Is there a single or an EP coming up?
Weirdos: A single's coming out on Bomp records and an album at the end of '77.
Slash: Where have you played?
Weirdos: Just Hollywood.
Slash: What made you decide to come up with this outrageous music?
Weirdos: We just started playing, like that . . .
—'Cause he knew I had a guitar.
Slash: Did you figure it'd be an avant-garde thing to do?
Weirdos: We're corny.
Slash: You think you're corny?
Weirdos: We're phonies, plus we're stupid. (stupid giggles) . . .
—What was your outlook of the music scene before you saw us?
Slash: Well, I knew it was taking place in other parts of the world, but I didn't realize that there were four or five weirdos going around here doing the same stuff . . .you might like this or you might not, but you're actually part of a very important current, it just makes me very optimistic.

Weirdos: That's good.
Slash: Don't you find yourselves connected with other bands?
Weirdos: We're buddies with The Damned.
Slash: We're like this (buddy gestures) too.
Weirdos: They're really nice when you get them alone . . .but around other people . . .
—They're real sweethearts!
Slash: I know.
Weirdos: They sent a car for us when they played.

Weirdos: No, wait, you just stifled him . . . (does a drum roll) . . .
—Ugly . . .gruesome . . .negative . . .
Slash: Who are your favorite bands?
Weirdos: Seeds, The Screamers . . . we don't like nostalgia.
Slash: Have you heard the Screamers?
Weirdos: No.
—I like the Sex Pistols.
—I like Tull.
—Ugh!

Weirdos: Uuurgh!
—Oooh!
Slash: Patti Smith?
Weirdos: Oh, she's alright.
—I peed in my pants! . . .
Slash: Television?
Weirdos: Ooh.
—I dunno.
—Oh, a bunch of static slowheads . . .
—I like the Dolls.
Slash: Lou Reed?

Slash: Do you see more of this outrage coming up in the next few months . . .or do you see yourselves as a fluke?
Weirdos: Yeah, a fluke.
—I learned to dress like this from my mother . . .
Slash: Here comes our famous question—drugs?
Weirdos: We're into heroin . . .and acid . . . we're on acid right now . . .
Slash: How many gigs have you played?
Weirdos: Three.
Slash: What's your religion? (laughter) . . . Hey, come on, I'm desperate!
Weirdos: Talk about the busing situation.
—The drought.
Slash: What do you guys do for the drought?
Weirdos: I don't flush any more.
—I don't go to the bathroom.
—You don't even wipe! (more stupid giggles)
Slash: That's for the paper shortage! . . . What about your music?
Weirdos: Talk about our sound.
Slash: Right, your sound.

Weirdos: We like it.
Slash: If you would describe your sound in a few words?
Weirdos: (all together)—Loud, hard and fast.
—Naw, that's a dumb answer!
Slash: What's your answer?
Weirdo: Melodic, joyous . . .
Slash: Oh, by the way . . . (another SLASH reporter): Wait, he's being poetic!
Weirdo: . . . Joyous . . .
Slash: Is he the spokesman of the group?

Slash: Do you like the Clash?
Weirdos: Yeah, I like the Clash.
Slash: Have you heard Buzzcocks?

Weirdos: Yeah, I love the Buzzcocks . . . well, I don't ***love*** them.
—I like Eno.
Slash: OK, let's hear about American music . . .Bruce Springsteen?

Weirdos: Aaargh!
—Shit!
Slash: Bob Dylan?

Weirdos: Yeah, he's alright.
—Jazzed out man, I gotta say, Lou Reed, fuck you man! I paid $17 to go to your concert and you fucked me up.
Slash: Why did you pay $17?
Weirdo: Because I was a jerk.
Slash: The Ramones?
Weirdos: Like their sound, don't particularly care to watch them.
Slash: You've got a guitar sound like the Ramones . . . It's factory noise guitar, which I like.

Weirdos: They should play louder.
Slash: Louder? Oh Christ! . . . How about Eddie and the Hot Rods?
Weirdos: No..
—Too slick.

Slash: How can a group of guys form a band a come up with stuff that's totally irrelevant?
Weirdos: How can *we*?
Slash: No, I think you're real relevant.
Weirdos: Because they're mindless.

about things.
Slash: Is that it? . . . When it gets right down to it aren't you serious about what you do?
Weirdos: Who us?
—We like it.
—I'd rather do this than anything.
—Very g-o-d-d-a-m-n serious.

Slash: You mean the way you look and the sound you make, right?
Weirdos: Oh yeah, we mean it.

Slash: Do you play parties? . . . Barmitzvahs? . . . Will you play at a party at my place on Saturday?
Weirdos: Yeah.
—What if people throw up and stuff?

Slash: No problem, they're hard-core . . . Why do you think of yourselves like that?

Weirdos: That's why we're phonies.
—'Cause we're normal.

Slash: I mean you guys might be doing spin-offs from America.
Weirdos: Or disco even, which is how we started out!
—Getting back to that question, I've wondered that myself because I've seen hundreds of bands . . .why are they doing it?
Slash: Do you think it has to do with success, that it's mainstream and they're gonna have a better chance of making some money?
Weirdos: It comes from being too serious

—We're phonies but we mean it.
Slash: Are you artists?

Weirdos: Yeah we're artists.
—We're a comedy team.
Slash: Why do you say you're phony?

Weirdos: Because we ain't real.

Slash: Have you been through phases?

Weirdos: Every week . . . In 1971 I had long hair—I'd drink and make believe I was on LSD.

Slash: Do you think the Sex Pistols are phonies too?
Weirdos: Oh no.
—They're broke.
Slash: Do you believe in revolution?

Weirdos: Oh yeah.
—(to John Denny): Didn't you talk to Johnny Rotten last night?

Slash: Was he rotten?
Weirdo: He's a great guy.

Slash: I think the problem with the Pistols is they really mean their attitude, they really mean their stance.

Weirdos: Our stance is down with England. Slash: (Kick Boy): That's very wrong, I'm afraid we're going to really get on your case on this one. (laughter all around). Another SLASH reporter: No, he said down with England, not English bands.

Weirdos: I say great, hang on the English!
Slash: How do you feel about Mink de Ville?
Weirdos: Who's that?
—What?
—Who?
Slash: OK, good, that takes care of that . . . Do you think the only rock and roll is American?
Weirdos: No.
—Not true.
—No . . . have you ever heard the Tigers from Japan?
Slash: No, are they really a good band?
Weirdos: Yeah.
—Can I say hi to my mom?
Slash: Yes.
Weirdo: Hi mom.

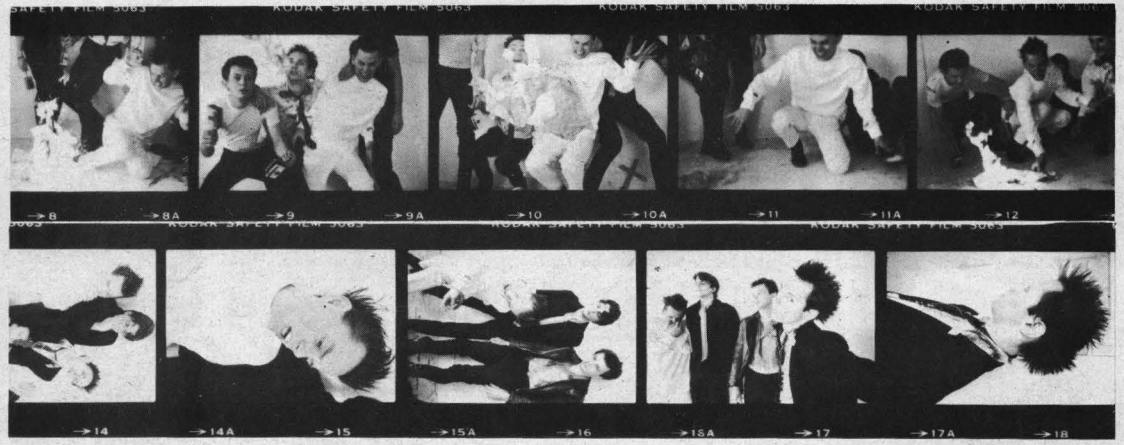
Interview with The Screamers: Tomata du Plenty (vocals), Gear (synthesizer), K.K. (drums) and David Braun (piano).

Due to the unusual nature of this group, this definitely was not your average run of the mill interview. For the sake of clarity, all giggles, shouts, insults and esoteric puns have been deleted. What remains is most of the important nonsense and the occasional profound remark here and there!

Slash: Describe your music in five simple words . . . (no reaction) . . . one word?
Tomata: In one word: anxiety!
Slash: Describe the response to your music so far.
Tomata: Religious!
K.K.: Devout!
Slash: True you have no guitars?
Tomata: We do have one. I use a guitar.
Gear: We don't use them as guitars, we use them as percussion instruments or as pianos, but not in the traditional sense.
Slash: Is this some kind of breakthrough?
K.K.: The guitar element just wasn't there . . .
Gear: I think there are alternatives to the guitar sound, to its symbolism.
Slash: But can you be sexy on stage without guitars?
K.K.: We're sexy off-stage without them!
Slash: Your musical influences?
K.K.: All kinds . . . every one of us has his favorite. We're somewhat influenced, but not really directly.
Tomata: I like a lot of bubble-gum, the Bay City Rollers . . .
Gear: I'm Nico's biggest fan!
David: I think James Brown is God!
Slash: The Monkees?
Tomata: Love them!
Slash: The Archies?
Tomata: I have all their albums. I like the Sadistic Mika Band too.
Slash: The Troggs?
Tomata: Definitely! "I can't control myself", fabulous song . . .
Slash: Are you a punk band?
(Long silence)
Tomata: Wouldn't say so.
Slash: Afraid to be a punk band?
Tomata: It's really a press thing . . . I would just say we make sounds.
Gear: I like to think of ourselves as Nouveau Vague.
Slash: What are your opinions about the new wave English singles?
Tomata: I like the Clash. "White Riot" is brilliant!
Gear: It's great, all these singles coming out. The goods are more accessible to people.
Slash: Short songs too, most of them.
K.K.: It's like the sound barrier, everybody's trying to break it down!
Slash: What of the local groups?
Tomata: We saw the Zeroes in San Diego last week. They're fantastic, like the Mexican Ramones! . . . I like The Weirdos, they are sort of like the Seeds.
Slash: Sky Saxon is making a comeback . . .
Tomata: He *used* to be one of my idols.
Slash: Love?
K.K.: Love Love!
Slash: What will happen to Johnny Rotten?
Gear: When he makes some money he'll probably get his teeth fixed!
Slash: The Screamers are very mysterious about their music, aren't they?
Tomata: Yes they are!
Slash: Where and when can we catch them?
Gear: When we feel ready, in the right place, at the right time . . .lots of people who might get turned on to us might be under 18 . . .
Slash: Do you take your music seriously?
Tomata: Very!
Gear: We do, but it doesn't mean we don't have a sense of humor. Humor is necessary in order to survive.

Slash: Are you a "musical" band?
Gear: I personally don't like music per se.
Tomata: It's more essential . . . sensational . . .
Gear: I told you we're Nouveau Vague!
Slash: How long you been together?
Tomata: Six months.
Slash: Do you have many songs?
Gear: Quite a number but we're confining ourselves, we want a set that won't be too long, so that no one gets turned off . . .when you go on and on it's not as effective as when you are very strong and quick and hard.
Slash: Any solos?
Tomata: Definitely not!
Slash: Give us some titles.
Tomata: "Eva Braun" is a love song, "Going Steady with Twiggy", "You don't love me you love magazine" . . .

Gear: A song called "Punish or be damned", a song called "Peer Pressure", another originally performed by Billie Holliday: "Gloomy Sunday;" . . .
David: A song about the Blessed Virgin Mary called "Mater Dolores", Mother of Sorrow . . .
Tomata: It's one of our big dance songs!
K.K.: The watusi will be reborn . . .!
Slash: Who were the Tupperwares?
Tomata: Gear and I were the Tupperwares, but we had some struggles with the name, had to change it.
Slash: Do you take drugs?
Tomata: Don't have the time!
Gear: Not any more. I can't afford it.
David: I have a whole medicine cabinet at home full of things I don't have time to take.
K.K.: Eyedrops?
Tomata: Ever heard Martin Denny? He's one of our main influences.



Slash: I remember dancing to it!
K.K.: Dancing to Martin Denny?! Quite an imagination!
Slash: Do you have a manager?
Gear: We manage ourselves.
K.K.: We manage to manage ourselves!
Slash: How long will you manage to manage yourselves?
Gear: If the right person comes along . . . somebody who is one of us . . . but not just some guy . . .
Slash: Are you in this for money or pleasure?
Tomata: No, we're very serious.
Slash: About what?
Tomata: All those screaming teenagers!
K.K.: We want to see our faces on lunch-boxes!
Slash: Which piece of equipment do you need right now?
Tomata: I need a bullhorn.
K.K.: An electric toothbrush!
Slash: Do you work hard on stage?
Tomata: Our stage act is like a controlled nervous breakdown!
K.K.: We're choreographed by the confines of the stage, or beyond the confines of the stage!
Gear: It will be inspired by our audience's reaction.
Slash: How old is your ideal audience?
Gear: I went to Iggy, there was a woman in the lobby, about 85 years old, I couldn't believe it, so I said, "how did you like the show?", and she said, "I thought it was great!". That's the kind of audience I would like, in addition to people who share our sensibilities.
Slash: If you were not accepted, would you change your music?
Gear: Our music has come out of our lives, so if our experience changes our music will, but the basic quality won't.
Tomata: I feel confident we have a very good commercial appeal.
Slash: Will they play your single on KHJ?
K.K.: What's KHJ?
Slash: What's more important to you, albums or singles?
Gear: At this point, singles.
Slash: In Jamaica, they shoot DJs who play the wrong tunes on the air!
K.K.: Watch out, Rodney!
Gear: Rodney is a good force . . .
K.K.: A necessary magnet . . .
Slash: Are you prepared to compromise?
Tomata: You mean like prostitution?! (laughter)
Slash: Would you do "Louie, Louie"?
Tomata: We don't know the words!
Slash: Let's talk about your looks.
Gear: Have I given you strange looks?
Slash: What about the London anti-fashion?
Tomata: Exciting!
Gear: I think couture is anti-fashion!
Tomata: I like the way the girls look . . . the fashions we like are not frozen . . .
Slash: How about the nazi paraphernalia?
Gear: I'll never be seen carrying a bayonet! . . . Americans are really underprivileged as far as uniforms are concerned.
Slash: Would you wear it on stage?
Tomata: Only at private affairs!
K.K.: To a wedding!
Tomata: You were talking about people's reactions: we were walking from the Whiskey one night, these cars were driving by, started circling and throwing rocks at us!
Slash: Do you think what's happened to rock 'n' roll is pure science fiction?
Gear: Science fiction? It's science fact!
Slash: How do you get your hair to stand up like this?
Gear: We use vaseline. When you put it in, it doesn't really wash out, and the vaseline will collect the dust from the air, it gives your hair a very interesting texture. After a while the grease is gone, but your hair is like a mold . . . like a sculpture . . .
Slash: Just like the rastas?
Tomata: They're great!
K.K.: I'd like to see the Pistols do reggae!

Gear: You wanted us to ask ourselves the question we always wanted to be asked . . . Well, Tomata will pose the question now.
K.K.: I want to see Tomata POSE the question!
Tomata: How do you feel when you see a young girl face down in the street? In the gutter?
David: Total complicity!
Tomata: I want to beat the shit outta her!
Gear: I feel sexual attraction!
K.K.: I want to turn her over . . .
Tomata: To see if she's done on the other side?
Gear: Another question: If you could do a benefit concert for a religion, which one would it be?
Tomata: Jehovah's witnesses!
Slash: Any plans for the next two months?
K.K.: Japan, Pago-Pago, Madagascar . . .
Tomata: Seriously, an EP and a tour.
Gear: And a lot more publicity.
K.K.: We want to meet all of our audience.
Slash: Do you think the Pistols are overdoing it in their anarchy stance?
K.K.: They're more into musical anarchy than social anarchy.
Gear: To make a point you have to be extreme . . .
Tomata: Anarchy relates there more than in California.
Gear: I think America will produce something distinctively American, but equivalent to what's happening there.
Slash: Thank you. What do you think SLASH is?
K.K.: The best magazine. We were so relieved the title wasn't STASH!

MELANIE/STEVE

STAY
GERMS
PUNK PANIC ON PICO!..
TO THE REST OF THE WO

MELANIE/STEVE

WHAT'S DEAF SCHOOL?

What's DEAF SCHOOL? It ain't punk, but it's not old boring rock 'n' roll either. Some people think it's one of those nostalgia bands, but that's not quite true. So let's say it's new music (first album out last summer) and leave it at that. We won't be caught labeling them and in the process making asses out of ourselves. Anyway, when we asked them how THEY would label themselves, they answered: "that's your job to label us, not ours." Sorry, pals, no labeling this month!

They're from England (Liverpool, actually), most of them come from art schools, they look kind of weird and they are all fed up with the musical status quo. So we decided to have a chat with them while they were in town and ended up talking about (of course!) punks, violence, and the new music scene in England and in the States. There are eight of them but most of the talking was done by Cliff Langer (guitar), Frank Average (bass), Reverend Max Ripple (keyboards), Eric Shark (some vocals) and Timothy Whittaker (drums). To know more about their music, read our review of their Whisky appearance on this same page.

Talking about their image, they admitted to a certain confusion existing in England, and probably here as well. Critics have mistaken them for a nostalgia outfit, partly due to the look of their first album cover, they believe. As mentioned above, they refuse to label themselves, this being "diametrically opposed to what (they) are trying to do."

They started playing because they were "bored with the same old heavy bands, which Liverpool is full of," and now they are not sure of where they fit in the new wave. They almost played with The Stranglers but that didn't work out, Timothy is a friend of ex-Pistol Matlock (who said that at the end it was just like being with The Monkees!) but mainly they are on the outside of the scene. "We look at each other anyway," is the way they described it.

Yet they all agreed that what is going on is quite exciting and that some of the bands will become very big. Cliff (the most vocal of the lot) thinks The Clash is way ahead of everybody (he carried a paper back full of Clash badges and posters!) and that the movement will reach its peak in '78. Timothy likes the Pistols but sees them more as something like a conceptual band ("McLaren comes from art school, his shop is just like an art piece") and they predict that the violence thing is about over: "It was only shock tactics to wake up everybody!" and even though they do indulge in a bit of beer spraying and spitting back at the audience themselves, they have no use for anything nastier in their act (on their first night at the Whisky, their lead singer was drunk and knocked a few props around, but has no memory of the incident!).

Asked about new american bands, they expressed interest in Television, Talking Heads and what they've heard of the Ramones. Cliff heard Mink De Ville on the radio (which he thinks only plays over-produced stuff, with "no live feeling") and thought it was Lou Reed! "England's all turned over with the new wave, but it's gonna take longer in America" was one of their grim predictions.

Two days later they were off to a country-wide tour ending in New York, where they will play the Bottom Line and CBGB's and may be looking for a producer.

Oh yes, almost forgot: "the Stones now are shit, totally unimportant!" (Timothy). And even under pressure Cliff refused to say anything about Sid Vicious " 'cause he'll beat me up when I get back!" Dangerous business, this rock 'n' roll!

Albums

IV RATTUS NORVEGICUS
THE STRANGLERS. United Artists U.K. Import

Chapter two in the invasion of the new British hoodlums, or more news from the gutter. Unlike The Damned, who wallow in the very midst of the punk scene, The Stranglers have been keeping their distance from the safety pin movement. In interviews they sometimes put down the hard-core Pistols/Clash fringe while definitely seeking a similar following, and the constant undertones of violence in their lyrics and of their attitude fit rather well with the general spirit of the new scene. I can only suppose that they judge themselves to be different on a musical level, which is obvious when one listens to the album, but might not be always to their advantage. The music is certainly slower and more studied than most other bands we just mentioned, and also a lot more ridden with various influences. When it works, there is nothing wrong with their "early-psychedelic-sixties" style of keyboard playing, and the fact that you'll catch yourself trying to remember (long time ago, wasn't it?!) that old Doors/Seeds/Electric Prunes riff only means you're not as young as you say you are! The kids that pack up the Roundhouse in Camden Town when The Stranglers play there don't care, they're not historians. Anyway, sometimes it's fucking better than the oldies mentioned, so there!

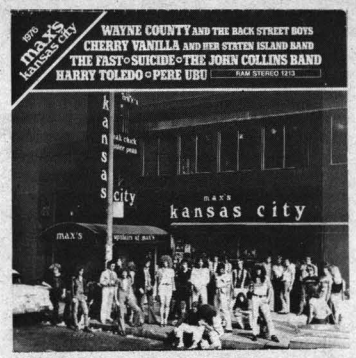
Speaking of which, "Sometimes" (which opens the album), was a hell of a single, and remains the best cut of the whole package. I'm always a sucker for songs that start with lines like "Some day I'm gonna sock your face," as I know many of you animals out there are! The tune rides along superbly, full of those lovely keyboard frolics we talked about, with a perfectly programmed solo that everyone knows by heart, everything nice and shiny and TOUGH. First rate wicked anthem.

Further along there is "Princess of the Streets," which went right away to my heart with its slow "Bad-guy-who's-been-hurt" stance ("she's the queen of the street/oh what a piece of meat"—these guys are such romantics!). The French bass player, Jean Jacques Burnel, carries the song with perfectly moronic bass runs, and I wouldn't want it any other way. "Hanging around," the last one on that side, is all right but forgettable. Just a bit too easy. No imagination is okay, but then it should be weird, or something. "Peaches'(side 2) is hot, a nasty voice rambling on about girls on beaches and ending at the end of a skewer (so them tales of punk cannibalism are true after all!), just one guitar hook throughout, simple unadulterated nastiness.

"Get a grip on yourself" is unnecessary and self indulgent (please everybody, no more songs about the rock 'n' roll business!). "Ugly" is good, especially the raw deranged style of singing. The last number is a puzzle. It's a long directionless instrumental (aren't they all?) in four parts (according to the inner sleeve, they are respectively called a] falling down, b] down in the sewer, c] tryin' to get out again, d] rats rally). I thought this kind of stuff went out with Pink Floyd and other cosmic heads, when "trippin' " into the music was a must, with everybody reporting on their visions at the end of the mental fireworks! Maybe I'm wrong. Just don't like the looks of it, that's all. Ain't much on the ears either!

There are a couple of tunes I haven't mentioned 'cause I don't feel like it. But don't get me wrong. I might have said unflattering things about parts of this album, but I like these guys, I'm glad they're around, and I'd rather be yakking about them than 99 per cent of what the record companies are churning out every day. Not as pure as The Damned (I refuse to shut up about The Damned) but in the right direction.

Kickboy Face



"MAX'S KANSAS CITY 1976"
(Wayne County and the Back Street Boys: "Max's Kansas City" / The Fast: "Boys will be boys" / Harry Toledo: "Knots" / Pere Ubu: "Final solution" / Cherry Vanilla and her Staten Island Band: "Shake your Ashes" / Wayne County: "Cream in my Jeans" / The Fast: "Wow Pow Bash Crash" / Wayne County: "Flip your wig" / John Collins Band: "The man in me" / Suicide: "Rocket U.S.A.")

Well, Wayne baby and Cherry darling, you'd better change the names of your respective bands. I ain't tying these endless pointless good times names no more, I swear! The new fashion is short vicious pointless names for bands, and as a mediocre typist I like it. Got it?!

Not that it makes any difference really, 'cause I doubt we will be mentioning much of you in the next issues. Along with almost everyone else on this record, your music is passe, cute, derivative and ultimately dumb and boring. I don't give a shit if you were last year's outrage, you suck! Cherry Vanilla, you suck ten times more than Wayne, and that's mucho sucking! I don't know if you actually could fool anyone while performing live (god knows, with the atmosphere and all the jazz, stranger things happen on Saturday nights) but on vinyl it's ridiculous. It's not even a parody, it's a cheap television take-off of our music. You guys, girls, or whatever are just sad.

The Fast are okay, at what they do but I don't like what they do. Harry Toledo is so-so, kinda interesting but then again . . . John Collins manages so much to sound like my personal enemy Ian Anderson I started believing it was a fuckin' conspiracy, got freaked for a while, real nasty like, almost belligerent 'til someone proved that it wasn't Jethro Tull, apologies to all involved. I'm sure you're alright, it's just that voice, you see . . .

Now everyone thinks I hate this record. Wrong! I love it! There happens to be two tracks (one at the end of each side) which make all the agony mentioned above worthwhile. On side 1 Pere Ubu performs "Final solution", and that, my babies, is one hell of a treat. I may be a bit demented but I know a great song when one hits me in the chest, and judging by the bruises this is a great song! You won't want to dance to it (that's pretty much old stuff, this dancing, ain't it? I mean, how long can you do the pogo for?) but you might want to die to it. Yeah, it's scary, depressing, obsessed . . . It is also unique and truly original. It's a hit, a bit twisted but a hit. And these people aren't even from New York. Which maybe will teach all of us to cut out the jive a bit, and just LISTEN. Pere Ubu, Jarry would be proud of you!

Second and last reason for hope: "Rocket U.S.A.", by two weirdos who call themselves Suicide. Let me just say it's not everyone's cup of tea, and that it might even send the weaker ones amongst you running out of the room (or the church or the graveyard) when it comes on. Nevertheless it's superb, in its avant-garde sort of way, and I just wish there was much more of this coming out everywhere. Some might even say it's gimmicky, but the same blase fuckers will probably think their own death has something gimmicky about it, when it zeroes in on them one of these days. For me, it's about as close as I want to get to the real thing.

You see, just because most important groups were already signed up and unable to give us the complete gamut of what Max's was about don't mean this album was worthless. Two songs out of ten, not bad at all in these days of hype and repackaging.

Kick Boy

"FALLING OFF THE EDGE (OF MY MIND)"
THE SEEDS
GNP-Crescendo 2107

(The wind blows your hair / The other place / She's wrong / Nobody spoils my fun / Fallin' off the edge / Pretty girl / Tripmaker / Chocolate river / Daisy Mae / Wind blows your hair (reprise) / Pushing too hard)

Allah be praised—a new Seeds album! A decade in the making(!)

Well, not exactly, but the mind rotates at the thought of collecting classic though largely unheard Seeds plastic together in such a tasty package, and the timing is precise. Let me just run it down, although it *is* uneven—the Seeds gettin' funky a la white blooze and/or Larry Gee Louis are a little embarrassing.

"The wind blows your hair", two versions here, sound better 'n ever with that great organ sound, just the optimum reverb on Sky's vocals, projects nicely. This song reeks of dried up old Southern California, late '60s. The Seeds are prime exponents of just-sit-there music, and this song and the next ("Other Place") are good examples. Perfect to watch people dance to on TV, featuring a rare sleazy sax break.

"She's wrong" is bred of Stupid Girl out of Pretty Big Mouth. Fine transistro piano solo for all of five seconds. Vocal punkish here, and on the next song too ("Nobody spoils my fun"), yes, Sky's leering and menacing were a direct function of his teen appeal ("Then she gonna put her high boots on / you know you wanna go along"). The Seeds here project a perfect vinyl counterpart to Stones' bogus leather. Always preferred vinyl myself.

"Falling off the edge (of my mind)" is a highly amusing trifle co-produced and co-written by Kim Fowley, obvious relic of the early cosmic buckaroo period. Great sound here, barroom transistor piano, double-time shuffle beat interspersed with pauses of Sky discovering himself (Ooohh . . .). Kim outdoes himself, every cliche right at home and comfortable being there. Great album title too.

"Tripmaker" should be familiar to all fanatics, got some amphetamine mixed in with that acid consciousness. Splendid pre-synthesizer effects. "Chocolate river", an out-take from Future, is a real find. Sky's vocals and bizarro gothic lyrics are probably worth the album's release alone.

The album blows out its conclusion with an especially abrasive version of "Pushing too hard", good pace here, barbaric, yelping harmonies. Want more.

Neil Norman is the man behind the presentation here, with its real front-burner material. Thanks Neil. Groovy graphics, not overtly psychedelic but honest. Neil put one over on Record World, seems they took the © 1977 seriously and mentioned that these were new tracks in their recent praise review. Do these people who control the industry have ears? Good to hear from GNP, Neil says he's gonna be waxing himself soon, and if it is anything like his immortal "Phaser Laser", want more.

Johnny Assai

"FINGERPRINCE"
THE RESIDENTS
Ralph Records

(You Yesyesyes / Home Age Conversation / Godsong / March de la Winni / Bossy / Boo Who? / Tourniquet of Roses/ You Yesyesyes again / Six Things to a Cycle)

??????????????????????????????????????
??????????????????????????????????????
??????????????????????????????????????
??????????????? . . . yes, I like it. A lot.

P.S. Strange stuff sure arrives thru the mail sometimes.

Jet Lag

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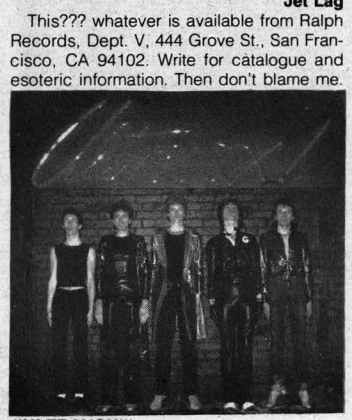


"ULTRAVOX!"
ULTRAVOX
Island Records

(Satday Night in The City of the Dead / Life at Rainbow's End / Slipaway / I want to be a machine / Wide Boys / Dangerous Rhythm / The lonely Hunter / The wild, the beautiful and the Damned / My Sex)

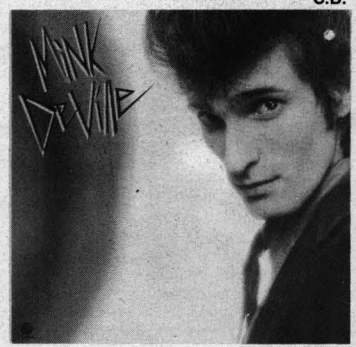
Good cover, especially inside. May be too slick and trendy, but effective.

First song ("Satday Night") good. Fast, urgent. Works. Gives hope . . . Then "Life at Rainbow's End." Hhmmm . . . singer sounds like the Quick . . . that's terrible . . . also drums too flashy, rolling and showing off . . . hope diminishes. By "Slipaway" annoyance starts. Cute pop ditty with voice even more wimpy. Nice progression for a while . . . but all too pseudo-heavy. Let me go. Countless breaks of pace, like early Roxy but no magic. Song ends like shit. "I wanna be a machine" . . . good title . . . could be a killer with a name like that . . . but no, the worst happens: Voice imitation Bowie, acoustic guitar behind . . . can't take it. Unbearable. Off with it.

Side 2 starts okay, a bit Mott, mean even. Then goes in circles with uesless theatrics and special effects. Tries too hard. "Dangerous rythm" is quite safe, that damned wispy voice negates whatever catchy hook they had there. Longest sentence so far. Thanks. "Lonely Hunter" . . . stupid title . . . vague '50-ish vocals first . . . quickly turns to English vaudeville diction . . . help . . . lead guitar particularly obnoxious . . . yawn. Last attempt called "My Sex." Experimental they become, what the fuck?! Not that bad, actually, poetry ramblings . . . aims at the sophistico crowd. John Cale not impressed I'm sure . . . when he does it it's disturbing, here only vaguely interesting. Is this it? yeah, they are finished.

Eno produced that. Bad move there. Whole thing fizzles out 'cause too many directions, imitations, influences . . . technical competence and good looks don't help much if originality and passion not there. Ultravox (why not Frigidaire or Norelco?) fails to excite or just puzzle . . . riding on thin edge of pretentious bloated crap . . . almost there . . . real careful, guys, could be good (Satday Night great possible single?) but now almost laughable . . . a total change of direction needed . . . relax, don't try so hard . . . OVER.

C.B.



"MINK DE VILLE." MINK DE VILLE
Capitol Records

(Venus of Avenue D / Little girl / One way street / Mixed up, shook up girl / Gunslinger / Can't do without it / Cadillac Walk / Spanish Stroll / She's so tough / Party Girls)

There once was a song on a rather forgettable compilation album that, the very first time I heard it, and many many times afterwards (still does, matter of fact) TOTALLY knocked me out, picked me up again, sent

me spinnin' about the room, and finally had me raving to anyone in sight: "this is it, this is it, the perfect fusion, the breakthrough . . .!" The song was "Change it comes," and the album the Atlantic "Live at CBGB's" package. And what had me foaming at the mouth wasn't even rock or white noise, it was reggae! Yeah, white reggae, by a mean looking band with a very classy vaguely fetishistic name. I never thought us whiteys would ever cut it in the reggae jungle, but it sure seemed we had. Jah be praised! Of course there were two more tunes on the album by the same band, and that was about as close to reggae as Cherry Vanilla, but I thought they're just playing jokes, anyone who can do "Change it comes" (live, too!) has more potential than Jesus Christ and Albert Einstein combined.

So now I've got this album in my hand, I've heard it a few times (conscientious boy I truly am!), I'm staring at the cover and so many nasty thoughts are popping up in my head I'm getting dizzy! (No, it's not the wine!) Fact one: I thought Mink De Ville was a band. Why then, one and only one face on the cover? What I like about most of the new wave is their apparent honesty, and their refusal to play the old superstar game. Come on, Willy (the razor face on the cover, I know he looks good, but so what?), what about the pals? You couldn't be thinking of going solo yet, could you? Fact 2: the back cover. (Relax, I'll come to the music eventually. Right now I'm just trying to see thru the hype, dig?) So many fuckin' names in the credits and thanks, it's like reading who done what on a Mad Dogs and Englishmen LP (thanks to my dog Spot for not humpin' anyone's leg during the sessions, thanks to Wicked's old lady for OD-ing only twice during the recordings . . .)!

Okay, you think I'm contradicting myself. First I say selfish, selfish Willy, then I say why so many names. The thing is, I always think of good rock in terms of a few people going crazy together, somewhere in between somebody's ego trip and a corporate venture. So this packaging bothers me, that's all. It smells of too much planning, too much dealing. Then Jack Nitzsche's name as producer does absolutely nothing to give me confidence. This mister "a finger in every pie" is too schizophrenic and too old wave to be of any use to a REALLY new band. And this is how we come to the music: it's strong, loud, varied and ultimately derivative, taking you nowhere in ten different manners. You've heard it dozens of times before, you'll hear it hundreds of times more (especially if this album gets popular on the airwaves, which I'm pretty sure it will). I won't even point out that the vocals sound like just about everybody in your old record collection and who they sound like, it's been every rock critic's favorite parlor game these past few weeks. The guy's a great imitator, or maybe not, something more like a sponge, different moods call for different styles, and he can't separate the singer from the song. He does not have a great voice, he has TEN great voices. He might be a phenomenon, but how the hell can you identify with so many personalities? The music is the same, clean effective licks and tricks borrowed left and right, all efficiently produced, all the anger and the life taken out, all so presentable. A nice FM album is what we're given. A nice FM album is not what I wanted from this apparently angry gang. Beware of nice recording deals, my little rockers, beware of old pros who will produce you so their names pop up one more time on a jacket sleeve, beware of . . .

(. . .at this point, Kickboy started frantically grabbing records off the shelf to make an obscure point, got madder and madder as we tried to reassure him, played or rather tried to play some "pure" obscure cut off some more obscure album, fell on the floor alternately cryin' and cursing, was prevented from finishing his "review" by one of the saner amongst us and was eventually carried away. Sorry Mink, he's a nice boy really [he won't like that at all!]. Good luck on your 1st album, boys!)

Forty-Fives

We have expanded our singles and EP reviews section for the simple reason that if we wait for every group to release an album before we pay attention to them, this mag will lose its iron grip on the scene and the excitement even minor releases can sometimes generate. There is a new wave, yet most record companies seem to be looking the other way, unwilling to risk those lovely dollars on unknowns. Yeah, I know, business is business. You will notice that many of the 45s mentioned are put out by small offbeat companies, and you will draw your own conclusions. In England singles are coming back 'cause everybody is broke, here because everybody (no, not everybody) is chicken and set in the old ways. If there is a new-wave bandwagon (as some seem to believe), then how come no one's jumpin'?!

EATER
(Outside view / You)
The Label, distributed by Virgin. Import

Second generation blankers (?) coming on strong and mean, with Andy Blade on vocals, Brian Chevette on guitar, Ian Woodcock on bass and the famed 14-year-old Dee Generate on drums. I call them second generation since, as opposed to such old hats as The Clash or The Damned, they have been together less than a year and are directly following in those illustrious footsteps. Actually, what they remind me more of than anything else are The Pistols, especially in the snotty spitting vocals. "Outside view" is the better song, unusually well recorded, and remarkably devoid of any kind of weakness. "You", the B side, runs a little out of breath towards the middle and eventually fails to hold your attention to the end. But the important point is that now that we all know "Anarchy in the U.K.", "Neat Neat Neat" and other little masterpieces by heart, this goes down like milk, and this is something that would have been hard to conceive of a year ago. You probably won't even wince upon the first listening, which proves you've come a long way in a short time. As for the rest of you out there in your various little time warps, this single is as good as any other to start with. In the new wave, one drop will get you as wet as another (old Chinese proverb).

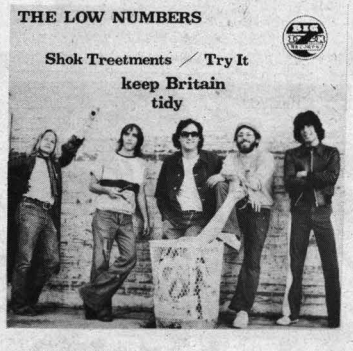
Jet Lag

BUZZOCKS "SPIRAL SCRATCH."
New Hormones Product, EP Import

(Breakdown / Time's up / Boredom / Friends of mine)

A young bunch (from 21 to 16) that seems to be right on top with the heavies. They have played with the Pistols, the Clash, Generation X, Eater and I'm sure they were nothing to be sniggered at. All songs are written by Howard Devoto (singer) and Pete Shelley (Guitar), and they all move, four fast brutal attacks on your mellowness, yet there is not a trace of heaviness or calculation, it does not try to shock or scare you, it is simply the new music, fast, furious and funny. My favorites are "Boredom," an hilarious manic complaint about today, and "Breakdown," which is a very catchy tune (somehow reminiscent of something else, but who cares!) that constantly threatens to run out of breath but the great thing about these english geezers is that it never does: whatever lethal pace they start with they stick to, the whole one minute and fifty seconds of it! And if this record just sounds like methedrine-induced chaos to you, you know what you can do with your opinion!

Kickboy-I-have-seen-the-future-of-rock-and-roll-Face



THE LOW NUMBERS
Big 7 inch records
(Shok treetments / Try it)

Indeed, it was bound to happen. Punk stuff is so easy to imitate, after all. So a bunch of smart ass pals get together in a garage (a must, the garage!), get loaded on whatever smart asses get loaded on, and wham: a punkier than thou single, complete with punkish stage names, punkish answers in the mini "interview" printed on the sleeve, punkish guitar riffs and punkish lyrics. But how do I know it's actually a comedy album, something similar to what's-his-name doing Joe Cocker (better than Joe Cocker!) on the Saturday Night Live? Easy, kids, a dead giveaway: the little mothers are SMILING on the cover pic. Now, when was the last time you saw REAL honest to goodness punks smile? Not on your bored life!! But although it's not the real thing, this single ain't bad at all. These guys have really listened to the stuff, and it almost works. "Shok treetments" (cute spelling, another hint!) starts with two or three seconds of pure early Velvets intro, enough to fool some of us (but even though you can fool some of the people . . . you know the lick . . .) and the singer starts bitching about sitting home and doing nothin' all day, you know the rest. Playing is adequate, singing above average. B side does not carry the put-on as well, mainly because of atrocious (there is atrocious and ATROCIOUS!) "yeah eh" choruses and general farting around (by then they were too loaded). Buy it anyway, and who knows? You might sneak it on at a party and watch your friends starting to whisper about your regressive tastes in music and how this "new stuff" is really hard to swallow! Some goon may even come up to you and tell you that "this stuff's alright! Not like that english shit!" I've heard stranger opinions!

hot wire my heart -- baby you're so repulsive

CRIME
Crime Music
(Hot wire my heart / Baby you're so repulsive)

Where do they come from anyway? Where have they been hiding? They look like neo-nazis perverts, and they sound like your average terminal speed-freak nightmare. Truly dangerous anti-music, even the recording engineer must have fled the room ten seconds after they started (which explains the incredibly shitty-but-effective mixing: everything is buried under everything else, and the singer's voice appears and disappears at random moments). This must be the trend that is scaring everyone right now, from big rock superstars right on down

to the secretaries at the big record companies' reception desks and the ladies that put the records in their sleeves in the basement! I mean, how do you seriously package this stuff? Somehow they did it (three cheers for Crime Music, whoever they are), and the results are awesome: if these creatures keep it up they gonna start banning rock music all over again, which means they must be doing something right. Not too sure what it is yet (it can only be taken in very small doses, you know!) but it could be the next big menace to civilization. (If some fanatic of the old order does not go after them with a .44 magnum!) Get it if you can. You can always insult me afterwards, if hearing it hasn't turned you into a drooling idiot!

Kickboy Face

ROKY ERICKSON
(Bermuda / The interpreter)
Rhino Records

Hey hey, this is too much! The burnt-out fringe is still there, folks, and although I'm not sure what this record is about I guess we should celebrate it. Remember the 13th Floor Elevator? This is their singer, Roky Erickson, and the guy hasn't come down yet! "Bermuda" is not exactly an evocation of that little island, it's more a . . . Hell, I don't know. Just listen to it: "It's just the innocent devil's triangle / It dares to come there—that's its angle / But the devil is innocent like mere / And the word you want is master, master, master / In Bermuda . . .", and it's sung to a very twisted accompaniment of fuzz guitar, wah-wahs, the whole psychedelic lot! Roky's voice is still great, but I have a strange feeling he is not totally with us. May be possessed, or something . . . (not the down-to-earth gutter fashion of being possessed popularized by Dave Vanian and Co., but an astral sort, spooky-like . . .).

Side 2 ("The interpreter") sounds okay music-wise but is so esoteric in its meaning (or lack of) that I won't even try to make guesses. Maybe one of you crazed fanatics would care to enlighten me. I am waiting.

Kick Boy

ROKY ERICKSON
(Bermuda / The interpreter) again!

It has been a long time since the demise of International Artist records, and it is to me most mysterious that Roky Erickson, lead singer and one of the driving forces behind the 13th Floor Elevator, has gone this long without recording outlets. For Erikson is no mere survivor of acid-burnout, he is an inspiration to all of us modern rokkers (in the know) who carry the title of punk or not. We are indeed fortunate that Rhino has scuffled up the plastic.

The A side ("Bermuda") is Elevatoresque, notable for its use of that gizmo (I dunno what the fuck it is, could it be Chinese Alien guitar?) we came to know and love the first time sapphire struck the grooves of "You're gonna miss me". This is however a viable, breathing 1977 record. Could Bermuda itself be as mysterious as this haunting production would make you believe—don't matter, this ain't no travelogue. Roky's unique phrasing sucks ya right down the tube.

The other side is more inscrutable yet. A lot of Roky's material is a little, well, preachy but I've never heard him wax so theatrical before. Very strong imagery—if the interpreter did hand us his car keys, would we want to get behind the wheel? Real soul-search material, of course Roky's been a philosophical kinda guy from the get-go.

This disk is only 99¢ at Rhino in Westwood and is easily worth it. It breathes as compared to, say, Beatles Live at Shea Stadium or the reunion of Crosby, Stills & Nash.

Johnny Assai

(This record and The Low Numbers' one are available from Rhino for $1.25 by mail.)

THE NERVES

THE NERVES

(Hanging on the telephone / When you find out / Give me some time / Working too hard) No label

I'm torn. These guys are doing a lot for the new scene, touring nation-wide and showcasing local groups everywhere that otherwise would have hardly no chances to be heard. They are obviously interested in pumping new blood into the land, and this is highly laudable. Only problem is, I'm not that keen on their own sound. It's quite professional, well-played and well-sung, but too much like early Beatles sounds for my liking. I know the Fab Four are enjoying some sort of revival here and there, but do we really need new groups (who obviously know how to play, no doubt) jumping in and doing their versions of these rather worn-out sounds. Some might find it pleasant and refreshing, personally I have no use for it. Come on, lads, get aboard the seventies. It can be lots of fun too, you know!

Jet Lag

THE STRANGLERS
(Choosey Susie / Peasant in the big shitty)
United Artists, Import

This is an odd one: it came as a bonus in the Stranglers' LP (the import one) and I don't kow if it's for sale as a regular single. The point is, it's goddam superb! One side was recorded live at the Nashville in London in December '76, ("peasant in the big shitty") and it is better than most of the stuff on the album. The vocals are perfectly spooky, the music is one great flurry of organ stuff (nice and cheap) that just sends thrills down me spine, the chorus repeats the word "gonorrhea" (I swear they do!) . . . all in all a great little tune.

"Choosey Susie" (the other side, also called Side A!) was done in the studio at the beginning of this year (as the album) and knocks me out. Raw one-dimensional vocals a la Morrison about stayin' up all night long and having some fun, nice early psychedelia solo and a great urgent beat to whirl and hop about the room to . . . Why, these

and hop about the room to . . . Why these songs didn't replace some others on the LP is a mystery, but it sure is a nice promotional touch to hide a surprise single in the package. Do it again. By the way, where does one still find those cylindrical contraptions used a long time ago to pile up a bunch of singles on the turntable?

Jet Lag

TALKING HEADS
Sire Records
(Love goes to building on fire)

I was hoping for their album to be out by the time this issue came out, but not yet. I can't see how they will be able to make it as interesting throughout as this song is, but I pray a lot that they do (well, in my own murky equivalent way!). 'Cause "Love goes to building on fire" is fuckin' incredible, and although there is no way for someone with my limited vocabulary to convey its beauty across (that's right, beauty is the word. Snigger all you want, you hoodlums!) I'll still say it combines a great emotional appeal with the most exciting musical precision any of the new bands have had to offer yet. I mean it GRABS you by the throat, like love, like transcended sorrow, I mean I probably could fuckin' cry if I let it! . . . There are few songs, very few songs that do it to you in that fashion. "Love's gonna walk out on me" by the Maytals was one, but this is even bet-

ter, 'cause it's sharper and cleaner. I even like the horns 'cause they're used with economy and blend perfectly with the urgent singing riding them, and because after the intense beginning you expect the song to just burst, and instead it just hardens without losing one drop of anguish, pushing thru right to the end like a shiny blade. Now I'm wondering who needs an album when there's a single like this? Just kidding, really. I can't wait.

Jet Lag

PEZBAND
Passport Records
(Baby it's cold outside / Princess Mary)

Inferior bubblegum. Worthless. I don't even hate them: They don't exist.

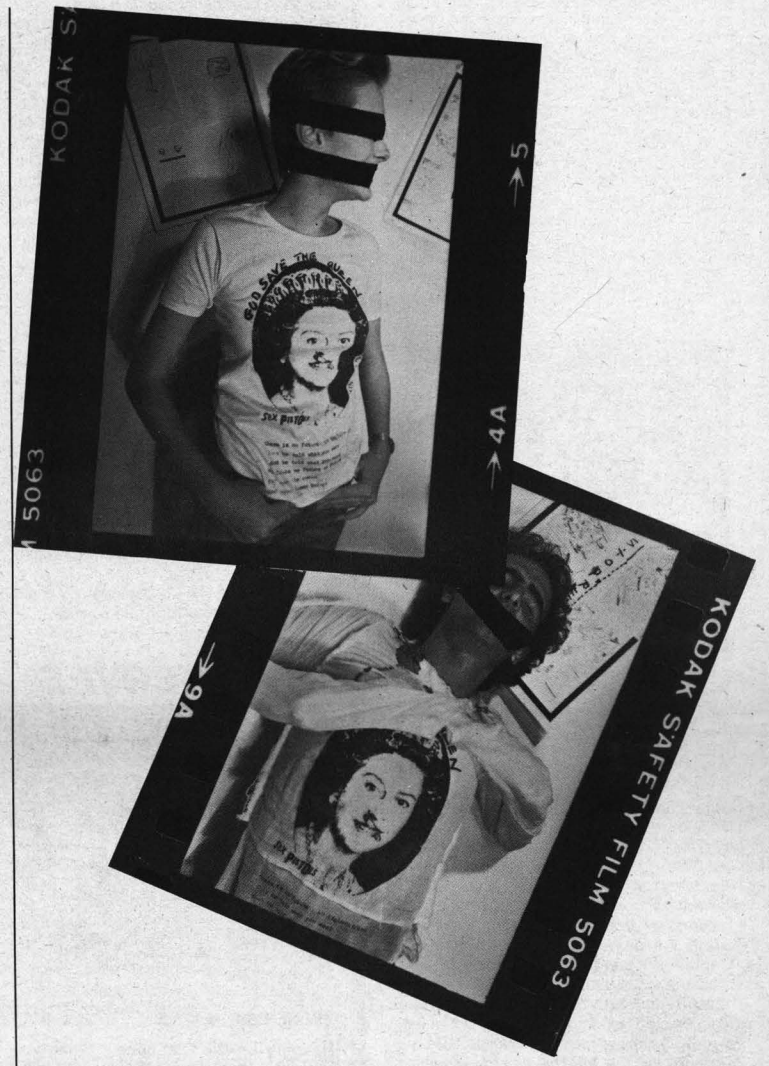
Kickboy

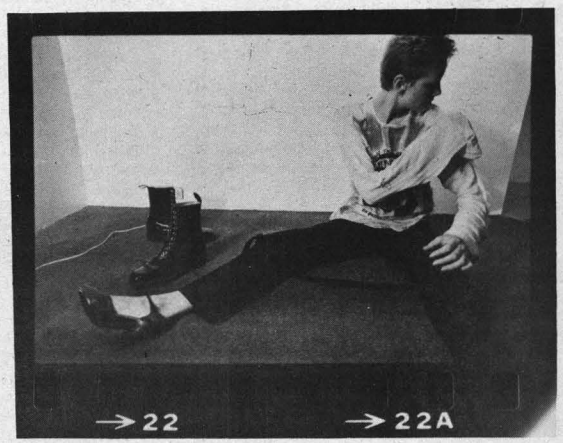
THE SEX PISTOLS
Virgin Import
(God save the queen / Did you no wrong)

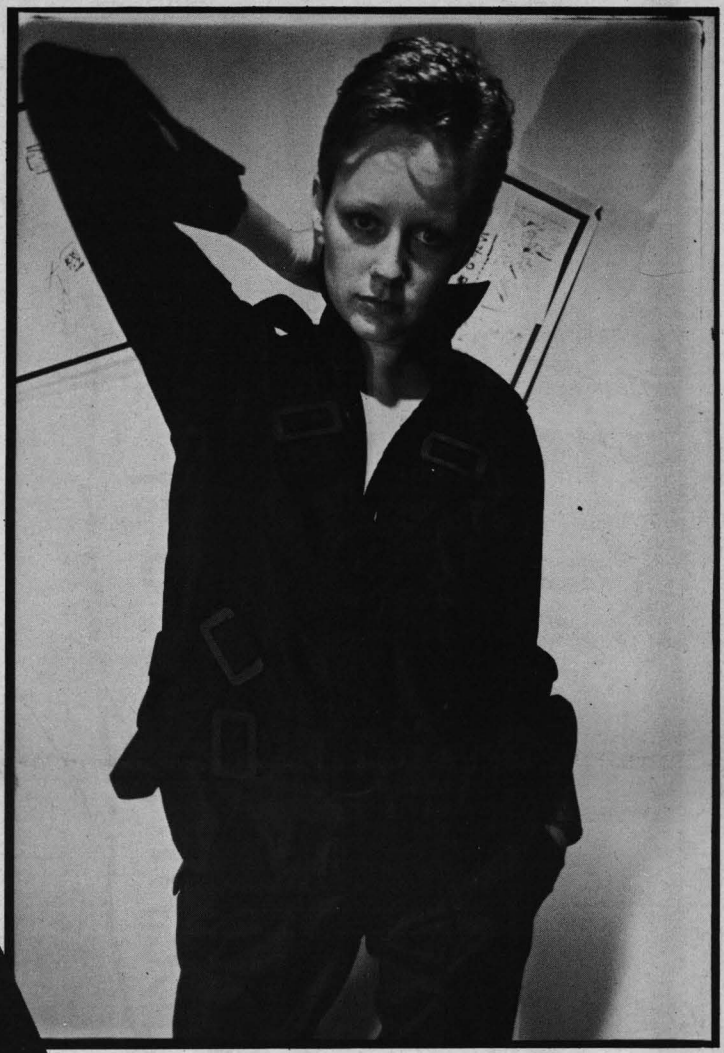
It took so long to come out, with the delays, the false alarms, the little old ladies at the record plant imposing their vetoes and what not, I almost thought this whole issue would go by without one mention of the beloved bastards! But bless Virgin Records, it's out, it's hot, it bloody well sizzles!

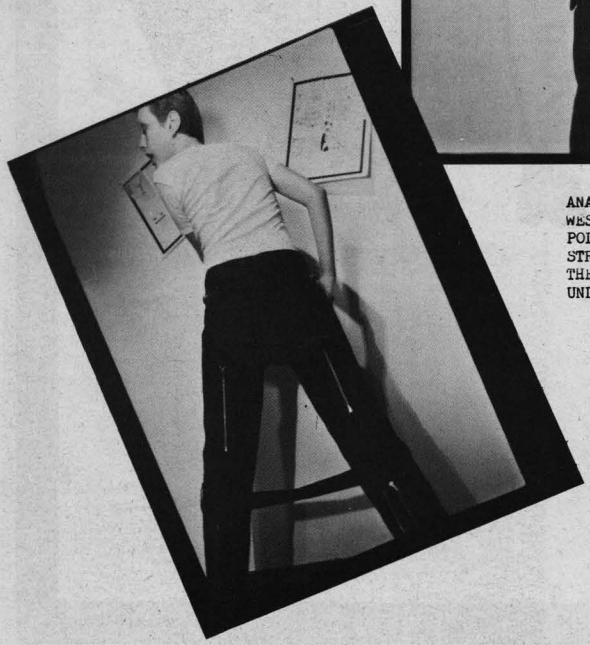
The Pistols have carried out the anarchy program one step further, they actually have picked out the first target. (The record sleeve with the cut-out newspaper words glued across old vacant's face is one of the most threatening statements the new music has produced yet.) Less catchy riff-wise than Anarchy, it is in its gut-churning mind-boggling way a much stronger statement, and manages without the slightest trace of pomposity to convey its enraged perception of England's dying "fascist regime." But I don't even think it is so much a political statement as a human one, and when Johnny screams about the old royalty head ("she ain't no human being") in a more personal manner his vision then strikes me as the most authentic, anti-death stance the movement has yet been capable of. It takes a lot of fuckin' guts to express such rage and contempt without veiling either in more subtle forms, and it proves that not one of us could do without the Pistols right now, whether we like it or not. And the jet-set princes and princesses and assorted degenerates playing at punk at Regine's club in Paris and elsewhere better watch their pearl-encrusted asses: They are next!

Kickboy Face









ANARCHY ON THE SUNSET STRIP....MALCOLM McLAREN & VIVIENNE WESTWOOD DESIGNS FROM SEDITIONARIES KINGS ROAD LONDON.... POLISHED COTTON STRAIGHT JACKETS....PATENT LEATHER KICKERS STRAPPED & ZIPPERED TROUSERS....INFAMOUS PISTOLS "GOD SAVE THE QUEEN" T-SHIRTS....AVAILABLE AT GRANNY'S....(MODELED, UNDER EXTREME DURESS, BY DOT DAMMETT & RORY JOHNSTON).....

NOT TOO HARD... JUST ENOUGH SO'S SHE PAYS ATTENTION.
THEY'RE UP THERE TEARING EVERY FUCKING THING TO PEICES, ANYONE WHO'S LANNED A FARFISA ORGAN KNOWS WHAT...
...I'M TALKING ABOUT.
HIS HAIR STANDS UP... JUST WRONG.
WHILE HE'S NEEDING HIS HANDS... AND NEEDING HIS HANDS... AND NEEDING HIS HANDS...
THE IMPACTS NOT QUITE WHAT IT OUGHTA BE
& WE'RE ALL WAITING FOR AN AUTO DEATH
RAPID VISCIOUS SLIPSTREAM HORROR.
LIKE WHEN SOMETHING'S CRUMPLED & YOU CANT ADMIT IT BUT YOU KNOW IT'S GONNA BE CRUMPLED FOR A VERY LONG TIME.
STOP PER!
AND THEY'RE STILL UP THERE ON STAGE TEARING EVERY FUCKING THING TO PEICES
SOMEONES TIED UP A GIRL WITH ROPES & BAMBOO... PAINTED ON FASHIONABLE BRUISES... FOR THE CAMERAS, SOMEONE HIT HER REALLY ONCE.
GARS-ROZZ-TOX
#

GARY PANTER

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Wreckless Eric
Motorhead
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THE NUNS

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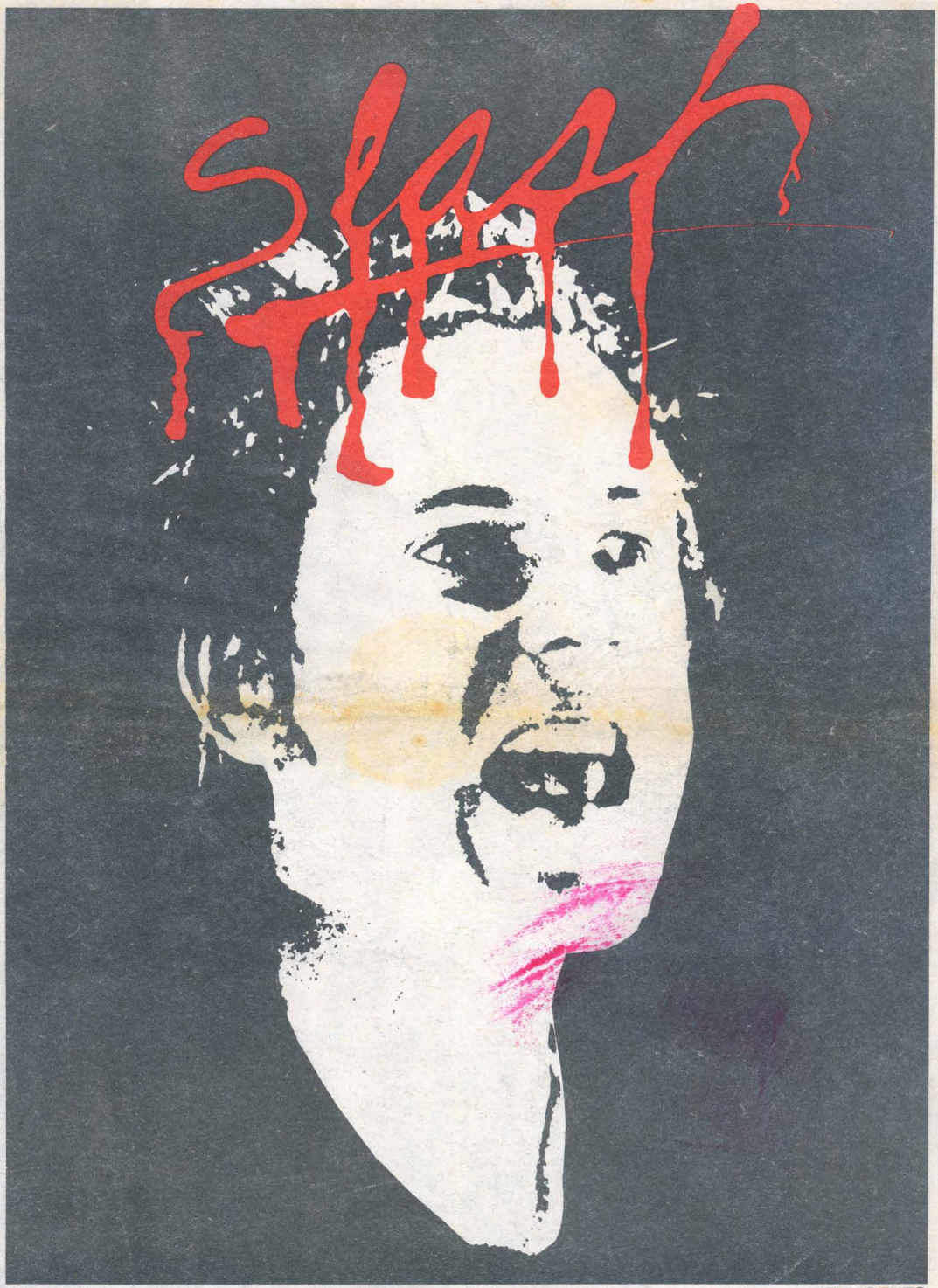
Slash



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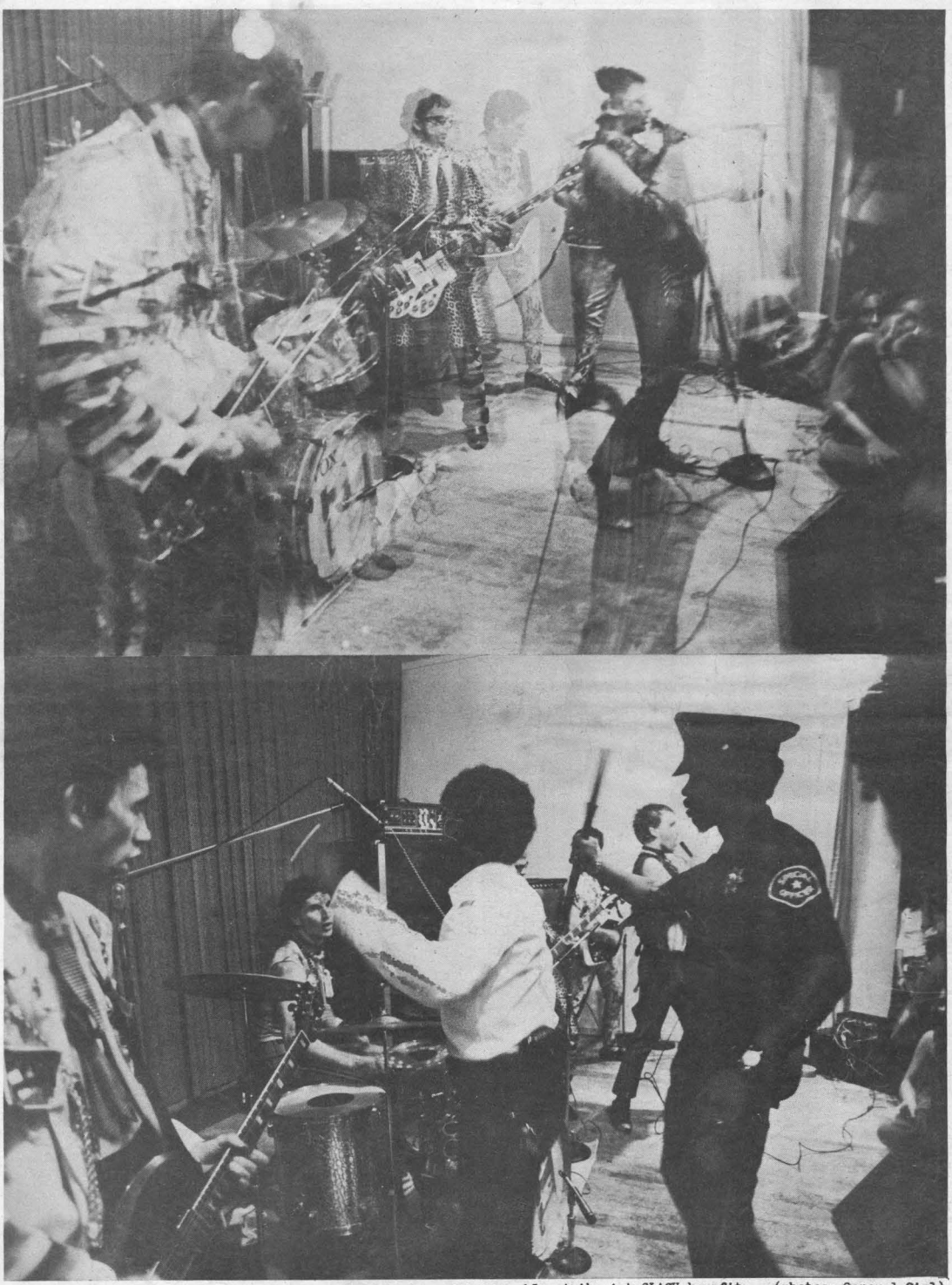

Those crazy WEIRDOS makin' trouble at the 1st SLASH benefit... (photos: General Girl)

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EDITORIAL

Your values are worthless...

There is nothing more puzzling to a generation than the emergence of a new movement which openly rejects what everyone had come to think of as reliable "new" values, well-deserved respect and appreciation from the gravebaits in charge. So the most obvious legacy the thirty-year-olds laid on the western world, the ROCK we all learned to accept as part of modern life, the ever-present background to countless activities, the money-making machine for the hip businessmen, the beat that's been going on since Cher wore Sonny's ring, the ROCK we grew up on is crumbling. The sacred sound is being mocked, ridiculed, challenged and ignored at the same time.

What surprises me most is that very few people saw it coming. Even though the music had been going in loops for half a decade (disco being to original rock 'n' roll what Brautigan is to Joyce), even though the signs of stagnation were everywhere (the rise of the studio musician as a cult figure, the more and more flagrant regression to '40s slickness and irrelevance, the countless reworkings of old standards . . .), even though what was once the very look of rebellion had progressively become the de rigueur appearance for every ambitious creep with an attache case in place of a heart, even though every fuckin' sign pointed to the exit, hardly anyone was ready for the storm. All caught unaware, with their pants off next to the waterbed and their brains still ringing with the latest Frampton lick!

Poor slobs. You laughed when the Dolls tried to disrupt the coziness of your musical tastes, you snickered when the Ramones extracted the essence of YOUR music and threw it back in your face, but now it is coming at you from all directions, and some of it is hard to swallow, ain't it?

And going around complaining about the lack of "music" in the new stuff is sad and silly: there were hundreds of articles written in the '50s explaining that Elvis' sound was NOT music, and hundreds of others in the '60s claiming the same thing about the Stones or the Pretty Things. And all they were saying, those failed prophets, was that it had little to do with the music that THEY KNEW, and therefore couldn't be music. Classical reaction. Now every Stones' riff is probably taught in music courses and is a must for any band that wants to be considered as a serious challenger.

What narrow-minded bullshit! There is no way to intelligently rasp what the real new bands are about if one insists on applying the same judgment standards we've been using in the '60s and the '70s (face it, this decade is over with—what we're witnessing are the birth pangs of '80s music). Of course THEY are not treating songs the way we got accustomed to. Of course they are not worshipping the old concepts of melody, balance (alternating fast and slow songs is such a prehistoric leftover from innocent school days . . .), of course they are not trying to look like everybody's sexual fantasy (I can't believe how long this androgynous-macho appeal actually lasted —sure shows how repressed and basically normal everyone was!).

What they are doing is brutally, forcefully shattering our ideas of what modern popular music is like, just anticipating a bit in the process. By doing so they get called monotonous (and so is reggae to millions of know-nothings), negative (because right now is the rejection stage—give them time —there is so much to do away with [!]—they have no choice but to negate), and amateurish (by which it is meant they haven't been doing the beer bar circuit for decades, paid the famous cliched "dues" —what a redneck concept!–and in the process lost every speck of arrogance and originality they may have started with!). Technical proficiency is the last quality one should admire in a music group, goddammit! The same people who are all "soul" this and "soul" that are also the maniacs who can go on for hours about the cleanliness of a guitar lick and the perfection of the beat changes.

The approach most magazines (even the pseudo advanced fanzines) use when dealing with the new wave is wrong and self-defeating for those very reasons: if it is new music, it is useless to talk of it in the same breath as the Hollywood Stars, Ted Nugent or Abba. Blaming the new wave exponents for muddy bass lines, one dimensional singing or whatever the fuck old standards they don't measure up to is like blaming Eddie Cochran for not sounding like Bing Crosby. Totally beside the point. A waste and a miss. So, if nothing else, write about the intentions of the group, the precision of their rejection, or the effects of their music on normally peaceful people . . . See what I mean? (It's about time!)

Booo on the " 'zines" for mixing covers and articles on (check out the mess!) KISS, CLASH, TUBES, SPRINGSTEEN, PISTOLS, TODD RUNDGREN, BLONDIE, RICHARD HELL and so forth. They are muddling up everything and making it hard for the uninformed fans to know diamonds from shit. You cannot pretend for a second these groups or individuals have any artistic goals in common, no matter how wide an audience you're trying to reach and unify. The old wave and the new one are like oil and water: they do not mix.

So what the hell does it all mean? Don't really know. Means a big definite NO to a lot of things we had taken for granted, which is good. It means a big question mark as far as future directions, and that's probably even better. It's alive. So are we. If the new noise hadn't happened, rock would have died peacefully of old age in a couple of years anyway. It just got stabbed a bit before its time. Let it bleed (to death)!

Local Shit

Screamers turned down an offer to play in Lou Adler's new production, a Cheech and Chong movie titled "The Adventures of Pedro and the Man." According to Gear, no one from Adler's office coule exactly tell them what, if anything, the hippie comics had to do with new wave. Not wanting to find themselves in the middle of a plot ridiculing the new music or its followers, they declined "the chance of a lifetime"! The Dils took that chance, and came away with (to say the least) mixed feelings about it (see interview). The Germs and other local combos also did. One last word about this business: what's the big idea of luring naive kids into "dressing punk" and making them wait for hours in a fuckin' parking lot with nothing to do? Don't believe all the "friendly" we're-with-you shit you hear, pals. Usually means somebody somewhere is pulling a fast one, you know . . .

Zeroes single ("Don't push me around") out August 1st on Bomp Records. Also on Bomp Records will be the highlights of Kim Fowley new wave fiesta at the Whisky, yes, friends, one LP featuring our favorite maniacs! . . .

Back at The Starwood, Backstage Pass gave a bit of the old take-this-you-creep (that's right, physically—we take our music seriously, sometimes) to a certain Michele Myer who apparently threw eggs at them while they were on stage . . .

Weirdos' deal with a certain Dream Records label is off, to almost everyone's relief (never trust an outfit that made all its money on disco!). There must be better things waiting for them (see further) . . .

Now a shocker: Eddie Darkstar, drummer of the late Motels (or ex-drummer of The Motels) outslashed SLASH during Kickboy's harmless little birthday gathering after the last Whisky night by REALLY slashing his wrists and drenching our friendly host with his spare hemoglobin. The pull of the new wave is too much for Eddie, who feels an almost morbid fascination towards a music movement that doesn't appear to care very much about old musical values. Stick to safety pins, Eddie. There are many new groups that could use your drumming!

The Dils played at Mabuhays on the 8th and 9th, got a reception, even though they played the first night completely out of tune . . . the Screamers and Backstage Pass will play there later in July (the 28th) . . . pubic service announcement: whoever ripped off Farrah Faucet Minor's mini-skirt from the Hyatt House better fuckin' give it back (it was the clear plastic one) . . .

Congratulations to Chris Ashford who just released the first Germs singles on his What? label. Definitely a work of love and dedication. You see, out there, anybody can do it. The guy works for Peaches Records, and he is no richer than you or me. And yes, the SLASH benefit concert at Larchmont Hall with Zeros, Weirdos and Devo film was a success. Well, we actually made 77 dollars (go ahead, all you capitalists, snicker!) but it was nice to see who our real friends are. Zeros and Weirdos did tremendous sets (in spite of security officers, hall owner and rent-a-PA man trying to pull the plug on the Weirdos), everyone did the pogo on the chairs, Gear carried a threatening brick in his hand throughout the night 'til one of the security men couldn't take the suspense, Sun Light (formerly known as Sky Saxon—that's right, THE Sky Saxon) walked around checking out the kiddies, Seymour Stein of Sire Records was there checking out what the Weirdo madness was about, Rodney did some of the hosting, Kickboy collapsed in Nicky Beat's drum kit while shoving undesirables off the stage, girls slapped each other (who were THEY?), just another wholesome evening in the new fashion. Loads of thanks to Suzy and Greg Shaw for their support (financial and otherwise) on that special night. And soon, SLASH presents . . . (see you there).

Last minute: No room for letters this issue —means lots of them next month—keep writing.

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COVER: Johnny (razorface) Rotten SLASH-MATE OF THE MONTH

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"There is no good in a system unless there is an anti-system which is threatening it all the time ... youth can be a watchdog, it's the voice of discontent ... what's the point in making pretty little noises, you might as well use a vibrator."

PUNK ROCK GOES TV

On Saturday the 25th, at 11:30 PM, NBC finally released its "in depth" documentary of the English punk scene. It featured some of the better known figures of the movement (All of the Damned, The Pistols, Jake Riviera, Malcolm McLaren, Mark P., The Hot Rods, Bill Grundy [!]) and numerous portraits of the Queen with pins and tattoos. The music selection was at best sketchy, and the American commentator was about as sympathetic as if he had been doing a report on a bunch of retired SS officers. I mean the guy sounded alternatively like a documentary on the mating habits of sharks and a paternalistic but stern judge about to send you to the slammer (for your own good) 'til you're forty-five. There was lots of footage of pogo dancing, fixtures ripping, contract signing and picture posing, all laced with that damned voice explaining and interpreting everything for us peasants in its pseudo objective manner. It didn't really matter 'cause we all know better, and all the attempts at proving the movement is as dishonest as the people covering it for the big corporations were futile and pathetic. But thank you, NBC, for the visuals. Next time, just find somebody with it, to yak along.

modern boy modern y modern boy moder rn boy modern boy modern boy modern

Welcome to the re-birth of slandering, vicious, totally subjective, three dot (. . .), yellow journalism . . . Given complete editorial control over this column I intend to enjoy full and unequal use of the First Amendment . . . A threat? Just step outta line & I'll smear your ass all over this mag (this goes for you too, Kickboy!), I'm gonna show no mercy & I can't be bought off!!!

FRONTAL ATTACK: After looking over a copy of Psyclone, S.F.'s "New Wave" newspaper, I agree when they call themselves "the paper that money can't buy" . . . can't buy writers . . . can't buy ideas . . . besides, they've been bought and sold already . . . running articles on Genesis & Bad Company . . . c'mon, you stupid shits, who are you kidding . . .

BACKDOOR BOOGIE: As long as I'm knocking the punkpress, let me drop a threat in someone's lap . . . If I ever hear another foul word from that fat jerk who has something to do with Backdoor Man (you know, the mag that had Kiss on the cover last month), I'm gonna coldcock the sucker . . . you know who you are (the one who wears the chi-chi St. Tropez sunglasses) . . .

PUN ROCK: With three nights of "new wave at the Whisky" under my belt, just the thought of anything presented by Kim Fowley makes me laugh . . . He has about as little credibility as he does insight . . . it pisses me off at how many times this vampire has wormed his way into something young & raw, and then sucked it dry with his own special brand of exploitation . . . you kids are too smart for that shit . . .

CALLING ALL SLASHERS!

Alright, you pinheads, would-be pinheads and assorted fringies: in last ish we discreetly mentioned something 'bout subscriptions. Obviously discretion and subtlety don't work, and if we had counted on your fivers to finance this number 3 you'd be holding a fuckin' xerox sheet in your hands right now, with one blank side! NOBODY behind the scenes is pourin' their unused money into SLASH, and we are ALL working on various demeaning jobs and are hardly able to pay the rent, and the fuckin' least you can do is help us put this paper out! And think of the joy of gettin' up to face another borin' day but instead you can find a new sizzlin' copy of SLASH in the mailbox, get back to bed, call in sick at work and read it from cover to cover. And nothin' prevents you from buyin' another one from your fave record store and layin' it on your grandma! All this goes for all the effete watchers out there who are just mildly interested in the new wave, the curious but not committed, the weekend punx and the sometimes noiz-nuts. Subscribe, you nurds, and see how many hilarious conversations you can start at parties. Astonish your friends and relatives with your deep knowledge of the current madness, leave it on the waiting room table of your dentist, quote it at board meetings. And get it for that man or woman in your life who has everything. 'Cause right now, we got nothing!

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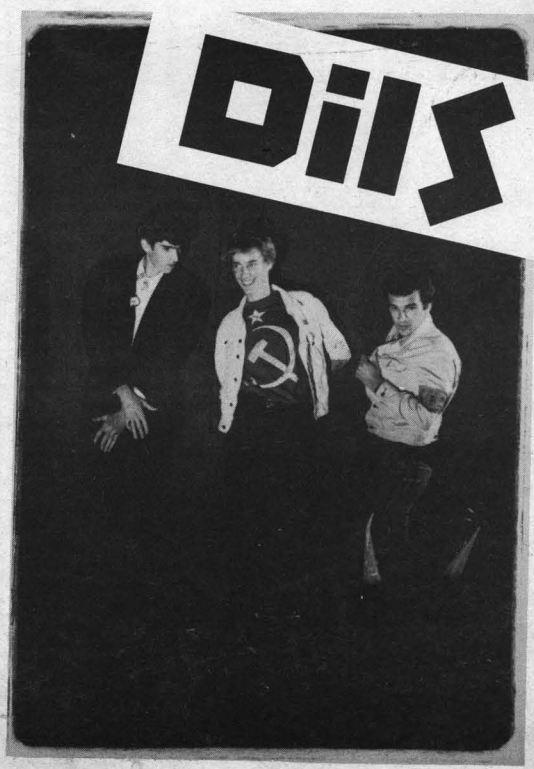

The Dils are Chip Kinman on guitar, Tony Kinman on bass and Andre Algover on drums.

Slash: Tell us about the Cheech and Chong movie.

Chip: On "Rodney on the Rocks," Rodney said, "Here's the Dils' big chance!" so Peter (Peter Urban, the Dils' manager) called us. We went down there and just stood around . . . There was supposed to be a charcoal burner full of pot burning in a parking lot, typical Cheech and Chong stuff, and the audience was supposed to be out of it, not getting off on the music, and it's supposed to piss us off, which we're good at! So we have to get angry and storm off the stage, and that's what we did. They probably edit us out anyway!

Slash: Were you pissed off that night at The Whisky? (Second night of Fowley's new wave concerts.—Ed.)

Tony: With the Quick's drummer? Yeah, 'cause I really hate the Quick. I don't even know what he was doing there . . . You expect that, especially in the new wave, 'cause the whole thing is bringing the audience into it. People have to realize that if you gonna come into it you gonna get it back! After we played, he came up and said "I'm sorry" and stuff. He also said, "Phast Phreddie made me do it!"

Chip: It's kind of a drag when you're playing, and you have a little core of people going "fuck you!" . . . it's like if we're walking down the street and somebody comes up and says you're an asshole, we're not gonna go "yeah"!

Tony: I never *try* to antagonize any other band.

Chip: But you learn not to eat shit on the stage!

Slash: How long have you been together?

Chip: With our present drummer, Andre, who used to be our road manager, six or seven weeks.

Slash: But you already were a band before?

Tony: We had a lead singer, and a different drummer. The lead singer did most of the singing. He was kind of the center of it on stage, and I guess he thought he was, off-stage, too! Chip and I have always been together, at first we were The Negroes, then The Duds. Now we're doing all new songs.

Slash: Is this the final set-up?

Chip: Yeah, I'm not going through it again!

Slash: Do you feel confident with the band now?

Tony: I think we have to work on more material. That was the last gig we had with this band.

Chip: We learn songs really quick though. And short sets are "in," but not as short as ours!

Tony: The Damned played 27 minutes . . .

Slash: And it worked.

Chip: After a really good new wave concert, you feel you've seen two hours. If you're in the front, that is . . . But talking about our material, we have a bunch of new songs: "I Hate the Rich," "God is a Korean," "You're Not Blank" . . .

Slash: If there is a new wave in this country, how do you see it developing?

Chip: To quote David Bowie on the Dinah Shore show when asked "what is punk?," he replied, "Something happening in England." There *is* somethin' going on here, but it's not that serious. It's more musical, and like an excuse, outrage for the sake of outrage, not so social.

Tony: The vast majority of youth has not much to be pissed about. They have a lot to be bored with, but most American kids don't translate the boredom into political thoughts. They translate it into drugs. Either that or they're college students, they'll write for four years and then get a job with IBM.

Slash: You don't see the two blending and becoming one?

Tony: English new wave will influence a lot of American bands on the surface, but I don't think they'll blend that much. People here are not pissed, just bored.

Slash: But YOU ARE! So where do you fit?

Andre: The thing is, where do ***they*** fit?! Where do they get off being halfway to Hollywood stardom?

Slash: What is your political stand as a group?

Tony: I'd call myself a socialist . . .

Chip: This hammer and sickle T-shirt I'm wearing is just a threat. Swastikas are Marlene Dietrich fun, but hammer and sickle, that's communism in your backyard!

Slash: How does your stance relate to your music? What do you reject in the old music?

Tony: I reject the star concept, the dressing-room scene, the idea that you have to go in there and put something different on for the stage. As if we had to put on our "Dils outfits"! That's a bunch of shit! All this is an unfortunate part of music.

Chip: The roadie scene also.

Slash: What about the groupie scene?

Tony: Not much contact with that!

Chip: It's a form of worship, and I don't

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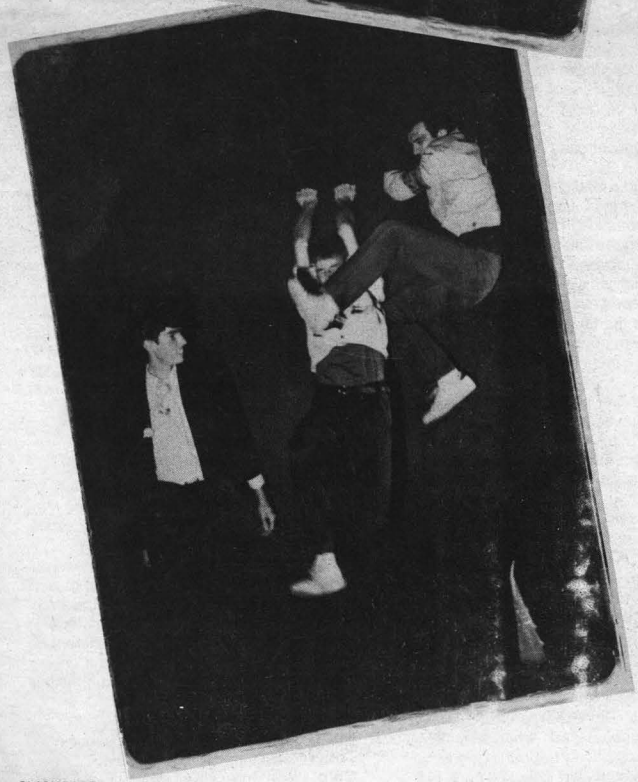

believe in worship.
Slash: What about fans?
Chip: The more the merrier!
Tony: As long as they don't give you the "you give me so much" bit.
Chip: "You set my karma on fire"!
Slash: (After much laughter at this one). Who said that to you?
Chip: Not to us. Some 16-year-old who was being asked about Led Zeppelin . . .
Slash: If an audience likes you, do you think it is your music or your stance they are reacting to?
Chip: Well, I don't think anyone can really hear what we're saying . . . it's America, and like Greg Shaw told us: "You're too serious."
Andre: People who do like us are really into punk. They can sense what we're doing.
Slash: Do you like the use of the term "new wave"?
Andre: Very much.
Chip: Better than punk.
Tony: You have the N.Y. bands denying the punk label . . .
Chip: . . . and the L.A. bands saying "we're punk, we're punk"!
Tony: . . . and Television not wanting to be associated with punk and refusing to play with The Damned, probably not wanting to be blown off stage and exposed as literary wimps!
Chip: And what it is with terms is that it's really great to ***belong***, a good feeling, like we're a movement, waaoohh, here we go, all 40 of us!
Slash: Suppose you do get the big offer, the album, the works, would it change the way you think at the present?
Tony: The only thing money could do to us is give us more power to reach a wider audience. But I wouldn't ride in a limousine. Anybody who could ride in a limousine without being embarrassed, I think there's something wrong with them.
Andre: Especially with the new wave, it's just anti . . . the whole thing is bringing the music back to youth and getting away from the people who've grown old.
Chip: Like Crosby, Stills and Nash getting back together every year . . .
Andre: When I see young people picking up "Deja Vu," I wanna go up to them and say, "Forget it, you're young!!" . . . everybody picked up on them when it was new, it grabbed everybody and now it's dragging them down.
Chip: The success of new wave in Britain will be the end of rock 'n' roll. It should be.
Andre: It's the logical end.
Chip: Not that the Rolling Stones are gonna say, "OK, you're young, you're better." We're gonna have to blow them off the stage, we're gonna have to blow them up, we're gonna have to get rid of them. They are not gonna move over.
Slash: Don'g you think it was dying anyway?
Tony: Rock?
Slash: Yeah, mainstream.
Tony: Elvis didn't die. He was killed.
Slash: How was Elvis killed?
Tony: If the Beatles hadn't come along, he'd still be around.
Slash: Is Linda Ronstadt going to do a version of "Anarchy"?
Tony: She'll get around to it! You gonna

see a lot of people taking on the image . . . the Hollywood Stars do.

Chip: With a lead singer named Marc Anthony?!!

Slash: What did you think of Low Budget doing "Anarchy" at the Whisky?

Chip: I felt sorry for them.

Tony: But it's true, these young bands are going to have to play those things.

Slash: Can any old bands still be "new"? Like Bowie; should he be "killed"?

Tony: When you listen to "Low," you realize people like Bowie are going into something else anyway. Bowie does not play guitar anymore. The Clash and the Pistols can do that better, but they can't do "Low." They don't want to anyway. Bowie, Eno, Fripp, people like that are in their own category. They're not threatened.

Chip: After "Young Americans," Bowie had the disco market on his hands. He said, "Fuck it!" and put out "Low." Just the opposite of what Roxy Music did—they started with "Low" and ended with "Young Americans."

Slash: Who do you like?

Chip: The Clash.

Slash: Local bands?

Tony: The Zeros, the Nuns . . .

Slash: Weirdos?

Chip: They're good fun. I used to love the Ramones . . . the second album is complete shit . . . all the synthesizer stuff . . . you can't put too many arrangements on three chords, so the album is uncohesive.

Tony: The Ramones' dumb image was fun at first, but now it's passe.

Slash: Stooges, MC5?

Tony: I appreciate their sentiments. I even appreciate the Stooges' music, but a lot of the psychedelic stuff does not hold up. Psychedelia was an embarrassment.

Slash: The Dolls?

Tony: One of my top bands!

Slash: Richard Hell?

Chip: I liked Richard Hell before I even heard him! He looks so bizarre . . .

Tony: They all look like him now . . . the clothes, the hair, the glasses . . .

Chip: The blank stare . . .

Slash: Last on the list: Eddie and the Hot Rods?

Tony: Don't like them. I'm amazed at how laid back their sound is.

Andre: Comes on like surf music!

Chip: Dr. Feelgood did it a lot better.

Tony: But they looked good on TV.

(The conversation drifts to the NBC punk special, and then to money.)

Chip: We're not making money now. I still work 40 hours a week. I'd like money so I could use those 40 hours for the band. None of us are ever gonna pull money out of this, not enough to be rich anyway, and none of us really give a fuck!

Slash: How would you describe The Dils and their music?

Chip: The Dils are no copycats. The Dils have never been a heavy-metal band, never a top-40 band. They play what they play, it happens to be in the right time in the right place.

Slash: Why are you called The Dils?

Chip: Because it does not mean anything, it's really nothing. That's why it's perfect.

GRANNY'S of LONDON

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LONDONS BURNING

Foreign correspondent Chris Jelley will not be letter-bombed for a while, having (just in time) come thru with exciting reports and tidbits from the funny little island. We're keepin' an eye on you, Marmalade, and on that beer-soaking Slime writer of yours! Fuzzy pics by Ian Alexander.

LIMEY NEWS

Pretty Vacant is to be the new **Sex Pistols** single.

French group **Stinky Toys** have been signed by Polydor. Une single will be released soon.

A punk festival has been planned for Windsor (site of Her Majesty's little castle in the country) this summer. Don't spread this around too much as it is not being made public until the last minute to keep outcries to a minimum.

God Save The Queen reached number one in most charts here despite total ban on radio and TV. Good to see **The Pistols** making a special effort for Jubilee Year.

They also plan to make a full-length feature film written by satirical/bad taste cockney writer Johnny Speight.

Johnny Rotten and drummer **Paul Cook** have both been savagely beaten up recently. **Johnny** got away with a mere razor slash across the face, while **Paul** needed fifteen stitches for a head injury. The attackers were, it seems, gangs of men in their 30s—not teenagers, hippies or punks. Favorite theory here is that they were Royalists outraged by the success of **The Pistols**' platter. London is burning, folks. Looks like this is gonna be the summer of hate alright.

THE SAINTS
At the Nashville, London.
Monday, 20th June.

The place was so packed only Elastic Man could have squeezed in at the time I arrived. Still, my name isn't Slime for nothing. I oozed in.

Fullers ale on tap and the Saints onstage. What a combination! They were hot on record but live they set the place on fire. In stance they look like Australia's answer to the Ramones—but tougher. Not a bleedin' safety pin or chain amongst 'em (the audience had a monopoly there). The hard-core loved 'em and so did I. I've heard lions roar quieter than vocalist Chris Bailey. The Saints came on like a tidal wave. All high quality stuff, mostly taken from their album (I'm) Stranded. It reminded me of the Stones when they were young. If Mick Jagger was alive today he'd sing like this.

A great evening (that Fullers E.S.B. slips down a treat. Cheers, Kickboy) and a great band. Definitely not for namby-pambies.

THE CORTINAS/JOHNNY MOPED AND THE MORONS
At the Marquee, London
Saturday, 18th June

I arrived late at the black hole of Soho and missed Johnny Moped and The Morons' entire set. Pity really, as The Damned told Slash they were their favorite London band.

The Cortinas—black pants, black shirts. Méan and moody. Schoolboy punks. Singer in donkey jacket with Henry Ford's logo on the back (their only concession to humor). Real kickspitters, these blokes—absolutely no mercy.

Lobotomy-panic onstage, hardcore pogo on the dancefloor. The Cortinas play hard. Spasm madness spread thru the crowd. The club was shaking. A bloke next to me caught a flying beer glass on the head. It was raining beer! The Cortinas played on. AND ON. Not much variation but bleedin' strong. At the end of the set I staggered home. (My ears crawled in an hour later.)

Harry (do not disturb) Slime

Step n Brew
SHOPS

ZEROS

The Zeros are Javier Escovedo, Hector Penalose, Robert Lopez and Karton "Baba" Chenelle. Baba was absent from the interview.

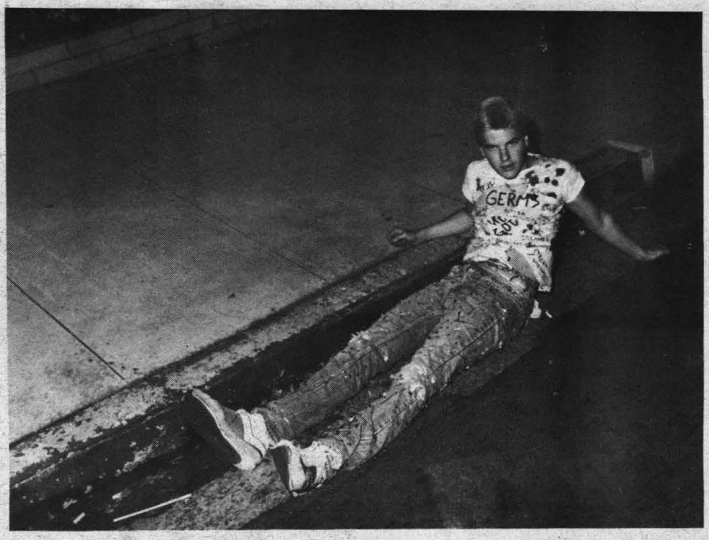
Slash: When people talk about you, some compare you to The Ramones . . .
Zeros: Yeah, the "Mexican Ramones"!
Slash: What does that do for you?
Zeros: It makes me sick. We don't believe we sound like The Ramones. WE have leads!
Slash: How long have the Zeros existed?
Zeros: Two or three months. Not really . . . we've known each other for a year. We had another band, The Mainstream Brats. We were punk way before . . .
Slash: How old are you?
Zeros: Nineteen (Javier), 17 (Hector), 17 (Robert) . . . our drummer is 16.
Slash: Do you perform your own songs?
Zeros: Yeah, all our own songs.
Slash: Who writes them?
Zeros: (Javier) I write most.
Slash: Give us some titles.
Zeros: "Don't Push Me Around," "Wimp," "Cosmetic Couple," "Mainstreet Brat," "Girls Girls," "Eat Your Heart Out" . . . We have about 20 songs, but we don't play them all.
Slash: Your home base is San Diego, right?
Zeros: Yeah, and Tijuana!
Slash: You played there?
Zeros: We played in Rosarita, a bit down south.
Slash: How was the response?
Zeros: First time they went nuts. Second time was terrible.
Slash: Are you all from Mexican background?
Zeros: Yeah, I guess . . .
Slash: Has it influenced your music?
Zeros: (All) NO. 'Cause how Mexican are we? We don't live in Mexico, we don't speak Spanish . . .
Slash: What kind of scene is it down in San Diego?
Zeros: Dead! Sailors, that's all . . . We don't play San Diego anyway. But there is a little record store called "Scratching the Surface" that carries punk records that may start something this summer.
Slash: Is it bad for the group being based down there?
Zeros: It's a disadvantage and an advantage. Disadvantage because we can't be part of everything that happens, and an advantage because we don't know what's going on so we use our imagination, and we can't copy anyone.
Slash: What do you think of L.A.?
Zeros: There's more to do in San Diego!
Slash: But will you eventually be forced to move to L.A.?
Zeros: We probably will. It's too long on the freeway . . .
Slash: You have a single coming out on Bomp?
Zeros: "Don't push me around," in August. It's already been recorded. Then there is a second one coming out some time, and we'll be on the Bomp LP of the three new wave nights at the Whisky. The cut will be "Eat your heart out."
Slash: Are you a punk band?
Zeros: I think we can last longer than other outrageous bands. We're more of a rock 'n' roll band.
Slash: What does punk mean to you?
Zeros: It's describing what you feel when you're young . . . Music had to change sooner or later.
Slash: Why do you name yourselves The Zeros?
Zeros: (Javier, pointing to Hector) I said hero and he said zero! I thought about Lester Bangs' "Don't want to be a hero, just wanna be a zero" . . . it's also a bit sci-fi. It's universal.
Slash: After playing those Whisky nights, what other bands do you feel close to, in attitude or in music?
Zeros: The Weirdos. Every time we play, it's with them.
Slash: If you were not the Zeros, which band would you be proud to be?
Zeros: The Dils! (Hector)
—The Weirdos! (Robert)
—I really like The Dils (Javier) . . . like the Clash gets all this press talk, but The Dils could be also very big if they had somebody with a lot of money behind them. Somebody really pushing.
Slash: Do you have a manager?
Zeros: No. Anyone wants to? Someone in L.A. would help.
Slash: You broke up once. What happened?
Zeros: It was my fault. (Hector)
—He was obsessed with the punk image (Javier)
—I was hard to get along with. (Hector)
—Very! (Javier and Robert)
—But he's cooled down a lot now. (Javier)
—It set everything back for us for a long time. (Hector)
Slash: You became a little Sid Vicious?
Zeros: Yeah, and Javier was Tom Verlaine!
—He was like those L.A. punks who became punk when they heard of The Pistols. (Javier) But I knew he was not such a hard guy . . .
—It went to my head. (Hector) I tried to start a band by myself, but there was no one to play!
Slash: So you got back together out of necessity?
Zeros: Yeah, only four of us there! We're an island.
Slash: Does the fact that you are and look very young . . .
Zeros: NO!
Slash: . . . make it hard for people to take you seriously?
Zeros: No.
Slash: What about when you're booked somewhere in a club, do they treat you lightly?
Zeros: Yeah. Sometimes they think they can take advantage . . . At the Whisky, we had agreed to play for 45 minutes. So we played 43 minutes, and they were bitching about those two minutes! Some guy with a beard was pushing us around too much . . . Greg Shaw tried to help, though.
Slash: Javier's brother is with The Nuns, right?
Zeros: Right. I think they're good. (Javier) It gave me an incentive to write.
Slash: In the L.A. Times, they write about your "lean, hungry barrio look" . . . (Mucho laughter and giggles)
Slash: . . . are you guys starving?
Zeros: No, we all got cars . . . we're just too busy to eat. We've never lived in a barrio. We're no low riders.
Slash: Are you still going to school?
Zeros: Yes, except Javier. He dropped out and he's a dishwasher.
Slash: When did you quit?
Zeros: (Javier) Ninth grade . . . went back in tenth but I never got a diploma.
Slash: You dress differently from other new wave bands. Is this a conscious effort?
Zeros: It just looks cool. I like the '60s. The greatest cover is the Standels' "Sometimes good guys don't wear white." That really killed me.
Slash: How do your friends and relatives relate to this scene?
Zeros: It's really hard to explain it to them. My mother saw Captain Sensible's picture in Backdoor Man and said: "What's this guy doing . . .!!??" When she saw the NBC program she asked me, "Do they do that at the Whisky?"
Slash: What makes you mad?
Zeros: I hate people using that punk thing, billing themselves as new wave when they're not. It makes me sick. We have a song called "Wimp" about these people, the phony punks. If you haven't lived it, well . . .
Slash: What albums were you buying two years ago?
Zeros: The Dolls.
Slash: If in two years you don't have an album out . . .?
Zeros: We'll be worried!
Slash: Anything we haven't covered in this conversation?
Zeros: Yes: every time we come up here to play, we need a place to stay.

GERMS

SLASH CATCHES THE GERMS (over vodka milkshakes at Powerburger and in their Hollywood apartment)

The Germs (Bobby Pyn on vocals, Lorna Doom on bass and vocals, Pat Smear on guitar and Donna Rhia on drums) have played three concerts in the area, have a horrible reputation and have just released a single on What? Records.

Slash: How did the Germs start?
Pat: Four months ago, we went into a record store, and some lady said she wanted to be a manager, so we said we'd start a group. We walked down to Uni High School, and picked up three girls and we called it Sophistifuck and the Revlon Spam Queens, and then all the girls quit, but we found Lorna and Donna.
Slash: Why the new name The Germs?
Pat: Because we make people sick, isn't that obvious?
Bobby: Because we wanted to have T-shirts printed, and we didn't have enough money for that long of a name. That's the truth.
Slash: What do you think of the new wave?
Pat: I think it sucks!
Bobby: I got one yesterday.
Pat: I think The Pistols suck.
Slash: The Damned?
Bobby: I think they're good for 13-year-olds.
Pat: I think Steve Hufsteter is gorgeous. He's my idol.
Slash: How did you get your hair so blue?
Bobby: I had polio when I was a baby.
Slash: How did you get your look?
Donna: Lorna always looked that way.
Lorna: It took Donna years to look like that.
Slash: Give us some titles of songs you do.
Bobby: We don't have any . . . umm, "Sex Boy," Death of an Immortal," "Jet Scream," which is about a guy who steals an airplane and it crashes in Lithuania, umm . . . "Teenage Clone," and our single which is "Forming," about breaking down the government and forming our own.
Slash: What are your fave bands?
Pat: Ted Nugent, Procol Harum, Grateful Dead, and what's that other one I really like? . . . Jo Jo Gunne!
Donna: The Weirdos.
Slash: Who writes the songs?
Bobby: Me, well, I wrote most of them.
Slash: Where do you get your ideas?
Bobby: From other people's songs!
Pat: Where else?!
Slash: What does your stage act involve?
Bobby: It ain't an act. It involves about three bottles of champagne and some quaaludes . . . but we don't believe in drugs . . . I used to sniff spot-remover, the 29-cent kind—it tastes like candy, and you put it on a sock and . . . (gasps) and you walk down the street and get this thing called ***the flingin' zingers***, where it looks like little meteors are coming at you.
Slash: Tell us about your fans.
Pat: We don't have any. Well, there are these surfers, Lorna's groupies, that follow us around going: "Wow, man, Bobby Pyn really gets down! He kicks ass!"
Slash: What was your first sexual experience?
Bobby: When I stuck my arm down the garbage disposal. One time . . . no, never mind.
Pat: That wasn't a garbage disposal.
Bobby: Who was it?
Slash: What kind of music do you play?
Pat: Ya-ya! There's a Lithuanian influence.
Slash: What do you think of your music?
Bobby: We try to ignore it . . . it's repulsive.
Slash: Talk about some of the concerts you've played. The Whisky?
Pat: They loved us . . . they were screaming for more, and everyone ran away.
Bobby: I smelled like a restaurant after. This guy mixed up rotten beans, mayonnaise, salad dressing and bread, and threw buckets of it on us. It was horrible!
Lorna: And whipped cream.
Pat: And milk of magnesia.
Slash: What do you think of the L.A. punk bands?
Bobby: There are only three real ones: The Screamers, the Weirdos and us.
Pat: The Screamers are terriff!
Slash: What does your future hold?
Donna: We'll all be institutionalized!
Slash: Have any of you ever been committed?
Donna: My brother was, at the age of 12. My mother was going to commit me, but I was too young. I've been in a lot of hospitals.
Slash: What for?
Donna: I fell off my bike and scraped all the skin off my face.
Pat: She lost her memory.
Lorna: Tell her the diseases you've had. All of them.
Donna: OK, I've got a brain lesion, I'm going blind (I'm already legally blind), I've had pneumonia, I broke my leg, I've had my tonsils removed, my appendix, a cross between a tumor and a hernia, a sprained ankle, leukemia . . .
Bobby: And she is a hypochondriac (giggles)!
Slash: Where did you record the single?



Pat: In my garage. The whole neighborhood was there. There were surfers sitting on the roof, low riders on the fence, and my family was throwing things at us.
Slash: What do your parents think of The Germs?
Pat: My mom wants to do opera-back up vocals. I'm serious. I swear.
Donna: They envy us.
Slash: What do you think of the Runaways?
Bobby: Cute. Very cute. I think they're a bad joke, but I like Joan.
Pat: I think they're a ***good*** joke. I think Kim Fowley is very witty (giggles). Wait a minute! . . . FUCK!—there, that's better, didn't want this to be too clean.
Slash: Where do you want to play next?
Bobby: The Forum, the Coliseum, and the end of the world. ***Top bill.***
Pat: After the end of the world we'll go disco.
Bobby: No, glitter! And we'll all have solo records. What else do you want to know?
Pat: We got kicked out of school for brainwashing! That's the truth.
Bobby: After I had my surgery, we moved to Lithuania. (laughter)
Slash: What;s this obsession with Lithuania?
Bobby: There's no Lithuania anymore! My mom almost ***died*** when they cancelled Lithuania. I mean, shit!
Pat: I wish I was Lithuanian.
Bobby: OK, in Lithuania it was very nice—a pleasant atmosphere, there was only one problem, airplanes crash there all the time. If an airplane knew it was going to crash, the pilot would say, "Head for Lithuania!" I always had this fear even when I moved here that one would crash in my house and I'd be caught in the bathtub, naked!
Pat: Can we talk about dicks now?
Slash: What are your musical influences?
Bobby: Oh, David Bowie, Chopin, Mozart, Led Zeppelin . . . Oh, you mean our real ones?
Slash: Yeah.
Bobby: Old Warner Brothers cartoons.
Slash: Do you have any plans for more

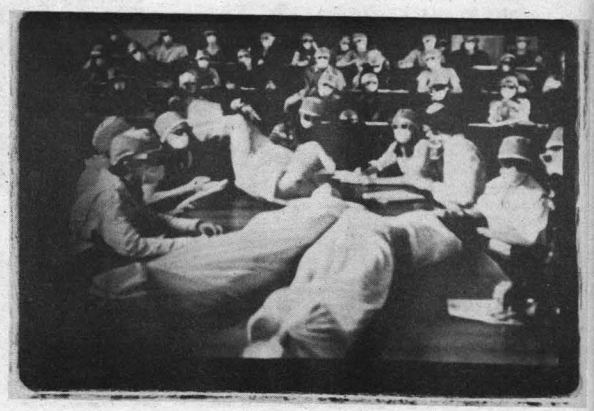
singles or an album?
Bobby: Yeah, but nobody else does! (laughter)
Slash: What's your favorite pet?
Bobby: I had a pet rock that died and once I had a pet flying saucer, but it committed suicide. I had a turtle named Hannibal . . .
Slash: Are you real punks?
Pat: Yeah, I guess—you shoulda seen what happened at the Orpheus! After we played they closed it down. We trashed the place, they called the police and no punk bands can play there now . . . we're really sorry, guys.
Slash: Is your music political?
Bobby: Kind of, we talk about overthrowing everything. We've been ruined by society. I like to refer to us as social heaps.
Slash: Did you have a bad childhood?
Bobby: Yeah—ooh, once I had a day off from school and a bicycle fell on my head and cracked my skull.
Lorna: That's how you got this way, right?
Bobby: Well, ***she*** lived in suburbia. She played on swings and ate peanut butter and jelly, made mud pies . . .
Donna: I spent my childhood in hospitals.
Pat: Can we talk about dicks now?
Bobby: Shut up. Bad childhoods is what causes punks. I bet Johnny Rotten was a battered baby. Pat is such a punk that a dog came up to him on the street and peed on his leg!
Pat: Let's talk about dicks.
Donna: OK, let's make up a porno story.
Bobby: . . . and Mack walked down the street and he thrust he throbbing tool into her . . . SNATCH! Yeah, OK—he leveled her lovehole with his atomic dick.
Pat: DICKS! All rite! (laughter)
Bobby: Tell her about the one-eyed waitress!
Pat: I don't even want to think about that!
Slash: What's the most disgusting thing that's ever happened to you?
Pat: Oh, gawd, the one-eyed waitress, but I'm not going to talk about it.
Bobby: The most disgusting thing that ever happened to me was the Germs! (laughter)

Special thanks to our new contributor, Pleasant, for her first SLASH interview.

Photos: Jenny Stern

(the de-evolution band)... from ohio... coming to los angeles...

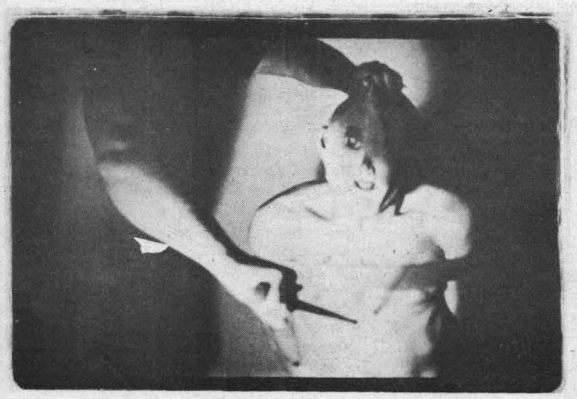
are we not men... we are DEVO... are we not men... D-E-V-O...



we must repeat... we must repeat... we must repeat... we must rep

july 25th & 26th... starwood... (the de-evolution band)... from c

are we not men... we are DEVO... are we not men... D-E-V-O-



repeat... we must repeat... we must repeat... we must repeat...

COMING DOWN WITH THE MUMPS

Lance Loud—Vocals
Toby Duprey—Guitar
Kevin Kiely—Bass
Kristian Hoffman—Keyboards
Paul Rutner—Drums

Slash: Have you guys found a record label yet?
Lance: No.
Slash: Describe your music in one word.
Lance: Ummm . . . ummm . . . That's it—um!
Kristian: Inspiration.
Lance: Tres . . . divine . . . ultra . . . tres . . .
Slash: Describe your reputation.
Lance: Ultra! . . . tres . . . um!
Kevin: Incubatory.
Slash: How long have The Mumps been together?
Paul: Six months. I was the latest addition.
Lance: Then came Kevin, before Paul.
Slash: Who writes all the songs?
Lance: Kristian.
Kristian: Lance wrote our big hit anthem, "Muscle Boys," and I wrote everything else. Writing songs is like homework . . . like squeezing toothpaste tubes, it's hard sometimes.
Slash: How did you get your look together?
Lance: Kristian and I are children of the thrift shops, what doesn't fit we give to the other guys!
Slash: Me too!
Kristian: A lot of Wilson Pickett's fashions would look a lot better if he didn't wear them, so we do.
Lance: I'm really into pimp wear. Oooh! Wow! and pastel colored pants. I love bright colors.
Slash: Punk is very black and white.
Lance: I'm very into dayglo.
Slash: What do you think of the new wave?
Kevin: It comes and goes.
Lance: I never listen to any other group but ours.
Slash: No one from New York wears safety pins.
Lance: Thank God! It looks very English and we're patriotic. I hate England.
Paul: We love the Sex Pistols.
Kristian: Because they hate England too.
Slash: What do you think of The Quick?
Lance: I like The Quick. They're really good. They're really great guys. They were super nice to us.
Kristian: They know how to have a good time.
Slash: I thought you and Van Halen playing together was a strange combination.
Lance: They're very successful.
Kevin: Very professional.
Slash: What do you dream about?
Kevin: Fast cars, girls and money . . . no, fast girls, cars and money.
Slash: What do you daydream about?
Kristian: It's all colored green—money, money, money!
Slash: What do you want to be when you grow up?
Kristian: Able to retire.
Lance: A successful recording group, where people love every record we do . . . so we can do Christmas records.
Slash: Yeah, no one does Christmas records any more.
Kristian: I want the Sex Pistols to do one.
Paul: Bobby Sherman does! He doesn't count though.
Slash: What's the main difference you've noticed between New York and L.A.?
Lance: The people are a lot nicer, more open to change [L.A.]. They are punk but they are interested in new music. We thought it was gonna be awful, but it turned out to be so much easier than breaking into a New York audience.
Slash: Have you been to the Rainbow?
Lance: Yeah, I don't like that scene.
Kevin: They dress up like Mommy and Daddy in a cocktail lounge. They're gonna grow up to be data processors.
Lance: they think if they go there, they're gonna have all those group orgies that they heard about in the groupie movies!
Slash: They have them! Up in the hills — you stand in a parking lot and a limo comes and picks you up for a swing party. (Gasps)
Lance: Wow!
Paul: I know what *I'm* doing tonight!
Kevin: Van Halen never told us about that.
Slash: What kind of groupies do you get?
Lance: Only the best! . . . Paul screens everyone at the dressing room door to see if they meet our standards or not.
Slash: What do you think of the local bands —The Screamers, Germs, Weirdos?
Lance: The Germs came up to us at the Starwood and told us we taught them everything they know.
Kristian: We want everyone to know we were the first group to jump on the disease bandwagon.
Slash: Why did you want a children's disease?
Kristian: Because we're still children and also because we don't want to be too cute. I mean, we ***are*** cute . . . but we're ashamed of it and also Mumps is nice and short and obnoxious enough to remember.
Slash: Badmouth the Mumps.
Kristian: I hate the Mumps, they're lousy.
Paul: They're too good.
Lance: They're too much like a recording act.
Kevin: That's what I don't like about them.
Lance: They're a group you'd love to buy a record from, but they don't have one.
Slash: Is this your first date out of New York?
Lance: Well, no, we played Boston and Woodstock. At Woodstock, Tony Dupres came on stage and it was a jammed audience and the first thing he said was, "We're here to kill flowers." ***The entire audience left in two seconds***! I've never seen such a stampede of hippie beads in my life!
Kristian: Yeah, they don't even have puka shells out there yet—they're really living in the past.
Lance: You have a beautiful magazine. SLASH is challenging New York Rocker.
Slash: Thank you . . . What were we saying before about releasing your own single?
Lance: Well, we're going back to New York to rehearse for a couple of weeks, then we're going to London in the middle of July.
Kevin: We ***think*** we are.
Slash: What do you guys do at night when you're not playing?
Lance: Out here? We don't know yet.
Kristian: We had turkey dinner at the Screamers' house.
Lance: Yeah, the Screamers have been great to us.
Slash: I think Tomata ought to get the Good Housekeeping seal of approval, or the Welcome Wagon award or something . . .
Lance: He should just buy Schwabs! Then we could discover all the new punk bands.
Kevin: I want Phil Spector to give us a going away party and invite us up to his house.
Kristian: We were supposed to go to Disneyland.
Kevin: All I want to do is to be the first person to die on Space Mountain.
Slash: They threw the Runaways out of Disneyland a few months ago.
Kristian: Do you want to draw anything more scathing out or is it good for us to be wholesome?
Lance: We're like the Wonderbread of rock!
Kevin: These are the formative years . . . the wonder years . . . ages 8 through 14.
Kristian: Isn't it 8 through 12?
Slash: I thought it was 1 through 8.
Lance: I don't know, isn't it 6 through 12?
Kristian: Whenever you're with us . . .

(Toby Dupres was in N.Y.)

The Whisky—

A Riot Of Our Own??
(compiled by K.K., Basho Macko and Kickboy)

A few highlights, lots of lowlights . . . boredom, excitement, anger, we got it all. The new wave is here all right, along with various debris and refuse that got washed along. No need to go thru it too chronologically, we'll keep these impressions and comments as disjointed as the shows were.

First night hurt a lot. Some started smelling a rip-off. Especially after being subjected to dusty outfits such as La Rue and Juice. The first one featured a bunch of overweight reformed hippies who made a joke of the "new wave" advertising approach by (among other tasteless errors) doing the Stones' "Starfucker" for an encore! Fuck the "stars" and anyone who emulates them! Juice believes rock 'n' roll a la Queen or Aerosmith is what the new rebellion is about and fell flat on their faces trying to prove it. Won't deny there was a sizable section of the audience shaking their asses to it, but there were also enough boos, catcalls and screams of outraged protest to make me believe the old order is shaking in its foundations. Soon these bands won't dare to impose their outdated renditions upon our less and less gullible audience. Who the fuck decided they were new wave enough anyway??

The Zeroes had started the night, rather unsure of themselves, but I like them, they've got more potential than a dozen semi-pro combos roaming the city, they mean what they do, don't nobody give them no shit, okay?

Night ended with a disappointing Weirdos set, kinda stiff and mechanical. The crowd ate it up anyway, they've got a fanatic following that would follow them 'round the world with three fingers outstretched. Can't blame them, most of the time they are amazing, as they proved on the last night (see Basho's report further along).

In between sets we had been treated to various gibberish from the more incoherent members of the audience, boys, girls and mutants exposing their philosophy to the rest of the sarcastic sardines, rambling about bands long gone and bands not yet born, showing off their safety pins and other dubious tokens of punkiness. One last snarl: I'd like to get my hands on the wit who started blasting Beatles tunes on the PA system. I would think there are enough new singles available in the city to prevent this kind of attack upon our sensitive ears!

Round two: Less tension in the air. The Germs . . . Kim had to call it "new wave," didn't he? "New wave" (kind of sticks in my throat like something a Beach Boy would look for). Beach Boy (kind of sticks in my throat like sand from an old ashtray). The Germs won't stick in your throat. The Germs are like throwing some chunks! (A term coined by a group called the leftovers, to replace upchuck or kack.) Tuesday at the Whisky, the Germs blew some chunks all over town. Someone was destined to outpunk a few of the local, flippant, new wave bands, and the Germs did it. Lead singer Bobby Pin outraged not only the management, but scared the audience by blowin' peanut butter, Russian dressing, mustard and hors d'oeuvres all about the stage, the crowd and of course each other. Their music was also very havoc chunka-chunka blow. But not too dramatic, those Germs, when B. Pin slit his hand, he quietly let it drip, drip until a guitar hit the floor to signal the finale. Finally it's healthy again to catch the Germs. Poseurs, beware!!

Needles and Pins are much fun, although a bit lacking in originality. They should call themselves Blondie West, so similar their sound can be to you-know-who. But they seem very happy with themselves, and lead gum-chewing eye-rolling blond teaser moves and sings very nicely. Strange to hear such milk-and-cornflakes cutie bellow out, "I wanna play with guns." I just don't know about today's youth! There was also (earlier, or was it later?) a set by Black Magic, another by Juice (hadn't improved much in 24 hours), and one by The Zippers, who some people like. Phast Phreddie hopped on stage and got scolded by a sound man for fuckin' around with the mike. Rodney paced about answering various accusations from the hard-core below and finally got mad for such ungratefulness, Van Halen paraded around in what they had been led to believe were the latest punk outfits and a basket case with guitar, harmonica and portable amp twitched his way thru the spectators, onto the stage and out of our memories.

Disappointment of the night: no set by The Screamers, Tomata being sick and therefore unable to do it to our ears. Get well, you bastard! You're needed.

Third and last round: Once again, Whisky packed, waitresses spillin' drinks on stumbling low-lifes (ever tried to find your way to the restroom with your shades on?), paper clip jewelry gettin' caught in somebody's shawl, the works . . . Half the fun being in finding out who was gonna play and who was not, since original bill had been changed about five times during the previous two days. Turned out only one band originally announced for that night remained. The Dils. Backstage Pass got out when finding out their promised spot (last) had been shuffled about in favor of the ever-growing Weirdos, and who can blame them? Bands deserve more respect than being treated like disposable panties. There might be dozens more where they come

from (that's the attitude, isn't it?!) but it's no reason for bullying everyone about. None of that show biz cynicism in our ranks, please. It stinks.

I like the Dils. I'll tell you why in our other live review (July 1 at the Whisky). Just one thing now: they don't take shit from the audience. Or anyone else. Creative violence, The Clash call that.

The Prophets are prophesying the wrong future, and the Weirdos got Basho Macko temporarily out of his stupor: . . . everybody down there started yelling "Weirdos, Weirdos." But first we hadda see a freak show. Some goon took an electric guitar on stage, stuck a microphone on the strings and proceeded to sing about Hollywood. Strummed right along. Regular Pete Seeger. Someone told me he was trying to be Wild Man Fisher. Nice try, bub. He counted to four before he ran off stage. I suppose he was bracing himself.

I figured the Weirdos were going to come on so I got a drink and went downstairs. I started out at the back but got shoved forward by the cops. I pretended to trip and bumped my way past two other people. The Weirdos came on and started their first song. My leg started twitching. A party of three left in front of me and I fell into place. I stayed there, looking at the Weirdos. "Is that the Three Stooges?" No, there were five of them. The Weirdos are as good as the Three Stooges with a Raw Power soundtrack any day. Wham Bam Wham. One guy does the lead sinking. He spends a good amount of time on the floor, like Curly Joe. I can see why. The Weirdos is very fast, lots of quick starts and stops. If the poor lead sinker didn't lay down once in a while he'd be dead before the fourth song.

After the fourth song I heard someone call my name. I went over there and it was exactly where I wanted to be. On the side maybe, but real close in front of speakers. The Weirdos did a song called "I dig your hole." "I dig your hole, I'm a mole" over and over they did that. "I dig your hole, I'm a mole," it got real catchy. The Weirdo sign got real catch, too. All you do is stick your three middle fingers up in the air and you got a Weirdo sign growing out of the end of your hand. It's very simple, the three fingers make a "W." Hey Weirdo. Time to have a good time. The Weirdos are fun personified. Fun like slamming a door so hard it breaks. Fun like swindling retards. Kicks as in booting a cripple downstairs. American fun.

A lot of people didn't want them to leave. A lot of people left when no Weirdos showed up for a second encore. A lot of people left when the next band came on. Me, for instance.

I dig your hole, I am a mole.

Went on Friday night. Original line-up not what the ads said (as usual!) with Zeroes and Weirdos missing. Somebody sick in each band, much sickness in punk circles these days.

At the beginning, place half-empty, guess everyone heard about the last minute changes, not wanting to see dubious replacement groups and blow their money on the unknown. Times are hard for fanatics, you know. Silly though, 'cause it was a very interesting show in the end.

The Whores played their absurdist tacky little set to general indifference, felt a bit sorry for them but they have a long way to go before they can be taken seriously. Needles and Pins worked very hard and toward the end gained scattered encouragement for some very energetic interpretations of old standards ("He's a rebel" and stuff). But until The Dils came on there wasn't much new wave feeling in the air, or in the audience. Never seen so many college types in one place before.

So Dils members came on to set up their own equipment (no crew for these guys—they live their hard-core image every second) and after a few minutes launched into their fiery abrasive set.

You either love The Dils or want to vomit on them, so uncompromising is their approach to the sound. Needless to say, all the jocks (some decked out in fashionable gear) and their chickies became extremely irate with what was being thrown at them. When lead singer Dil Chip ruined his guitar after trying to mate it with the mike stand, had to borrow one and tune it onstage, the abuse became general. Dils flashed the finger to heckling smart asses, smart asses competed with each other to see who could be wittier and ruder—"Hey, you guys should be called dildoes!" (smart asses' girlfriends rolling with laughter at the bon mot)—"fuck-you"s of growing intensity were exchanged, a few brave fans rose to The Dils' defense, the new wave was indeed alive and kicking back. Dils performed thereafter with twice as much anger and arrogance, 'specially their new song, "I hate the rich." Maybe vocals were slightly buried, but the overall effect was still very impressive.

These three geezers look and play some of the most committed music around, giving us a taste of what the English scene must be like certain evenings. Like the Pistols, they are constantly pushing audiences, challenging them to show their true colors, and, like the Pistols, constantly improving and hardening their music in the process. You're either with us or against us, pals. The nurd that kept shouting "entertain us!" should have stuck to The Palomino that night.

Left after a few notes from The Best. Looked and sounded like slick old-timers making another attempt at being with it. Torn T-shirts and weird shades. So what?!

Forty-Fives

THE USERS
Raw Records Import
(Sick of you / I'm in love with today)

Well, even with photo finish and all that there's no way to tell who of these three groups of mutants wins the new wave race so we won't discriminate and get cute. You're welcome to buy them in whatever order, but buy them all. 'Cause it's all whamm bam bam stuff, and the more the better. Assholes will indeed complain they all sound the same, only shows the movement got unity, that's what.

"We don't give a damn" sing the Adverts about goons telling them "we don't like you / go away / come back when you've learned to play." Good for you, Adverts. Record sleeve real nice too, with the girl in the band looking spooky on the front and real punked out in the back.

THE ADVERTS
Stiff Records Import
(One chord wonder / Quickstep)

Slaughter & The Dogs is a real killer and features nice barkings on "Cranked up really high."

And The Users must have used lots of it. "Sick of you" is too long but the singer sounds convincingly disgusted so that makes up for it. "I'm in love with today" is another contender in the new anthem competition, summing it all up in lovely slashing sentences surrounded by metal dronings of skin-piercing intensity: "I don't want to live in a suburban home . . . I won't take none of your shiit / you better believe it!" The song ends in the middle of a chord, everythin' having been said, no point in stretching it, so they stop, unless the engineer pulled the plug, any rate it's perfect.

SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS.
Rabid Records Import
(the bitch / cranked up really high)

I have dreams of a gigantic marathon featuring all these groups and others, fifteen minutes each group, no waiting in between, no show-biz atmosphere, everything raw and immediate. The new sound ripping the crowd apart, like a possessed diesel coming off its tracks. Many would leave. The ones that would subject themselves to the ordeal would never be the same. I wake up steaming and trembling, and the paper tells me soon it's Peter Frampton and Foghat at the Anaheim Stadium. Well, fuck me! Somethin' is gonna have to change soon. The gap is getting bigger every day, ain't it?

Kickboy

SNATCH
Bomp Records
(I.R.T. / Stanley)

Snatch are Judy Nylon and Pat Palladin. Two N.Y. girls recorded by Greg Shaw in a London living room. No musicians, 'cept a passing French photographer toying with a guitar on "I.R.T." "Raw mono" says the label, and raw mono it is. Sounds like underground Ronettes before they hit the wall of sound.

"I.R.T." is so-so but very very short, and "Stanley" is a gem. Features a screeching spoken intro by one of the two: "Stanley take out the garbage, how many times do I have to tell you you're just like your father goddam you Stanley . . ." or something similar, pure exasperation. The spoken song tells the story of Stanley, a stud who hit the big city ("and then it was pussy galore") in very plain, down-to-earth language, it is a lower class masterpiece, a real slice of life. Since you're not about to hear it on the air, go down at Bomp and listen to it. (Greg's always surprised when somebody likes it.)

Jet Lag

Photos: ENO

THE VIBRATORS
Epic Import
(Baby, baby / Into the future)

Remember issue #1 when I was kinda hesitant 'bout the Vibrators (please, everyone, don't ever call them the Vibes!)? I'm happy to say they've shaped up real fast and hard, and this is a mother of a single. "Baby, baby" might be no breakthru for the new wave but it's so uplifting, says Philomena, and she knows. A real heart-warmer ditty, catchy and goosepimply material. Makes you want to play lead guitar, 'cause when it's done like this it is STILL cool. The B side ("Into the future") is good good new wave noiz, starting with raw vocals about I want this and I want that, real demanding and arrogant. "I want it for my baby and I want it for myself." So do we.

Kickboy

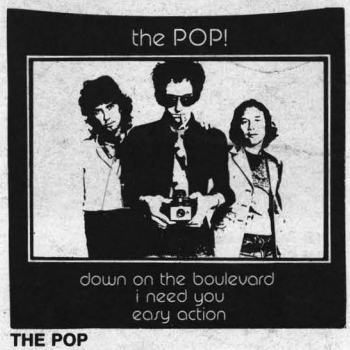
DEVO (the de-evolution band)
Boojie Boy Records
(Jocko Homo / Mongoloid)

. . . So some art students form a band, have a weird name, weird looks and do weird songs (I know, it sounds gimmicky) . . . what's worse, after what's happened, I doubt if I could ever give an honest appraisal of this single . . . you see, I've been devolved . . .

It all started when I picked up the single at Bomp, took it home, played it and really liked it. Then fate stepped in: a friend called me up and said he's got a film some friends (DEVO) made and wanted me to see it. Thinking that very little, if anything, comes out of the Midwest, I wasn't expecting much, but after five minutes, I realized my sensibilities would never be the same.

The film left me feeling confused, for while I KNEW it was only four art students with weird names and songs, I FELT there was something dangerous about these guys, that they had gone over the edge and they didn't even notice. So anyway, you can see why I can't honestly evaluate this single (every time I play it, I get that feeling in my guts). If I had any influence in this world, I'd either lock these guys up or ship them out here so we could all see them. There is no middle ground . . .

Cardelle Boyette



THE POP
BackDoor Man Records
(Down on the Boulevard / I need you / Easy action)

Exploring the fishy barriers of PUD-ROCK, thank you POP for scuffling up! " . . . the best (PUD)burger in town!" Pure pud—the last (hopefully) flatulence of a dying breed of self-conscious pudrockers.

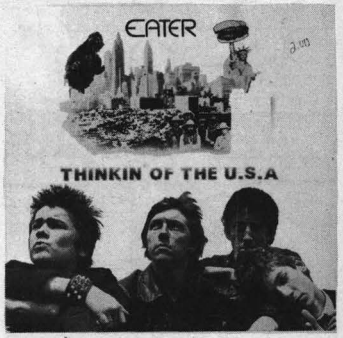
"Down on the Boulevard" reveals a remarkably anachronistic squeaky-clean countenance, hey, this is a powerhouse trio! —gtr. bs. drms. and even a picture sleeve so's not to forget what ***groovy guys*** they are!

B-side: "Easy action," a mildly amusing cut with Uriah Heep-style harmonies, and—bonus—a Kinks ripoff, what a psychedelic abortion. These guys should be deflowered with a "Flying Vee" for this version of "I need you."

Johnny Assai

HEARTBREAKERS
Track Import
(Chinese rocks / Born to lose)

A classy little package. Johnny Thunders don't put HIS name up front. Fuck the Tom Petty shit. "Chinese rocks" got short bitch solos, flung harmonies, and appropriate zooms. Side 2's got a main guitar break. Good standard. The rest of the song and the A side kick solid.

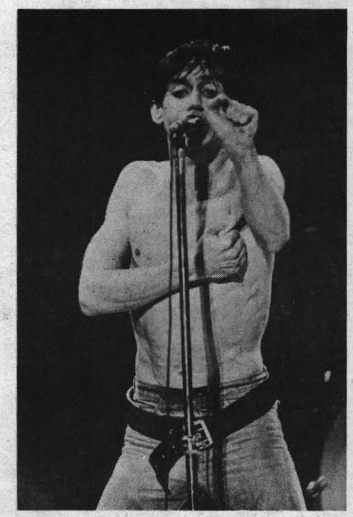


EATER
The Label Import
(Thinking of the U.S.A. / Space Dreaming / Michael's Monetary System)

Eater's latest. Another garbled classic of sub-teen depression—thinking of the U.S.A. in what capacity, lads? Becoming the first punk tax-exiles? A highly profitable tour perhaps? Good grinding distortion-torsion, vocals nasal, whining mush, just the way we like 'em.

B side a speculative rouser concerning cold synaptic regions and a rather nebulous survey of the relative value of differently colored buttons. Eater possesses a creepy quality in its instrumentation which commands one's attention. Real English, highly recommended.

Johnny Assai



IGGY POP & JAMES WILLIAMSON
Siamese Records
(I got a right / Gimme some skin)
(available from Bomp, Rhino, Tower and other discriminating outlets)

Let's start with the B side (I'll save the best for last). "Gimme some skin" is probably the most sexual song the Stooges have ever done, even more so than "Loose" or "Penetration," but then everything Iggy's perpetrated on us has been intrinsically

erotic. James Williamson opens up with the most incredible, yet simple riff (a la "Raw Power"—"Shake Appeal") and blitzkriegs non-stop to Iggy's coked-out, all but incoherent vocals. Nice lyrics too: "She shoots speed right up her asshole . . ." "I don't mind if your mind is gone, if you want my body, gotta gimme some skin all night long!".

And now we come to the real gut-churner. "I got a right" has to be the most violently crazed ditty anyone's ever kicked ass to (and that goes for most previous Stooges material too). This song is so unimaginably violent, yet simultaneously poignant and tear-jerking, that it takes a few listens to believe one's ears. There really aren't adjectives to describe the beautiful abandon here . . . all stops out quite literally and nothing left to lose. Makes what The Damned and The Clash are doing look like incompetent shit (and I like them, too!). The only group to come anywhere near a single like this are the Sex Pistols. Someone at Bomp Records (where "I got a right" is available for two bucks) says these two were outtakes from Raw Power. If that's true I wonder what else was left out. I know there'll be those who disagree, but these are rawer, crazier, less calculated, more despairing and brain-shattering than anything on the 0-mind masterpiece.

Chris Desjardins

(According to Philippe Mogane, editor of French mag "I wanna be your dog" and head of Siamese Records, these two cuts are '71 demo tapes that the boys were taking around to various companies and which got dumped and forgotten after the CBS deal was secured. —Ed.)

THE SEX PISTOLS
Virgin Import
(Pretty Vacant/No fun)

Well, I'm taking over this running Sex Pistols extravaganza, I mean, one single in every issue, Kickboy needs a break. Anyway, he's taking a definite left turn toward Clash and other aware stuff, losing the roots I say, stick to the pounding and all that, the guy's a snob! I'm not even sure he REALLY likes this single, bet he thinks it's just more of the same. Well, I wouldn't know because I've had a hangover for the past six months and that punx stuff caught me by surprise yesterday morning (I've heard bits of it in my coma but I thought it was just audio DTs) and this limey nasty sure got my attention within ten seconds of his song.

Harry Slime says it's a great new wave anthem but I don't know what an anthem is. If it's anything with a great intro like this, nice lead touches and fuck-you words that say "we're so pretty, oh so pretty vacant, and we don't care" (that's all I got, the guy sure talks funny . . . can tell he's a foreigner), I sure want more anthems! It's so good you want to beat your head against the wall and sing along. Only thing wrong with it is it's too short. It stops when you really get going, all crazy and sweaty, looking for things to throw.

On the other side (they called it "B" last time I was sober, but things change so fast . . .) Mr. Rotten starts with just a basic drum bit and his ghoulish diction ("Rrright, here we go now, a sociology lecture, a little bit of neurology, a little bit of psychology, a little bit of fuckology, no ***fun*** . . .") the boys at the noise machines get in the action, and for the next six minutes he tells us of his basic requirements ("I want to be alone, and all by myself") for relative happiness. This guy's a realist, no sensuous massage for two and mail-order good vibes. I like that. My only worry is that his voice (and the rest of his wiry self) ain't gonna take this treatment much longer. So much contempt and resentment gonna snap his vocal chords before he has the time to tell us ***all*** where to go. Careful, my funny faraway friend!

Gus (Red Death) Ano

(Editor just announced that, according to Virgin's latest newssheet, Pistols album is coming out on Sept. 2, with maybe second album on Oct. 14th. I'll drink to that!)

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SHOCK, SCREAMERS AND BACKSTAGE PASS AT STARWOOD 4TH OF JULY PARTY

What's this "party" business anyway? Where were the chips and guacamole dip? I'm very definite about what's a party and what's not. Lots of people are very definite about letting me in or not at THEIR party. But they wouldn't mind Shock crashing it, 'cause Shock are real nice and not shocking at all. The hostess would find them cute and well-behaved. It would be a nice evening unless The Screamers burst in, at which point the host would call the fire department and lock himself in the bathroom.

The Screamers are exponents of electro-therapy rock, and they even look it. You can almost smell the ether and hear the muffled gargles comin' from behind padded doors when they are onstage. Brain cells shrivel and eyeballs roll inward, forgotten muscles start twitching, foreign sounds come out of the throat. A definite departure from the routine. Even when they do slow songs like "Gloomy Sunday," the tension remains. There are slow songs and slow songs, and The Screamers do the latter kind. "Ziggy Stardust came out 5 years ago, and now it's SHIT! In five years, punk will be SHIT!" screams Tomato before the skull-crushing "Peer Pressure." Punks with a sense of history. Will these marvel-filled days never end? Will I ever sleep again?

All this commotion made it very hard for Backstage Pass to successfully carry the rest of the evening. Not mentioning the disturbing continuous barrage of firecrackers aimed at the performers. Why not frisbees, you anonymous peasants?

Kickboy

Albums

"I'M STRANDED"
THE SAINTS. Harvest Import.
(I'm stranded / One way street / Wild about you / Messin' with the kid / Erotic neurotic / No time / Kissin' Cousins / Story of love / Demolition girl / Nights in Venice)

A real drag, ain't it, raving about all these imports? Shows you them record companies ain't very much on the ball too, don't it? Global village my ass! Everybody into their little trip, that's what it is!

This LP is no surprise. One long extension of their super single. No departure, no explorations. If you liked the single you'll be fine. If not, don't bother. Just more noise for you.

I liked it very much, so 40 minutes of the same satisfy me plenty. Talk about minimalism! They make the Ramones sound like a bunch of intellectuals! Each side starts with one cut off the single, and from then on it's just more of the same (with one exception —read about it further on), same relentless bass, drums, the whole band might be on automatic for all we know. Hardly any separation between the instruments, the triumph of the drones. "Story of love" slows down a bit but still in the same keys, got a nice mindless solo, real punk voice Chris Bailey got there, almost hummable, but then "Demolition girl" starts its assault, sending you back to passivity. That is, unless you've really mastered the pogo. Songs to thump each other to. Songs to rip everything apart to. Modern stuff, my droogies. My favorite is the long (almost six minutes) "Nights in Venice," an insane drooling metal journey that definitely turns its back on your average conceptions of what music is about. Leaves you flushed and panting if you haven't fled yet.

The exception mentioned above is the odd "Messin' with the kid" tune, a slow melodic soulful thing that will have you swearing it's a remake of "Knockin' on Heaven's Door" when it begins. It changes a bit but remains a question mark in the rest of the manic collection. Shit, without it I could have made everyone believe these guys were no humans!

Kickboy Face

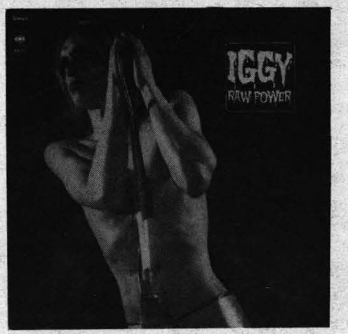
"TEENAGE SUICIDE"
THUNDERTRAIN. Jelly Records.
(Hot for teacher / Let 'er rip / Modern girls / Cheater / Love the way / Hell tonite / Frustration / Forever & ever / I gotta rock)

The cover is the first mistake. Makes you feel homo carrying it home. The album is the next mistake. That's why Poopsie slit her wrist on the cover. It's a letdown. "Hot for teacher" is an OK single. It got good response in England. But the song is not pure pogo. It is tinged with bump and grind. That's what puts down the rest of the album. Too much bump and grind. Every ballsy cliche in the book. Not enough mutation. Blues, Heavy Metal, oh, they got it. They even boogie at times. The singer moans about TV dinners; hot and juicy.

"Get down, get down. Bring up the bass, Ric. Give it to me, give it to me. All I wanna hear is that big bass drum."

There might be lots of people liking this record. It's meant to be accessible.

Macko



"RAW POWER"
IGGY AND THE STOOGES
CBS Import
(Search and Destroy / Gimme Danger / Your Pretty Face is going to Hell / Penetration / Raw Power / I need somebody / Shake Appeal / Death Trip)

A few years ago this album was everywhere. Cutout bins, used bins, in with the trash, under beds. You could find it at Woolworths or Zodys, Thriftys and Sav-on. All the chic spots had it. Then overnight, I don't know what happened. Someone unmentionable went around and bought up every single copy. They turned it into a $10 collector's item and have been making a living for years.

But no more, chum.

We can finally get it again. Complete and unadulterated, except for the inner picture sleeve which some regular prick decided not to include with this English re-issue. But there're still those four definitive photos on the back cover and the one and only up on the front. Raw Power.

Inside you've got the album that's as good as anything that's ever been said about it. It is my favorite big single in the world more often than any other record I've ever heard. And it's not a big single just because every song sounds the same because every song doesn't sound the same. The songs only sound so similar because they are all of them so good. Bands often put a lousy song or two (side or two) on an album so you can hear how good the rest of it is, in comparison at least. But there's no comparison when it comes to Raw Power because there is not one song or part of a song that lets the rest down. It packs the punch of a single for eight songs straight, double-edged.

Ya, it's real sharp. If this album wasn't a re-issue, if I'd just pulled it off the new release rack, well, I'd take that record home and an hour later I'd be on the phone ranting to everyone I know about how I'd just heard the future, past and present. But my friends on the other end of the telephone line, they wouldn't be able to hear me at all.

"What's all that noise? Who's screaming? I'll be right over with the police."

But when they got to the scene of my crime they they would know too. My friends would join me climbing the walls. The police would probably beat us up just for playing Raw Power near humans.

But officer, please, any kind of human being needs at least three copies of this. That copper, he would beat me up anyway, that's the way the world is. But maybe I'd get something out of that beating, get some kind of revenge in my head because I know I'm better. Remember, I'd have Raw Power playing full blast. I wouldn't even feel no clubs. Just Raw Power in my head.

Raw Power isn't just great for when you're getting beat up. It's fantastic for beating someone else up. Good for doing the in-out, watch TV, argue or make up. You can use it to get a hangover, later it will wipe that hangover out of your head. Wonderful for being on either end of a seduction or repulsion. When your friends all decide to hate you for months on end, Raw Power will bring them back or kill them in your head. In short, it's got it. It's got guitar solos too, but some people know how and some people don't. Somebody knew.

Basho Macko

"MANIFEST DESTINY"
THE DICTATORS. Asylum.
(Exposed / Heartache / Sleepin' with the TV on / Disease / Hey boys / Steppin' out / Science gone too far / Young, fast, scientific / Search and Destroy)

Asleep on their feet. Dancing in a lunkhead coma. Forever stacking crescendos. Crashing letdowns. Did Creem magazine say these guys were great? It's a critic's band! A critic proud of his lyrics. Probably was a lousy critic too. What more could I expect? I didn't expect vocal harmonies straining for oneness. Everything's so attuned to everything else on this record. Drab. The last three songs act as if they'd like to stand out. Should have cut "Search and Destroy" off at the vocals. The guitar could use some elimination too. First album was supposed to be a joke. This one's not funny.

Macko

"IN THE CITY"
THE JAM

(Art School / I've Changed My Address / Slow Down / I Got By In Time / Away From The Numbers / Batman Theme / In The City / Sounds From The Street / Non-stop Dancing / Time For Truth / Takin' My Love / Bricks And Mortar)

This one kicks! The Jam are one of the hottest new bands in England. Tough and tight. Smooth black suits and ties and vicious short hair. The sort of geezers you push into the other room when the vicar calls. If they weren't into music they could have the biggest protection racket in town.

The Jam are a threesome (they just sound like a sixsome)—bass, drums and on guitar Paul Weller, who worte all the songs except "Batman Theme," which makes the original TV theme sound like a dirge, and "Slow Down."

A well balanced mixture of songs here—teen-dream romance and punk anger. This is dancing/jumping/action music. No sitting around on the floor smoking those damned joints to this stuff.

If you like The Damned you'll like The Jam—but don't get the idea these geezers are copying anyone. They're not. Although at times they do sound like the early Who (at their peak) but ANGRIER.

To be played LOUD. Even listening to it on headphones will have the bleedin' neighbors complaining about the noise.

Harry Slime

"THE ROXY LONDON WC2 (JAN.-APR. '77)"
E.M.I. Import
A live album featuring: SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS / THE UNWANTED / WIRE / THE ADVERTS / JOHNNY MOPED / EATER / X-RAY SPECS / BUZZCOCKS

This album is a necessity if you are at all interested in the British new wave. An excellently mixed montage of various evenings and bands at London's top punk club, The Roxy.

It has great atmosphere. All conversation, shouting, glasses smashing, crackles, clicks, buzzes, feedback and other odd electrical sounds have been left in—even during the songs. It's nice to pick up on odd mumbled phrases in the audience: "Is Sid Vicious here tonight?"—a girl, after a number by Wire. Despite all this texture, the recording quality is bleedin' excellent—better than some new wave singles! Also, both the outer and inner sleeves are full of sleazy pictures of punks and punkettes at the club. Group members are listed by name. So far so good—but what about the music?

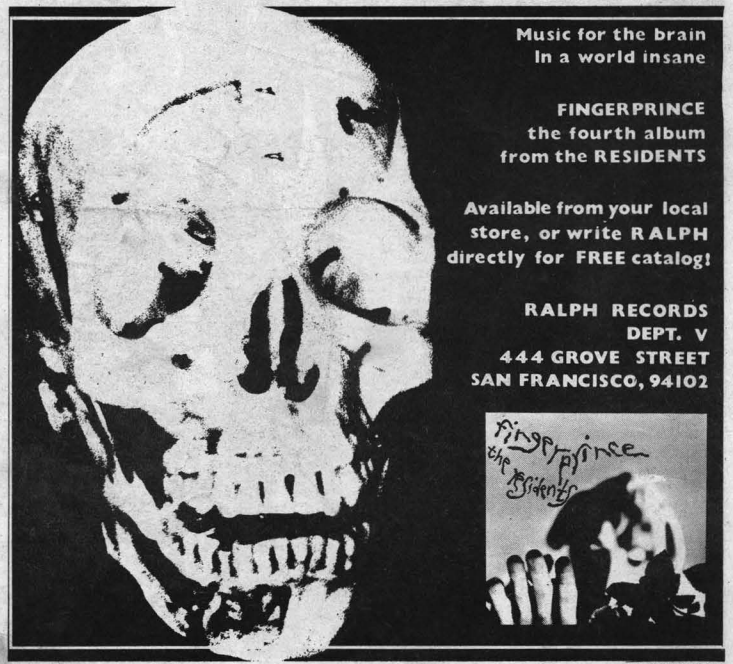
Side one starts off with voices/drinking/telephone ringing . . . then, Slaughter and the Dogs with "Runaway" and "Boston Babies." Good, hardcore punk. "Freedom" by The Unwanted is a weirdo. Zombie/robot music—programmed for auto-destruction. Wire plays "Lowdown" and "1.2.X.U." A fine mixture of menace and despair. Last cut is "Bored Teenagers" from The Adverts. This one says it all. It features a very long, boring repeat chord/riff. Perfection. The ending is pure genius—but I won't spoil the surprise by telling you.

On side two, Johnny Moped gives a riot-inciting intro (lecturing the audience on the finer points of maces, bludgeons and clubs) to "Hard Loving Man." Try standing still to this one! One hundred dollars to anyone who falls asleep during this track. (Having glanced in my wallet, I am forced to withdraw that offer.)

Next comes Eater with "Don't Need It"—a tribute to that noble institution, school—and "15," nicely off-key. Sexy stuff from Miss Poly Styrene of X-Ray Specs, singing "Oh Bondage! Up Yours!" This is a hot little number with super-sleazy sax. If Roxy Music had been a punk band they might well have sounded like this. Buzzcocks closes the album with "Breakdown," screaming, tight and catchy, and "Love Battery"—a violent love song. "My love battery wants to charge you . . ." So romantic. Unrequited lust.

The most alive live album ever. It reeks of London from every groove. Great for parties or hinting to those old hippie friends that it's time they went home.

Harold Slime



THE CLASH. CBS Import.
(Janie Jones / Remote control / I'm so bored with the U.S.A. / White riot / Hate and War / What's my name / Deny / London's burning / Career opportunities / Cheat / Protex blue / Police and thieves / 48 hours / Garageland)

Like 14 hand grenades tossed down the pants of the music world, the Clash's first LP is here. (Actually, it's still only there. Columbia is sitting on it, refusing to announce any date for an American release. What is wrong with these people?). It is everything one could have expected after their stunning singles, and much more. There is so much fire, rawness, musical economy and brilliance, there is so much of everything the new wave is about it'll make you dizzy. One of those albums that you'll explore for weeks, constantly finding new reasons to rejoice. Makes just about everything else obsolete and bloated. I mean, this is so lean and tough, so right now, that unless the incredible happens this will be the summer of The Clash. Wake up, Columbia, you near-sighted blobs! So much honesty and truth contained in their work there ain't no way to review this but song by song, deciphering the lyrics (you lucky dogs—fuckin' hard work that was!) and pathetically try to convey the strength of this masterpiece.

"Janie Jones" starts it, and within a few secs you're right there in the middle of their world, where frustrations, resentment and crushed dreams are the rule. "He's in love with rock 'n' roll wooahhh . . . he don't like his boring job, no-oooo!" chants Joe Strummer while drummer Terry Chimes pushed the song on with a jerky backing, all nervousness and anger. Bass and guitar join in, and Joe sings the sad story of an anonymous city slob who collects all the problems of modern living and none of the rewards. Ends on a call to "Let them know, let them knoooow!" how bad he feels. Will have you screaming the same at odd moments, when frustrations get you down.

"Remote control" is about lack of freedom, starts rather melodically, but don't trust it 'cause the urgency and the raw harmonies come back right after the intro. "It's so grey in London town / Panda cars crawling around / Here it comes / Eleven o'clock / Where can we go now?" Familiar feelings, even though bars close down later here. Everybody's suspect at night, and the kids twice as much. So much sarcasm in the falsely glorious way Strummer sings the words "remote control." Ends with Mick Jones and Strummer hollering "repression, repression." Chilling.

"I'm so bored with the U.S.A. (but what can I do?)" is pretty explicit. Especially resented is the Yankee influence on the telly, and other cultural impositions. Not so much a politico statement as a social one. We're not crazy about all that shit either. Why should they be?

"White riot" is the already classic chaotic call to arms. "Everybody's doing what they're told to," Joe screams. Song to throw bricks to. This version is faster, more frantic than the single. If you didn't know, the riot pictured on the backsleeve took place in Notting Hill last summer, at the end of a Jamaican reggae carnival.

"Hate and War" is not a slogan, but a description of our world. Only way to cope is to be the same. Total opposite to the old suckers' philosophy give-them-the-other-cheek bit. "I have the will to survive / I cheat if I can't win/ If someone locks me out / I kick my way back in / And if I get aggression / I'll give them two-times back" is hardly sung, but more shouted in a panting voice. As if the hoodlum had just stopped running in a dark alley and stood there, facing a night patrol. Music the same, choppy and aggressive, like fighting jabs. Strummer almost loses his voice as he tries to bury the final chorus with more rage: "I hate Englishmen just as bad as wops / I hate all the blindness / I hate all the cops."

"What's my name" is the Clash putting themselves in some loser's place, a jail material song about violence and lack of identity. "What the hell is wrong with me / I'm not who I want to be" wonders Strummer. They can make you FEEL the hopelessness of such a case 'cause they've been there. They'd be in jail themselves if they hadn't started the group, said one of them once. Think about that, all of you punk dilettantes.

"Deny (. . . you're such a liar)" is moving and beautiful, with torn vocals about one's girl being strung out and not admitting it. "You said you ain't had none for weeks / But baby I've seen your arms / Baby I've seen your arms," sings Joe, half-angry, half-sad. Great harmonies and melodic progression, while Joe mumbles his dismay, becoming more and more incoherent. What a song! Rock will never be the same.

Side 1 ends with famed "London's burning." Written one depressed night in their 18th floor flat overlooking the Westway traffic structure, it spits out its resentment of modern living and the ever-present boredom. It is messy, raw and urgent. Boring it ain't. Funny how boredom inspired them such a fast lively cut. Real gut-reaction. Stay out of the kids' way when they feel like this, is the message. "Now I'm in the subway / looking for the flat / This one leads to this block / this one leads to that / The wind howls thru the empty blocks / looking for a home / But I run thru the empty stone / 'Cause I'm all alone / London's burning with boredom now / London's burning down, dial 999 999." Hope no local group does a version of this. We have our own brand of boredom that deserves its own approach. Anyone?

"Career opportunities" starts side 2. Real scorcher there, making fun of employment tactics used by government agencies. "Do you wanna make tea at the BBC / do you wanna be, do you wanna be a cop? / Career opportunities / the ones that never knock / every job they offer you / is to keep you off the dock." No absurd jobs for these lads. This ain't rock 'n' roll for zombies.

"Cheat" is about living in the modern jungle, another I'm-not-like-you anthem, Joe introducing himself in his usual blunt manner: "I get violent when I'm fucked up / I get silent / when I'm drugged up" and speeding thru bits of advice for survival: "You better lie / if you can't win . . . you better cheat / if you wanna survive . . . Don't use the rules / they're not for you / they're for the fools." Some will call it immature, negative, nihilistic. They're probably the same ones who have everything (god knows how THEY did it) and see no reason why YOU should. Blast the bastards! And all this backed by a tremendous phasing sound like you never thought you would hear again.

"Protex blue." Real fast stuff with Mick Jones on lead vocals. Still can't make out the lyrics, but the playing is first-rate, with mean rhythm riff tying everything together, incisive lead and classic rockin' drumming.

"Police and thieves" is the surprise of the album, being the only tune not written by Strummer and Jones. A hit by Jamaican singer Junior Murvin last summer, it is the Clash's tribute to another oppressed minority, the black London community. The Clash doing reggae?? That's right, white boys and girls. And doing it well. Their long professed love of the sound was no pretense or posing. Strummer has the perfect voice to sing about "police and thieves / scaring the nation / with their guns and ammunition," even though the tune was written more about Kingston than London. They also manage to restrain their usually manic playing, giving the song that subtle reggae feel the dreads seemed to possess exclusively. Just the slightest trace of reverb (in the dub manner), sinuous guitars, it's all there. A punk-dread alliance (musically, at least) would be THE phenomenon of the decade! Want more.

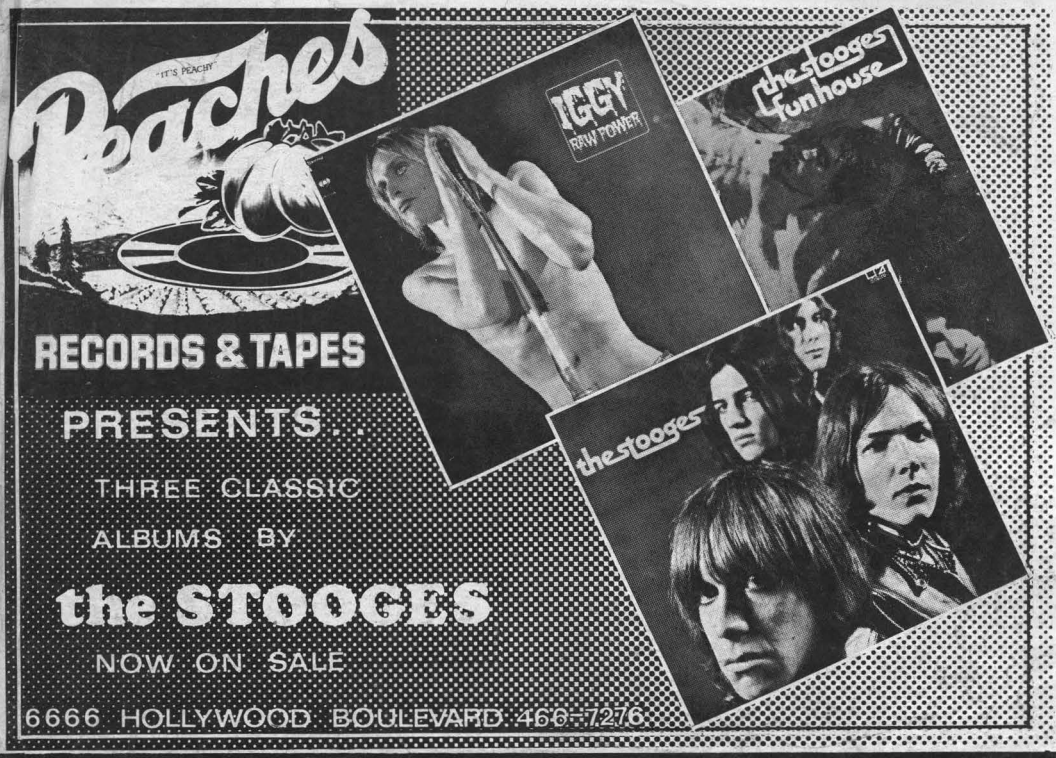
"48 hours" is back to clashing rhythms and consciousness. Short song (as short as the weekend is compared to the working week) about the horrible need to find kicks and forget oneself before the nightmare of daily work starts again. "Monday's coming like a jail on wheels / You know a girl, eh? / Well, she's bound to be rude" and the repetitive leitmotiv takes over: "48 hours needs 48 thrills . . . cheap thrills, any kind of thrills." Now, don't tell me you can't relate to that one. The same everywhere, pals. All in the same stinkin' boat.

Album closes with the fantastic "Garageland," a song that has been running thru my head for days now, so strong and precise are the feelings expressed in it, and so haunting its music. "I don't want to hear about / what the rich are doing / I don't want to go to / where the rich are going / They think they're so clever / they think they're so right / but the truth is only known by gutter-snipes" are the kind of lyrics that make you glad to live now, 'cause now is the time of The Clash. This sort of music is going to accelerate the coming changes and polarize everybody's feelings. The new wave has suddenly passed into high gear, the offensive has started. Might take a while before anything as strong comes our way again, but those 14 songs are so inspiring and revolutionary it should make it easier for others to follow.

Now we must demand that this album be released immediately. So we can start telling the real punx and new-wavers from the sissies, the old from the new, the poseurs from the hard-core. I haven't recovered from this album yet. Some of you won't either.

Kick Boy

Blue Leach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AY,' JACK,' LET'S HAVE 2 TACOS & A FUCKIN' CHOCOLATE SHAKE. EYAB, DAD!'
YESSIREE BOB,' IT'LL BE RIGHT OUT, SIR,' (CLICK, WHITE NOISE...)
AS JIMBO SITS WAITING, THESE TWO GUYS HE KNEW FROM SOMEWHERE COMES UP.
A LONG SHOT OF JACK-IN-THE-METACO.
WHERE HAD I SEEN THAT FUCKFACE?
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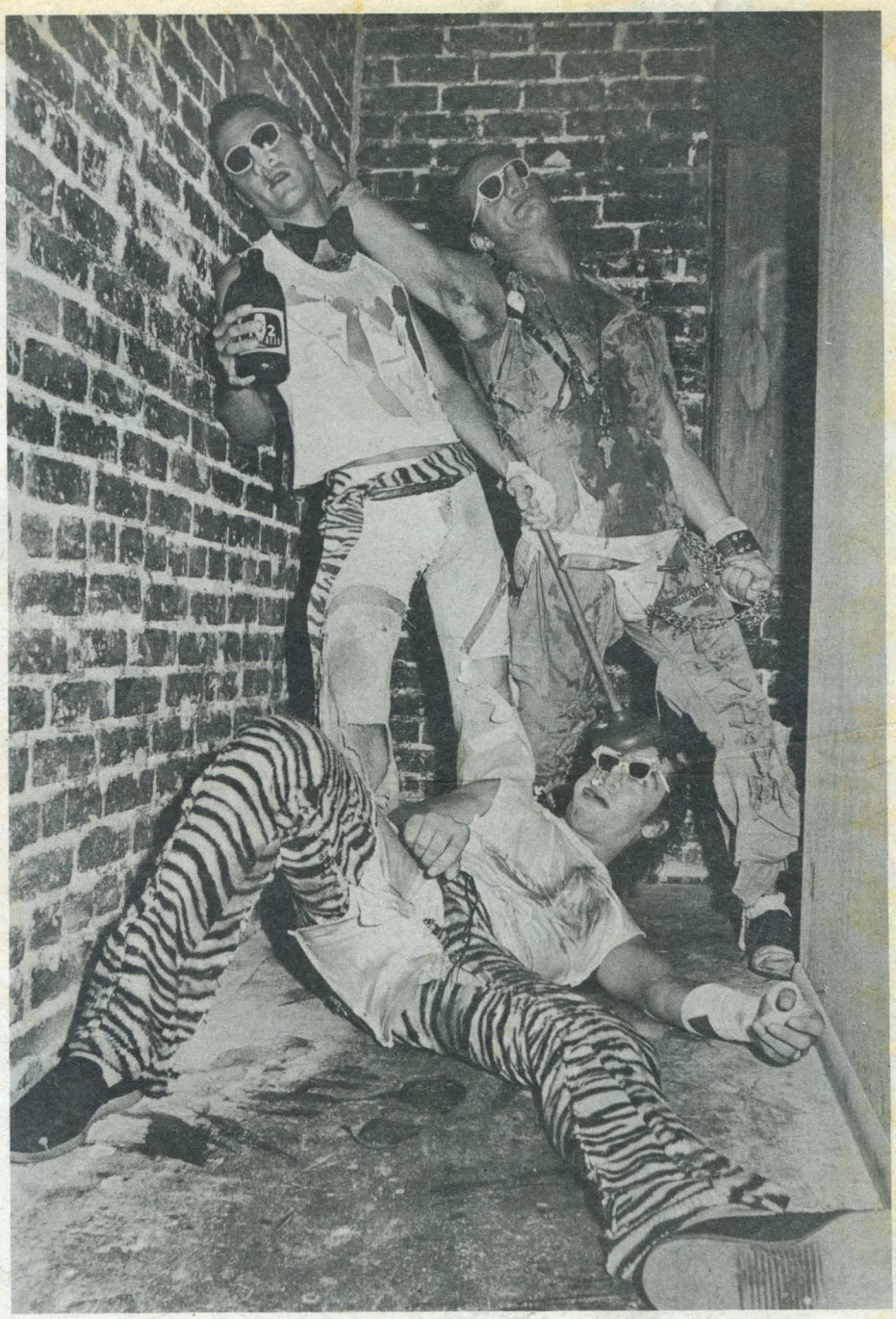

Photo: Philippe Mogane

The Whisky—Rock 'n' Rollsville Sunset Strip

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 4 SEPTEMBER 1977 FIFTY CENTS

LETTERS

Dear Slash,

Enclosed is a $10 money order. $5 of it is for my subscription, the other $5 is a gift subscription for Peter Frampton.

Shawn Henley
Hawthorne, California

Hi folks at SLASH!

Always hearing Greg saying how great you are finally leads me to sending you $1 for a sample issue.

"Sick of You" by the Users is the best single to come out of England ever. A must.

Do the Blitzkrieg Bop!
Reinhard Kunert
Braunschweig, West Germany

Nothing from Peking yet?

Slash,

Tell me, if this is the "New Wave," why I am staring in disbelief at the "Spot the familiar faces" centerfold?

Who needs Rodney anyway? If he's the self-appointed spokesman, what's going to happen when he meets a real English punk like J. Rotten or one of the Clash tries to mc the Stranglers? These guys aren't as jive as T. Rex was (or as sweet).

Your 1st issue was great, loved it. The 2nd issue's rap with the Weirdos was out of line, asking a jerk band from Pico Rivera (or is it Montebello?) about England. The Weirdos are overdressed, costumed, uniformed (in their very own words, mind you) phonies.

Just ask anybody outside Hollywood; this is the truth. They were all hippie types three weeks ago!

Anyway, why I wrote to you is because while all those snaps were being posed for, real punks were having a fucking good time at the gig we played down here in old "new" L.B. I am the bass player/singer in a four-piece hot band called Two-Fold, L.B.'s only real resident (none of us work either) punk band. We are new faces, we opened the KNAC bash for Shortage of Blood (now Rodney should try meeting these real English refugee punks).... The punk scene down here is very real, maybe you should move your paper down in L.B., maybe you could interview us at our next gig. We're funnier than Weirdos and Screamers put together.

O Fuck you!
K.C. (Two-Fold)
Los Alamitos, California

Okay, you "real" punks, let me tell you something. We don't give a shit what the Weirdos were last year or last week, all we know is that right now they're one of the best bands in the country, that they look fantastic (whadda ya mean, overdressed? Whose standards?) and that they probably could blow you off any fuckin' stage, dressed or naked! And Rodney never claimed to be the spokesman for the new stuff, you clown. Actually Rodney probably says less about the scene than anybody I know. Thank god there ain't no spokesman yet. Why not a leader? So you guys don't work, uh? Big deal! You get checks from Daddy every month or what? Sorry but it's too late to move down there, we just moved into a suite on top of the Playboy building on Sunset.

Kickboy

Howdy Kickboy, you sweetie,

Greeting from shitkicker land (Dallas, Texas). I found your June issue and I've just about memorized it. I even take it to bed with me (some people really complain, too).

Things are really desperate here. I've been raving about this punk junk to my friends almost a year and I might as well be talking Chinese. Ah! but the time is coming. Last month there were three ads in the local music mag for "weird types to form new wave band."

Last Sunday there was a free Ramones/Nervebreakers concert at the Ballroom... 800 denimed refugees from Saturday's Frampton concert sitting there with their mouths hanging open and 200 leather and safety pin clad crazies (who've been surviving on three Stooges and two MC5 albums for four years) tryin' to tear the front of the stage to pieces... The DJ who mc'ed the show was 30, bearded, beer-bellied and ***confused.***

This letter is just to let you know it's spreading like a fungus. Maybe I won't die of boredom now. Thank god.

(I'm sending my five bucks, Kickboy. I wouldn't want you getting on my ass. Not 'til we're properly introduced anyway.)

Robbie Paulette Robinson
Dallas, Texas

First of all, I am NOT a sweetie! And don't thank god for the new music. The old maniac had nothin' to do with it. He hasn't created Johnny Rotten in HIS image! But thanks for the fiver. Wish more of these L.A. poseurs had your commitment. Keep up the missionary work, doll.

Kickboy

Dear Slash,

I gotta admit I was really surprised when I saw SLASH #2. I really think L.A. sucks for the most part, and with the exception of BDM (which has been around for a couple of years anyway), the new 'zines from L.A. (Blank Generation, Raw Power, etc.) are dogshit. But SLASH is real Boss Hoss.

Phast Phreddie told me it sucked but he likes ZZ Top, Aerosmith, The Babys and shit like that. If you're sincere enough to put on yr own new wave shows it's obvious you're honest about the mag and not surfing on the new wave 'til it peaks. The interviews were pretty funny and the reviews almost intelligent. So what if it's skimpy, you get yr point across...

Rave on,
Todd Abramson
Berkley Hgts, New Jersey

The reviews are almost intelligent, uh? Always thought they were brilliant myself! And we are not skimpy, dear boy, we are LEAN. It's, like, a style, you know...

Kickboy

Re: "Take-that-you-creep" item in SLASH local shit:

I am a 15-year veteran of the rock music scene, or rather, an architect of a rock music scene where there once was none. My defense of the Groupie Principal is well known: either do it, ***admit*** you're doing it, do it with style and (hopefully) class, or get the fuck out! There is no definitive word for women catering to specific needs of men in specific professions. For instance, a geisha is not a whore.

The rock scene having developed in the past 10 years or so into a political, bureaucratic death dance has brought forth social leeches who have brought down the level of the hustle from Patti Harrison, Cynthia Lennon, Gail Zappa royalty to the animal squawking dog-pigging of a Farrah Fawcett Minor or Genevieve Schorr or JoAnne Russo! I'd rather EAT gall and wormwood than hear one more unsuspecting naive visiting musician say, "I have to be nice to that. It writes for a magazine" and point to one of Backstage Pass!

Now the "I write for a magazine I want to interview you" hustle has developed into "I want to hang out with you backstage and be glamorous (ugh) like the GTOs and the Runaways... I'm a FELLOW artist." Hey! Get out of the fucking way you phony cunts! Or at least bring your own oxygen! I've NEVER seen you CONTRIBUTE one fucking iota to this scene. You just suck blood, sap up energy, take up space and get in the way of people who CARE about and are in a position to help, build and support a scene. It's your fucking fault that there are Farrah Fawcett Minors behaving like animals in public! You and your ugly, unmagical, destructive crowd have made it impossible for people of substance and class to support New Wave and enjoy the scene. Fuck off!

Michele Myer

Strong stuff there, dear architect. If this thing escalates much more we'll have to drop it. One reply allowed. At your marks—go!

Kickboy

Fuckin piss shit weewees virgin mary titties mrs thatcher look my willie turds on toast how about that fuck you and fuck you and fuck fuck fuckety-fuckfuck safetypins in heat lick out my bumhole rats pus searing emotion creep burn yer ears off pain kill hate raw sick up

Several more people I know have now heard punk rock. They all say it's boring and bad music, except George who lives in The Forest of Dean and works for Rank Xerox and Sophie who is a housewife and mother and teaches shorthand. I've heard a few bits on the radio and the most disappointing thing is that it doesn't even convey to me that it's exploiting uninterestingness as an art form (not that I'd be particularly interested if it was), it just seems uninteresting in a sort of rather sad way that makes you want to pick it up and wipe its snotty little nose and tell it there, there, it was a good try.

Clearly I'm not qualified to hold any opinion. If I was interested in human behavior I'd certainly go to a punk concert, because it does seem that it's a mistake to suppose that the music is what it's about. Having read SLASH from cover to cover I deduce that the important aspect is the propounding of boredom and frustration, rejection and obnoxiousness as states of grace? Indistinct sound, abortive solos and unintelligible vocals are virtues in the music? An acceptable person would accompany continuous moronic face-pulling with nonstop dribbly razberry-blowing? .....Sorry if much of this letter seems a little negative. Fuck shit cunt bollocks.

Paul Winstanley
London

Whadda ya mean "negative"? Should hear us talking about the other music!!

SLASHPEOPLE:

...I must say you've got the best publication on the punk phenomenon there is. The photography is superb, and the writing should please both the intellectuals and those who enjoy pounding on dogs with Les Pauls...as a member of the Low Numbers I must thank you for ***the*** most perceptive review of our single I've ever seen. We will, I hope, have more surprises on the way...the Sex Pistols are amazing. Don't be afraid to write about them just because some assholes put them down for getting publicity... (then it's more support for Mark Shipper—took care of that already, didn't we)....I think it's interesting that even the IRA, which is promoting the destruction of England in one way, is condemned by Sex Pistols philosophy. Even they are too organized!

Anyway, all the best, good luck, keep 'em flying and all that. You are filling a gap—we need you!

Mark Leviton
Rhino Records
Claremont

If we please the intellectuals, what have we done wrong?? And we couldn't be filling the gap, 'cause we ARE the gap!

Kickboy

More on page four...

LISTEN 'ERE, YOU PUNK! (angry tone) Gary Panter

Everybody awake yet? Not too much of a hangover? Feeling almost human and satisfied with life? Well, that's too bad, shithead, 'cause there ain't nothing to be smug about. FACT ONE: (most immediate stuff first, we'll get to the philosophical later, don't you worry) ***this cute lovable paper you all profess to love and cherish 'til death does . . . is not gonna make it.*** Period. Did that sink in or do you want us to sing it in harmony?! ***Kaput, fini, oblivion . . .*** Might as well renew that Rolling Stone subscription or hope the other new wave rags are not hurting too much in their finances. All we got from you people are lots of talk, handshakes and promises and nothing fucking else. Sure it was fun putting down the "others," sure it was a gas raving and dreaming about what was happening. And it's not even satisfying to put ***you*** down now. Heartbreak hotel. We told you to subscribe, didn't we? But you thought, shit, not me. Let the naive kids send their dollars. I'm cool, I'll always get me a copy of SLASH somewhere. Maybe at their benefit. Or at their parties. I'll just come in lookin' real bad with my hardware, I'll drink their booze and I'll get me a few "complimentary" copies. I'll make the scene. Well, you gonna make the scene without us, dead weight! Party time's over until you learn to give a bit of your own, concert time's over until you stop bitching about a lousy $3 admission and then wreck the joint and cut our miserable profits in half 'cause of damages. And plain old SLASH time's also over unless you get your satisfied ass in gear (no, not him) and help us live. Do it for the music, do it for whatever twisted reasons but do it. ***Subscribe*** (yes, you!), impose it on your local store, find us places to have concerts, carry us to remote corners of the world, advertise your perversions on a quarter page . . . So it's not ***really*** over? Depends, bud. If you wake up it might be alright. We've done what we could. Let's see you.

FACT TWO: Looks to me like this little ol' scene is stagnating. The Whisky has had some real good shows this month but where are the ***new*** bands? Still in the garage painfully copyin' the latest Pistols riff or what? Come out, you sissies, let's hear your noise. If your lyrics ain't written yet we'll give you some. We hear about all these new combos with killer names but not one guitar note yet. Soon we're going to have to change the name of L.A.'s new wave to the "new ripple"!

FACT THREE: Modern Boy says something about it in his column but two warnings are better than one. If you feel nasty and in a fighting mood don't let it out when we're in SLASH company. Just go home and start a band or something. Or if you're real suicidal go and provoke the security heavies at a big stadium concert. That should be a big enough challenge.

And for the last time, punk is ***not*** decadent. The middle-of-the-road mindless rock is decadent, disco outfits are decadent, expensive denim outfits are decadent, Kiss is decadent. ***Punk*** is healthy. And it's a much better term than new wave. End of the charming editorial.

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MORE LETTERS

Zoooom:

SLASH is a BLAST! Wot a neat neat neat bunch a pages! Hey . . . But where's the FAST? We're hot here in Nu Yawk n we're recordin our 1st single this week for Private Stock Rec. with Richard Gotteher producin'. Expect an LP by late summer. Also expect us in L.A. sooner than that to race through our Power Pop Sets! Hey . . . Great Damned layout & wot a disgustin' rave-on about the Screamers . . .they gotta be "IT" out there! Anyway . . . Shit, ya better catch us FAST (not Quick!) an' prepare for the 1977 hot accelerators . . . No Elvis, Beatles or Stones fer us either!!

Spit 'n' clips
Miki Zone, The FAST

Listen, you modest bunch. You BETTER be good after that!

Kickboy

FUCKING GREAT!

Wild behavior in California??? I never thought it could happen . . . (1st line from a manic eight-page letter).

Stewart Copeland
(The Police)
London

Mr. Kickboy
Properties
I am produce you are discharge
I am animal you are not
I am slang you are school
I am riot You are wood
illegible
Hollywood, California

Should I take this personally??

Kickboy

Dear Slash,

Just wanted to say that I am somewhat into the "punk" scene and your paper is pretty neat (keen, nifty, etc.). I am more turned on by the scene than I am by the music, probably many people are. But you don't care what I'm into, do you Kickboy?!

Well, I just have one beef. If you and I want this scene to grow and last, you must let it happen on its own terms, by that I mean you should not print stuff like "what to wear, how to stand, how to act," etc. When you pull that crap you are saying what it is and isn't sort of matter of factually. As soon as you say what is in, hip, kool, or whatever the new thing is, it becomes instantly passe! (That's passe like lasse.) Let things happen by themselves and then report them. All scenes in the past from the slick '50s to the slash '70s have been able to evolve by themselves. So don't hinder progress! Kickboy, I'm not mad at you (so don't take it out on your mother or anything), I am just offering some advice . . . You should change your local shit column to "punk junk" and soon we can call the whole thing "junk rock."

If you're wondering why I wrote on this paper towel, it is because the underwear I was going to send it on was not dirty enough and I didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings! I have also enclosed in a plastic bag Kickboy's dinner which consists of some of my nails (toe and finger), part of one of my best scabs, and a real used band-aid. Sorry, no safety pins!

Yours truuuuleee,
Billy Dolls (Billy Dolls & the Go-Go's)

Thanks for the care package, Billy boy! Some of you out there are truly disgusting . . .some cultural movement we're part of! As to your advice, we agree. No more hindering progress from now on (hindering progress . . .what next?!!)

Hey Slash,

Please send me SLASH magazine. Here is me 50 cents. Can't wait. Thanx.

Dave Stinson
conrad, Montana

MONTANA? Ha ha ha hey hey hey. Quick can't wait.

SLASH,

We're taking over. Nobody gets a break. Everybody is suspect.

Sincerely,
Jami Golden

You too!

COMPETITION

Let's see how the competition's doin'—Part I (a more or less objective peep at mags, fanzines, punkzines and other ephemeral phenomena)

TWISTED ("Another rock 'n' roll magazine): brand new, published in Seattle. Price is O.K. (60 cents), decent pics, good stuff on local groups (Knobs, Feelings), weak reviews (they don't like the Saints!), free jar of vaseline with subscription. Write 8045 Brooklyn, N.E., Seattle, WA 98115.

NEW YORK ROCKER: A biggie. One dollar but worth it. Mucho information, tons of pics. Real schizo attitude about the new noiz, they love it but . . . Some great writers, some bad interviewers, some embarrassing ads. We all read it from cover to cover. Definitely here to stay (who mumbled "not like some of us!"??). Write Box 253, Elmhurst, NY 11373. Elmhurst A NY 11373.

SEARCH AND DESTROY ("New wave cultural research"): Thin and expensive (one dollar), San Francisco contribution to these chaotic times. Great lay-out, some funny stuff, limited subjects (Crime & Nuns & Nuns & Crime & . . .). Number two should be good. Write to City Lights Bookstore, 261 Columbus, S.F., CA 94133.

RAW POWER (Metal machine magazine): Barf! xeroxed little piece of shit with dull look and moronic opinions (raves about Alice C. and Quiet Riot!), not worth the quarter they ask. This kind of crap is gonna give fanzines a bad name. Don't write to Quick Draw, 23938 Mariano, Woodland Hills, CA 91367.

BACK DOOR MAN: An old timer. Price's right, some great pics. Can be real funny. Real rock 'n' roll attitude, very opinionated. Strange likes and dislikes. Out to defend rock 'n' roll to the death. Also puts out records. They hate us but we don't care. Write P.O. Box 6726, Torrance, CA 90504.

I WANNA BE YOUR DOG: High-priced raver dedicaed to the Ig's various manifestations. It's all in French but that shouldn't stop you 'cause it's "rock French," a special lingo made up of 50% filthy French and 50% English. Not to be shown to your French teacher unless you hate him. Sometimes looks quite good. If it's not about monsieur Pop it covers some of the new stuff and still too much of the old. One day very perceptive and the next totally misses the point. Write to Iggy Pop Fan Club, 2 Square Trudaine, Paris 75009.

NEW DEZEZES (or DEZEAZS) ("Punk Stuff"): Truly crazed 'zine from S.F. with "up yours" lay-out, unique grammar, manic opinions and the shortest record reviews ever printed. Seventy-five cent's a bit high but it deserves support. Write to 1937 Mason St., S.F., CA 94133.

SNIFFIN' GLUE ("and other rock 'n' roll habits . . ."): The best of the small ones. Real sharp and angry, they know what they like and they know what they hate. Also extremely funny. Militant rock. A must to know what it's all about. Published by Mark P., who also now puts out great singles. Write to 28 Dryden Chambers, 119 Oxford Street, London W11 England NOW!

(to be continued . . .)

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WRITE KICKBOY!!

HE WANTS YOU TO RESPOND. (HE THRIVES ON ABUSE). LETTERS WILL BE PUBLISHED. ADDRESS LETTERS IN CARE OF THIS PAPER.

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LOCAL SHIT

Weirdos single (on Bomp) in the making. Title is "Destroy All Music." Nice lads!

Speaking of Devo, SLASH helped organize a "little" party to welcome the quintet in town. Fifty people were expected and a few hundred showed up. Ended up with "dancers" writhing on the floor while sophisticos looked on with disbelief and the slightest trace of uneasiness. Boojie Boy's gang looked 'specially ugly that night with transparent tape on their mugs. The broken glass level the next morning being slightly over two inches, it looks like whatever little affair (aren't we chi-chi?) we have something to do with will have to take place in a bunker . . .Same night later: SLASHer Pleasant fell down a whole flight of concrete stairs, landed on her chin and elbows (ouch!) and ended up in the hospital having to have stiches put in her chin.

Screamers now have their own fan club and newsletter. Great 1st issue—contact Brian Tristan, 1845 N. Wilton Place, Hollywood. The Screamers' two nights at the Whisky left everybody there dazed and overwhelmed. Many think this was their best appearance ever. No more shows for a while, Gear havin' to spend time in the hospital. When they do reappear it might be with a whole new set of songs.

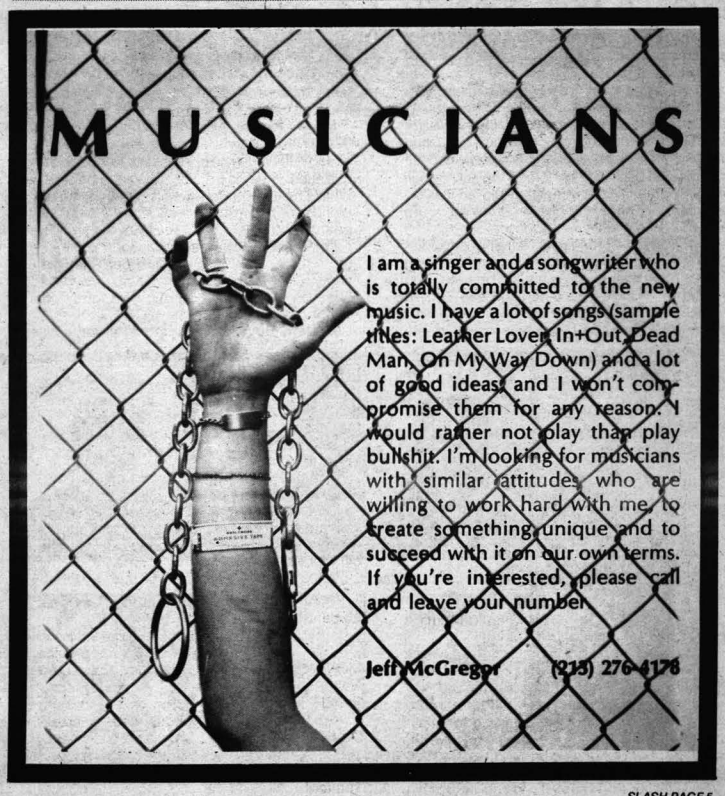
Dils/Devo/Weirdos night at the Myron Ballroom much fun. Dils played very short set with Zeros' drummer Baba, Andre having fallen down a flight of stairs the day before (is this a new fad?) and broken things in his body. Quick recovery and all that, Endre. Baba did a great job replacing him, having never played with them before. Devo appealed to many and Weirdos had the crazed audience pogoing and thumping each other in the most lively manner.

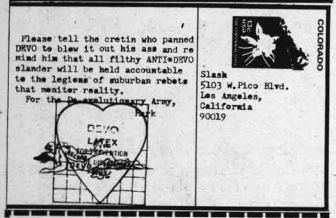
SLASH benefit #2 at the Larchmont went well, thank you, we made twice as much as last time (why do we tell you these things?). The featured bands (Dils, Germs, Screamers) giving us back part of their already meager salaries after it was over. Some people have class.

Here's a lot of thank yous . . . Thanks to Alain & Helen for their financial (and moral) support . . . Thanks to KROQ for the free radio spots for both our benefit concerts & also for playing some new music occasionally . . . Thanks to everyone who subscribed last month (all of you can ignore most of the editorial & any other nasty threats), we hope you like our plain brown wrapper . . . Thanks, Paul & Dizzy, for the free advertising on the Roosevelt Hotel . . . and ***thanks*** to our minds, we can't remember the other 400 people we really mean to thank.

Backstage Pass apparently off to Japan soon?? (where, by the way, this here rag is on sale in Tokyo!) . . . lots more happened this month but enough is enough. And remember, the SLASH slogan of the day is ***"subscribe"***!

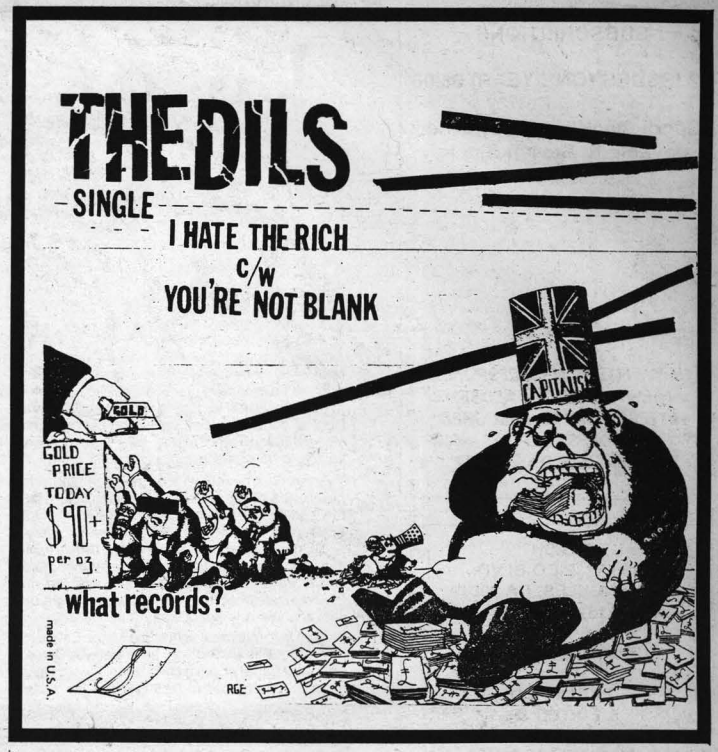
Oh yeah, the Dils are looking for a drummer, so keep your ears peeled.





FUCK UPS

In last issue's Zeros interview, we attributed Robert's words to Hector and vice versa. To read it as it was really spoken, just change the two names around. Sorry, guys, we're quite embarrassed about that. Also, picture credits were not given to Genny Stern for the Mumps on page 18.



modern boy modern y modern boy moder rn boy modern boy modern boy modern

...Welcome back...I've managed to maintain my little space in this rag for another month ...last time, the editors got so many calls (or were they threats?) from my brief but biting blurbs they bound & gagged me & subjected me to repeated listenings of "Pretty Vacant" (which would've been heaven 'cept they played it at ***low volume!!***)...Those assholes are ***cunning*** ...it's all I can do not to write love poems...

Soft Start: Why the fuck is it that whoever it is out there is tearing up & ripping down everything they can get their fucking hands on in every club in town...I don't care if you did see English wankers on TV doing the same... We've only got a few places in L.A. where one can see groups... So until someone opens a new club with padded walls, unleash all that pent-up energy on yourself or a friend... Right now it's more important to have places where new bands can be seen...!!!???

Nude Waif: I just couldn't believe it!... SLASH has only been out three months & already they're (we're) resorting to cheap ***sex***-ploitation (see last mo's contents page!)... What's next, a scratch 'n' sniff centerspread with Blondie or P. Smith?...well, actually it wouldn't be that bad...

I'm Pissed For Real: O.K. Goddammit... I uh, ...shit, it's no use... I just can't get really angry...maybe the summer heat, maybe it's because I don't get a fucking cent for this shit (uh-oh, I'm feeling sorry for myself)...

Modern Boys & Girls: (a brief history, courtesy of mr. rozz tox). Time: pre-atomic. Place: Japan...as Japan swings into the industrial revolution, the teeners (foreseeing their future as machine-like drone-heads) form a loose society of co-ed moderns...nihilistic were my name-sake...one favorite pastime was jumping into the crater of Mt. Fuji...those Tokyo-teens always were (and are) a creative bunch...

P.S. **Pix Nix to Kix(Boy):** (This little bit o' gossip was pinched from the local shit file, I hope you don't mind) Kickboy Face, that underground cult figure (haha) surfaced last month to play a small role in an upcoming "Hardy Boys" series ... It'll be aired mid-September & if you watch real close, you might see him playing three-chord tambourine, or looking real bad in his sherpa vest...he's so hard-core... (snicker snicker).

LIMEY NEWS

The first punk movie is due for release here in November. Starring Jenny Runacre and Richard O'Brien, the film is not purely punk but seems to be a surreal look at the England of the late '70s. It has the same producer as *Sebastiane* and is being directed by David Jarman.

The Sex Pistols' movie (to be directed by Russ Meyer) is now crawling into production.

Rastaman Bob Marley has recorded a song about the punks called "Punky Reggae Party." News is vague, but it seems to be produced by Lee "Scratch" Perry after they both heard the Clash version of "Police and Thieves." As yet there are no release plans.

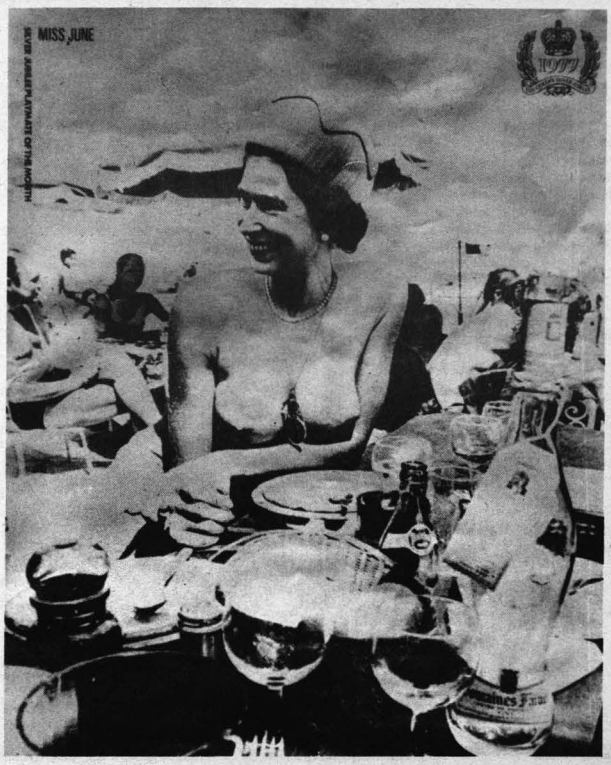
Generation X have been signed by Chrysalis Records. Their first single, "Your Generation," to be released soon.

The Sex Pistols returned last month from a tour of Scandinavia. **Sid Vicious** was compelled to fly back to London during the tour to stand trial on a charge of carrying a flick-knife (an offense here) one evening at the **100 Club** in Oxford Street, nearly a year ago. This was the night when a 17-year-old girl was blinded in one eye by broken glass. Sid, who was not even near the incident, was pounced upon by the hastily summoned rozzers and lamely charged with possession of an offensive weapon.

Wearing a black suit, shirt and tie, Sid appeared in court with his mother—and **Clash** men **Mick Jones** and **Paul Simenon** as defense witnesses.

A happy ending: Mr. Vicious was fined £125, given a stiff ticking off and returned to Scandinavia a fairly free man. (The Pistols are still not allowed to play anywhere in the U.K.).

P.S. The Damned have added a second guitarist, "Lu," who is now recording their album with them. Virgin now says Pistols album due to be released on 19th of September, with still a possibility of further delay. Come on!



in memory of the king

Elvis

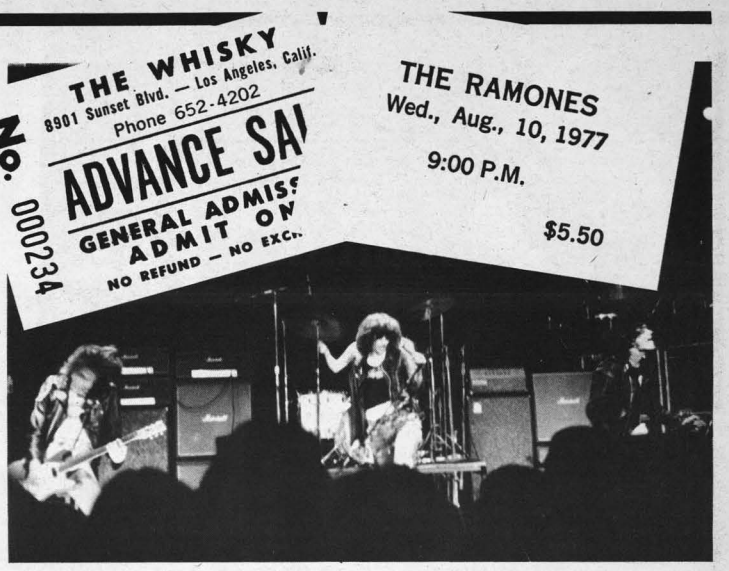
glen at grannys

LIVE (SOMETIMES)

THE RAMONES, PLUS MILK AND COOKIES at the Whisky

Sold out. Lines around the block. Los Ramones have made it. One tiny hit on radio but a definite following. Not quite as important here as they are in Europe, but soon... And nobody walked away with mixed feelings. They were perfect. Did most of their songs as good and better than on the LPs and it wasn't a turntable you had to stare at, it was the leather kids themselves. Speaking of which, I'm real envious. They've solved the clothes problem once and for all. What you wear just becomes your second skin, and everything else is bullshit. They sweat in it, sleep in it, perform in it and I'm sure do many other things in it.

But back to music. Joey knows one great position and uses it a lot while belting out his sweet songs. It's kind of a I - take - one - step - back - then - I - swing - the - mike - stand - across - my - thigh - and - hold - it - there - at - an - angle - until - I feel - like - putting - it - back - where - it - belongs - stance and it's good. Also saves a lot of hassles as far as the what - do - I - do - when - I'm - not - singing dilemma. Not that there is much of that, 'cause there are no solos and each song blends into the next right after Dee Dee has shouted the introductory "1, 2, 3, 4" to everything. And that's not all Dee Dee does. He runs around, shakes his head and plays the most basic powerful bass runs my ears have ever witnessed (can ears witness?). Johnny, on the other guitar, is mister Riff himself and since you all know Ramones riffs you know the guy is something to be reckoned with. Tommy is behind the drums and does not have any expressions.



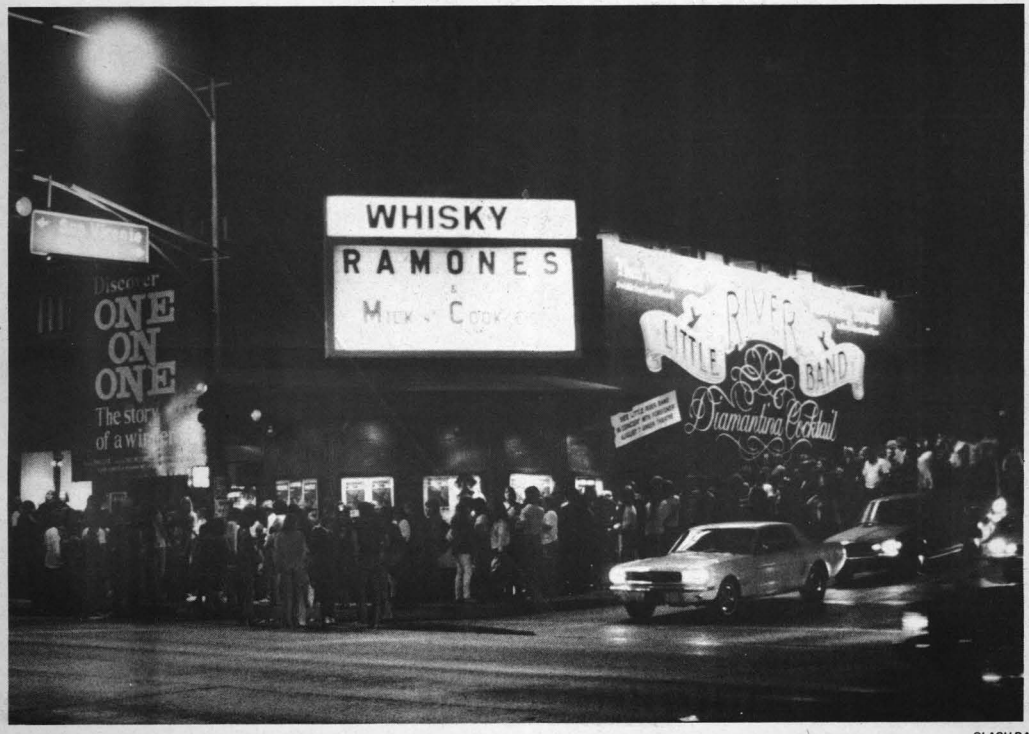
Being at the drums with the Ramones does not leave you time to have expressions.

The audience knew every song by heart (now that's popularity!) so everyone helped along in the choruses, not that any help was needed. The Ramones are rock geniuses, which is not like your average genius. If nothing else, it's much more fun.

Almost forgot: Milk and Cookies did some pop tunes before. With a name like Milk and Cookies, I didn't expect anything tasty. My expectations were fulfilled.

K.B.

P.S. I was just told I didn't say nothing 'bout the music. I can't. Just too physical. Buy the records and use your imagination.



James Stark

SCREAMERS ATTACK SAN FRANCISCO

Celebrity night at Mabuhay, plus all the usual old rockers and suburban egg-yolks out on the town on a Friday night. No one was prepared for what they were about to see and hear. The Screamers ain't punk, new wave, or other wave. They're outer wave: Bermuda Triangle rock. Avant garde. Minimalism-extremism. Parallels to Kraftwerk are garbage. Kraftwerk are somber and low energy. Screamers are high tension and somber. Tomato popped around the stage and into the audience. Shrieking vocals, ejected from the bottom of his throat. Danced the epileptic a-go-go. Gidget goes spastic. Curled up into a little foetal bundle. Looked like Nicholson post lobotomy on energy pills. Gear, killer expressions, wild and fierce back-up vocals, projecting tension in motion. Wouldn't introduce him to my mom. He danced everything akimbo. Lots of kicks. David and K.K. younger and more art-school. K.K. no frills percussion. David ghoulish clown—reminds me of Eddie Munster grown up. "Gloomy Sunday" focal number of the evening. Like a late night religious science-fiction chiller. Gear's vocals establishing him as high priest of the order. Tomata killed the guitar. Hard-core fans loved them and reacted. The rest sat there, sucking up the energy and not giving anything in return. They were overwhelmed and confused. We all were. Few pogoers for ***this*** show. Chattering during "Gloomy Sunday." More songs. No encore. Everyone went home relieved it was over. Even the ones that loved it.

Jean Caffeine

D-O-G

THE DOGS/F.O.B.L.A.
at the Whisky
Monday, August 15

First of all, what does F.O.B.L.A. stand for? Fucking Obvious Bastards of L.A.? Should be, because these kids are still caught up in the sequin shit trip of singing about being R 'n' R stars . . . insipid and retarded hippie wimps with googoo brains; even have drum solos yet and plunging V-neck shirts a la Buddy Greco. Hasn't anybody learned anything in the last year? There's no excuse for this kind of music any more . . . no matter how unimaginative/unoriginal one is.

Although the Dogs have been around for a while, this was the first I'd seen of them. And after hearing their no-nonsense single (out of print) I was prepared to like them. Unfortunately, their faults all but outweigh their good points. Songs are too long, lyrics dumb, riff selection boring. However, they perform with such energy, volume, and ***conviction*** (very important) I almost don't mind . . . almost. Anyway, Mary looks real cool on bass in her total mobilization jumpsuit (big black cross over left knee) and guitarist Loren appropriate in ragged jeans and MC5 T-shirt. But they still have a way to go.

Chris Desjardins

THE NUNS, DICTATORS and PLEASANT
at the Whisky

The Nuns have a bunch of really good-o songs but I can't remember any of the titles. Singing what's-her-name opens the show with the Sally Bowles-type number that's fabulous. They also do a good cover of "Search and Destroy" with the short guy singing in this raw gives-ya-goose-bumps growl.

I can't really evaluate the Dictators set because I fell asleep during da foist song. That guy Handsome Asshole was wearing a blinding red sequin jacket and the rest of them looked like the Cycle Sluts meet the Hell's Angels—lots of fuzzy hair, black leather, shades and studs.

ZACHA
FEAR MAY BE OUR ONLY HOPE

LIKE THEM...

Controversy is the key word . . . What controversy? The one at SLASH headquarters! Some of us are DEVOted, while others (the ones with pointy heads & vacant smiles) just didn't (or wouldn't) like Devo in concert (a perfect example: Bardo Mello's review on this page). It's just a sickness that plagues wetbacks ("me no comprende").

What appears to be the stumbling block for these minimalminds is the difference between celluloid fantasy & reality (c'mon guys, remember reality?). They saw Devo's film (12 minutes of compressed uneasiness) & expected to see something of the same intensity onstage . . . I mean, shit, they're only human (human?).

Okay, after their first tune, I too felt a little disappointed, but by number two or three I came around & realized "oh fuck it's real subtle and understated but they are stranger and sicker [meaning better] than I ever imagined." Nothing obvious like spit & vomit, Devo is more a subliminal affront (unconscious outrage?—that's what ol' Roget sez). I'm trying to say that even if they didn't try, they'd be terrific! I'm not discounting their theatrics (Mark dives into an audience better than anybody I've seen & their jumping 'n' marching in regimented unison rivals stormtroopers on parade), but when they peel off those masks & reveal all those soft sweet midwestern faces—faces to model androids from & they make with those UNIVAC melodies, that's when my cerebral juices flow . . .

Maybe I've got an overactive imagination, maybe stayed up late too many times watching 1950s sci-fi, maybe I've been eating too much at McDonald's of the future (the best Macs in town), maybe SLASH oughtta lay me off 'cause I never am able to make my point . . . all I'm trying to say is ***"listen Basho & Kickboy & Pea, I don't mind a little controversy, but just remember I'm right & you're wrong & everybody out there listen to me . . . I'm not God, but I'm trying & the least you can do is ignore everything"*** (except what I say) . . . fuck this shit, I'm hungry . . .

Modern Boy

D-E-V-O
at
the
starwood

OR DON'T...

Boy, did I brace myself before I went to see Devo. I'd seen their gruesome photos in the paper, I heard the unsettling single and I caught glimpses of the devastating Devo movie. I had the impression something was wrong with these guys. I feared it might be catching so I took the precaution of fortifying my blood with smuggled Mescal. There was a dead worm at the bottom of the Mescal bottle. I was confident. None of that Devo bacteria was going to survive in my veins and give me after-effects.

I got to the Starwood and paid my way in, with mixed bravado. The Starwood evicts SLASH. I was afraid someone would fink before I had the chance to test my will to survive against the forces of Devo. But nobody, thank God in heaven, snitched. Devo was the experience of my life. I could have stuck to Dr. Pepper, avoided the hangover, and still become as culturally enriched as if I'd just seen Anita Bryant (my personal hero) drive down the street in a car with a French name. Devo is that good! Obviously fantastic. They are perfect. Just ask them.

They aren't rude like so many of those other bands giving youth music a bad name these days. Not Devo. Those mild boys are so considerate they wore plastic masks on stage and waited for an invitation rom the audience before showing their true faces. Surprises galore! No terrible mutilations were revealed. I was disappointed at first that it really wasn't the Beatles reunion under those masks, but Devo is such great show biz I soon forgot about the fab four. There were five Devos.

At the end of the show they brought out their mother, who has not borne up terribly well through five childbirths. She did a fine go-go strip, blubber shake on stage. She must really love her boys.

I think they are the best thing since the Tubes discovered the vanilla milk shake. Why, I actually at one moment found my foot had tapped. I will not rest until Devo are on T.V. where they belong. Following Donny and Marie, opening for Cher.

Basho (I'm-sorry-I-wasted-the-Mescal-Kickboy) Macko

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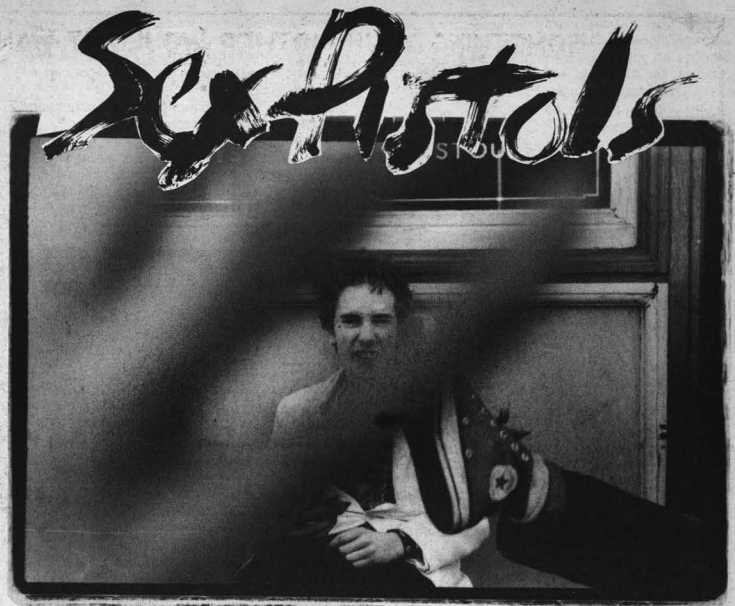
THE SEX PISTOLS

The interview took place in and around a small television studio, where the Pistols were recording a videotape of their current single, in Whitfield Street, London W1. The Sex Pistols are Johnny Rotten (vocals), Steve Jones (guitar), Paul Cook (drums) and Sid Vicious (bass).

(Late morning in the dressing room)

Slash: . . . You didn't like our magazine?
Johnny: You bet I didn't.
Slash: What was wrong with it, then?
Johnny: It was pathetic.
Slash: How? We like it.
Johnny: "How to cut your hair . . . (unintelligible)." "What hairdressers to visit . . ."
Slash: Yeah. Don't forget it's American and things are different there. It's for Americans.
Johnny: I see. Ha, ha!
Sid (lying on floor): They're more stroppy there.
Johnny: So because they're American they've got to have a lower standard.
Slash: Have you been to America?
Johnny: No.
Slash: You've been to New York, haven't you?
Johnny: No.
Slash: Are you going to go?
Johnny: No.
Sid: Yes, I've got plans to go to Los Angeles.
Johnny: Send me a postcard.
Slash: What about the movie you're going to make?
Johnny: I despise the idea (laughing). I hate it, and I don't want to do it. It's as easy as that. I think it's fucking ***bullshit.***
Slash: Johnny Speight's writing it, isn't he?
Steve: He can't write, he's too fat.
Sid: I think it will be wonderful. I'm looking forward . . . (unintelligible) new art form.
Slash (to Johnny): Have you got a big part in it?
Johnny: I dunno. I haven't even seen the fucking script. It started out as a joke, but now it's got pathetic.
Slash: Is it going to be a feature?
Johnny: It won't be a feature in my life.
Slash: Tell us what the film is going to be about.
Johnny: Oh, supposedly a history of the band. But I've no doubt many egos will run into it and the whole thing will be a complete farce.
Slash: Who is the director?
Sid: Yeah, my granny's directing it.
Slash: Righto. What about album plans?
Sid: I've got a stamp album. (Burps twice.)
Slash: O.K. How many did you sell of "God Save The Queen" compared with "Anarchy in the U.K."?
Johnny: About 30,000. "Anarchy" was stopped after it reached number 28 in the charts.
Slash: Are you happy at Virgin Records now?
Johnny: It'll do.
Sid: Only a fool is happy with anything . . . that was funny, wasn't it?
Johnny: Hysterical.
Slash: What's the truth behind your sacking from A&M?
Sid: I broke the bog window. That's what they gave us to say.
Slash: Nothing to do with pressure from "hip" rock stars?
Johnny: Yes it was.
Sid: It wasn't. It was because I broke the bog window.
Slash: Was it Peter Frampton's bog window, by any chance?
Sid: Who?
Johnny: Possibly, he complained.
Sid: What's that big spot . . . Rick Wakeman.
Steve: Big pus-bag (unintelligible). He looks like a pig, a hippie pig.
Sid: It's his nose, you can see right up it. It's vile, you can see all the bogies up there.
Johnny: Pig-dog.
Slash: Have you heard any American new wave bands?
Sid: Yeah. Glen Miller.
Slash: What about the Ramones?
Johnny: The Ramones are the only ones that have got any idea of fun. The rest are just too fucking dead-pan serious.
Sid: Everything the Ramones make keeps getting cheaper and nastier . . . it sounds right corny.
Slash: Iggy Pop?
Sid: He's just a fart.
Slash: Bowie?
Sid: He's just a fart.
Slash: Have you got any musical heroes?
Johnny: You've got me stumped there.
Sid: Jefferson Airplane.
Steve: I thought I was your hero, Sid.
Sid: Oh yeah, Fatty Jones.
Johnny: Mamas and Papas. They've really helped our career a lot. We know how not to do it.
Slash: Do you like any new wave English bands?
Sid: I think the Clash are quite amusing sometimes. Joe Strummer is quite funny—to watch him whimpering across the stage like a big pubic hair wafting about.
Johnny: Most amusing. The best circus going—load of fucking epileptics.
Slash: What about The Damned?
Sid: The Damned aren't even funny. They're just quite a sad—I want to cry whenever I see them.
Slash: They told us that you were just a vehicle to sell clothes for Malcolm McClaren.
Steve: That's right. That's correct. We're puppets on strings.
Sid: We try hard to be as good as the Clash. It's not our fault if we can't quite . . . quite be . . .
Steve: It's just that they got a better manager than ours. That's why we can't be as good as them.
Johnny: Where we went wrong is we didn't get an invitation at fucking sunset resort.
Slash: So you don't like what the Clash or anybody else is doing?
Steve: Well, I'd rather see them than Led Zeppelin I suppose.
Sid: Led Zeppelin aren't even funny.
Slash: Alright, what about the Pistols' album-to-be?
Johnny: That's awful.
Slash: Of course . . .
Sid: What cheek!
Slash: When will it come out?
Johnny: God knows. No idea at all.



Photos: Fleshy Parts

Slash: Have you put down any tracks yet?
Johnny: Done 'em all—about 12.
Slash: Can you tell us some of the titles?
Johnny: No. All the old stuff. Everything we used to do. Originals, of course.
Slash: Where's Paul Cook?
Steve: He ain't here yet.
Sid: The ugly one with the big nose.
Johnny: Pig-dog.
Sid: He's like Rick Wakeman with short hair.
Johnny: Yeah, Miss Piggy.
Slash: What's the videotape you're here to do for?

I know you're banned by the GLC.*
Johnny: Yeah. There aren't any. If we *can* get a big hall, no insurance company will back it. And you can't do a big gig in England without an insurance company.
Slash: Tell me what happened with that beating-up incident that was in the national press.
Johnny: What was that?
Steve: He's talking about you (to Johnny).
Johnny: I just refused to talk to the nationals because they just love to scandalise anyway. So I let them crawl up their own arseholes for a week. Most amusing.

Johnny: Just for Virgin's shops. 'Cause they have like video displays.
Steve: It's embarrassing 'cause you have to mime it out of one watt volume.
Johnny: I fucking hate it. I despise it.
Slash: What did you think of SLASH? I know you saw a copy.
Sid: I wiped my bum on it.
Johnny: It's like that Andy Warhol rag. It's the same set-up. It's plain awful.
Slash: How political are the Pistols?
Sid: Not political at all. I don't know anything about politics—it's all bullshit.
Johnny: It's political to decide which can of baked beans you want nowadays in England. You can have a huge fucking argument with the shop assistant. "Why don't you buy brand X? What's wrong with it? Why d'you pick that one?"
Sid: What's politics anyway? I don't know nothing about them. We just want to moan about things.
Johnny: It's like for us to bloody finish music for all time, so that nobody can ever listen to it again without feeling disgusted. Any music.
Slash: We'll have to wait for the album.
Johnny: Oh, but that's so sweet and nice.
Slash: How many dates are you doing in Sweden?
Johnny: We're not. I'm not going.
Sid: Neither am I. We refused. He [Steve Jones] isn't going either.
Johnny: Don't wanna go, I'd rather go to English speaking peoples, not a load of fucking Gong fans.
Slash: So it was going to be a tour?
Johnny: I don't know, I wasn't even told about it.
Sid: Three dates in Outer Mongolia? That's a tour?
Slash: So what about playing plans in England?

Sid: If they tried to beat me up, I'd fucking run away.
Johnny: I didn't get beat up, I got cut up.
Slash: One of the Adverts got beat up too.
Johnny: It's got nothing to do with the group, it's just a way of life. But I could have been anyone. Lance Percival, it still would have happened.
Slash: Who beat you up?
Sid: They were nasty beasts and they did it because he's still a star and they're jealous of his . . .
Steve: Here he is! (Paul Cook arrives)
Paul: Dead again! Fuck! It took me ages to get here.
Slash: If you do make a lot of money, what will you do with it?
Pistols: SPEND IT!
Slash: On what?
Johnny: Fucking anything. Anything that amuses me.
Sid: I dunno. I spent all my money already.
Johnny: A house in the country and a Rolls Royce. That's what we all want. 'Cause we're just a big hype just to get money. We'll do anything to get lots of money.
Slash: Do you get lots of money?
Johnny: No, not yet. Something must've gone wrong with the plans.
Sid: I wanna buy a fish and chip shop for my mum.
Slash: How much money do you get paid though?
Johnny: We get £35 a week—which goes in one night's entertainment.
Sid: Or rather, one night's non-entertainment.
Slash: Have you got any message for the American punks?
Sid: Yeah. Fuck off, you stupid wankers.
Johnny: I dig the originality of The Weirdos. They are truly wonderful. What a bunch of wankers. Talk to me on the phone, did they? Fucking liars. I never talked to any of them on the phone. Why do they make up these stories?
Slash: So what's going to happen to The Pistols in the next few weeks, few months?
Johnny: We'll gradually fade out and come back with a vengeance as the new Bay City Rollers. This is a deliberate plan of ours—to make more money.
Slash: So you're fed up with everything now?
Johnny: Yes. We're going to wear nice clothes from now on. Be like everybody else. We've realized it's the only way to live.
Slash: How much does McClaren's clothes shop tie in with you?
Johnny: It's not his shop, It's—dare I say, lover? It's his lover's shop. His girlfriend's.
Man: The studio's ready. It's all set up.
Johnny: Yeah. First I want to drop a brick.
Slash: If you come to Los Angeles, will you come and see us at SLASH?
Johnny: I don't mind. I'll see anyone there.
Sid: Good.
Johnny: Oh, he's such a pleasant young chap.
Slash: Isn't he? You made a lot of money from those sackings, didn't you?
Johnny: Noooo. Actually, the tax people made a lot of money. Eighty per cent of everything we earned they took. It's no fun being famous.

Everyone moves to the studio where The Pistols eventually half mime, half play "Pretty Vacant" to the television cameras. Johnny refuses to mime. After about five takes, an acceptable tape (to the crew and the group) is achieved.

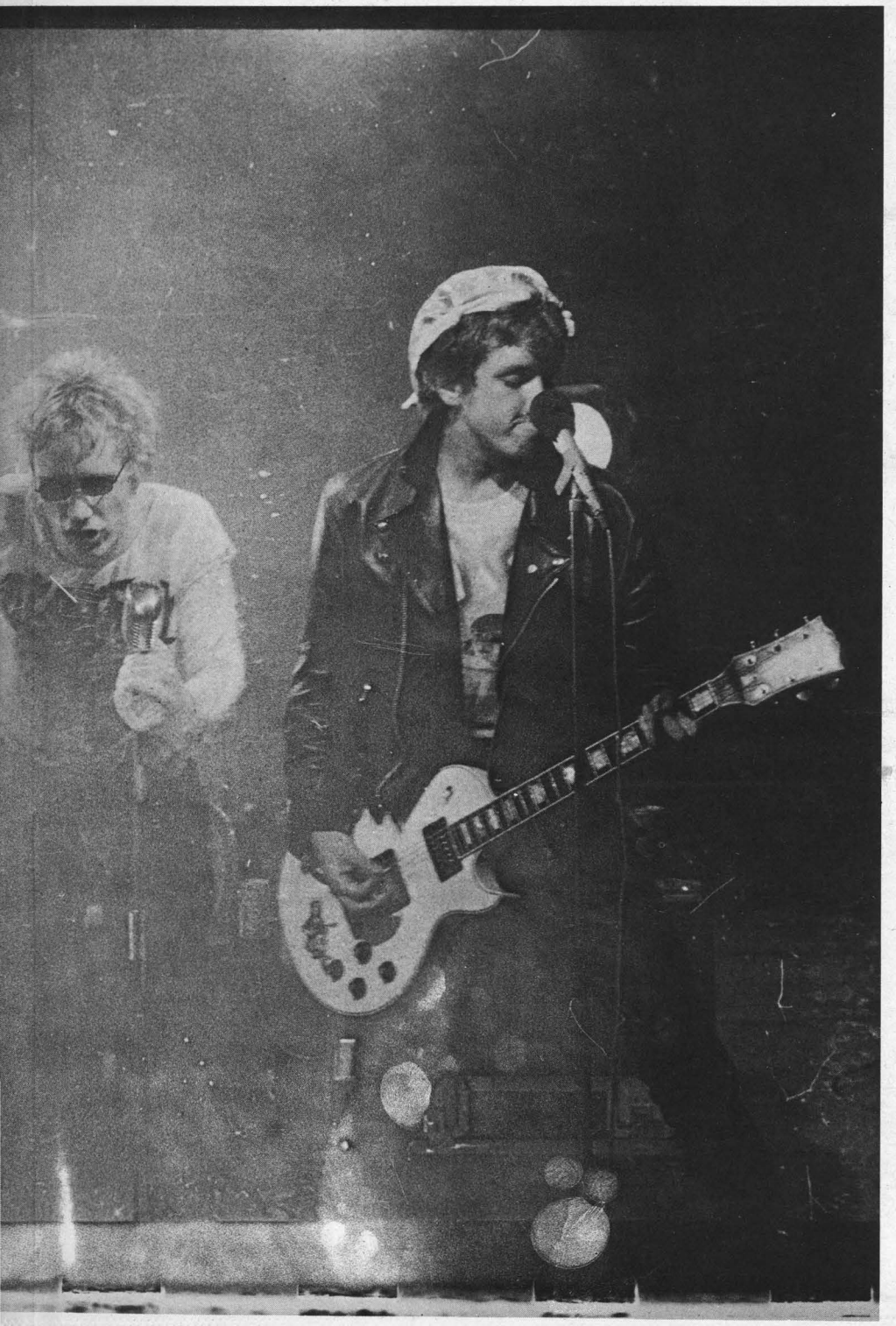
*(Greater London Council—Ed.)

(Lunchtime. Outside a pub over the road.)

Slash: What do you think of "Sniffin' Glue"? (The top English fanzine)
Johnny: I despise it. Mark P is like one of my worst enemies.
Steve: I beat Mark P up so many times—he come up the office once didn't he . . .
Johnny: It's just not worth the bother, is it? He's thick as shit.
Steve: . . .knocked on the door . . .opened it, just picked him up by the scruff of his neck and threw him right across the floor.
Slash: Does he still feature you in his mag?
Johnny: No! Ha, ha, ha. That's how pathetic he is. He wrote recently that I was the spokesman for punk until I slagged it all off. I thought surely it should be a bit of honesty just for once. The arsehole didn't seem to suss that out.
Slash: What do you think will happen to punk now it's . . . come to a head?
Johnny: Someone will bust it like a septic spot. I don't know. How can you predict things like that? What does it fucking matter? It'll be good if it ends music for all time. The governments of the world will ban all rock music. That'll be hysterical. They'll all be jiving to Beethoven then. And that could be fun.
Slash: Does it annoy you, the price of admissions to gigs?
Johnny: Yes it does.
Slash: How much do you think it should be?
Johnny: About half the price at a big gig, and a quarter of the price at a small gig. But then the fucking halls you hire charge so fucking much.
Slash: What do you think of the big rock stars who play Wembley and charge four or five quid?
Johnny: I think they're prize cunts.
The roadie: I think they're finished.
Johnny: They're all just horrible—and they know it.
Slash: What albums do you listen to?
Johnny (pointing to Sid): He's got a live double album by the Hollies.
Steve: And the fucking Beach Boys.
Johnny: Secretly he goes home and listens to the Hollies.
Sid: I haven't bought an album for years.
Slash: What do you think of the Stranglers?
Sid: I hate them.

Steve: I wish they were fucking strangled.
Sid: The last album I got was a Ramones album I stole off someone a year ago. Will you buy me an ice cream . . .?
Slash: Er, yeah. O.K. How old are you, Johnny?
Johnny: I'm 21 now. (Unintelligible) . . . last January.
Slash: What's the signs of a true Aquarius?
Johnny: Originality and humility, brilliance, integrity—all the big words that mean a lot. All the good words.
Slash: What do you do if you can't play gigs?
Paul: We rehearse. I don't know what we're rehearsing for!
Slash: Doesn't it demoralize you?
Johnny: We call each other pleasant names to pass the time.
Steve (at Sid): Look at that nasty insipid balding rat there.
Slash: It's thinning at the back.
Sid: . . .'Cause I take too many drugs!
Johnny: See how skinny that fucker is? He eats constantly. (Unintelligible)
Johnny: So we should coat our records in VD so that any people that play them get it. We can give it to young children without ever going near them.
Steve: We should give a pubic hair away with each record.
Sid: Oh, you turd! You've had that jacket cleaned.
Johnny: My mummy done it the night I stayed. She put it in the dry cleaners.
Slash: Do you often go and stay with your mum?
Johnny: No.
Sid: Will someone give me another 12p. I love those ice lollies.
Slash: Alright. So we've found out your drug at last.
Johnny: Come on. Who is Kickboy Face?
Slash: If you go to L.A. you'll see him. Did you like what he wrote?
Johnny: No, not really.
Slash: What do you think of Malcolm McClaren?
Johnny: A two-faced conniving hypocrite.
Steve: 'Ere, let's get rid of John and get this cunt [a passing dwarf] to sing with us. He'd be much better.
Slash: Have any of you got cars or bikes?
Sid: I've got a motor bike.
Johnny: I've got a car. It's nothing to do with the group.
The roadie: If it all breaks up, you can go minicabbing!
Johnny: I don't know what the fuck I could do. I couldn't do any sort of job.
Slash: Do you like singing?
Johnny: Yeah. I like doing that a lot. I like screaming insults at people.
Sid (to a passing girl): Do you want my autograph, I'm a pop star!
Steve: Do you want mine. I'm a pop star. Honest I am. You can come to bed with me if you want.
Sid: I want another ice cream.
Steve: I want to kick The Weirdos' guitarist's head in. See if he is weird.
Paul: Who are you going to give a good kicking over there [L.A.], Sid?
Sid: Everyone. Everyone that I meet or see.
Paul: I'm going to give Richard Hell a good kicking.
Sid: I'm going to cut Richard Hell's nose off.
Paul: He's got a great big conk, hasn't he? Ugly bastard.
Slash: What do you think of Blondie?
Steve: I'd like to give her a good stuffing.
Sid: I think she's fucking ugly and she's got a big fat face.
Paul: He'd give her a seeing to . . .
Steve: Her head's too big for her fucking body.
Sid: I wouldn't. I'm a snivelling little homosexual really. I wouldn't be capable of it. I'm an impotent little wanker.
Steve: I'd fuck any bird any fucking shape or size.
Sid: I try to make out I'm a man, you see, but really I'm just a snivelling coward.
Slash: Why, I heard you took on a group of five-year-olds single-handed the other day.
Sid: That's not true, I ran away. I was frightened they'd beat me up.
Slash: Do you get many groupies then?
Paul: You're joking! They're ugly cunts, punk rockers.
Steve: We don't even fucking play anywhere, do we?
Paul: I don't mind the old suspenders though . . .
Steve: I tell you what. I nobbed one—we played one night—I nobbed one about a minute before we were on stage. And I nobbed it when we went off as well. I gave her a severe seeing to 'round

the back of the stage. She started screaming, "No, no! I have to go home now!" I said, "Shut your cakehole when yer . . ."
Slash: What do you think of Eno?
Steve: Eno's an arsehole.
Sid: I don't understand it. I keep going bald and then getting a bit of it back again. I'm not actually going bald but . . .
Slash: They tell you and you believe them, that's why.
Sid: No, if I don't feel well, all my hair goes limp.
Steve: Did you think that video thing was alright? You can do fuck all in that place.
Sid: Here he comes. What a state! Look, it's weird Johnny Rotten.
Johnny: Where's my fucking beer?
Slash: Where do you live? What part of town?
Paul: At the moment me and him (Steve) are in West Hampstead.
Slash: West Hampstead!
Steve: We don't like living there. Don't get the wrong idea.
Paul: Johnny and Sid are in Maida Vale. (Unintelligible)
Johnny: . . .after you've got me a cab home. 'Cause cabs won't pick me up no more.
Slash: You mean they just drive past?
Johnny: No. They stop and they look at me and go, "Oh, it's you!" Then they drive off.
Slash: That's fame, isn't it? Did you ever want to be a household word?
Johnny: Well, the idea does appeal to me. I'm just glad it's a rotten household word not a fucking "ooh, isn't he lovely," like Rod Stewart.
Slash: Did you make your name up?
Johnny: No. These bastards did. (Unintelligible)
Johnny: Hoy! When is this fucking radio thing? Tonight? Don't you think it's a bit short notice? Leave it till tomorrow. I'll do it tomorrow. I'll go 'round and collect some records, but like—what I like is really going to annoy a lot of people. 'Cause it's not what they expect. No, I won't pick the worst, I'll pick what I like, which always annoyed you [the roadie] intensely.
Slash: You're doing a radio show or . . .?
Johnny: Yeah. My favorite ten.
Slash: What sort of things have you got in mind?
Johnny: Captain Beefheart.
Slash: Oh . . . does anyone know how to get the back off this camera?
Johnny: Somehow I get the feeling you're professionals . . . Oh yeah, here's a good snippet of news—the Hells Angels have offered to give us protection.
Slash: Do you need protection?
Johnny: No. I thought it was a really terrible thing to tell anyone. That's one of the cheapest lenses you can get.
Slash: Shut up!
Johnny: You win things like that in lucky-bags . . . if you're unlucky enough.
Slash: What do you think of reggae?
Johnny: I love it. I . . .
Paul: Ooh! Look at this little fat Paki there.
Sid: Hoy, Sinbad!
Steve: Hoy, Abdul!
Johnny: Leave him alone, you ain't so good yourself . . . What a turd you are. Fucking pop star turning up with a different set of clothes.
Roadie: Here's a cab.
Paul: Come on.
Johnny: I don't wanna go to the office. I'm going home.



Michael Cotten

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Forth-Fives

THE STINKY TOYS
Polydor Import
(Boozy Creed / Driver Blues)

It could be terrible and I'd still love it. That girl on the cover, next to the Martian in the tie, she does the singing. That Milk 'n' Cookies twerp wishes he had the gonads. Those other chick singers of late, they wish they had the band. This ain't no bombshell nostalgia comedy routine. This band throttles that girl and she knows how to ride. Wreckless abandon, yes. Pee-pee in the pants, no. Hold the Pampers, please, this girl can hold her own.

I like the second side best. "Don't want your money, don't want your honey, hey man who do you think you are?" The guitar and pace are literally twitchin'. Don't play it near epileptics. It's a very compressed little monster; the band lets her rest for a total of ten seconds.

On "Boozy Creed" she catches her breath. The song's about lots of beer and loud playing. It's a kind of downhill coaster, like a rock slide. At the end of the line it is sheer demolition. It's a good thing the girl breathed while she had the chance. In closing, she blasts another incredible amount of wind. 'PLAYLOUDPLAYLOUD PLAYLOUD." It ain't a coax, it's a command.

Basho Lusto

CELIA AND THE MUTATIONS
United Artists Records Import
(Mony Mony / Mean to Me)

Celia looks like a sub-species of "one of the boys." She say, "Ya, shoot 'em down, Mony." He, that Mony guy, you know he shotguns people just so Celia say, "Oooh feels so good. Now." She said ya. Turn the record over and this Celia, she's scheming to dump the guy. Without a parachute. Poor Mony.

The band is less blues brawl on side 1. Side 2 has piano, barrel-house, I think they call it. Side 1's got creeper organ, they discovered electricity. The band boys yelp it up to Celia's lead on the "say ya's." Sounds like they throw good parties.

Bashno Macko

$27 SNAP ON FACE
Heterodyne Records
(Let's Have an Affair / Kicking Around)

Hippie dorks from P.O. Box 7281, Santa Rosa, Ca. 95401. They got lyrics about kicking out to the big city, lyrics about Scorpio eyes and Cancer blood. The guitar and harmonies sound like any of those San Francisco bands who were going to make the world rosy. I've been glad I was young enough to miss it the first time. Please don't bring groovy around again.

Hacko Macko

THE GERMS
What? Records
(Forming / ?)

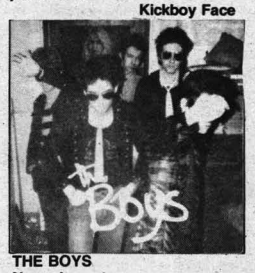
First of the hard-core L.A. groups to come up with a single, the Germs have recorded (I think that's the word) one of the most mind-boggling songs I've ever heard. They take monotony to new heights and push the absurdity factor further than almost any other group. The song is supposedly their "political" stance, and it does talk about presidents, queens, czars, and emperors, but the choice is not clear. It is totally crazed music, totally obscure but inexplicably brilliant.

Bobby "who gives a shit!" Pyn is perfect as he drones thru the incomprehensible lyrics, absolutely refusing to inflect any kind of feeling to his words except an overall contempt for the whole performing process, and the other three Martians plowing thru their two chord changes on the other speaker (that's what they think of stereo!) will make all the "minimal" theorists sick with admiration. This vinyl "thing" is some kind of ultimate breakthrough, and not many will want to follow.

Other side (yet unnamed when we got the record) is beyond music. It's some kind of party time tape with the mike stuck under the bed and the gang getting ripped in some other room. Should make the avant garde art world buzz for a while.

The chorus of "Forming" can't seem to leave my brain alone, so I'll share the pain with you: "Rip them down / Hold me up / Tell them that / I'm your gun / Pull my trigger / I am bigger than . . ." May not seem that much, but wait 'til you *hear* it.

Kickboy Face



THE BOYS
Nems Import
(I Don't Care / Soda Pressing)

Mediocre name. Mediocre cover. But the record's O.K. A pop punk hybrid, heavy on the punk. Not half baked. "I Don't Care" bips my buzzer better than the cheer-up song, "Soda Pressing." "I Don't Care" has those trilling schoolyard vocals I usually hate but I don't care here. The bass is jumpy thrust and the guitar is the clincher. It flips off, drops its drawers, and pops in your face.

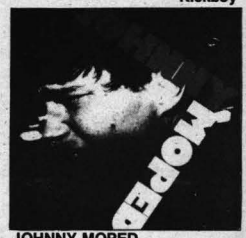
B. Macko

THE SAINTS
Limited edition 12" pressing
Harvest Import blah blah blah
(This perfect day / Do the robot / Lies)

They just knock me out. LP still ringing in my head and now this . . . whatever (a single the size of an album, ah the wonders of technology!) that just refuses to leave the old turntable to be relegated to the back of the pile. Too good to be true. Them Aussie slobs (don't they just look like they use malt liquor as cologne?) sure got the market cornered as far as three chords non-cultural explosive brilliance is concerned . . . like in "Perfect Day," there is none of that marvelous rapport between singer and band: everybody just hops aboard the express train, the guys on the guitars don't lower the volume for the voice to come thru and the voice (curly alcohol-soaked Chris Bailey) doesn't mind singing above the chord changes. He actually thrives on it. The less you hear of the lyrics the better, just follow the drone . . .

On side 2 we're invited to "do the robot," must be a great dance if you're totally numb and reeling, super Ramones-like chords explosions and more Bailey monotone delivery, and it ends with "Lies," a one-riff run 'round the block and back where you started, just an energy reliever, something to make you go back to the bar the second it's over, down a few and look for trouble.

Kickboy



JOHNNY MOPED
Chiswick Import
(No one / Incendiary device)

Wino-rock. Or whatever he swallows that gives him this wonderful trashy voice. The guys on the instruments aren't too sophistico either. Their rehearsals probably turn into brawls very easily and the music comes second in their lives, inebriated bashings being their first hobby.

"No one" is fine, very catchy and easy to shout along. "Incendiary device" is better, although Moped is a bit out of breath. The band does pretty much what it likes behind, being all strong individualists with only a vague foggy notion of what a tight unit is. The ending is fantastic, the best contribution so far to the I-don't-give-a-shit approach to music. Pompously speaking, a very real uninhibited record.

Jet Lag

P.S. Lyrics of "Incendiary device" should forever endear Johnny and Slimy Toad (guitar player and songwriter) to feminists everywhere. None of that subtle put-down a la Stranglers. With Johnny, it's plain old simple war on the ladies approach: "Walkin' down the road with my incendiary device/lookin' for a lady to blow her with gelignite/Stick it in her lug-

SLASH PAGE 19

hole, watch it blow her head apart /Stick it in her lughole/Stick it in her other parts . . ." If you don't like it, write your own song, darling. Let's have none of that liberal shit about offending this or offending that. Everything is offensive anyway. At least Johnny's poetic about his resentment.

[P.P.S. 'gelignite' is not a typo!]

CHELSEA
Step Forward Import
(Right to work / The loner)

Gene October looks real angry on the picture. I'm not sure I'll go along with him on the "right to work" bit 'cause I'm a lazy bastard myself and I can't get too worked up about being unable to spend five days a week in a factory/office/whatever, but then again I don't know what it's like being a futureless kid in Britain so I'll stop being cute and irrelevant. And the music is super, real churning stuff with great riff drumming and singing, almost a classic quality although you never heard it before. And somebody just showed me a copy of Sniffin' Glue in which Gene says the song only says "fuck the unions." So I totally agree in the end. B-side is impossible not to like. Not too original but very alive. Want to see them perform real bad. Some hope!

Kickboy

(Catchin' up with the [recent] past)

RICHARD HELL AND THE VOIDOIDS
Ork Records
(Blank Generation / You Gotta Lose / [I could live with you in] another world)

"Blank Generation" starts out with blistering metal absolutes, stabbing guitar chords that scald the inner ear. Suddenly everything breaks and the bass runs into a hyped-up blues progression . . . You almost lose your footing . . . blues progression? But the incredibly ragged and direct distortion of Robert Quine's lead guitar and Hell's whining opening lines ("I was sayin' let me outta here 'fore I was even born/It's such a gamble when you get a face/It's fascinating to observe what the mirror does . . . I belong to the Blank Generation, but I can take it or leave it each time") blast you out of your momentary stupor. This is definitely *the* NOW American anthem (word "anthem" is becoming a fuckin' cliche, isn't it?), falling in line with other glories of the past. Hell goes on to tell a curiously intimate story about a doctor and nurse (whom he met at birth?) then into post-adolescence about kissing TV screens, etc. One can see why Mr. Verlaine and Mr. Hell parted company. Although I still like Verlaine despite all my instincts that tell me not to, I must admit that Hell is, without question, the genius of what once must've been a great group (Television before their album).

"You Gotta Lose" follows, obliterating more traditional rock and blues cliches by the very naked frenzy of the attack; lyrics like "My mother was a pinhead/and my father was a fly . . ."

"(I could live with you in) another world" is slow and eclectic . . . like Television doing their "Venus" or "Friction" stuff but superior; distinctly more cutting lyrics, more energy, less calculated and esoteric guitar, and a subversive irony in Hell's delightfully cynical, sobbing vocals. Only thing is . . . if you're looking for something that kicks ahead without reserve, this does get a little long, clocking in at about six minutes (unless you're stoned out of your mind, in which case it all takes the feel of an ominously pessimistic sexual dirge).

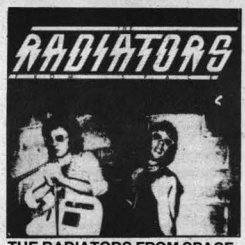
On the whole, definitely worth searching out. These may be on Hell's Sire album due out any day (but one never knows).

Chris Desjardins

STRANGLERS
United Artists import
(Something better change / Straighten out)

Stranglers must have something going 'cause people either hate them or love them. I like them but I wouldn't join no fan club, if you see what I mean. So for you Stranglers fanatics, here's another heavy goodie. The A side starts quite pretty but then they get mad and it's not pretty anymore. As they say in our kind of paper, it's urgent. Side B is regular Stranglers with the bass pumping and the vocal chords suffering. The organ ain't exactly taking a rest either. Bet they sweat a lot when they play that one.

Jet Lag
(not the lame group, the lame writer)



THE RADIATORS FROM SPACE
Chiswick Import
(Television screen / Love detective)

Side one sounds like the Rods doing Chuck Berry; it's not my cup of tea, luv. "Love detective" is alright—it'll grow on me if I drink to it and play it loud enough. Or maybe it won't. (A few glasses later: it did. Quite good vocals. But is that a super fast bamba rhythm I detect??)

Kickboy

THE RINGS
Chiswick Import
(I wanna be free / Automobile)

Well-recorded. Too bad it's trash. The twerp who calls himself Twink (shiiit!) wants a "society where everybody can be free . . ." Such commitment! Side two is even more boring. They got a couple of riffs down pat though. I'm sure they'll use them again. I was getting worried about such a constant flow of good singles coming from England but this reassured me. Still loads of vinyl being wasted there, too. And, come to think of it, it's not even that well-recorded. **Boring!**

Kickboy

THE CORTINAS
Step Forward Import
(Fascist dictator / Television families)

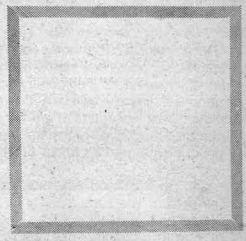
"Fascist dictator" is a bit dry, fast, well-played, all that, but . . . dry. Don't know how else to put it. "Television families" is great stuff ("Lucille Ball, Dick Van Dyke, I know them all . . ."), really cooks until three or four miniscule "showcasing" solos (one for each instrument, I guess they voted on it) break the pace up a bit. It ends up fine and as good as it started but almost lost it because of that mistake in logistics. Guess it's hard not to want to "do your bit" on one's first single. Never mind, all is forgiven.

Father Kickboy

PRIMITIVE: PRE-VELVETS
Who knows what label
(The Ostrich / Cycle Annie / Sneaky Pete / You're Driving Me Insane)

If Lou Reed or John Cale issued old toilet paper (it probably happened), I'd be first in line to buy a roll. But Lucifer and J.C. didn't squeeze out this pimple. The record isn't a total embarrassment because of the picture sleeve and Lou Reed. He sounds promising.

Ted Macko



THE ZEROS
Bomp Records
(Don't push me around / Wimp)

Another local band goes vinyl. (San Diego's just another L.A. suburb, ain't it?) The Zeros are very young but they know where they're going. They seem to improve incredibly from show to show and now with this record out they just proved they are certainly one of the most interesting bands around.

In "Don't push me around" they get that real '60s AM brat consciousness and delivery, "always talking about nothin'/Me I don't want to do nothin'/To me you're just nothin' " with a fast no-frills '70s sound. The lead is real effective, and at last you can *really* hear Javier's voice, which is always kind of buried at concerts. It's perfect: vaguely sneering and contemptuous, angry teenager with no time to waste. The little girls should really fall for it.

But the Zeros are not tryin' to out-punk anybody or jump on any bandwagon. They just do their songs with no concessions to whatever is "in" or not, no posing and no showing off. So when they suddenly change keys in the middle of the song (a practice given up by the new wave bands for

mysterious reasons) it's totally acceptable and not even quaint or passe. They don't dwell upon it anyway, they just do it 'cause the song demands it and that's that.

"Wimp" is also good but slower. The lyrics are fun, and it's nice to hear a song with my favorite insult as a title.

If there's any justice left this should be a lot on AM radio, 'cause it sure beats the mush they play all the time. But radio lost its balls a long time ago, didn't it? Rodney'll play it, but who else, in these days of "adult music" stations?

This single wasn't quite out when this was written, but should be now.

Kickboy

PERE UBU
Hearthan Records
(Heart of Darkness / 30 Seconds Over Tokyo)

Astral wailings from the black oozing pit of Cleveland's concrete hell (wailing is a very appropriate word for what Crocus Behemoth does), all swirling above a miasma of crudely produced guitars/synthesizer that remain starkly minimal; "...and I don't see anything that I want...lookin' at you, the Heart of Darkness." "30 Seconds Over Tokyo" is pretty long, but that's okay since the numbing paralytic effect is addictive...all about a nightmare war flashback, what it must've been like for some normal everyday fellow to obliterate thousands by the press of a button: "...30 seconds and a one way ride..." Only question I have is where is the album these should be on (along with their other hypnotic mindfuck singles)?

Chris Desjardins

MX-80 SOUND BIG HITS
Gulcher Records
(Train To Loveland / You Turn Me On / S.C.P. / Till Death Do Us Part / Mionga Von Bontee / Boy Trouble Girl Trouble / Tidal Wave)

MX-80's Sound: Like they are from some other generation. They are loud, noisy, obnoxious jazz. Old Frank Zappa gone to art school.

Jazzo Trasho

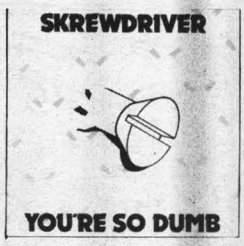
PATTI SMITH
Mer Records (out of print but supposed to be out again soon on Sire)

(Hey Joe / Piss Factory)

Kickboy asked me to review this since there's been a number of things that have helped sow the seeds of the New Wave that deserve recognition.

"Hey Joe" starts with Patti's spoken intro: "...and Patty Hearst, you standin' in front of the Symbionese Liberation Army flag with your legs spread...were you gettin' it every night from a black revolutionary man and his women?...and now that you're on the run what goes on in your mind?" DNV Sohl comes in on piano, Patti mournfully crying out the Joe standard but from P. Hearst's point of view, Tom Verlaine's strangled guitar building (he has so much fire/repressed desperation here, unlike the boring TV album). "Piss Factory" hearkens back to a teenage job with lines worthy of Joe Strummer: "...these bitches are just too lame to understand, too goddam grateful to get this job to know that they're gettin' screwed up the ass..." These both reach a kind of furious/sad triumph by raping dismal failure; sweet, poisonous demands for recognition that refuse to be left dying in the gutter.

Chris Desjardins

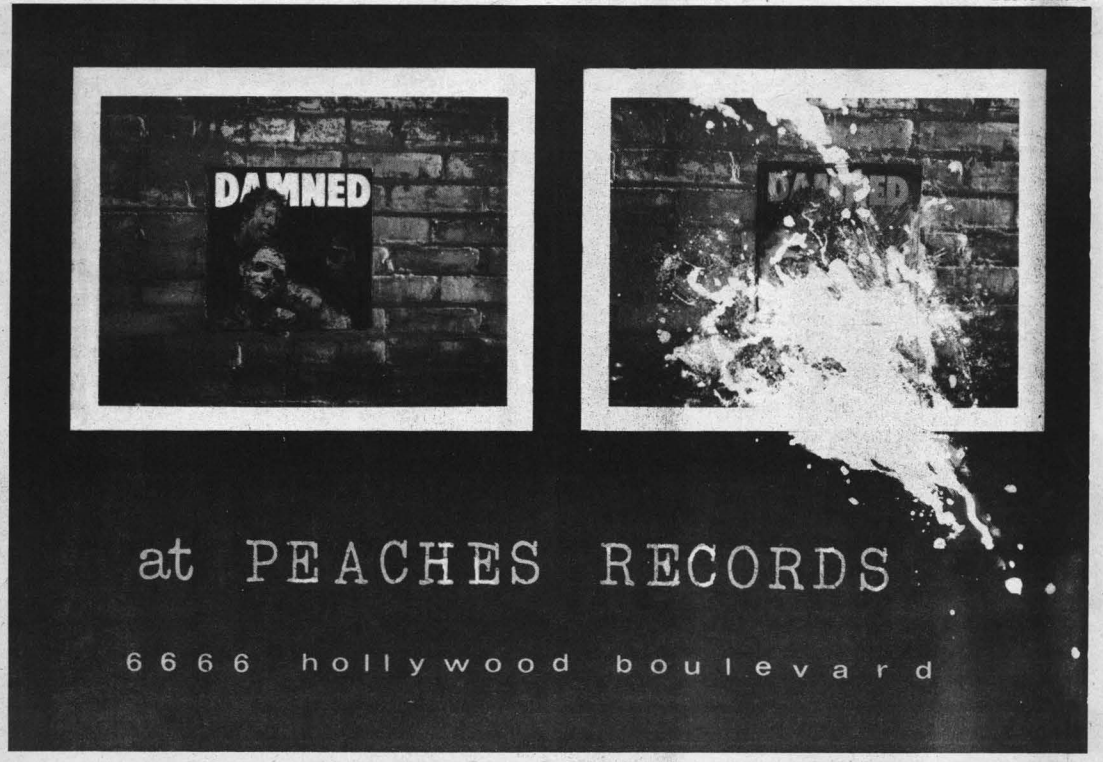


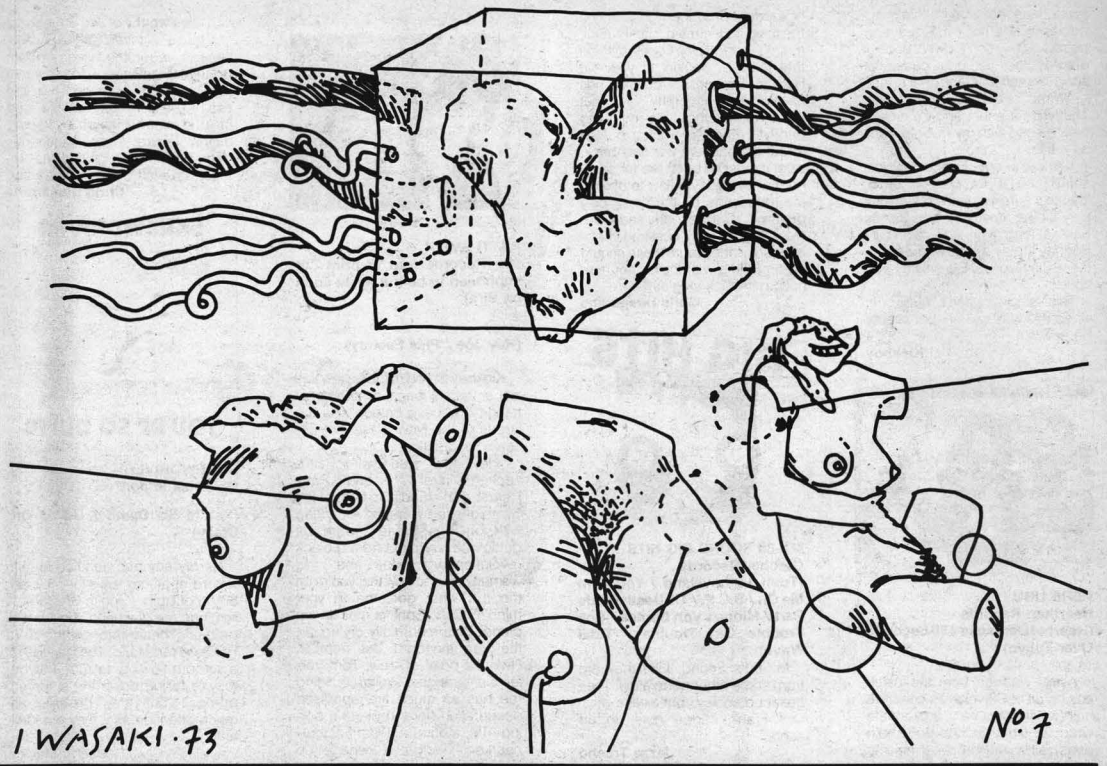
SCREWDRIVER
Chiswick Import

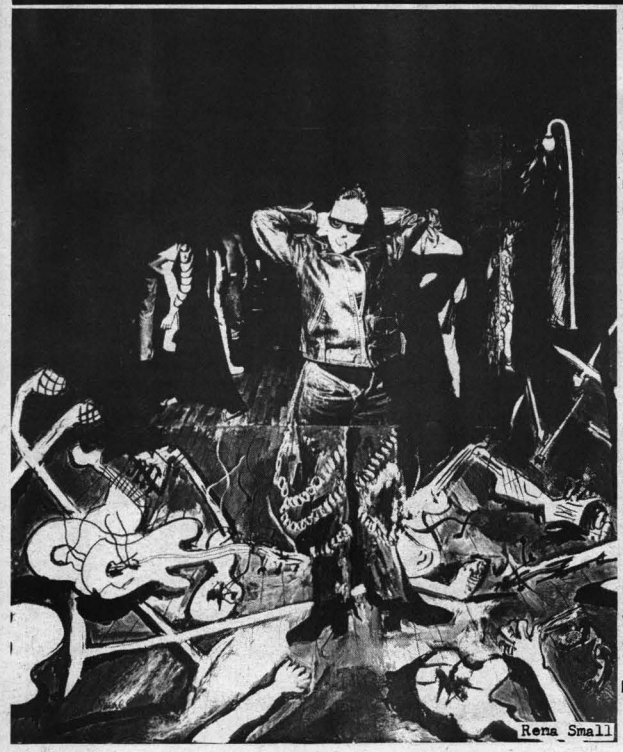
(You're So Dumb / Better Off Crazy)

Hardly any orange juice in this record at all, no ice either. It's an 80 proof burn. "You're So Dumb" reminds me of when I shoved my brother's head through the T.V. Running red static. The flip side is a smooth flowing seizure. Maybe they're falling down the stairs on purpose but they deserve as much attention as if they couldn't help it.

Basho Macko







NEW YORK

The diehard fans of New York's New Wave DEAD BOYS were not disappointed at a recent 3 A.M. show at CBGB when during an encore tribute to IGGY POP they were treated to violence between the band and certain members of the audience. From where this observer was sitting it looked like lead singer STIV BATORS, dressed in BAZOOKA BUBBLEGUM TEE SHIRT, unbuttoned trousers, and black KEDS, got alot of grief when he bent down to get a bowl of FRANCO-AMERICAN spaghetti. (Fans will recall the 1970 concert where IGGY got involved with a jar of PEANUT BUTTER from STIV.) The DEAD BOYS' ROADIES returned MR. TROUBLE MAKER to the audience four times. After that, when it looked like STIV was really in trouble, drummer JOHNNY BLITZ jumped over his TWO DRUM KITS and took a flying leap onto MR. PERSISTANT. The fight moved into the tightly packed PUNKED-OUT CBGB audience, and the DEAD BOYS, in a move typical of those that have made them a favorite in this town, battered their instruments to pieces. The whole scene rivaled the time an over-enthusiastic lady from the audience went down on STIV during a DEAD BOYS number. Nobody missed a beat.

MICHAEL BAD.

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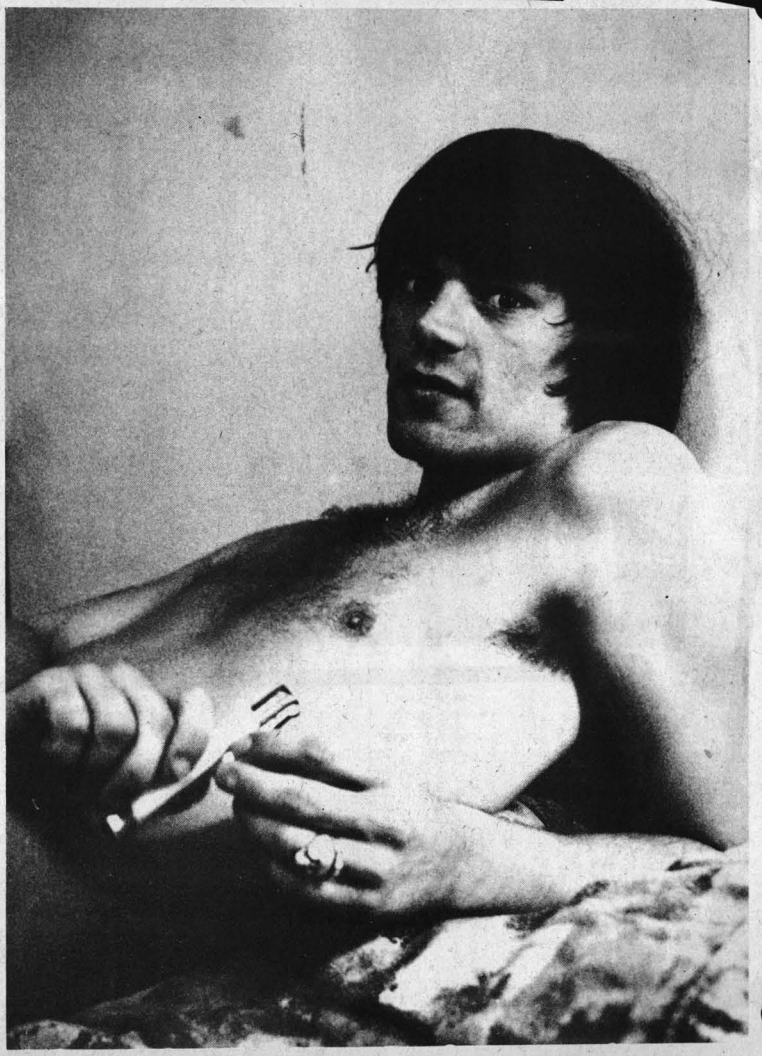
RAMONES

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH JOEY AND DEE DEE RAMONE
(Late afternoon in a room at the Tropicana)

Slash: How do you feel about being labeled the East Coast Zeros by a few people?
Dee Dee: Very angry . . . it's a bunch of bullshit. How long have the fuckin' Zeros been together? Who started this whole thing about punk rock and how can we be . . .?
(It ***was*** supposed to be a joke—Editor)
Slash: What's the big fascination with WW II stuff, the shock troopers and Nazi allusions?
Dee Dee: We don't take a pro-Nazi stand at all. I think the Nazis were a bunch of gangsters; still, we're infatuated with Nazi stuff. Nazi uniforms look real beautiful . . . we don't like the Nazis.
Slash: Are you good guys or bad guys?
Dee Dee: No, we're good. We're not like people think, real mean and everything. We're not like that, we're all gentlemen.
Slash: Any of you in love at the present?
Dee Dee: Nah . . .
Joey: Nah . . .
Slash: Infatuated?
Dee Dee: Yeah, infatuated . . .
Slash: Everyone talks and writes about you, yet hardly any radio play. Why?
Dee Dee: Because we haven't put out commercial songs. So we deliberately put out a commercial single and it's being played.
Slash: Sheenah?
Dee Dee: Yeah, it's like torture, that record.
Joey: They just don't know what's good, you know.
Dee Dee: It won't move up . . .
Slash: But you're happy with it, aren't you?
Dee Dee: Yeah.
Slash: Someone described it as surf punk . . . Tell us about the European tour you had recently. Who did you tour with?
Dee Dee: By ourselves. We were top headlining our own shows all over, in big places. In Europe we're real big for some reason.
Slash: Did you also play clubs?
Dee Dee: No, I think the only club we played was in Amsterdam, the Paradiso, and it still holds 1,000 people.
Slash: Where did you play in London?
Dee Dee: The Roundhouse. We sold out two nights. We could have played the Hammersmith Odeon but we didn't want to play there because they have seats and the kids wreck the seats . . .
Slash: And you're responsible?
Dee Dee: Yeah.
Slash: How long have you had the leather jackets?
Dee Dee: Oh my God!
Slash: Were you born with them?
Dee Dee: No, but Tommy was.
Slash: Where did you get them?
Dee Dee: Hudsons on 42nd Street in New York.

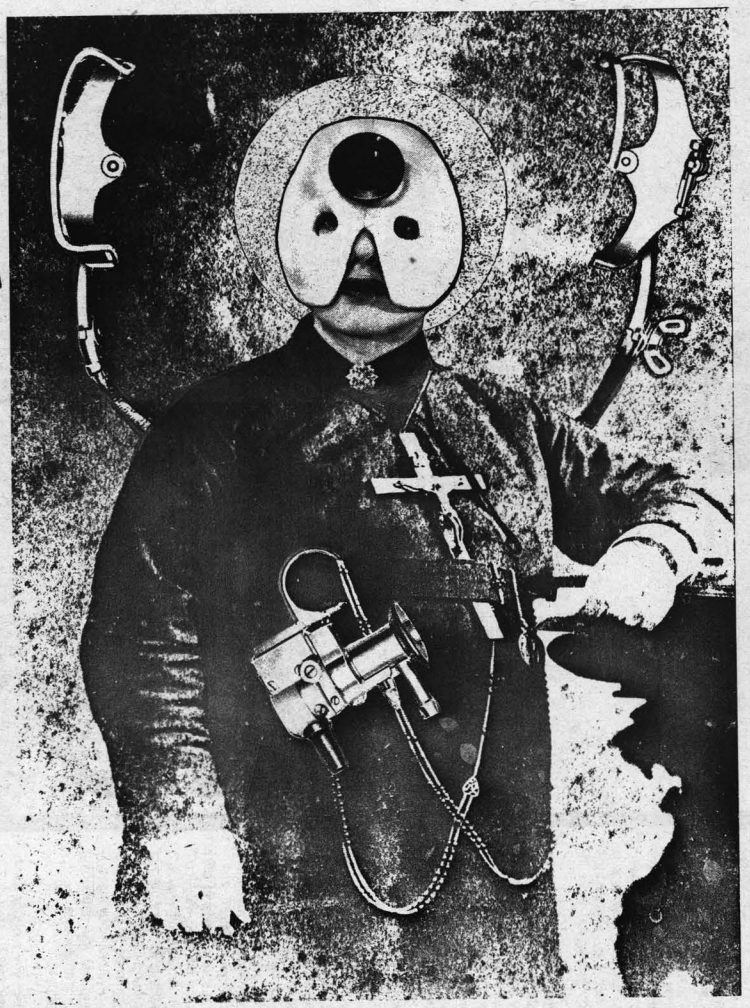
You can only get them in New York, the cut that we want.
Slash: First it was glue, then carbona. What will be the fave chemical in the third album?
Dee Dee: We stopped taking drugs.
Joey: DDT is the drug for me!
Dee Dee: We're gonna write a song about bringing back LSD!
Slash: What do you drink?
Dee Dee: Blackberry brandy.
Joey: Beer . . . I like Miller.
Slash: The others?
Dee Dee: Tommy likes vodka and John likes beer.
Slash: You seem to delight in taking early '60s music and twisting it around, making it something else . . .
Dee Dee: You're probably misunderstanding us. I think that we have some certain flavors of that music because it's influenced us a lot, but what we try to do is become original . . .
Joey: We're influenced by everything.
Dee Dee: We consider ourselves as having a modern sound.
Slash: Why do some people hate you?
Dee Dee: They either like us a lot or they hate us. I don't know, we enrage some people . . .
Joey: We bring out the worst in them.
Slash: Do you beat up anyone?
Dee Dee: No, we have beaten up a few people but we're not a gang, we're a rock band. We stopped being a gang a long time ago. We don't go hitting on people 'cause we can't! Look what happened to the Sex Pistols: last time I saw Johnny Rotten, and he's a nervous wreck. He's so paranoid . . .there's gonna be repercussions . . .it's all bullshit that he got stabbed in the face but their drummer did get hurt. They backed themselves into a corner, and we're not gonna back ourselves into a corner and try to be tough guys. We're musicians.
Slash: What do you dream of?
Joey: We just want everything.
Dee Dee: We're making a lot of money now . . .
Slash: Are you?
Joey: We're not millionaires but we're making a lot.
Slash: What are you going to blow it on?
Dee Dee: Cars, jewelry—and pay back the old bills.
Slash: Have you ever been banned from playing anywhere?
Dee Dee: We were banned from this shopping center thing here.
Joey: We were banned in Cleveland.
Slash: What were the official reasons for both?
Dee Dee: I'd rather not talk about it.
Slash: What's all this minimalism shit written about your music? [We did it too, to sound as cool as the other papers!]
Dee Dee: I don't know.
Slash: What's minimalism?
Dee Dee: It's just nothing.
Slash: Do you want to be in the movies?



Joey: Yeah. (laughs)
Slash: No bands?
Dee Dee: I'd have to leave that up to the talent agency or something.
Slash: What records do you listen to at home?
Dee Dee: Oh, everything. You name it. I have a whole library of comics and a whole library of records.
Slash: What's the first one you'd play when you get back?
Dee Dee: Maybe "Little Town Flirt" by Del Shannon.
Joey: I'd put on some new wave singles. (laughs)
Slash: Do you secretly want to change the world?
Dee Dee (indignantly): No! I'm a very shy person. I'm not gonna go getting on a soap box telling people what to do.
Slash: I said "secretly."
Dee Dee: I've had enough of all that, I'm fed up.
Slash: "Gabba gabba hey" is from a movie called ***Freaks.*** What movies do you like?
Dee Dee: We haven't seen any really good movies lately. We saw ***Star Wars*** and ***The Island of Dr. Moreau,*** the new Sinbad.
Joey: I liked the big wolf in ***Star Wars.***
Slash: Do you read books?
Dee Dee: Yes, I do. I like biographies, people who are already dead because then you get the truth. I dunno, I don't read too much fiction.
Slash: What's a punk?
Joey: Dee Dee's a punk.
Dee Dee: And he's a new waver.
Slash: What's a poseur.
Dee Dee: Oh, we know what ***they*** are! People who are just full of shit, you know, who just go around because they just . . .oh, I don't wanna go into it, it's a very sensitive subject.
Slash: What's your opinion of the new look?
Dee Dee: It makes the kids happy to do that so it's all right. It must be fun.
Slash: Why don't you try it?
Dee Dee: Nah, I know we won't. Maybe some day secretly I'll go in the bathroom and put some shoe polish in my hair and stick it up, something on my eyes and a safety pin thru my nose.
Slash: Can we get exclusive pictures?
Dee Dee: No, no, I'm gonna do that in private.
Slash: Some say your music's too simple. Is it harder to play than it seems?
Dee Dee: You try and play it! . . .We are athletes!
Slash: Any more versions of old songs on the new LP?
Dee Dee: Yeah, maybe two non-original songs.
Slash: Which ones?
Dee Dee: I can't say.
Slash: How long will it take you to record the new album?
Dee Dee: About a month.
Slash: Do you read rock 'n' roll papers?
Joey: That's all we read.
Slash: New York Rocker?

Dee Dee: Not particularly.
Joey: I want to be in a TV commercial.
Slash: For what?
Joey: No-Doz.
Slash: What's wrong with society?
Dee Dee: I don't know.
Joey: I guess everything, but it's alright.
Slash: Even the nastiest, most negative new bands have only good things to say about you. Why are you the only American band the English nasties like the Pistols or the Damned seem to like?
Dee Dee: They all look up to us, we're their idols. It's because they're our pals. We get along with them. I like the Pistols, the Clash; I like the Damned; it's just that they just all hate each other, which is hard when you like all of them. We went over there a couple of years ago, these guys didn't even have bands. They saw us and they talked to us and then they started their bands. They told us, you know, you guys inspired us.
Slash: It's fantastic if you are responsible for what's happening in England right now.
Dee Dee: I think the only one that was trying to do something before us was Joe Strummer of the Clash; he didn't know what he was trying to do, but he was sincerely looking.
Slash: Do you think there's any room here for what Joe Strummer is now doing in England?
Dee Dee: We're not suppressed here, not like those people are. Their country is a mess.
Slash: Tell us about your musical education.
Joey: None.
Dee Dee: I'm trying to learn the notes. I have an idea now of what it's supposed to be but before I didn't even have an idea, even though we were playing. But I think I'm good, you know. I think I play real good. I got a lot better than when I started. I started three years ago when the group started. We all started playing then, and we're getting a lot better. We play a lot faster.
Slash: What were the first songs you ever did?
Dee Dee: "I don't wanna get involved with you," then "I don't wanna walk around with you," "I don't care"...it ws anti-glitter, we were tired of glitter. We used to walk around like that then we got sick of it because it got to be so disgusting. It's just like now at Macey's you can buy these T-shirts with rips in them and that was happening with glitter, you could buy it at Macey's.
Slash: So you're tired of punk?
Dee Dee: Nah!
Slash: Would you be where you are today without Danny Fields, your manager?
Dee Dee: He's helped us a lot. Sire has helped us, they're really a good record company. We were lucky we got with them. And now we're gonna be distributed by Warner so everything's okay.
Slash: If you had a TV special, which support bands [or comedians, or any act] would you pick?
Dee Dee: The Smothers Brothers.

Joey and Dee Dee: They don't like us, but it's always fun to read, the gossip column is a goof, you know.
Slash: Do you get amused by the wild variety of comments your music has drawn from critics?
Dee Dee: Yeah. I liked one, I can't remember exactly how it went, something like Mrs. Ramone and her four horrible sons, the way they worded it was really funny. We're nice guys, you can tell, right? There's not a mean bone in my body.
Slash: In a Belgian mag called More, the interviewer apologizes to his readers for what he thinks of as your lack of political awareness...
Dee Dee: We were laughing at that guy because he wanted to talk politics and we didn't and it was really important to him. He said we're "the biggest punks in Europe and our country is really in a crisis," and we looked around and it's so clean, like people are washing the sidewalks! and we're from the Bowery and, man, ***we*** have a crisis, you know...
Slash: Are your lyrics tongue-in-cheek or are you deadly serious?
Dee Dee: It's a mixture of both. But I'll tell you, in Belgium, man, it was really one of our most successful jobs, almost scary to be up on that stage. The kids were really wild. It's great in Europe, except in Denmark. We flopped in Denmark.
Slash: Why?
Dee Dee: I dunno. Everybody flops there.
Slash: Will you retire when you get bored, or is it a profession?
Dee Dee: Yeah, but it's not a hobby. I'm serious about it. It used to be a hobby.
Slash: Tell us now, for all your teenage fans, what is it really like to be a Ramone? Is it fun, is it glamorous?
Dee Dee: (laughter) Yeah, I guess. It's the most exciting thing that ever happened to me.
Slash: What's a pinhead?
Dee Dee: A pinhead is a person who's born with a deformity, and their head really goes up into the shape of a pin and they have a little pony tail.
Slash: Do you know any?
Dee Dee: We've only seen one. We've seen them in movies.
Joey: We saw one in a car and we couldn't believe it.
Dee Dee: We were just staring and going, "Hey, a pinhead!" and the pinhead was getting really angry because we were staring so much, and it was with its mum and dad because what had happened was in St. Paul's, the mental institution, people were on strike so all the parents had to come over and pick up their children from the mental institution and this pinhead was in the institution so they were bringing it home...
Slash: Do they really wear their hair in a pony tail?
Dee Dee: That's what you do when you are a pinhead, and their mom goes, "Don't you look nice, don't you look gorgeous..." (general sick laughter and end of interview)



Blue Leach

Albums

THE VIBRATORS
"PURE MANIA"

These guys remind me of my big brother. They remember being my age. They are concerned about the way I am growing up. "Keep It Clean" says I should keep the needle out of my arm, then I'm sure to be a success. Gee, guys, thanks for the concern but I only want to be a success so I can stick the needle in my arm.

The Vibrators want big success. They want it real bad. They want the girls. This album is Pure-Fish-Mania. Evidently they had trouble with the little honeybuns when the nektar was most needed. The Vibrators are obsessed with the gash of procreation. Pert near every single song they get driven crazy, wrecked on her, brought down, broken hearted, etc., etc. They are jealous purple of the guy in the "black Cadillac, whips and furs in back." They'd rather be him than shoot him.

But I like the record anyhow, even if it is more slaphappy than punchdrunk. It's a bit more processed than, say, the Clash, but it is not boogie shit or heavy mettle sludge. They do scattered solos and all, the sound is reminiscent of some other English invasion, but they don't get over my head in tradition. This album is one more step away from that R&B hole tripping up the Hotrodsies. I mean, they sound too pissed off to do "Glad All Over" but they ain't got no "White Anarchy Riot."

They got problems, sure, headaches and dissatisfactions, but everything wrong in their world has one root cause. The tush situation is the bring-down supposedly inspiring this decent platter. Makes me think of seventh grade. Slow song, lady's choice. Smoochy dance of the heavy petting two timer. These guys don't slap the slut around, they don't slash the prick who cut in. They just fume and go home and make a record. She'll be sorry when they're rich and famous. My big brother, he would be disgusted.

But that's playing let's pretend because my brother got killed two years ago. So play let's pretend. Pretend you had one hour and then you are dead. Pretend you can do anything in that hour. If you spent the time with a snub of a femme fatale on your face, this record is right up your rut. My brother, on the other hand, ran his motorcycle through a police cruiser.

Barfo Macho

"NUGGETS: ORIGINAL ARTY-FACTS FROM THE FIRST PSYCHEDELIC ERA 1965-1968"

Sire Records
(27 groups, 27 songs)

Some hold up, some are boring. It's got songs that are all surface, others so deep they drowned. Was there stupidity back then? You bet your mother.

But I was nine years old. We sang "Dirty Water" pissing on a snitch out by the fence during recess. All the little kids knew how. We all went to bed with too much to dream, woke up with psychotic reactions. We never smiled around grownups unless the joke was on them.

No fooling, these songs came out of the radio and that radio was in our looks. Anything that looked like it hurt and, lady, we knew who we wanted hurting. There was this list, nobody had to write it down. All you had to do was listen to the radio and you knew no doubt.

I suppose I should figure out where all those little wild kids went but I already been told. Dope, a safe line, and music for the mind. A lot of songs on this record led to a demise. Led to San Francisco, blanked out with some trippy intelligence. FM tuned on retarded we'll-take-leftovers air waves. Now there is that useless radio in the car that every single body complains about.

"Car radio? I got the habit of playing static." Now the Ramones and Pistols are on AM. Does it make me happy? I pray like murder ***this*** punk music don't end up a Nuggets album.

Macko

+the CLASH+DEVO+the ADVERTS+MINK de VILLE+SEX PISTOLS+ROKY ERICKSON+the RAMONES+UTOC+the SAINTS+the BUZZCOCKS+ +IGGY POP+CHELSEA+the USERS+SLAUGHTER N' THE DOG+the DANNOLITTLE BOB STORY+ +the CLASH+DEVO+the ADVERTS+MINK de VILLE+SEX PISTOLS+PATTI SMITH BAND+

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+M C 5+VELVET UNDERGROUND+the 101ers+RICHARD HELL+STINKY TOYS+TALKING HEADS+PUNK DUKES+the BOYZ+the RANGLERS+USERS+

THE JAM
"IN THE CITY"
English Polydor Super 2383 447

Beatles, Stones, Who . . . Those names should never be invoked when discussing the "new music," at least according to some experts. Did the Sex Pistols dump their guitar player because he listened to the Beatles and the Stones, as one report stated—or was it because he claimed he felt like he'd become a punk Monkee? (And who *are* the musicians who really played on "God Save the Queen"?) It's amazing how quickly people have been able to concoct drama around this new socio-musical phenomenon.

Fortunately, The Jam have arrived in the nick of time to expose this dogma as dog-doo.

The English trio in question (The Jam, that is) has just released a debut album, **In the City**, that is as well-played, well-written, and accessible as anything the New Wave has yet produced, record-wise. While The Jam most assuredly operate in the vanguard of the new rock & roll, their music carries an unmistakable acknowledgement to the high-tension melodiousness of the young Who and Beatles, right down to updates of two mid-'60s raveups, "Slow Down" and, of course, the "Batman Theme." The album's ten originals (all by guitarist/singer Paul Weller) incorporate the sinew and spirit of First-Wave British rock even more dynamically than the period tunes do (and much more so than the recordings of mere replicators like the Flamin' Groovies) without sacrificing a split-hair of their razor-sharp contemporary edge.

In his warbling, Weller sounds more like a teenage McCartney suffering from terminal blue balls than he does like Johnny Pistol or David Doll, and his frenzied lead/rhythm guitar-ing (Weller scratches those strings with the conviction of a man with a maddening itch) drops in the slot between Pirate Mick Green and live Pete Townshend. Bruce Foxton plunks his bass as fast as the situation demands, and Rick Buckler slugs the skins with a vengeful fury.

As for motives (that was the next topic in my pre-review outline), The Jam's state of arousal seems more carnal than political ("Be an Angry Young Man and ***Score Chicks***!); their anger peels away to reveal party-time elation. Whatever issues The Jam confront in their songs, the album's covert theme and overt mood shout, "Talkin' 'bout girls!" even if the literal message is "Talkin' 'bout yer revolution." Troubling? Perhaps. Reactionary? Aw, c'mon, have a heart. To The Jam's horny New-Wave revisionism, I can only respond, boyz will bee boyz. Won't they?

In the City joins the Stranglers' lewd 'n' lascivious ***Rattus Norvegicus*** at the top of the heap of British New-Wave lps. To the punk dogmatists who demand unrelieved seriousness in their new music, I feel compelled to humbly suggest: Scratch that itch, take a *hot* shower, lighten up, do anything you wanna do . . . but don't kick out The Jam, motherfuckers. These kids're alright.

Scuddy Bopper

BURNING SPEAR
"DRY & HEAVY"
Mango Records
(distributed by Island)
(Any river / The sun / It's a long way around / I w.i.n. / Throw down your arms / Dry & Heavy / Wailing / Black disciples / Shout it out)

Now that Marley has gone soft and easy on us and the more hard core part of the reggae field is mainly represented by next to impossible to find toasters* with elusive labels and ever changing war names, it is high time to look for a successor that will plaster us with more sticky obsessive reggae tunes, someone that will inject another "Stir it up" or "Concrete Jugle" into our dazed daytime hours. The legendary bunch known as The Burning Spear might just do it, providing they haven't passed their peak yet, which is something that seems to happen overnight in Jamaica (as the Maytals have sadly proven recently). 'Cause although this is supposedly a new album, it mainly consists of reworkings of old tunes done a few years back in Kingstown on two obscure LPs, "Studio One presents Burning Spear" and "Rocking Time." And I'm afraid I like the old versions better, less cluttered with horns, lead guitars (although tasty and discreet, but lead guitars still—this instrument should be outlawed!) and back up voices, more tchuky-tchucky, faster, edgier, less studio-y . . .

I could go on for hours but I won't 'cause many will never be able to compare, and esoterica is not the goal of this review. It's still a monster of an album, it will goosepimple you out of your ignorance of another insane music scene. Almost as great and disturbing as "Man in the Hills" by the same guys (now don't say you never heard THAT!), a true Rastafarian wail that should grab everyone. If you thought black music meant disco, you got something coming!

Chatty chatty Mouth

*half-singing half-raving JA D.J. backed up by other artists' instrumental version.

THE NEW YORK DOLLS
"THE NEW YORK DOLLS" and "TOO MUCH TOO SOON"
Mercury Records
Double Reissue Import
(Personality Crisis / Lookin' for a kiss / Vietnamese Baby / Lonely Planet Boy / Frankenstein / Trash / Bad Girl / Subway Train / Pills / Private World / Jet Boy / Babylon / Stranded in the jungle / Who are the Mystery Girls? / There's Gonna be a Showdown / It's Too Late / Puss 'n' Boots / Chatterbox / Bad Detective / Don't Start Me Talkin' / Human Being)

The first two sides of this, which made up the first album, are incredibly good; one of the few records over two years old that I still listen to (the sexy, taboo-smashing transvestite cover is gone, though).

"Personality Crisis" has never impressed me much despite clever lyrics. The ***real*** thing erupts on "Looking for a kiss": ". . . everyone's gone to your house to shoot up in your room/most of them are beautiful, but so obsessed with gloom . . . I didn't come here lookin' for a fix . . . just a'lookin' for a kiss . . ." "Vietnamese Baby" opens up with a nasty, psychedelic drone, then into an explosion of smash chords: "Maybe you think you're gettin' all you've ever wanted/and maybe you never ever knew what that was/and maybe you're just findin' it out now/with a Vietnamese baby on your mind." "Lonely Planet Boy" has great lyrics, but the singing and music leave me cold, a bit too Stones-ish (though better than anything they've done in eons). "Frankenstein" is The Dolls' masterpiece, Johansen railing against the spectre of Nothingness, Sylvain twisting a swirling, venomous lead to Thunder's infamous power chords: "So now you're startin' round here/with your myths and your demands/in a place where they don't expect nothin'/tryin' not to dirty your hands/I'm askin' you as a person/is it a crime/when you've just fallen in love with Frankenstein?". "Trash" is what this music is all about: ". . . don't take my night away . . . don't take my knife away . . ." with pseudo-Beatles break that manages hilarity and pathos simultaneously. "Bad Girl," "Subway Train," "Pills," & "Jet Boy" are all fine with "Private World" being the other standout here. Excellent clear/muddy drone production by Todd Rundgren.

Too Much, Too Soon is another story. Strangely enough, this is the Dolls album that mainstream critics preferred. Shadow Morton's production is crude without being effective, oddly cut-and-dried, showing off the group's liabilities rather than its assets. Johansen's voice sounds like pure shit on most cuts, the guitars just so-so. "Babylon," "Stranded in the Jungle" and "It's Too Late" are the best things on side one, Johansen singing: ". . . she can't stop digging sin/and that's just about to make you scream!" "Mystery Girls" and "Showdown" are okay but . . . ho-hum.

Side two is almost a total loss except for Johnny Thunder's personal two-minute extravaganza, "Chatterbox." Thunders sings great here, his nasal whine a perfect complement to his city-block spanning chords. "Human Being" is the germ of a good song but is performed badly, vocals just awful (ditto guitars). Still, if you don't know the Dolls, this is worth having. Along with Bowie and the reformed Iggy and the Stooges ('73-'74), the Dolls never were a part of the glitter movement . . . never could manage to be superficial enough (thank God!).

Chris Desjardins

JUNIOR MURVIN
"POLICE AND THIEVES"
Island Records

You all know this title as being the longest cut off the Clash album, and also the only non-original song they perform. Now here's the real thing (not that the way they did it was weak or uninventive—they just did it differently—a la white punk) by its original creators, Junior Murvin and Lee Perry.

Lee Perry, also known as The Upsetter, also known as Scratch, is probably one of the greatest record producers in the world, has released countless albums of dub (hypnotic instrumental reggae stuff), has added his incredible touch to hundreds of reggae songs by various artists, and has almost singlehandedly shaped the music coming out of Kingston today. I know it's unusual to treat a producer as one would an "artist," but this man ain't no average producer. Just pick up this album and ***listen.***

Along with the already mentioned "Police and thieves" (shorter and smoother than the Clash

version, but so cool, so . . .per-fect), you'll get a great bunch of reggae smoothies, songs to listen to when your head is pounding and you feel like throwing up, songs to wake up to and face what you see in the mirror, songs to drive to late at night and the limbo around hasn't swallowed you yet. Reggae, you know. Junior Murvin's high-pitched voice and the multi-layered production job may not sound like your idea of musical heaven but that's because you don't know better. Play it at odd moments, surprise yourself. It's amazing what it can do at times. And if this ain't a plug, I don't know what is. This sound has been ignored for too long. Something's wrong.

Chatty chatty mouth

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Arista

(All The Kids On The Street / Weekend Love / I Need You Tonight / Stay The Way You Are / I Can't Help It / Sunrise On Sunset / Merry Go Round / So Blue / All For Love / Make It To The Party)

This ain't rock and roll. It's a cosmetic.

Macko

"FROM AKRON: BIZARROS—RUBBER CITY REBELS"
Clone Records
(Bizarros: Lady Doubonette / I Bizarro / Jackson's Pride / Ice Age / White Screen Movies. Rubber City Rebels: Kidnapped / Such a Fool / Brain Job / Child Eaters / Rubber City Rebels)

Ohio seems to be a fertile breeding ground these days: first the uniformed evolution experts, then these boys. Not much else that they have in common though: the Bizarros and the Rebels look and sound much more like back alley hooligans than art students. Each group has one side of the LP and half of the cover. They both have a good nasty rock 'n' roll sound, with the Bizarros being the more sophisticated (a bit Roxy a bit Lou Reed a bit early Velvets) and the Rubber City Rebels the rawer more frantic ones. There's also a lot of great playing on both sides, even when they tend to get carried away by rockin' for the sake of tradition and losing the edge of the song by doing so. Bizarros' singer can be quite spooky, but it's not really singing he does. At any rate, it's a good record. Once again the real stuff is coming from the underground.

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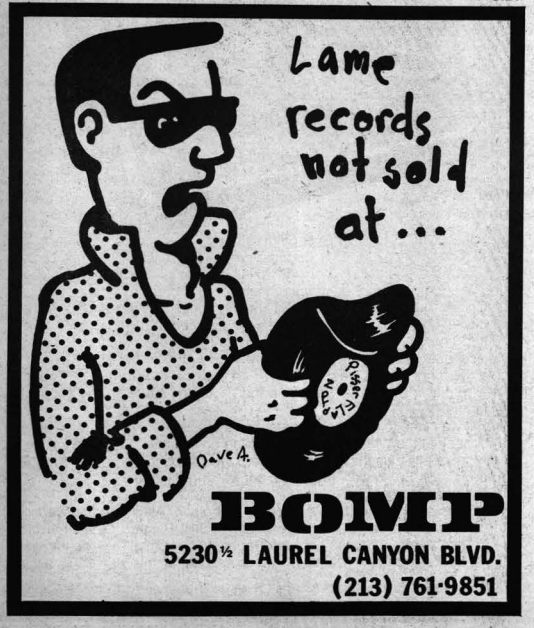
C.B.



SLASH'S ROVING REPORTER ASKS THE GENERAL PUBLIC "WHAT DO YOU THINK OF PUNK ROCK?"

Nancy, age 18, telephone operator:
"It's faaaaabulous!"

Dave, age 22, works in a clothing store:
"Isn't it like a new fad or something? It will probably last as long as glitter but I'm not going to get into it . . .was in England this June and saw some punk groups—they did nothing for me, plug they're all ugly!"

Mrs. G. ("I'm old enough not to want my age printed"):
"It's like when I was a teenager [this will give my age away] we used to buy new saddle shoes and wouldn't wear them until we had completely scuffed them up. It's more like a media phenomenon, a once in a while occurrence. The thing is, though, that you all are fearfully conformist, with the leather and safety pins."

Dee Dee Ramone, bass player:
"It's great. Can I go back to sleep now?"

John S., age 12:
(Slash): John, do you know what punk is?
(John): Uh-oh . . .oh, ya mean punk rock?
(Slash): Yeah, what do you think of it?
(John): Why ME???

Chuck, age 16:
"I think it's really stinkin'! It's the worst, it's really disgusting! I think punk rock sucks, how's that?
(Slash): What's your idea of good music?
(Chuck): There is no such thing!

Al, taxi driver, age 42:
"My son [he's 17] likes it. He's going to some concert tonight. I wouldn't let him outta the house wearing some of those crappy rags, I tell you. What's all that shit around your neck? Is that punk? You probably run around with my son."

Mr. R., age 73, retired:
"I'd hate to tell you [laughs] but did you see the letters in response to the Times magazine article? They said punks were a bunch of psychopaths, degenerates and a bunch of nuts."
(Slash): Do you agree?
(Mr. R.): Yes. In England, it seems to be a youth movement, very strong. Here, I think, just for fun.

Mrs. N., Beverly Hills attorney:
"It's fine for you, dear."

Iggy Pop, singer:
"It's like . . .oh, did *I* start all this?"

Carol, 27, mother of two:
". . .oh, is David Bowie considered punk?"

Amy, age 14:
"I don't know, some of it is alright, I like Blondie. I think people like Johnny Rotten are repulsive! They dance like maniacs in England . . . Oh, I like some of it . . ."

Meg, age 14:
"Some is pretty good. Don't like the violence. Safety pins are okay."

Bobby Pyn, age 19, singer:
"What did other people say?"

Nuns

* Sorry Alejandro, but some rabid female made off with your pic....

SLASH met a bunch of nuns the other day. We did not ask them the usual stuff about god, sexual abstinence and their old hit "Dominique, nique nique," but instead chose to be unique and original by talking about, of all things, music.

The Nuns didn't seem too impressed with our little scene down here. "It's too contrived, and they [the bands] do not seem to know what direction they're going. So they have to read magazines . . ." What direction are ***they*** going in? "Well, we decided six months ago that we were not gonna do a single. We want an album." Any record company in mind? "Electra and Sire seem interested." They like Sire 'cause Sire has a reputation for really backing up whoever they sign. In the meantime, the Nuns are regularly featured in that hot bed of avant stuff, the Mabuhay Gardens, and have even appeared at Winterland, supporting Bryan Ferry.

We asked them about money, curious to compare punk payrolls up there and down here. "We do make money, up to a thousand dollars a night. We get a percentage of the door . . ." That was a bit hard to swallow but they swore it's true. Any starving L.A. punksters thinking of moving up yet?

Do they like other groups up there? Only Crime and the Avengers were mentioned. They also said their two favorite L.A. bands are not even from L.A., but San Diego, the Zeros and the Dils. Dem Nuns not nuts about the Weirdos, they can't understand their popularity. O well, different strokes . . . "Backstage Pass is the closest thing to the Velvet Underground," someone said, and no one argued. The interview quickly degenerated into a messy lively rap session (sorry 'bout the hippie-ism, just can't think of another word) with everybody talking at once (there are so many of them!).

On Crime: "they say S.F. is doomed but they could have never made it in any other city . . .no way. They would have been laughed at" . . .on politics: "we're not out to change things but what can you say . . .?" . . .on Mabuhay: "it looks like a mafioso place" . . .on S.F. new wave crowd: "It's not just a bunch of people wearing the clothes y'know" . . .on musical backgrounds: "we just learned to play instruments to start a band" . . .on the future: "we're not gonna play games."

Then it was time to take the obligatory pics before the even more obligatory sound check at the Whisky. Suddenly feeling confidential, SLASH admitted to our new northern pals that "we have more terrible bands here than we have good ones . . ." "So do we!" they said, not wanting us to feel terrible. Come to think of it, they're right.

(The Nuns are Jennifer Miro on vocals and piano, Alejandro Escovedo on guitar and back-up vocals, Jeff Olener on vocals, Richard Dietrick also on vocals, Mike Varney on bass and Jeff Raphael on drums. They do their own songs plus "search and Destroy," which is part of this century's cultural heritage.)

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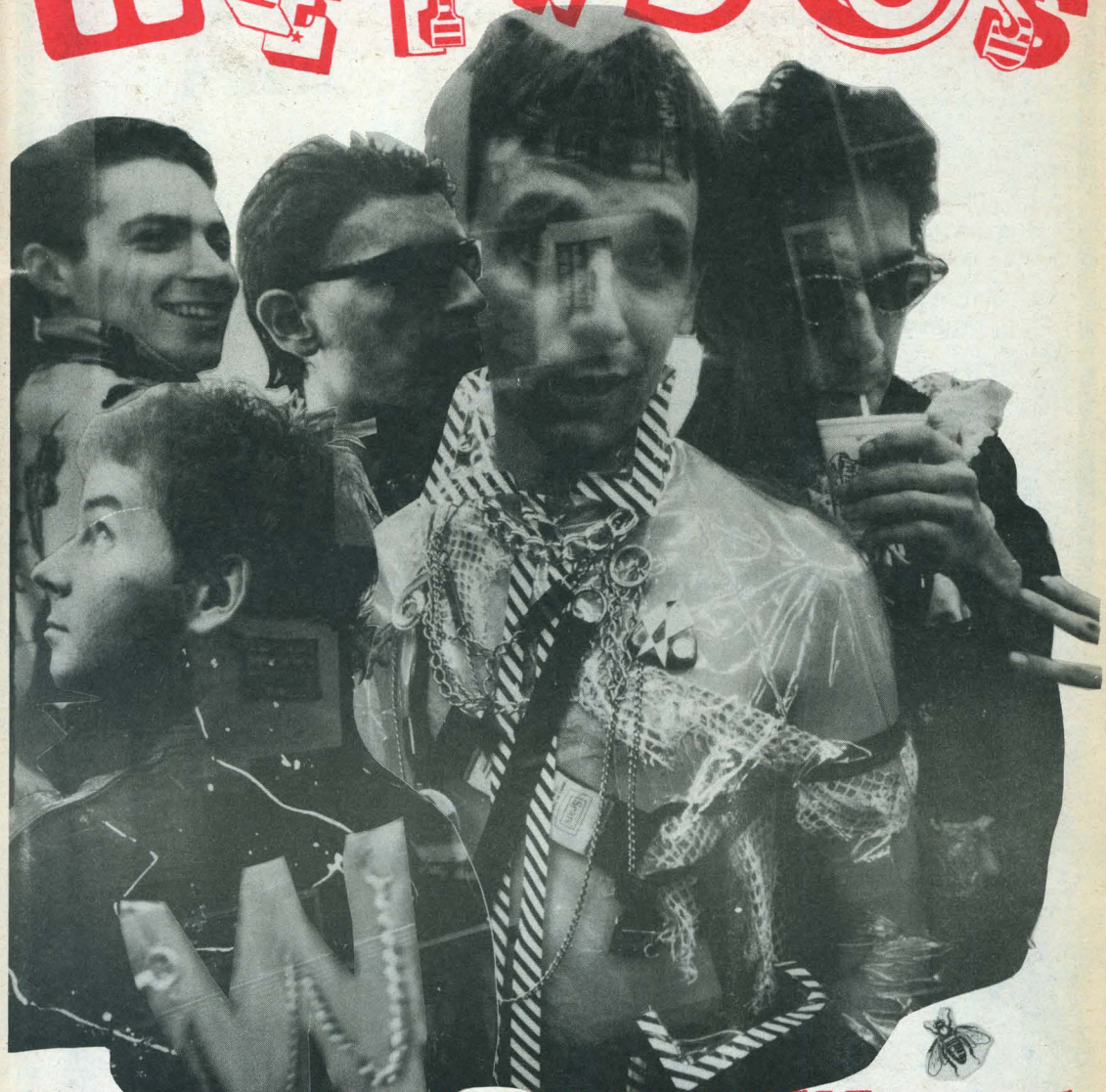

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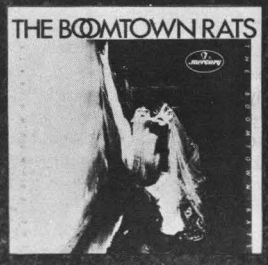

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EDITORIAL

NO FUTURE?

(A LOOK AT THE PRESS, THE RADIO AND THE RECORD RACKS)

Well they sure are taking notice suddenly aren't they? Just walked down to a newsstand and here was Johnny's snarling face on the cover of two establishment publications: Rolling Stone and High Times. There's gonna be lots of after dinner talk about our music in the flare denim and coke spoon crowd! Of course it really don't mean shit, both stories are pure examples of sensationalism mixed with a pathetic attempt at being "in the know," and it was only a few weeks before that that Rolling Stone ran one of the most hateful and ignorant reports on the new music. Still, many people are going to become curious and intrigued by the whole hoopla, and that is where the situation becomes ludicrous. Unless you live in the big "hip" cities you will have a hell of a hard time getting your hands on some new wave/punk vinyl, and even in them big cities only a few stores carry it, and they are out of most of the stuff half the time. The record separators are there with the exotic name of your fave crazed combo written on it but no single can be found. Just an empty space because someone decided a dozen copies were quite enough, shit, you never see them pinheads anyway! hat is where the danger lies, pals. If our sound stays a cult matter it's going to die and life will once again be a very sad ordeal. Ludicrous situation number two: the airwaves. The well known exceptions aside, the DJs, those faceless creeps with the payola aesthetics and the way-back-then consciousness, seem to have made up their minds to ignore the new sound as long as it is possible. And let's not hear the easy reply about playing what the majority of the public wants and tough titties on the far left stuff 'cause it is a chicken shit argument fit for brainless robots: in the days of "progressive experimental" FM, they (younger then, maybe even alive) did not hesitate to play obscure controversial stuff for which the public demand was, I'm sure, rather minimal at the beginning. So that same stuff is still being played by the same coked-out DJs, except it is nowadays as controversial as a rock dance at the White House. Anyway, I have decided to turn my hopes towards AM, whose format fits the new brief songs much better and which has always been obssessed with reaching the kids, and to totally give up on the musical limbo of the other generation's stations. And, speaking of limbo, one brief salute to the Rot Music Awards, that televised extravaganza in boredom, which made one wonder how they could seriously bother to keep the name "rock" in its title. Everyone involved in that masquerade was dull, pretentious, cute and irrelevant. Tuxedoed pretty boys and evening-gowned fat asses parading about desperately trying to believe they are still the new hip generation. A nightmare or a farce, depending on your toughness. Ma, what have they done to my song???

LOCAL SCENE

Very old news first: David Braun no longer with the Screamers, but not at all out of the picture as he now runs Danger House Records, a small independent (totally!) record company he formed a few weeks ago... "Anarchy in the U.K." available once again in stores... all you maniacs with the permanent three fingers in the air syndrome can now join the official Weirdos Fan Club. Write 6777 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, for information...

San Francisco's bunch the Avengers apparently stranded in L.A. after their Palladium appearance. Everything got more or less straightened out and they were finally able to return. Speaking of Palladium, we asked a few questions from Jeffrey Jolson, one of the organizers of the evening (Jeffrey is no longer part of California Productions, having had strong disagreements with his partners. He has now started a production company called 1984.). We were told that the Clash were unable to obtain their visas in time, due to a definite lack of cooperation by the authorities, both American and English. Draw your own conclusions on that one.

As to the situation backstage (two dressing rooms for Blondie, one for all the other bands), it was just part of the contract. That's show biz (but punk rock?). The unnecessary frisking and refusal to let uncredited photographers take their cameras was just Palladium policy (how long before they force you to attend those things stark naked?), so was the absence of projected slides and film. No union projectionist, no pictures, in spite of the fact that they had been told there would be no problem. Jeffrey also expressed doubts about the "fashion" show and its hysterical (in every sense) female M.C. who definitely was in the wrong place at the wrong time. And Richard Hell did get paid although no one seems to remember having seen him perform. Jeffrey has not straightened that one out yet! We were assured the Avengers did get their fare back, and that whatever they were still owed (if any) would be paid. And if all this talk of money still excites you, there is another small item: no profits were made. You could even say lots was lost.

In San Francisco, the Nuns/Blondie show at the Old Waldorf turned into a bit of a riot, with the Nuns being canceled & many fans being evicted... It seems that the club's owner couldn't relate to people having a good time (you know, jumping & jiving to the beat of the noise), and got rather physical, or rather his bouncers got physical and some blood was spilt... In retaliation, the Nuns put on a free show at Mabuhays...

At the recent Sunday afternoon Whisky show (Germs/Devo/Blondie), guitarist Bob from Devo dived into the audience & whacked Weirdo Dix & an unnamed photographer with his guitar (unintentionally), causing both to be rushed to the hospital... Later on in the show, they were both seen returning, the photographer in bandages, Dix with some stitches... real troopers those two... Gary Panter (the pissant that draws "Jimbo"), has threatened to quit unless we mention his new comic book, "Alamo Courts"... It's a tender love story involving a redwing shoe salesman who falls for a shoedevil from outer space?... available around L.A., or by mail ($5) to: 212 S. Kenmore, #7, L.A. 90004...

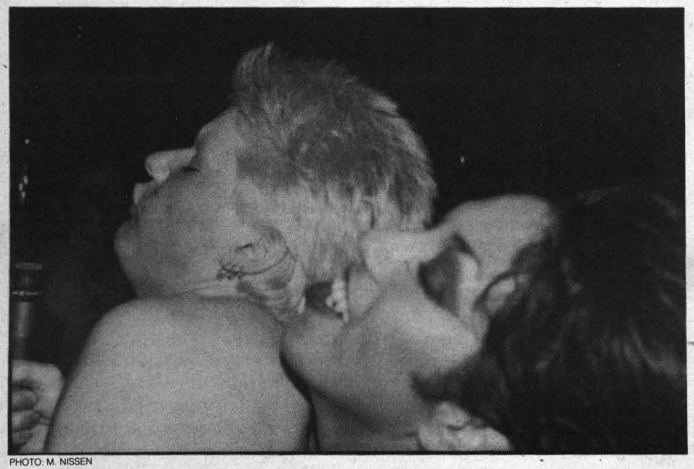


PHOTO: M. NISSEN

Now let's go back to more intimate matters. Two very unusual bands played for the couple of hundred punksters and fringies gathered at Dave Allen's house a few nights back. The event was in honor of Farrah Fawcett Minor and John Doe, the bands were X (singer Exene, bass and vocals John Doe, back-up vocals and lead guitar Billy Zoom, drums Rand McNally and subliminal piano David Braun) and Metro Squad (singer Black Randy, special guest on guitar K.K., bass John Doe, subliminal piano David Braun, guitar Bob Dead); the atmosphere was rowdy and friendly, the booze was cheap and the neighbors probably terrified. Can't wait to see these two bands again—what we heard was more than promising. Also realized that evening there ain't nothing better to test the foundations of your house than to let 200 yobs pogo in it all night...

Now the big thanks of the month to John Mark Robinson, who is a very special bum indeed, and a fucking good friend of this worthless cause! And a honorary mention to KROQ, who had a lot to do with what was good about the Palladium show and nothing to do with what was bad...

Obligatory fuck-ups of last month: center pic of the Pistols was by Chris Jelley, and review pic of the Dolls by Chris Desjardins.

Late good news: the Masque should just about open again by the time you read this. See you there, nitwits.

Wizard Jamaican producer Lee Perry co-produced the Clash's newest single, "Complete Control." Seems like the dreads and the punks getting closer every day. According to Virgin, the Pistols album delayed once again until the end of October. However, expect a single before that. Also on Virgin, X Ray Spex and XTC coming out with singles on October 7th.

Eater also are coming out with new single on the same date and on October 21 Buzzcocks (with Peter Shelley on vocals this time) are released by United Artists. Songs are "Orgasm addict" and "Whatever happened to." To end all these recording news, there is an LP of The Boys about to appear (in England at least) and a new something on Chiswick by the Radio Stars.

Shock of the month: Rat Scabies, famed noisemaker with the Damned, was fired during a tour in France. Replacement was flown from England the next day (apparently the drummer of Johnny Moped and the Morons). Seems Jake Riviera was serious when he said on TV, "People like Rat, they're a dime a dozen," or something as charming. Speaking of Jake Riviera, he is no longer with Stiff Records.

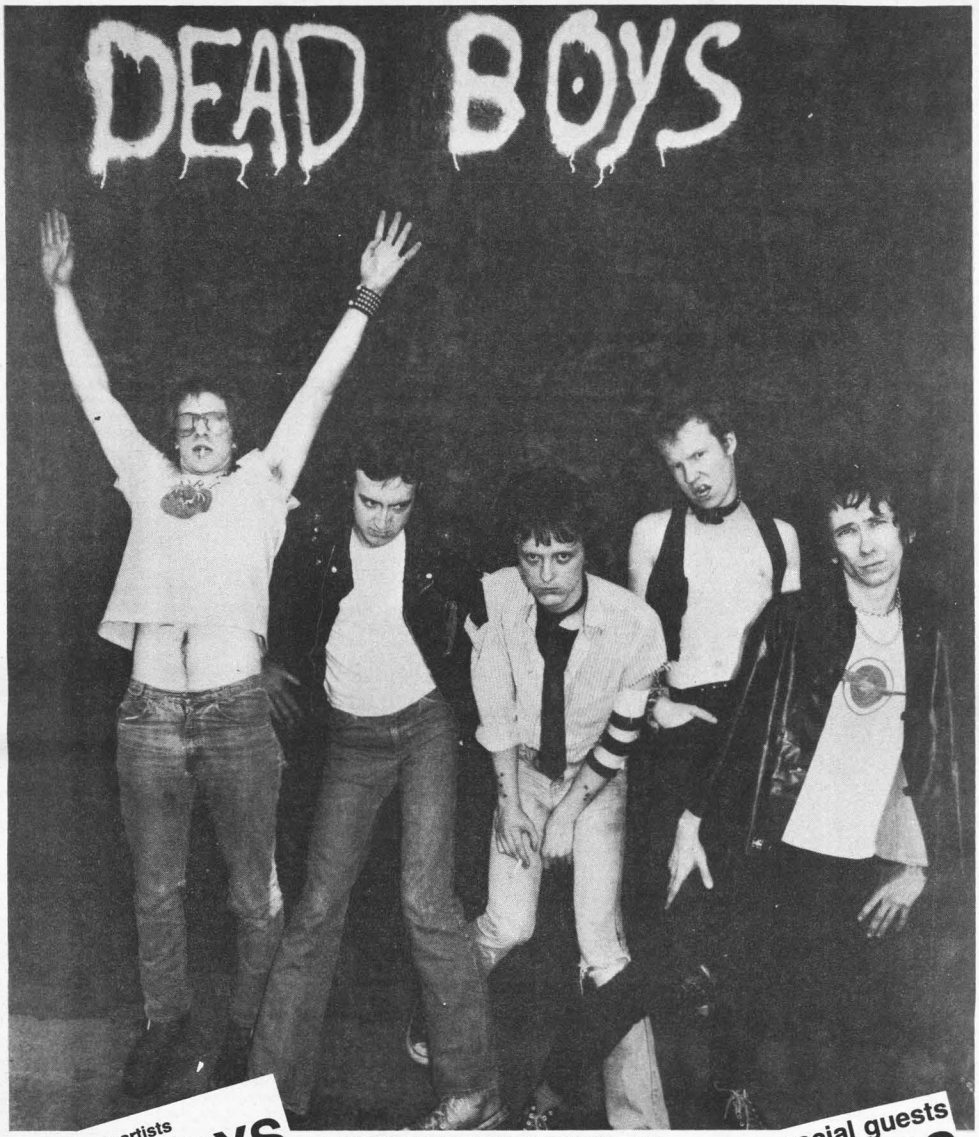
And Jimmy Pursey, singer of Sham 69 (see interview next month in SLASH), was arrested and taken away for performing with the band on a London rooftop. This was the mysterious correspondent speaking, temporarily substituting for a too-drunk or too-lazy Harry Slime.

SLANDERama

by PLEASANT

I wouldn't trust anyone on the staff of this magazine—they're all nutz! (They must be crazy, they gave me my own fuckin' column!) Well... at least I sign my name to it—I was going to call it "modern girl" but I'm not a rat sucking pussy like some people who write for this rag! Don't know what this column's about yet, but they told me I could say anything I wanted, raves or slander... (slandering me wouldn't be hard, God knows!)

Germ Warfare (?): The Germs have christened Kim Fowley "penis face"... Ha, they should talk!! **Bobby Pyn** appeared on the Whisky stage in a leopard Jock Strap! He should join the Weirdos... they need the sex appeal, and besides, the leopard is right up their alley... **Jimmy Destri,** that black-haired **Blondie,** has a fetish for midnite swims in leather pants... ***ycch!*** Makes me vomit to see all the palladium poseurs hanging out at the Whisky, thinkin' they're bitchin', now that punk is in vogue... **Dangerhouse** is dangerous... what or who will K.K. do, now that his sweetie has gone to London?... **Destri** rides again—he caught a **Jett**... **Romeo** oh **Romeo: Black Randy** serenaded **Gear,** in total rhyme, outside the **Screamers** house at 4:30 A.M., thru a loudspeaker... Those beloved scums, Helen and Trudy, have been sleeping anywhere from alleys to Rodney's car, just to live in Hollywood... Hmmm... used up the best of my ammo for this month... I wish I was Rona Barrett! (Personal note: Randy, go smell a tree!) ***That's all!***



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letters

Re: Michelle Meyer's letter in last issue.

Dear Kickboy:

Many thanks to the neurotic girls of Hollywood (i.e., Michelle Meyers) that insist on spreading my name about and giving me so much free publicity —it's through them that I have become well known for my basic social spunk and "get up and go."

Who is really taking up all the "space" on the "scene"??? It's obviously the has-been groupie-types who are now weighing in at 275 lbs. I'm sure we all appreciate the 15 years of "building" the scene in Hollywood—but now it is a time of new things and new, young faces, so those who are old and in the way should stay home with their beach boys/GTOs scrapbooks and leave the oxygen for us.

Farrah Fawcett Minor
Press Officer, Stiff Records

Dear Kickboy:

Having stayed in L.A. for several months, I found your letters are the best text for my English (is it?) study. I'll be leaving for Tokyo next month. Tell me how to get SLASH over there.

Yours truly,
Honda Yamaha Kawasaki

I don't believe your name. But anyway, dear little Honda, I'm sure you picked up a few idiomatic winners in this column. Just make sure you use everything you've learned next time you go to the American embassy and apply for a visa.

(SLASH's Tokyo retailer is written somewhere in these pages. No kidding.)

Kick Face

Greetings,

I would like to comment on your editorial: "Your values are worthless." Whenever I try to describe the New Wave to friends who are ignorant of what's happening, I get the same bullshit remarks —mostly: "It's so noisy and offensive." Well, far out! (pardon the cliche). I prefer ***outrageous, offensive, energetic and new*** to lobotomy, stagnant, boring ***old*** music. Your article really summed it up and I think I'll make copies of it to whip on people I get too exasperated to explain to.

Keep going strong,
Maggie White
Fairoaks, CA

THIS WANTS TO KNOW

What I want to know, who you? Have you no heart? I have seen nothing so far. Why not this? You think we are only kids. We maybe this. I think we are that—not wanting to think but have 2. It is different for you. Who are right, always. You ***have*** to be. We won't. We want to see something else. You are members of clubs, you don't know. We forgot what you never knew. Look for your words (no: to talk) for you, always, to many things happen too much is it to ask of. Always, always never will.

If you look hard—can't see it. Nothing happens. Who you now? Now we: you (too many) are us. I want to see this: you moving. Why this pattern thinks, do you know if it does or am I kidding.

The Leader

I give up. Some people just have a way with words . . .

Kickboy

To Kickboy/Steven,

I'm about to get sick from going to rock shows like The Screamers/Zeros show at the Whisky. Close to the end of a Zeros set one of the guitarists, an obviously disturbed young man, threw a glass down on the stage floor, smashed it and kicked the shards off the stage, a big piece hitting me in the chest. Fortunately I was not hurt, and I'm thankful it didn't hit me in the face or I may have been blinded for life because of some lame Mexican boy's neurosis. I also recall at a Germs gig the singer taking a jar of peanut butter and smearing it all over his band. The music was pretty bland and the theatrics were pretty lame so I walked away from the front of the stage when five paces later the enormous jar of peanut butter that was on stage a second ago, sailed past my head missing me by about three inches. Again I was fortunate that I wasn't hurt. Had the jar hit me I would have been severely injured. If rock and roll to you means physically abusing an audience or causing permanent damage to innocent people, then you'd better protect yourselves to a great deal of people that aren't going to take it and are going to waste you in the end. I think the local punk rock, or new wave scene is a childish little facade where everyone pretends they're British teens on welfare, which is in itself a pretty big joke considering how affluent L.A. kids are. The whole movement is predicated on who can put who or how much down and maintaining a cool negative attitude towards everything. This is every bit as exciting as going to Rodney's English Disco back in 1974 and seeing who could pretend who was more gay than who. The prime irritant of all this phony posturing is that it romanticizes violence on a large scale. I mean like who made it your business to publish shit like Eddie Darkstar slashing his wrists at your party? Did it ever occur to you that he may have gone through a lot of personal pain and agony and wanted to do something out of personal conviction rather than flaccid publicity, which is what you made it sound like? I mean like who gave you the right to write about somebody's problems and write it off as some cheap, trendy obsession? He isn't even into New Wave, he's too fucking cool, and he didn't do it for the stupid reasons you mentioned. I think you'd be better off not writing about good bands like The Motels, if it's going to result in a lot of rotten publicity, maybe you're better suited to stick to crap like The Zeros and The Germs. It wasn't very easy writing this letter, I'm sorry I had to do it, because I met you Steven, and you look pretty smart but I guess once you start writing you deny your looks. If New Wave means hurting people, then it won't stand.

Get Hip Or Get Fucked,
Andy Gervay
West Los Angeles, California

What the fuck are you talking about? You go to a couple of concerts, you think you almost got hurt and you draw the amazing conclusion that we are urging the bands to attack people. Anyway we've been to dozens of concerts without ever seeing the "violence" you're moaning about. Sure it gets a bit rowdy (compared to a Linda Ronstadt show) but no one is busy maiming someone else or shit like that. The Eddie Darkstar thing was written with his ***permission, and although he wasn't too sure about it afterwards there were no bad feelings, so your righteousness is out of place. Your analysis of the L.A. scene is stupid and narrow-minded. Nobody's pretending to be British teens on welfare, they're pretending to be teens on terminal boredom, 'cause they are. Don't let*** **Time** ***magazine do your thinking for you. Just because you don't like the music does not mean you have to drag in all this half-digested sociological crap. The L.A. scene is real and alive, you're just too constipated to enjoy/understand it. And don't worry, we do plan to stick to "crap like the Zeros or the Germs." This is just the wrong mag for you, ain't it? Get Fucked too, mister Hip!***

Kickboy

Slash,

I would like to point out a few things to you. After reading the recent copy of SLASH I've come to a understanding of your 'zine, you guys are just a bunch of ***morons!*** When are you going to learn to spell or even construct normal questions to the people you interview! Or did you not finish school? You guys aren't true punks! Your just somebody, like alot of others that are trying to cash in on the scene. When the Pistols do come here and show L.A. some real action I hope that they start with you first! The only thing I see in your fucking 'zine is to subscribe, subscribe! I've seen alot of other 'zines that ***are not*** shoving down your throat to subscribe. If you thought that you would have trouble in the beginning of starting a 'zine, why didn't you think of that in the first place? To end this, If I did have a place for you to throw your little benefits I sure wouldn't give it to you! And its a real shame what you did to the Screamers at your last benefit, don't you have any brains? And how would you know that ***punk is healthy?*** You don't even ***pogo!*** Do you?

whizz kid
hollywood

Hey whizz kid, you really cracked us up!! So true punks are supposed to be educated and all that, uh? As to the cashing in on the scene bit, that really had us rolling on the floor! If you knew how this rag works, you'd see that cashing in is not exactly the term for it. But you probably wouldn't understand 'cause according to your brilliant thinking only people with money should start a magazine. A true little pig concept. And what the fuck did we do to the Screamers? You're real confused, aren't you? Kid, you can stick that concert hall you'll never tell us about up your ass. And stop reading SLASH, ***you little shit. It's embarrassing to realize in what hands it ends up sometimes.***

Kickboy

SLASH,

I'm writing to you about that punk rock fashion show that happened friday the 23rd. I thought it was great except for one thing. Those fucking assholes that just stood there and got in the way of us people that got radical when the Weirdos came on.

Fuck! They think they're such punk rockers well let me tell ya, they all suck fucking shit! I enjoy getting radical with punk rock because that's how I show how much I like it. These other people that dress up and stand around and look at everyone and compare clothes with each other should stay home and fucking pick their noises.

and compare clothes with each other should stay home and fucking pick their noses.

And another thing. I thought the fashion show sucked.

Stay home you fucking phonies!

L. Huntington Beach

Look at it this way, angry young person. If them "phonies" did stay home, the shows would be financial failures, the promoters would discard the music as commercially unsound (that's how they say it, isn't it?) and you would never see any British bands touring or any of that. Any big show will attract strange combinations of people, some of themyou're bound not to like. And when you just want to be amongst your kind, there's always the Masque.

Hiya Kickboy,

I know it's very current to bitch about how boring life is

a) in L.A.
b) in the U.S.A.
c) on Earth

and I admit to ownership of several sufficiently ripped T shirts proclaiming my ennui . . . but since I tuned my antennae into the new wave of music/sound, and with it SLASH magazine, the "new wave of fanzines," I feel ***fulfilled*** for the first time in years (I mean, I'm even considering a "I found it"

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letters

bumper sticker), anyhow, before I sink into the depths of obscurity let me gush a bit: ***thank you thank you thank you!!!*** for your fabulous publication. Enclosed find one check (eek! Can you believe my mother wrote "Stash" instead of Slash? I seriously considered repossessing my five dollars worth of preciously accumulated change for such an inexcusable error) for a year's *PER*scription (you've addicted me). Finally, the question everyone's asking: Who is Kickboy? I think the Clash deserve an entire issue. Perhaps with an organised effort we can get the Pistols over here for a tour. May be a punk lobby could be formed?

Jane Wiedlin
Woodland Hills

a) You should change mothers.
b) Kickboy is not Lester Bangs (nobody's that *old)*
c) The Clash are great but so are dozens of others. No more heroes (thanks Stranglers)
d) I think the Pistols are *coming, punk lobby or not.*
e) You're welcome.

K.B.F.

Slash:

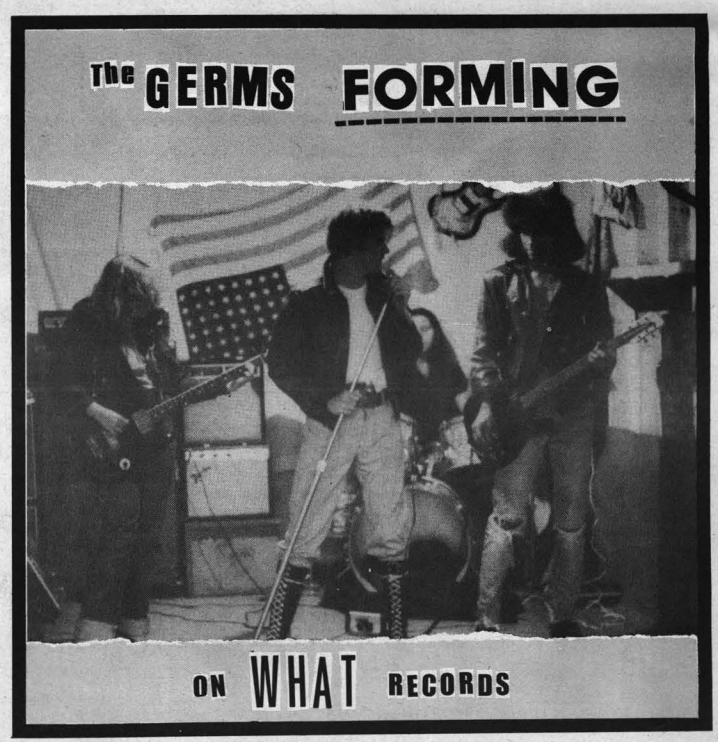
After a few days of listening to The Clash, Jam, Users, Sex Pistols, Peter Tosh, and Bunny Wailer, I made it into LA to find your latest issue and desperate plea instead of the usual sharp editorial.

So here's a check for ten (won't even bounce) for two subscriptions.

Send one to this girl I used to know (never fucked her but I turned her on to music) and one to me.

Big thrill to find reggae reviews. Keep up the crisp, incisive comments on punkdom.

Mitchell Kalish
3rd century America



Let's see how the competition's doing—Part II

NO EXIT ("Fanzine for the other wave"):

First issue really pissed me off. There ain't no price anywhere and I had to pay a fortune for it. And all there was inside was stuff about Crime, a few reviews and a ludicrous fashion page with girls looking as much punk as Bianca Jagger and S.F. guys with mustaches. So I had already crossed it off my list of reading material but #2 came my way yesterday and I have to revise my opinion. Still no price, so it's up to whoever sells it to milk you as much as they can, so I'm still pissed off 'bout that, but the contents are (and look) better. They even rave about the Weirdos, which is apparently very uncool in San Francisco these days. "No Exit" is alright. Write 49 Germania St., S.F., CA 94117.

FLIPSIDE:

I like this. Unpretentious and entertaining. New from L.A., great cover and format. They do their editorial and record reviews as conversations between the staff members, and it works fine. Dubious article about a band called Eulogy, hilarious back cover—what more do you want for a quarter? I hope they go on not worrying about the "misteaks and typing errs." Write Flip Side magazine, 12340 Broadway, Whittier, CA 90601.

SIDEBURNS ("If you want politics read something else"):

Don't know if this is still coming out. Last issue I have is a few months old. A shame if it isn't, 'cause this is a mother. Half-typed, half-handwritten, full of slogans, insults and graffiti, it raves about a few British bands (Stranglers their favorite) and spits at the rest of the world. Definitely anti-poser. Write 40 Woodyates Road Lee, London S.E. 12.

40 Woodyates Road, Lee London S.E. 12

TROUSER PRESS ("America's only British rock magazine"):

Venerable publication (about three years old) for Anglophiles only. Everything you want to know about anybody that ever played rock in the island and a lot that you couldn't care less about. Only American music they cover is the "underground" scene. Too bad they don't do it as well for the new English scene. Their latest review of the Roxy live album is a masterpiece of misunderstanding and superficial listening. Still, a courageous mag that believes in what it is doing. And every Cream reader knows how unusual that is. Write to Room 801, 147 West 42nd St., New York, NY 10036.

/ ("The fanzine for the blank generation"):

The / thing is the name of this 'zine. Totally into the punk thing. Aggressive and intolerant, as it should be. Lay-out too stiff and opinions sometimes too naive. Should relax a bit. One can be militant about the whole thing and still be funny (most U.K. fanzines manage both). I guess being hardcore in this laid back city can lead to paranoia. Write to P.O. Box 1485, Tustin, CA 92680.

FALLING ROCK:

Only reason this one stands out is because of a color cover. Color xerox ain't exactly cheap, so somebody's got money in this. What they do with it is another matter. Except for a very funny double page of drawings ("a page from the textbook of the Robert Plant Ballet school for Lead singers"), the issue I have here is one big yawn. Hardly any pictures, lots of horrendous drawings and not funny remarks about boring acts. Who cares? 1105 Donaire Way, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272.

RIPPED AND TORN ("Not just a fanzine"):

Sometimes I wonder if I don't like it better than Sniffin Glue. (My head's full of such heavy dilemmas, ain't it?) Full of interviews, gossip, collages, pictures, cutting reviews and even sociological essays, Ripped and Torn proves that the punk attitude goes far beyond the fuck-you philosophy most pinheads I know have settled for. Truly subversive rag, may it never shut up. Write c/o Rough Trade, 202 Kensington Park Rd., London W11.

PUNK:

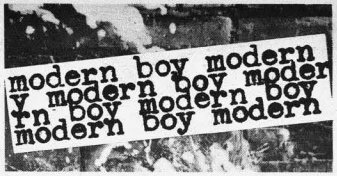
Very cliquy (cliquey?) old timer from N.Y. Comes out when it feels like it and mainly caters to the East Coast in-scene where everyone thinks they've invented the new music. Last issue came out in a totally different format (hassles with the printer) and was overloaded with pictures and comic strips of very uneven interest. Gets clever and cute too often. Yet there is a lot in it so you'll always find something to get your teeth into. If you think punk is one big joke (which it is, among other things) on the world, this is your mag. P.O. Box 675, New York, NY.

BIG STAR ("Shake some action . . . now!")

There are many things I don't like about this relatively thick fanzine (page-wise) and a lot more that I do, so it must be all right. Much variety, goes from the Damned to John Mendelsohn (that has-been) to Dead Fingers Talk (these hardly born) to the Flaming Groovies (yawn) to just about every corner you can think of. Letting one of their writers call the Clash "post-glitteresque" is asking for a lot of trouble, but that's what's fun about fanzines anyway: the most off the wall opinions get to be published, everybody foams at the mouth and the typewriter, insults fly back and forth and everybody has a great time. (God, am I tolerant today!) I also wish it wasn't called Big Star. Still, lots of good stuff. Write 104 Claremont Ave., Buffalo, NY 14222. (Also has a newsletter.)

NEW WAVE:

Well, money ain't everything, is it?! This brand new slicko mag came out all shiny and imposing (at first glance anyway) and then pffft bye bye no more. 'Cept apparently it *is* coming out again with a new team. Everybody got sacked or something, disagreements on policy. If at SLASH we had to fire each other every time we disagree . . . Ha, money. (We'll tell you about #2 when it's out.)



. . . well, whadda you know, it seems I'm becoming a regular feature (which makes me feel about as secure as I did when my unemployment ran out), a few gossip mongers around town are even wondering who I am in reality (I don't exist in reality) . . . they're probably paid informants of the people I offended in my first column (are they still out to get me?) . . . (c'mon, can't you see my tongue in cheek?) . . .

Punk Fashion: What's the latest look? Not hefty bags . . . Not denim suits or leisure suits . . . It's ***lawsuits!!!*** Around the office that's all I hear about . . . so-and-so suing so-and-so and so on, etc. . . . I wonder if anybody realizes that nobody has anything worth getting (actually, it would be great fun to see everyone in court—visually it'd make the Tate/La Bianca trials look like Sunday Mass) . . .

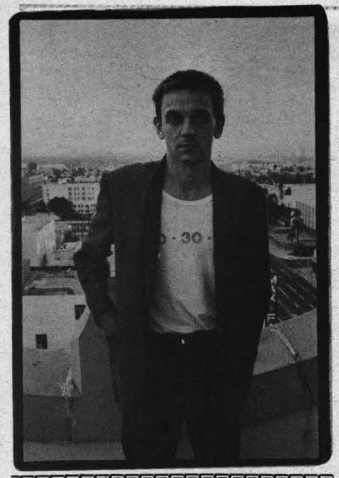
Who's Jumping: What's all this bullshit I keep hearing about "everybody jumping on the bandwagon" . . . don't you fuckers know that the fucking wagon hasn't pulled into town yet? . . . just about everyone in this pueblo that could even vaguely be labeled an "exploiter" of this scene isn't makin' a plug! . . . I mean what makes this phenomenon so sacred that somebody can't make a few bucks . . . (mind you, I said just about everyone, there's always gonna be a few bootlickers who'd sell their sole) . . .

Punk? Poseur? Prima Donna?: Speaking of bullshit (it seems to be pervading the movement lately), I just don't know if I can handle any more of this "holier (punkier) than thou" crap . . . I mean, if a guy is into the music, or even curious about what's transpiring, and just 'cause he doesn't dress or look like you, I mean who are *you* to label this guy . . . I'm sorry but nobody's gonna convince me they were born with a leather jacket on . . . (except da Ramones) . . . (okay, maybe there's one or two real punks reading this, I remember both of you from Studio One last year. Remember? we were all doing the Hustle) . . . a snob does not a punk make . . .

photo: Herb Wrede

Marc Bolan—space invader, slippery rock star, you'll be missed.

—Herb



John W. DENNEY

(I know, there was already one Weirdos interview a while back. They were not satisfied with it. And John had a few things to add.)

Slash: How did the Weirdos really form?

John: Dix and I are brothers, Cliff met Dave at Cal Arts, and then we got Nicky. I know Cliff from high school art classes. When we got out we ran into each other, realized we were on the same... beam and, uh, and he was playing in a band called Scab Country. They played modern jazz. Cliff played saxophone. They played at parties and Cliff would do these real long like Ornette Coleman sax solos for about three hours; people would walk out. They wanted to progress so they asked me to join them.

Slash: Doing what?

John: I don't know. Cliff said, "We don't care what you do, just stand on stage."

Slash: Did you do anything?

John: No, not with them. They broke up soon after.

Slash: When was that?

John: About six years ago. Right after that we were the original Razorblades.

Slash: Is it true you were hippies three weeks ago?

John: No, but that really infuriated me.

Slash: You're not serious?

John: We've had fucking short hair for years. You never caught me at a love-in. The '60s ended in '70 for me. We think hippies are deplorable. Anyway, we're gonna challenge that guy and his band to a battle of the bands at the Masque at an as yet unnamed date. We may play naked.

Slash: Why do you dress the way you do on stage?

John: For fun. We're a live act. We give 'em more than just the music.

Slash: People say it looks like joke punk rock.

John: Oh yeah? Well, the joke is on them. We're gonna have the last laugh. Unfortunately there are a lot of dim-witted lame brains injecting it with a lot of profound nonsense. Like I'm doing now in this self-serving interview. But it's real. Those are real clothes. We make our own. It's a part of the ritual before we go on stage ... it's like war paint.

Slash: Is the music serious, like "I'm not like you"?

John: Yes, yes ... unquestionably, like serious jokes.

Slash: Would you say the music is violent?

John: Uh, I think we are quite violent. By the mere fact that we jump around and flail our arms and guitars like raving maniacs. We can be dangerous.

Slash: You do seem to attack members of the audience that aren't enjoying themselves. You do seem to pick on them.

John: Yeah, we single 'em out and use them as props.

Slash: The same people come back a week later wearing plastic bags and torn T-shirts ...

John: Sure.

Slash: What was your first favorite rock 'n' roll song?

John: Ooo, eee, ooo, ah ah, ting tang, walla walla bing bang ... ooo, eee, or, uh, my favorite song was "Itsby bitsy teeny weeny yellow polka dot bikini."

Slash: Do you think you're normal?

John: No.

Slash: What makes you think that?

John: My brain. (uh?? —Ed.)

Slash: Why do you exist.

John: I don't know. I'm just posing the question, that's all. It's a sobering thought, considering what a lush I am.

Slash: A lot of people are indifferent to you.

John: Most people don't know what they like. They wait for an advertisement to tell them. Don't they realize they've got minds of their own?

Slash: Would you say the Weirdos are loyal Americans?

John: Most assuredly.

Slash: Do you believe in the American Dream?

John: It's not a matter of believing in it, I was born in it and I have no alternatives. I'm not equipped to do much about it ... at this point. Being capitalists is out of our hands. We are capitalists by being Americans.

Slash: What do you think of the U.S.A.?

John: I don't think about it, I just live in it.

Slash: What do you think of the U.K.?

John: Uhh ... many glorious things. The quaint architecture, the lovely countryside, Big Ben, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; I think of the unfortunate economic condition; I think of the War of Independence; I think of American imperialism. I'd like to blow it off the face of the earth. (laughs) About ten A-bombs ought to do it.

Slash: You swine ... Have you got a car?

John: I did, but not now, it was impounded and I can't afford to get it out. It doesn't run anyway.

Slash: Do you think what's happening in L.A. punk bands has anything to do with the rest of the world?

John: Yeah, I mean we're all on the same planet, needless to say.

Slash: Would you say L.A. is behind?

John: No. We're all living at the same point in time.

Slash: What other bands do you like?

John: Not Procol Harum. I like Gene Vincent and the Blue Caps, Burning Spear and Generation X. I like Beefheart. I'm a Beefheart fan from way back.

Slash: It's not worth bragging about, John.

John: No, but I think his time of recognition is right around the corner. He's from L.A.; I've spoken to him. I gave him a gift once, you know these plastic birthday cake decorations, little figurines of the Beatles ... I had one in my pocket so I gave it to him and said, "I almost didn't come just so I could say I wasn't here." He said, "Yeah, I know what you mean." It's like early Elvis before he went in the army. He died while we were recording "Destroy All Music," August 16, 1977. The song "1977" was prophetic; Jagger's next. I like the Hollywood bands like the Bags, the Germs and the Screamers. I like the Dils and the Zeros, also the Avengers from San Francisco. They should move down here.

Slash: What other names did you consider for the band?

John: Los Lords, the Adults, the Barbies, the X-15s ... Cliff came up with the Weirdos.

Slash: Why did you choose the Weirdos?

John: Isn't it obvious? We're from Hollywood.

Slash: Do you think any of you are particularly weird?

John: Unanimously ... we ***are*** the Weirdos.

kipper kids

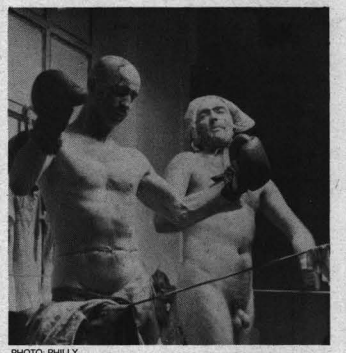


PHOTO: PHILLY

The Kipper Kids have been together since 1971. They've been performing separately for two years, one in England and the other one here. The show they did at the Old Firehouse was their first time back together. They originally got together at theatre school in England ...

"In fact, it started near a railway station in Germany and the railway station is the closest place to home for what are called guestworkers —people from Greece and Italy—and they're real Kipper Kids (they make indescribable noises). We came up with the name of the Kipper Kids and something kind of crystallized which was a thought character called Kipper Kid who we could both do although we're individuals. There was a third person we could both do, he was identical.

"The first thing we did was a show where we couldn't really dictate to the Kipper Kid what to do, we couldn't give him lines or anything in the traditional way of the theatre, so we gave him a situation in which he could let loose and we arranged it so that we would have a stop mechanism, so that if the Kipper Kid were to disappear because he was totally autonomous (he was totally independent, we could switch him on, he just came in and left whenever he wanted), we could wait for him to come back."

Slash: Is it Dada, what you do?

Harry 2: It's more Mama than Dada.

Harry 1: There are similarities but we don't consciously strive to ...

Harry 2: We don't consciously strive to do anything, what we do is really what just comes about. We don't do the shows with a specific intention of achieving anything, we just do them because it just happens to be what comes out.

Harry 1: We ended up making the art world.

Slash: Have you ever been arrested for your shows?

Harry 1: We had the police call in one show because we attacked the audience ... we ended up attacking this guy, we chased him down the street (they did look pretty weird, they were wearing titties made from half melons) and he called the police on us. They didn't take it seriously at all.

Harry 2: Harry gets beaten up a lot.

Harry 1: I got beaten up by a Scotsman who accused me of being a punk rocker.

Slash: I heard you hurt each other.

Harry 1: No, we've never used physical violence on each other in a performance.

Slash: How do most audiences react?

Harry 2: Lots of people walk out in the boxing because it's very violent ... it's one person boxing himself until he bleeds ... you don't last more than three hours.

Well, that's the Kipper Kids. They're like nothing you've ever seen before. If you watch the Gong Show regularly you might catch Harry 2.

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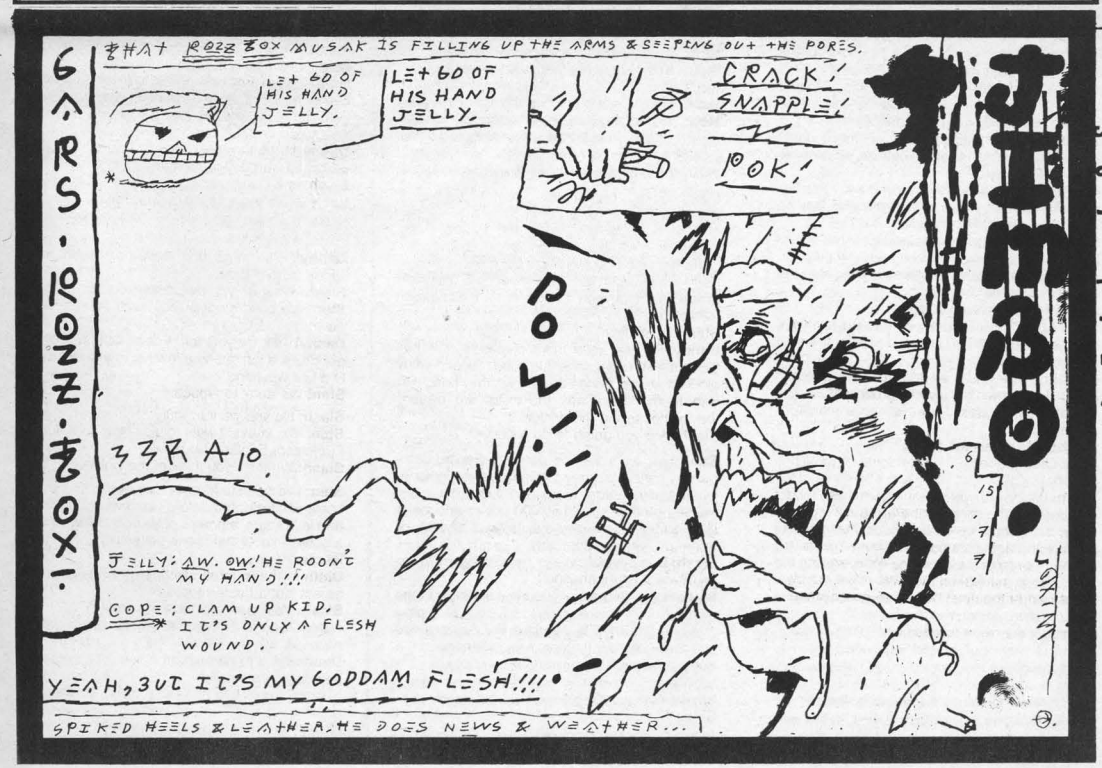


SKULLS

PHOTO: S. MOBO

At the time of the interview, The Skulls were: Sten Gun on vocals, Danny Death on guitar, Framin' J on bass, and Victor on drums. They're all from L.A. except Sten Gun who comes from Newcastle, England, and sounds like it.

Slash: Sten, why did you leave England?

Sten: 'Cause there were no fuckin' jobs. Most of the kids in London had jobs, it's the ones in the North of England that didn't have jobs.

Slash: Is Newcastle really one of the toughest towns in England? That's what Eric Burdon always used to say.

Sten: Yeah, like Glasgow. You couldn't get any tougher. Horrible nasty place. But Eric Burdon was never poor.

Slash: Who started the Skulls?

Danny: It's always been Sten and I.

Sten: We had another English kid with us at one time. He was the vocalist.

Slash: How did you two meet?

Sten: At a Chicano art show. I asked him what significance skulls had in all the paintings. We hit it off just like that . . .

Slash: So The Skulls started from Chicano art?

Sten: No. As a kid my favorite group was Johnny Kid and the Pirates. I always had a mania for skulls.

Slash: Who writes the songs?

Sten: Danny does . . . I write some of the lyrics and that . . .

Slash: Why were you smashing up these model airplanes on the stage of the Masque?

Sten: It's a song we do that goes, "Mom thinks I'm building airplanes but Dad knows I'm sniffing glue . . ." and I'm the kid of the song, sniffing the glue and smashing the models.

Slash: And I thought it was a song about World War II! Have you played live a lot?

Sten: Not a lot with this line-up.

Danny: Mostly out of the Hollywood area. In Long Beach, at the Pike . . .

Sten: That's a real punk place, the Pike. It's a combination of the kids that follow the English scene and the older crowd that shouts, "play Led Zeppelin!" . . .

Danny: The ones that think Ted Nugent is punk.

Slash: I've seen you wearing those Teddy Boy drapes a lot. Were you ever a Ted?

Sten: Yeah. All that punk fashion evolved from Teddy Boy stuff, the straight stove pipe pants and all that . . .

Slash: Do you like playing at the Masque?

Sten: We're doing a lot of behind the scene stuff there . . . I cleaned up the pissers personally! We do a lot to make the gig a success. Sometimes I watch the door . . . we do what we can.

Slash: Did you play any music before this band?

Sten: We've got roots going back a bit further than we'd like to. But most of the groups on the scene are older than their audience, and anyway we're not embarrassed of our past, we've always been the Skulls in L.A., always been a nasty lot.

Slash: What do you think of L.A. these days, music wise?

Sten: It's healthy.

Danny: But we need more places to play besides the Whisky or the Starwood. Sixteen-year-old kids are not gonna buy drinks, they bring it in with them. That's why the clubs are pissed, they're not selling the drinks.

Slash: Are you going to do a single?

Sten: Yes, we'll do it on our own. Record companies here are not as trendy as in England, where they realize when a group's got a six month potential . . . sell 50,000 copies and make a gold mine. Here they only think of albums, of three- or five-year contracts.

Slash: Because of what's happening now, do you think it might change?

Sten: Hope so. Lots of groups can't afford their own P.A. Now you're going to have one thousand and one groups with their little Vox AC 30 amps and they'll all sound great. You don't need all the trimmings, the laser beam shows and all the rubbish.

Slash: What songs will be on that single?

Sten: Two new ones . . . I've always been a fan of the TV show "The Prisoner," and the song is about that I'm-not-a-number-I'm-a-free-man thing. The other one is a catchy little tune we've got. It won't be none of the stuff we do right now.

Slash: Which is?

Danny: "Cruelty to Animals," or four ways to smash your brother's brains out, "Models" . . .

Sten: "High Polidium" (?), which is about a certain life in England, against the unions, housing councils . . .

Danny: An anti-socialist song.

Slash: Are you political?

Sten: We try to stay unpolitical. My ideas are very simple: Shangri La is a terraced house and a little terrier dog. I don't care how the world ends as long as I have these items.

Danny: I like to go from house to house, anywhere, I don't care.

Slash: What do you do off stage?

Sten: We build models, pull each other's pants down . . .

Danny: Talk for yourself. I don't build models. I get drunk a lot, spend a few hours a week in jail. Did last weekend.

Sten: We drink too much.

Slash: Do you want to tour?

Sten: We wouldn't want to play New York or San Francisco. England we would.

Slash: What do you think of the violence?

Sten: I've been to football matches in England, I know what rough lads are like. I've got a thousand and little scars, a broken nose from being hit with a bottle. I know that scene better than the Pistols, let me tell you.

Danny: I have three stitches on my eye, more here, I got a busted tooth.

Slash: You sure do! (Ha ha ha . . .) And the violence in L.A. is more self-abuse than anything else, isn't it?

Danny: That's right. At Larchmont Hall there was this guy in the toilets, smashing the door and hurting himself a lot more than he was hurting the door!

ARE THEY NOT MEN?

Overcoming jet lag had not been easy . . . needed something to snap[1] me out of acceptance of feeding and development of adipose tissue as supreme entertainment forms . . . good . . . tell-tale signs of subtle interest were there. Primitive similarity to thought process was in motion . . . i would spend an afternoon with DEVO for an interview.

Saw their movie at a SLASH party (first social outing off the 707[2]) . . . hmmm . . . the DEVO spirit . . . Charmed and confused, i wanted more. Saw them perform at Myron's Ballroom . . . thought provoking . . . They reeked of science fair, think tank out of hand[3], marching band gone mad, assembly line insanity . . . gently mixed and melded, adolescently identifiably wholly un-hip, wonderfully whimp and *oh so* geek-chic. I was *innarested*. Who were these masked men and how did they get this way?

The courtesy-of-A&M suburban hideaway was difficult to locate. Once inside, confusing and hectic. Ring, ring.[4] Well wishers, equipment, and five guys in a two bedroom place . . . as one might expect (after catching their act), ring ring, the atmosphere was more dorm than crash pad . . . more *oi* camp than camp . . . the phone rings constantly . . . (they haven't signed with anyone yet). Heavy phrases like "Contract Negotiations" hang[5] in the air . . . ring, ring. Hmmm . . . mix and match uniform type ensembles . . . pressed pants . . . kung-fu shoes . . . so you guys like Hollywood . . . great . . .

Equipment takes up most of the living room . . . the patio is covered with pleasantly flung coveralls and disposable suits for stage wear . . . Seem to be a self-contained unit . . . Mark, Bob, Jerry, Bob, Alan, and their friend who came with them all the way from Ohio[6], Tosh Berman. No residue of managers, roadies, hecklers, groupies (though Alan has been missing for several days) . . . Jerry[7] seems *to* ring, ring[8] manage a lot of the business details . . . keeping a light net of organization, and monitoring somewhat the other group members (basic cleanliness as applied to health, watching for signs of self abuse, etc. . . .). Hmmm . . . mind if i smoke[9]?

Mark[10] succumbs to urgings, and brings out the book *My Struggle*, which he wrote and illustrated. (Watch[11] for it. Currently being published, and sure to be controversial. It's a must-read, containing material suppressed for generations.) The book is impressive in volume alone, and elaborate in its rich Spencer Gift style . . . ring, ring[12].

Yes, it's urgent, and Mark and Tosh must leave on an important document mission[13].

At last it's semi-calm in the apartment . . . a DEVO tape is playing softly in the background . . .

"Jerry, would you like to talk about what DE-EVOLUTION means?"

"Yes . . ."* ring, ring

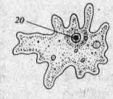
Now i will share with you the rich personal data which i obtained through rigorous, extensive, even embarrassing questioning . . .

Jerry[14] and Mark[15] were both art majors at Kent[16] State. They finally met. Jerry was into photo-silkscreening and so was Mark, but Mark was really more into making-your-own-puke-patties, people barfing on the moon, and dismemberment. Mark dropped out, lacking a semester. Jerry finished, and went on to teach art. Meanwhile, Jerry and Mark both have younger brothers named Bob. Both Bobs are 25. Mark's brother (Bob M.[17]) was/is a musician. Mark has a still younger brother who was also a brother to Bob, and into electronics (and made some electronic drums that you can hear real good in "Secret Agent Man," on the movie soundtrack). Jerry's brother (Bob C.[18]) went to college at Akron University where he majored in chemistry/biology (*ah ha!*), and in time, became a radiation physicist. Meanwhile, Jerry was getting into trouble as an art teacher, so he and Mark opened a graphic arts shop. Mark made rubber stamps in his spare time[19] and tried to get a mail order business going to help out. At this same time, they were all playing weird music together in the basements of Ohio, and forming the concepts that are the nucleus[20] of DEVO.

Mark had previous musical training in church, where he played organ.[21] This same Protestant church was attended by the rest of the family, as Mark and Bob's mother taught Sunday school there. Jerry and Bob were raised Catholic, and put in eight years in parochial schools. It is rumored that Jerry carries his first communion picture with him always.

Meanwhile, Mark and Bob's brother was getting heavier into electronics and feeling urges to open a shop of his own, so he left DEVO. Bob M. knew Alan[22] (they'd played the Ohio bar scene together) and brought him into the group . . . larva, pupa, telephase, and the boys kept practicing, and brought their music out of the basements and into the clubs[23] of Ohio, where their efforts were somewhat unappreciated . . . but not for long. After about four years, we find them playing Max's Kansas City, CBGB's, the Whisky, and the Starwood . . . appreciated, and with a cult following . . . STOP[24] . . . EJECT . . . DRIVE HOME . . . REWIND . . . PLAY . . .

Geez . . . Jerry musta taken all his electives in philosophy . . . no bueno . . . it wasn't the in-depth psychological profile i was looking for to help me figger out why they sing and play the way they do about the things they do (wait a minute . . . this may be a hit single on my hands . . .) . . . well . . . i knew where my interests lay . . . badda finda way to get the material i wanted . . . pace, puff, pan[25] . . . so, made up some questionnaires** . . . the partial results of which are now yours for the reading . . .



What books have had a noticeable impact on you?
Jerry: *Stations*[26] *of the Cross*.
What magazines entertain you?
Jerry: Watchtower, Christian Science Monitor.
Bob C.[27]: Scientific American, L. A. Star.
Alan: The best, the worst, mediocrity . . .
What do you watch on TV?
Jerry: Divorce Court.
Mark: Dragnet, Sonny and Cher . . .
Alan: Dragnet.
Do you have any heroes?
Jerry: Ted Nugent, Jack Bruce.
Bob C.: Astro Boy.
Mark: Sonny and Cher, Jack Webb, Don Ho . . .
Alan: Mao.
Bob M.[28]: This is a sad question for me because all of my dreams of heroes have been shattered, leaving me cold and disillusioned . . .
What kind of food do you like?
Jerry: Chili Dogs[29]. Ho Ho's.
What music do you like to listen to?
Bob M.: I listen to all music. I like DEVO music . . . DEVO music is mutations'of all music . . .
Alan: Low jazz.
Mark: Tennessee Ernie Ford's Christmas Album, Crosby, Stills and Nash.
Bob C.: Blooze, Merle Haggard.
What is your duty now for the future?
Jerry: To explain the discipline for the creative process.[30]
Mark: To clean the dishes . . . my struggle is to get the dishes clean.
What do you like to do when you're bored?
Bob M.: Answer questionnaires . . . please send more as soon as possible.
What does your family think of DEVO?
Bob M.: If it makes us money, it's okay . . . if not, it's a waste of time.
Did you want to be (career wise) something other than a musician?
Bob M.: Nothing serious . . . veterinarian, little league player, roadie, store owner, cartoonist . . .
Alan[31]**:** No.
What hobbies do you have?
Alan: Tai chi, absorbing abuse.
What do you like to do when you go out?
Bob C.: Come back.
Whose art do you like?
Mark: Walter Keene . . . he's so sensitive . . .
What are you doing with these guys?
Alan: Playing the best Slash music[32] in the land.
Bob C.: I was a rotten scientist.

*Jerry's answer to this question, the crux of the interview, has been omitted because of lack of space, and a lack of ability to interpret logically material covered, once i got home. A summary follows:

Things:

A. Most things have one purpose (a "thing" can be a rock band, a shoe horn . . .), such as the can opener in figure A.

B. DEVO has many purposes and uses (to listen to, to help around the house . . .) much like the Swiss army knife in figure B.

"It is also important that the meat and potatoes hit the market the same time that the pictures of the meat and potatoes hit the market" . . . and . . . "what's hip is un-hip," and also . . . "energise, don't parasite" . . .

Easier to understand than this heavy philosophical stuff are the lyrics to "Jocko Homo" (which sums up the DEVO type ideology). © DEVO 1977

"THEY TELL US THAT/WE LOST OUR TAILS
EVOLVING UP/FROM LITTLE SNAILS
ARE WE NOT MEN? WE ARE DEVO!
WE'RE PINHEADS NOW/WE ARE NOT WHOLE
WE'RE PINHEADS ALL/JOCKO HOMO
ARE WE NOT MEN? WE ARE DEVO!
MONKEY MEN ALL/IN BUSINESS SUIT
TEACHERS AND CRITICS/ALL DANCE THE POOT
ARE WE NOT MEN? WE ARE DEVO!
WE MUST REPEAT/D-E-V-O
WE MUST REPEAT . . ."

Even better than this is to *hear* these guys . . .

**Mark, Jerry, and Bob C. admitted to receiving aid from Tosh in filling out their questionnaires.

ART & INTERVIEW: LINDA STOKES

eyes

The Eyes are: Joe, vocals, guitar; Charlotte, vocals, bass; Kent, guitar; Don, drums.

Slash: Why is Brendan going to have to close down the Masque?
Charlotte: Because kids were lyin' around on the street after the show. (laughter) I saw two of them rolling around together. I don't know if it was two boys, two girls, or a girl and a boy . . .I was gonna go check.
Slash: On Cherokee?
Charlotte: Yeah, it was near the alley on the sidewalk. And there were people yelling "Fuck!" at the cops who came up. It was the wrong thing to do obviously.
Joe: Bobby Pyn.
Charlotte: Brendan's not into it enough where he has to frisk people down when they come into the palace. (Ed.—For booze, since they've no liquor or other permits.) That's what he told me.
Slash: Let's talk about you. When did you first get together?
Charlotte: Joe and I have been in bands together for about three or four years.
Joe: Five.
Don: You'd think they were married.
Charlotte: The way we met Don . . .we were really desperate, so we went to this school dance . . . and there were two drummers in the band. Don was taking a break; we walked up and said, "Hey, you want to join a band?" And he said, "Sure, okay." And he knew Kent.
Slash: How did you and Charlotte get together?
Joe: There was this band called Manuel and the Gardeners . . .she joined the second year and started playing keyboards. She was into classical piano, and we thought, yeah, she'll really catch on quick to this rock 'n' roll stuff.
Slash: Then the Eyes?
Joe: Then Channel D.
Charlotte: You know, open Channel D?
Joe: Then Tornado Babies . . .then Band X unfortunately, which was the worst band in the world. And then the Eyes.
Slash: Who thought of the name?
Joe: There was this book called . . . "The Flying Eyes," it's got the worst plot in the world, but it has great sentences like, "I'm not afraid of the Eyes."
Slash: So what about your influences?
Joe: All kinds of stuff . . .cartoons, movies, Japanese robots . . .
Charlotte: Catholic meat-grinding—
Joe: Oh, yeah, Catholicism figures a lot.
Charlotte: Yeah, I have a couple of altar boy outfits I stole one time.
Slash: What are some names of songs?
Joe: "Kissin' Zombies," "I'm in Love with the Beehead," "Kill your Parents" . . .
Don: "Little Girl from Hell."
Charlotte: "Penance," "Daddy-O" . . .
Joe: "Goodbye, Jackie O."
Slash: Charlotte was saying you guys had some doubts about doing "God Save the Queen" the other night? Whether you should do a cover?
Joe: I didn't have any doubts.
Charlotte: I had the doubts.
Joe: I wanted to annoy somebody by doing it . . . also if we were punk enough to do it and get away with it.
Slash: Kent, you really looked out of it that night . . .what did you drink?
Kent: I started off with Jack Daniels, then some Drambuie. I'm not sure how far I got with the Bacardi 151.
Slash: Are you all from L.A.?
The Eyes: Yeah . . .
Slash: Ever been in jail?
Kent: He used to spend a lot of time in the sewers in the Valley.
Slash: What movies do you like?
Charlotte: "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" . . .
Joe: "Infra-Man" . . .Bunuel movies. I just saw a documentary of his the other day called "Land Without Bread" . . .pretty hard core, great.
Kent: Surrealist stuff . . .
Slash: Books?
Charlotte: I like Raymond Chandler.
Kent: I like Comte de Lautreamont, Baudelaire, Rimbaud . . .Andre Breton is one of my heroes.
Joe: Science-fiction.
Slash: What about groups you hate?
Joe: Backstage Pass, Quiet Riot . . . Germs, they're a bit too wimpy for my taste.
Slash: Do you guys have any dates lined up?
Charlotte: Well, uh . . .it's connections, you know?
Joe: Any more SLASH benefits?
Slash: Hard to say right now . . .

AV

The Avengers were interviewed after a pretty impressive set (at a rehearsal studio) and lots of beer and other stuff. The Avengers are: Danny Furious, drums; Greg (vomit) Scars, guitar; Jimmy Cleaver, bass; Penelope, vocals.
Slash: Would you play somewhere for a hundred bucks?
Avengers: Yea . . .
—Maybe . . .
—Sure, we're not really interested in going and making a lot of money, we are just tired of reaching the same audience, we get bored with them, and they get bored with us . . .
Slash: What do you think of the scene here (S.F.)?
Avengers: We've only been playing three months . . .
—The first time we played, people went crazy . . .
—There's really nothing here, only three bands, Nuns, Crime, and us.
Slash: How do you place yourselves as far as S.F. bands?
Avengers: We're the best!
Slash: And down the line?
Avengers: We don't wanna go down the line!!
Slash: Aw, c'mon . . .
Avengers: Well, except for the Nuns, Crime & Avengers, the rest are shitty—y'know old Aerosmith types . . .oldware . . . long shag haircuts . . .
Slash: You've only been together three months?
Avengers: Yes, three months, but we've only had our bass player one month.
Slash: Were you all involved in music before the Avengers?
Avengers: Yea, me and him played together for a year in Orange County . . .
—I played with myself . . .
—I played records . . .
Slash: What led you into punkdom?
Avengers: I was raised in the suburbs, it was a perfect place for punks and rebels to come from.
Slash: What was the last thing you were inot?
Avengers: Boys . . . Girls . . .
Slash: No, musically . . .
Avengers: Nothing . . .
—Well, when Patti Smith came out, that's when I got into Modern Music . . . before that, just dumb stuff.
Slash: Are you a political band?
Avengers: Would you repeat that? I can't believe it, you're the first to ever ask.
—I think we're political 'cause we're dealing with a cultural movement.
Slash: Do you have plans to put out a single?
Avengers: Yes, it's one of our immediate goals.
—We were talking to the people at Dangerhouse, but nothing's for sure.
Slash: Do you get in fights?
Avengers: We get threatened all the time, isn't it ridiculous? There's always people who come up and say, "We'll show them what real punks are."
Slash: We've got some enemies . . .
Avengers: It's fun to have enemies, it sets you apart from people, and that's a nice place to be.
—We get enemies, 'cause we are out front with people . . .
Slash: Are you out to entertain?
Avengers: We're energetic, when we are onstage and if people get into the energy, then I guess we entertain . . . We're not showmen.
Slash: What do you think of the energy levels of the other S.F. bands?
Avengers: They have good energy, but their attitudes are all wrong.
Slash: Do you draw lines between poseurs and real punks?
Avengers: Yea, we do that . . . You mean somebody that's just into it for the fashion?
Slash: Yea, do you think it's wrong for people to like it on a fashion level?

ENGERS

Avengers: You mean like Halloween? . . .The thing I hate is that the media gets a hold of it and brings out the fucking worst in it . . .
Slash: What is your message?
Avengers: I knew somebody would ask us that.
—My message is, make a lot of noise and everybody have a good time . . .
Slash: How do you survive?

Avengers: We work in restaurants.
—I live off my girlfriend.
—I live off my mom, and I have a scholarship at the art institute.
Slash: Would you like to make it big, or be able to support yourselves making music?
Avengers: We just want to go a satisfying route . . .we really want to play for people.

Slash: What do you think of the future of new wave music?
Avengers: I think it will just give birth to something else . . .
Slash: Do you draw any parallels between this musical phenomenon, and any other?
Avengers: Only in its rebellion.

Slash: What were your musical influences?
Avengers: Well, the Ramones, but we don't sound anything like them, we improvise.
—There was once, when we all played guitars, turned up all the way . . .
Slash: Do you play around the city a lot?

Avengers: It's the only place we've played.
—As much as we can . . .
—About twice a month . . .
Slash: Are all the rumors of big money at Mabuhays true?
Avengers: Oh God, you mean what the Nuns said?
—Shit, you know how much money we average at Mabuhays? Maybe $100 . . . maybe . . .
—The bands only give us 15, maybe 20 per cent . . .
Slash: So, you're not a headlining band?

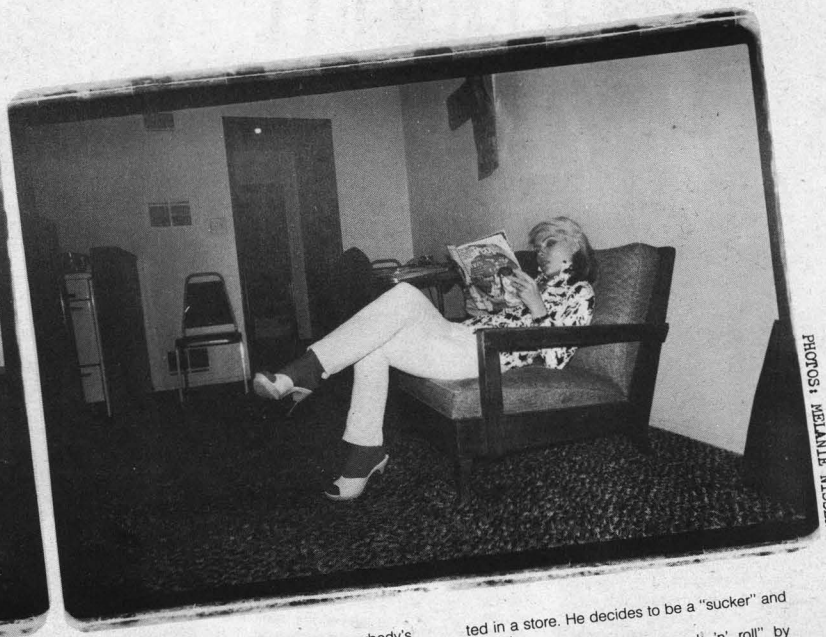
Avengers: We are now!
—Yea, Dirk Dirkson said, "I think you guys are of headline status."
Slash: How many punkers do you think there are in S.F.?

Avengers: Hardcore?
Slash: Hardcore to middle of the road.
Avengers: We only know the extremely committed . . .
—It's a nice little family . . .
—Like every scene in S.F., it's minimal, but it's there.
Slash: How many songs do you have?
Avengers: We used to have nine, but we keep cutting them down, maybe we have five . . . (laughter)
(Some guy enters the room.)
Avengers: Michael!
—This is our friend Michael Kowalski . . . he's our famous manager . . .
(Twenty minutes of tape passes by, with unintelligible nonsense.)
Slash: It's obvious, spending this time with you, that you are not into drugs. (laughter)
Avengers: Well, we're not anti-drug (more laughter).
Michael: Marc Bolan died today!
Slash: So did Maria Callas . . . we'll call you later if we can think of any more questions . . .

BLONDIE

BLONDIE INTERVIEW with Debbie, Chris and Jimmy (Clem walked in later).
Room #4 at the Tropicana.
Slash: Did you enjoy the last English tour?
Jimmy: Yes. The kids were the best part.
Slash: Debbie, did you see any of the new wave, girl singers and bands there?
Debbie: Siouxie and the Banshees are all right. She doesn't sing though, she just shouts. I heard X Ray Spex are real good.
Jimmy: There's a group in N.Y. called Teenage Jesus and the Jerks with the most erratic sax player in the world. He just goes up to the mike and (makes screeching sounds) over and over. They play one note but they're really good.
Debbie: That stuff does not really impress me, it's so easy to do that.
Jimmy: You put a quarter in the machine and you get musical shock waves . . .
Slash: Why did you leave Private Stock records?
Debbie: We got a better deal.
Jimmy: We traded a Chevy for a Cadillac.
Slash: Are you doing the Doors' "Moonlight Drive" on the new LP?
Jimmy: No. We recorded it, but we recorded so much material . . .
Slash: Any other non-originals?
Jimmy: One. It's an oldie, I don't know the author. One of those "oooh, la la . . ."
Chris: I think this album is going to get in the charts.
Slash: What is it called?
Chris: Kill-crazed teenage winos from Hell.
Slash: Do you have different audiences in different towns?
Chris: Yea. L.A. is the youngest audience.
Jimmy: N.Y. is college audience, intellectual high brows . . .
Chris: Seattle is pretty young.
Slash: What happened with the Waldorf show in S.F. and the Nuns?
Chris: The manager blamed the Nuns for all this stuff getting broken.
Jimmy: From what I understand the people on their guest list wrought havoc, so the management decided to dump the Nuns. We were already under contract.
Slash: Did you just make a movie?
Debbie: Yes, at the Whisky, with John Cassavetes. It's a 15 minute film.
Jimmy: He is really really professional.
Slash: Tell us more about the differences in audiences in various cities.
Chris: In N.Y. it's very blase. There is no excessive behavior. London is the craziest. L.A. is next. S.F. is kind of obvious.
Slash: What have you seen of the L.A. scene so far?
Debbie: We haven't seen the Screamers but we know Tomata from N.Y. We saw the Zippers.
Chris: The Zippers are good. I like them the best. I think Devo are also the best.
Debbie: They are not a L.A. band.
Slash: Even though one of your songs is titled "In the sun," you don't exactly look like the outdoorsy jogging type. Are you all in good health?
Jimmy: We all went to the doctor and he said we were all right.
Slash: Any interesting stories about Bowie?
Jimmy: I could tell you about me, David Bowie and Stewie his bodyguard driving on Highway 301 at 4 in the morning looking for quaaludes but I don't think anybody would be interested.
Slash: You'd be surprised! Do you like Iggy's new album?
Chris: Yes, it's terrific.
Jimmy: The Sales brothers make a great band.
Chris: I don't have to hear bam bam bam bam to know it's rock 'n' roll. I like all kinds of music.
Slash: Fun is an important part of your image.

What do you do for fun, personally?
Chris: Get into fights.
Debbie: Chris gave someone a mild kicking at the Whisky.
Jimmy: I stood behind just in case.
Chris: We're gonna give the Sex Pistols a good kicking.
Jimmy: I'm bored with the Sex Pistols.
Slash: Do you think there's a rebirth of basic rock 'n' roll? Do you think there's some kind of unity behind it?
Chris: Definitely. That's why I hate to see the press create competition between bands. I don't like them comparing all the time, everybody's on the same level.
Slash: Debbie, how famous are you? Do people recognize you in the street?
Debbie: More and more. It does not bother me.
Slash: What did you all want to be when you were little kids?
Jimmy: I just wanted an easy job.
Chris: I wanted to be like Matt Dillon.
Chris: Millions!
Chris: I always wanted to do "Ring of Fire" by Johnny Cash, James Brown songs, reggae songs, but nobody ever wants to do that. I wanted to do an instrumental, the theme from . . . I won't tell 'cause somebody will steal it—it's a movie theme.
Slash: What happened to Gary Valentine?
Debbie: A movie star.
Slash: Before the Palladium show, there were rumors that you would not play. What was going on?
Chris: I don't know. Probably because of the Richard Hell thing . . . we had a good time anyway.
Slash: Is there a song that you would like to play but won't because it would not go with the image of the group?



PHOTOS: MELANIE NISSEN

Jimmy: He is surfing. He's out here in L.A. He just wants to hang out for a while. "Musical differences" is not always a cliche.
Chris: We're less pop now than then. More heavy metal.
Jimmy: Not heavy metal. More rash . . . Blondie is a band that changes a great deal. We have a totally different sound from the first album. Even our life-styles have changed.
Slash: Some groups complained you were taking too much room backstage at the Palladium.
Chris: Tough shit!
Jimmy: We flew 3000 miles to play, and if they don't like it . . .
Chris: That's what happens to little bands that don't have managers and aggressive road people working for them. It happened to us for years, now we do it to other bands. Someday they'll do it to other bands, when they have a road crew and all that. That's just the way it goes. We're not in psychedelia, free love and do your own thing. Everybody has to be aggressive, it's a business reality we exist in.
Slash: Yes, but quite a few people on the scene think that the new music should have less of that traditional show biz stuff . . .
Jimmy: It's all the same. It will be when the Pistols come. Anyway we had tons of people in our dressing room, people passed out on the floor.
Chris: We like to surround ourselves with people, but sometimes it's impractical.
Jimmy: You can't let everybody with green hair and chains in when they're banging on the door.
Debbie: We only had one room with not enough space for everybody to sit down.
Slash: Will you always live in N.Y.?
Jimmy: No.
Chris: I like N.Y.
Debbie: It does not really matter. I like N.Y., L.A., Chicago. I'd like to live in different places.

Slash: What's the most stupid thing anybody's ever said about your group or your music?
Chris: It was supposedly a review of our show in the New Musical Express that started by saying that Debbie's head was too big for her body. Then I read it in your interview of the Pistols, which proves that they read the fuckin' paper!
Jimmy: The biggest insult was when somebody reviewed us negatively and we found out they didn't even see the show!

Slash: What must be ***the*** rock 'n' roll question of the month: How did Elvis' death affect you?
Chris: Nothing whatsoever.
Jimmy: We were rehearsing in the studio. I said let's do an Elvis song but we didn't know one so that was that.
Slash: What went wrong with rock 'n' roll in the '70s?
Chris: About a thousand things. Everybody lost interest.

Jimmy: It became too much of a producer's game.
Chris: John Denver is what went wrong. And radio fucked everything up.
Slash: Do you ever feel like a product?
Chris: Sure.
Slash: Do you read rock and punk fanzines?
Chris: I find the press quite depressing. Always looking for an out group in order to have an in group. Debbie has avoided reading the press longer than me. I get a thousand of those fuckin' mimeo things, saying "I hate this and that" . . .
Slash: Isn't that healthy?
Chris: Sure. I throw them away now but I used to collect them until I realized I could never have most of them. But I think everybody should do a fanzine.
(At this time Clem walks in, talking about the Elvis memorial issue of the Memphis Tribune he spotted in a store. He decides to be a "sucker" and buy it.)
Clem: I just bought "That's rock 'n' roll" by Shaun Cassidy.
Jimmy: I think bubble gum was better in the '60s. Tommy James.
Slash: Which bands that are starting now do you think will be important in the '80s?
Chris: Devo. Maybe the Pistols. The Damned may be the next Alice Cooper.
Jimmy: I think it will be an American band, if any.
Chris: The Ramones.
Clem: My favorite new record is "Let's make the scene" by Rodney. The flip side is good too.
Slash: Can anarchy be fun?
Jimmy: It's supposed to be fun.
Chris: It will never work.
Clem: I try to live outside of politics. Nothing bothers me.
Slash: Fun question of the month: Do you think about death?
Chris: Sure. I sort of believe in reincarnation.
Jimmy: I am more scientific. I believe electronic impulses leave and pick up somewhere else, like a controlled release. I believe in that slightly.
Clem: I only think about death when threatened by it.
Slash: Debbie, do you think punk rockers are sexy-looking?
Debbie: Some of them. I don't think there's anything new about the fashion. It's just different combinations.
Slash: Say goodbye to Los Angeles.
Chris: Stay off reds, kids. Eat them 'ludes.
Clem: L.A. is the greatest city in the world 'cause it's the most plastic, and that's how most people are.
Jimmy: You don't have to look at the tape recorder when you talk, Clem!

SLASH MEETS THE

BAGS

(Some kind of interview)

There were a few problems. Douche Bag, Flea Bag, Barf Bag, Trash Bag and Grab Bag walked in and just wouldn't take the fucking things off. Some of us (well, one of us) were in no conciliatory mood or something, it was argued that it was impossible to talk to faceless bodies and it was replied it shouldn't matter, blah blah blah, a very shaky truce was made. That is where we will start.

Slash: Why do you wear fuckin' bags on your heads? (Still not friendly. —Ed.)

Bags: It gets us reaction.

—If we were called the Shits we would not do it.

—Quite simply, we don't want our identity known.

Slash: Are you ugly?

Bags: ***Really*** ugly!

Slash: Alice is not ugly, ***she*** takes her bag off. (Alice is the singer, she can't manage to keep her bag on throughout a set. —Ed.)

Bags: When we met we were not wearing bags. But we insisted on the bags so we wouldn't have to look at each other.

Slash: How old are the Bags?

Bags: Couple of months.

Slash: What came first, the music or the bags?

Bags: (all) The bags!

Slash: Were you in other bands before?

Bags: Nothing very prominent.

Slash: Do you take your music seriously?

Bags: We're crazy about playing, really.

Slash: Don't you think it's hard for people who happen to like your sound to relate to a bunch of bags?

Bags: Look at Kiss. (Kiss? —Ed.) Their fans identify with them.

Slash: Do you always have the same expressions on your bags?

Bags: No, they change every time.

Slash: Who influenced you, musically speaking?

Bags: The Weirdos.

Slash: Were you surprised by your success at the Masque?

Bags: Totally. We started as a joke, and suddenly this . . .

Slash: Are you second generation L.A. new wave?

Bags: Why?

Slash: Well, the first generation was influenced by England, and you're influenced by them.

Bags: Depends how far back you wanna go. You gotta change quick. After the Ramones played here a year ago punk was black leather jackets.

Slash: How old are you?

Bags: The average age is 20.

Slash: How do you feel about all these rules as to what punk is, what it is not . . .?

Bags: —I think it's a deadly and hideous practice, making up those rules. It could crush whatever life there is in the "movement."

—We're a rebellion against all that.

(The discussion then went on and on about poseurs, political attitudes, and who's copying who. Since that's all anybody's talking about these days, we'll skip that—partly. —Ed.)

Bags: . . .we all can see the parallels with the '60s, that is anyone who's lived longer than 15 years. The situation then also started out with everybody going: "What am I supposed to do, what's the style, where do I fit in???" Some people just copied everything they saw, others altered the style into their own form, and others hung back for a long time, eventually ending as the most important spokesmen of that era. But there was a very confused period with just a bunch of copycats. That's what we're against.

—We don't understand all these punk new wave definitions.

—Especially after listening to Blondie. I like Blondie, but where do they fit in?

—We're anti-boredom rock.

Slash: Who do you hate musically?

Bags: I don't want to say any names but the Germs come to mind.

—Hey, don't pick on the Germs!

—Yeah, lay off the Germs!

—I hate the Deadbeats. (?? —Ed.)

Slash: Will you ever take off the bags?

Bags: Yeah, when we reach the point where it does not matter anymore.

Slash: Why are you doing this?

Bags: For kicks. It's the only thing we do well.

Slash: Do you work?

Bags: I'm a librarian.

—I sleep 12 hours a day.

—I'm an auto mechanic.

—I write for SLASH.

Slash: Possibly. There're so many.

Bags: None of us are rich.

Slash: What else should we know about the Bags?

Bags: Most of us are ex-Catholics . . . also we have a secret language, a code . . .

Slash: Like?

Bags: Really attractive girls are called dead girls. A tuba is an ugly one. Girls in general are sniffs, being horny is being rabid . . . Anything else you wanna know?

Slash: Yes. What do you look like?

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THE ALLEYCATS

This interview took place at a secret hideout. Interviewed were Randy, guitar and singer, and Dianne, bass and singer, of the Alleycats. The questions were asked by a panel of eight extremely famous noodles.

Slash: How did you guys meet?
Randy: Well, I was giving guitar lessons.
Dianne: . . .and I got a guitar for my birthday.
Slash: Did you (Randy) teach Dianne to sing?
Dianne: No.
Randy: I don't know how to sing so how could I?
Dianne: He wrote a song and told me to sing.
Randy: Told her to scream a lot.
Dianne: That still applies.
Slash: What's the names of some songs you wrote?
Randy: "Give Me A Little Pain," "Licorice Cats," "King of the Street Fights," "Angel Dust," "Too Much Junk," what else do we do? "Nothing Means Nothing Anymore," "I Don't Love You."
Slash: Dianne, do you write songs?
Dianne: No, I'm a singer. Randy does all the writing and decisions.
Slash: Who writes the bass?
Dianne: He tels me the keys and chords.
Slash: So you guys know about music, a key and a chord and all that.
Randy: Ya, all that. But I can't put anyone down for being musically incompetent. That's what people always said about us, the songs weren't complicated, but they were too fast.
Dianne: We're not sophisticated. We didn't have the right sound.
Randy: Punk is the first time people started being nice to us.
Slash: How long have you been in a band?
Randy: Since I was 16 or something. The Hubcaps.
Slash: Heard much of the new wave?
Randy: Only what, no.
Slash: What do you play when you get home?

Randy: There's nothing I'm that crazy about.
Dianne: I pass out when I get home.
Slash: What kind of music did you used to listen to?
Dianne: Just what was on the radio. I didn't have any money for albums so whatever was the hits then. But they had real bands around then and they actually played them on the radio.
Slash: Do you think L.A. punk's plastic?
Randy: The Germs, I don't know them personally but it seems like Bobby Pyn is the way he is when he's like that. Some seem like they're just being that way.
Slash: Who inspired you?
Randy: I used to like those Philipino movies on Channel 13. Those and Mexican movies. There's one about some girl wrestlers . . .
Slash: If you could get any producer in the world who would it be? Yourself?
Randy: That's what I thought. The best way is do it yourself. So we don't have a manager.
Dianne: Randy does all the running around.
Slash: When was the last time you had a normal job?
Randy: I never had a normal job.
Dianne: They wouldn't hire him at a carwash.
Randy: They'd take my number, say they'd call me, then they never did.
Slash: Did you have fun taking your picture in the alley?
Randy: I was embarrassed.
Dianne: We don't usually have people wanting our pictures but I'd like to go out in the audience and see how we looked.
Slash: Make a film?
Dianne: That's going too far.
Slash: What's the most disgusting thing you ever knew of?
Dianne: Disgusting?
Randy: Disgusting things happen every day. You drive on the freeway every couple of days, you pass up this dead gory body . . .

LIVE

KIPPER KIDS and THE GERMS
at The Old Firehouse on Main and Rose

This was the first time the Kippers had performed together for two years. They talk to each other in squeaks and grunts and northern English cliches (which is hard for an untraveled American to get) and just get on with a spontaneous act of nonsense after sawing themselves out of a metal box. They are dressed to begin with in army uniforms and mud masks. They get into a boxing ring with a lot of Laurel and Hardy type difficulty and bring out a little traveling bag with endless junk which they lay on a table and get busy with, drinking tea, singing and just generally enjoying a day in the life of . . . anybody? All the time they look like mental cases (their heads are shaved). It's becoming too long, but the parts that have you rolling are worth waiting for.

Finally the act changes . . . they put on doctors overalls and plastic hats and sunglasses, grunting, singing, squeaking, they pick up five pound bags of flour and throw it over the audience (the audience is pretty stuck up, they dust it discreetly off themselves), they *did* laugh, then they screamed and ran towards the door—the Kippers had pots of ink. They pour it on each other's heads. They make themselves beautiful colours with all kinds of goo on each other's heads. Harry 1 takes his clothes off. Hary 2 is too shy; he has to hide behind Harry, he puts on his boxing shorts, the elastic is separate and the only part which stays around his waist.

The boxing match begins, Harry 2 (with boxing gloves) takes on an imaginary partner and bashes himself hard in the face, the floor is slippery, he slips and slides everywhere . . . end of round one, a beer out of the icebox, most of which doesn't go in Harry's mouth. The referee (Harry 1) cleans him up, (referee is wearing a baby bonnet), stands him up and the show goes on; Harry 2 is getting red in the face. He falls, gets up, gets another beer a few times. Eventually he knocks himself out almost unconscious and Harry 1 drags him off stage . . . Everybody begins to leave, the Germs haven't been announced—a lot of people go without knowing they're playing . . . finally an announcement—"There's a rock and roll band in the next room!" About 40 people (out of the 150) cram into the small room with no stage where the Germs have already begun.

Bobby Pyn is on form. He has two girl friends who pull him apart and drag him to the ground and throw beer on him and he does the same to them, they have long hair, sometimes he pulls it too hard. The audience watches coldly for a few minutes, someone gets pushed and leaves, someone else gets splattered with beer, he leaves. This seems to make the band want to be as outrageous as possible—they're playing good, can't hear Bobby Pyn's voice but the whole act is *great*. People slowly leave, by the fourth song there's nobody left but a couple of amused faces, a handful of punks and an old man. Pat Smear shouts, ***"Get out of my house you bunch of stuck-up assholes!"*** They sing a few more great songs, we all dance like crazy (in an almost empty room, it's fun and dusty). Then Pat says, "Okay, I know everybody here, whaddya want to hear?" . . . shouts for "Forming." They play it again. Pat ends up writhing on the floor. Bobby's quiet by this time and just crouching in a corner watching like he had nothing to do with it. Cliff kicks what's left of his drum kit around. Lorna's just grinning at the scene. Bobby goes and sticks his head in the sink. The room needs as much cleaning up as the Kipper Kids' stage.

Pea

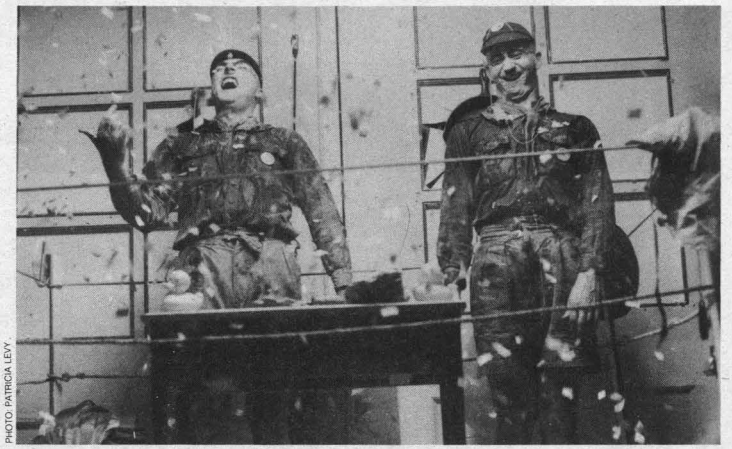


PHOTO: PATRICIA LEVY

NEEDLES AND PINS, THE GERMS, THE SKULLS, THE ALLEYCATS

at the Masque, Labor Day Eve Workout

First thing I fell down the stairs, felt right at home. I was in a cement brick basement, some walls were padded. In the main room, spray paint all over, pictures of dead people taped up. Holes in the ceiling, pipes hanging down. My ideal fallout shelter. A bunch of creeps crept around like they had too much radiation. I might have been in no condition but I knew this Masque place was going to be better. The pit's pajamas.

Just in time for Needles and Pins. Stood cold 15 minutes to get the sound right. Miss Honey Singer, she seemed afraid to move in case someone looked up her mini. I tried to peek to get on her nerves, then out to the alley. Coming back I rolled down the stairs, a dumb stunt but worth it.

The Germs came on. I've never seen four people do more to inspire a crowd to kill itself. To a beat even. I wish they'd play their hit punch-out single more. Like three times a show. In a row. The audience expired. I was crutched to the alley. Then I took the steps one at a time sitting down.

I'm glad I preserved myself for the next band: The Skulls, first time. Was knocked out. No hassle to chip with that band. Later a Skull bespoke his gratitude to the Germs for revving the audience. I'm grateful myself but the Skulls didn't coast on borrowed adrenalin. One of the best of the new, I'm not sure I can believe they were as good as they were. I was drenched. Shivered back into the alley. Don't recall stairs, probably rolled back in.

Last band, the Alleycats. Their bass girl could teach Needles and Pins' skirt the book. She was tough, she sang. I wanted to film her spitting. The skinny guitar player played neurosis. His voice was tough, too, I hardly wished he'd shut up and let the girl take over. The music seemed barely derivative and the drummer more than occasionally gooned, but the guitar/bass singing team gave them an extra added booster.

So there it is. Three heart attack onslaughts in a row, wam bam slam. Just two dollars. A conducive, well paced atmosphere. Support the Masque. It'll maybe bring out more bands of Germs, Skulls and Alleycats caliber.

Spazo Masko

PHOTO B. CLONE

Sunday afternoon at the Whisky with THE BAGS, THE GERMS and THE WEIRDOS

May be one of the best new sound concerts this month. Wasn't even drunk (never on Sunday afternoons) or nothing, yet came out reeling and panting. Music can do that to you, you know. A certain type of music. I was actually so fucking proud of them L.A. bands I wanted to challenge London and New York right there. Unfortunately there were no representatives of either place around ('cept for the Blondie gang but they looked so pale and vulnerable in the light of day I decided it was best to leave them alone). Yeah, three new Los Angeles groups playin' their guts out, no faking, no posing, the real thing.

The Bags started it, and it was quite a start. Only seen them once before and I was in a daze so I couldn't really judge. They had seemed quite good but nothing like this show. Alice "Douche Bag" does the singing and loses her bag somewhere in the set, that's okay, it's not a face I would want hidden anyway. I mean she looks tough. And she sings tough. And she acts tough. Ask the goon who got a bit out of control in the audience. She just leapt in there, wrestled for a beat or two, got back on stage and finished the song. The songs are fast but not blurred, the playing is sharp, and the singing... Well, I could rave for hours 'bout Alice and the way she tries to dislocate her spine and snap her vocal chords and her constant exhortations to the hardly awake audience to "move, move, move, fuckers," but there are other bands to write about, so just believe me if I say the Bags are hot.

Maybe the next SLASH concert. (When is that going to happen anyway?)

Next the Germs. You gonna say yeah, seen them before and all that. ***Wrong.*** The Germs were fantastic. The Germs even played music. Bobby Pyn screamed and fell and auto-mutilated and staggered and even sang better than he's ever done. I mean he moved me. He made sense. Their rendition of "Forming" was just one of those incredible moments. ***It was perfect.*** And forgetting some of the lyrics was perfect. If you've got it nothing matters. Bobby Pyn has it, 'cause anyone who can act like a baby and a homicidal monster at the same time has it. He can bleed (yea, real blood, ninnies!) and pout at the same time like no one else. Maybe the brat is a genius. Pat Smear has it, and his grin is one of the most recomforting sights one could ask for in these snarling days. Lorna Doom has it, she's just... there. Jerks with education and a certain culture might find her bass playing a bit basic, but that's just because they don't for the life of them understand it really does not fucking matter that much. She's up there doing it while they're down there bitching. Stay there, Lorna. You're alright.

Did you know Dee Dee Ramone is just starting to learn the notes? And Cliff Hanger is perfect 'cause he is one of the three best new noiz drummers around (***the*** best as far as Germ drumming is concerned—it does take a very special approach to life and stuff in general) and because he didn't kill me after leaping over his drum kit and zooming like a fuckin' rocket to that point in the audience where he thought an egg had been thrown from and recognized me just in time (fame) and decided not to give me his left - hook - for - out - of - hand - hecklers and zoomed back on stage and went on with the show not waiting for my swearing I didn't throw nothing (I didn't—some big jerk behind me did). Might even start a Germs fan club.

I don't know if it was after the Germs or before that Rodney came out on stage. Whenever it was, it was a sensation. Rodney raved and swore and just about shattered his image of a nice guy who just happens to have a radio show. Rodney showed dedication. His little speech was so honest and true that nobody, and I mean nobody, made one wise crack or comment. It was just one of those afternoons. Everybody knew what they liked, and everybody knew Los Angeles was fine and right there, thank you.

Then the Weirdos. I write so much about the Weirdos I don't know what to tell you except they were very good (almost always are), that John is less epileptic and more sarcastic, that Nicky's got funny hair and very serious beat, that Dave is true to himself, that Dix looks nastier and more antisocial than ever and that Cliff has turned into a crazed Marine.

The Weirdos did a couple of new songs, "It Means Nothing" and "I'm Plastic (I'm from Hollywood)," which sounded like potential hits. In between songs and during technical hang-ups John very democratically shared the mike with some of the more vocal ones in the audience. There was much pogoing and thumping but it was so early in the evening I ran out of breath halfway thru "Bed bad Bed bad tom ta dom." I am also runnin' out of breath now. This was Kickboy Barrett reportin' from Hollywood. Good night.

THE BAGS, THE SPASTICS, THE EYES
at the Masque, Saturday, Sept. 10

All the bands seemed a little green, just learning the ropes; so much the better as far as energy and audience response. Screamer Tomato outfitted in pseudo-stormtrooper attire and optional cassette player MCed the show, had me breaking up as he successively announced each new group as his favorite L.A. band.

The Eyes started things and did well for their first gig anywhere. They took a long time to warm up, but once they did, the audience was out-of-control. Bobby Pyn attacked the stage a few times and was finally kicked in the stomach for his trouble by Joe, dervish singer-guitarist. Joe has nice spitting, epileptic lungs that held up admirably. Bass player, Charlotte, also had her voice tottering on the brink, edgy collaborations with Joe to kill brains. There were P.A. problems all night and the Eyes seemed to suffer the most.

Next came the Spastics. They didn't look the way I thought they would, which was a pleasant surprise. Music was funny and raw, but tended to bore after while. By now the club was in that rarified atmosphere that can best be described as lunatic.

After a long wait, the Bags romped on wearing paper bags on their heads except for the dark, raunchy and romantic girl doing loud queer things with her voice. This very vocal girl pogoed on stage, shouting in triumph while competing with Bobby Pyn (who persisted in exhibitionist martyr routine even though no one could hear what he was screaming). Come to think of it, the Bags reminded me of the Germs; also a bit of British X-Ray Specs.

Everything broke up early. People hung out in the alley or on Cherokee until the Hollywood night patrol moved in.

Bobby Clone

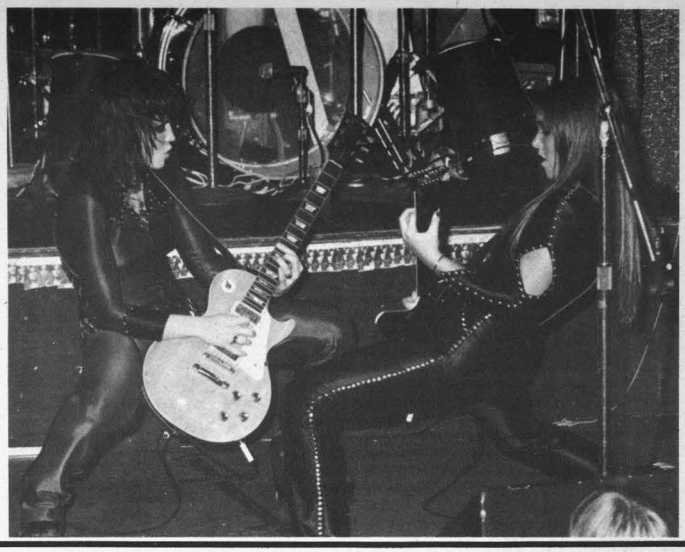
THE WEIRDOS and THE RUNAWAYS
at the Whisky

The Weirdos was okay. Last time I seen them they was brilliant, exhilarating and stupendous. This time I think those unfortunate Weirdos, or me, got bad influence from the audience. Ted Nugent was there, Kiss, Cheap Trick. The customers: corduroy puka shell, walking around saying: "Where's all the weirdos here to see the Weirdos?" Nicky Beat was better than okay. Them other Weirdos were too. But the audience made the intermission endless.

I am sick of people putting down the Runaways. There's enough I like about the Runaways. I don't like the clothes they wore. Joan Jett looks better at parties. I don't like the lead guitar dyking it like she's Jim Dandy from Van Halen. It's just a guitar, it don't tumesce. I don't like lyrics about Ca. being paradise. That crowd was Ca.. If they look like that in paradise, deal me out.

I make myself sick putting down the Runaways. It makes me mad Joan Jett is still in such a confining position. It's not fair, she pulls all the weight. I wish she'd run away from the Runaways and show us the brilliant, exhilarating, stupendous Joany Rotten she was born to be.

Macko



photos: jenny lens

PUNK ROCK HORROR SHOW
Hollywood Palladium

A new wave of sound and saliva dangled from her cheek. Hefty bags turned and pirouetted unaware. "Punk, punk, look it up in the dictionary! . . . the recycled generation . . . Plastic . . . okay, girls, move it!" Gas station attendants yelled, "Fuck you!" A stunning Japanese beauty put her hands all over me to suck up the money. And then in the same breath, "Wow!", the crowd threw ice and plastic drinking cups. Then, there was a sensation, a color supplement girl in multicoloured record jackets jeered at the "Punk Nation" for being fascist.

Devo-tees clicked and clicked their tiny flashbulbs at the leering rent-a-cops and the jumping jacks. Devo, those neuter workers, were transformed into flesh and blood. I wanted to weep, but was put to sleep instead. Wow! The Weirdos had one ear to the keyhole of half the bedrooms in Beverly Hills. The users and the used. Plunging into the battle of the accessories. Blondie swaggered on down the catwalk. The crowd roared. A she-devil in chiffon, screeching of dead men. The crowd whimpered. Saluting the bare-breasted, hard-driving, Blonde without pity. Hard hats and sunglasses reflecting the heat. Big guys driving those big fucking trucks. I kept thinking: Soviet Russia.

The Avengers, the young militia, extremely flamable, fell into a rage. He torpedoed his supple body high above the drum kit into the pit below. It was a "Triumph of the Will." 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, into the heart of an atomic testing center it took only 10 seconds to turn them into the most dangerous group that night. Richard Hell, flown out and left foaming by the pool at the Tropicana. His was the big kiss-off and he was taking it in the big, successful, Hollywood way. The Clash, rumored to show, remained citadels of mystery, the illusive romance behind the scene.

One might wish to thank "Uncle Punk" (California Productions), a California swimsuit magnate, for taking off the time from the serious business of world communism, assuring us that nobody pogoed all night. Let us all toast "the poison in the machine."

by Tomata de Plenty
as told to Gorilla Rose

I'd Rather Be Dead Than Mellow!

Nigel Craig

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(Lust for life / Sixteen / Some Weird Sin / The Passenger / Tonight / Success / Turn Blue / Neighborhood threat / Fall in love with me)

Iggy looks good smiling. Is this Zen punk? Not quite, but close.

First four songs actually aren't bad. They tell us more about Iggy since the dissolution of the Stooges than anything on "The Idiot" (which relied more heavily on ambiguous metaphor). Yeah, if some new punks had done these, I'd say the same thing, I like. But guitars don't bite (mixed down to nothing, it's just the kind of edge that would've made these great) and Ricky Gardner plays with the conviction of a dead mackerel. I know after James Williamson one night expect too much, but come on! Even a Mick Ronson show-off would be superior. Also Iggy sounds like he's singing from a transistor radio in the next room on most of this. All the same, I could live with these faults if the rest of the record had been as good.

"Tonight," the last song on Side 1 sounds an ominous note about side 2's musical direction: boring, esoteric, directionless. "Success" starts off, obnoxiously bland music with a repetitious chorus where the band (Bowie included) repeatedly chimes in. Still there's an underlying sarcasm in the way Iggy sings that's reassuring. Iggy's as cynical as ever, maybe more so.

"Turn Blue" should've been the masterpiece here (if you've seen him perform live its "Mama, I shot myself up!", you know why) but it isn't. Guitars are languid, pseudo-Eno psychedelia that is distractingly superficial. Everything's muddled, especially Iggy's voice. Bowie's production is Bowie at his worst...schmaltz time. Maybe these guys are pulling our leg? Somehow I don't think so.

"Neighborhood Threat" has nasty alienated lyrics about the complacent android who comes in contact with his introverted crazy neighbor (Iggy?). But absolutely no dynamics as far as music.

"Fall in Love with Me" would be the most banal thing here if it wasn't for Iggy. In his repeated refrain, "Fall in love with me..." you're drawn into the whole boring shtick, personal melodrama reduced to idiocy (where it belongs?). Can't say much more...too bored really. Aside from the first four songs, that's what this record's about... boredom. And the boredom is so chic and sanitized, I don't give a fuck.

Bob Clone

VARIOUS ARTISTS
"NEW WAVE"
Vertigo Import

(Judy Is A Punk / Sonic Reducer / Piss Factory / Personality Crisis / Hollywood / Horror Movie / Love Comes In Spurts / All Or Nothing / Lookin' After No. 1 / Love Goes To Building On Fire / New Rose / Suzy Is a Headbanger / All This And More / Shake Some Action / Cherry Bomb / Who Are The Mystery Girls)

As you read this the record isn't the one to buy. It's got a bunch of songs from old albums, some from albums to be released, and one or two sought-after tracks. Most of it I guess deserves to be called new, even if the Dolls is too many years and ten bands ago. Skyhooks has absolutely no right to be included, which is I suspect why the band's name was left off the cover. Little Bob Story also stands up at falling short and whatever is new about the Flamin' Groovies is still a mystery to me. Patti Smith's "Piss Factory" is one I hear and would rather cut off my ears.

But then there's two Ramones favorites, a pair of Runaway knockers and a solid one two by the Dolls. Also Talking Heads' hit and The Damned's "New Rose." Okay so far, exceptions aside, and it gets better three ways. First is the Boomtown Rats whose "Lookin' After No. 1" manages to be jumpy as the Vibrators, tough and smooth all at once. Pretty good. Richard Hell's one song is pretty good too. "Love Comes In Spurts." So does the guitar, splattered all over. Hell took the devil with him so far since he split Television.

My favorite channals are the Dead Boys. I don't care if they do get rich. "All This And More" is now my favorite song in the world: "Just wanna be a dead boy." Punch press screws hula hoop. They smack the wall against your head.

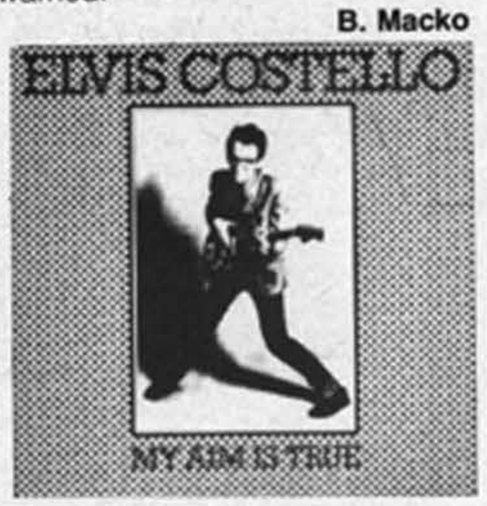
B. Macko

ARMAND SCHAUBROECK STEALS
"A LOT OF PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO SEE ARMAND SCHAUBROECK...DEAD"
"I CAME TO VISIT BUT DECIDED TO STAY"
Mirror Records, 645 Titus Ave., Irondequior, NY 14617

First album is angry and heavily well intentioned. Of the three record set, half is spoken dialogue and prison life sound effects. Many of the few songs revert to folk in their desperation. The theme is prison. If you are blind it's good as any documentary seen on T.V. But I got eyes so I don't prefer it, if I did I'm not sure about reruns. And it's nine dollars.

That was Armand's first try. He got it all out of his system. Now, perfectly normal, he puts out a love album. About a priest and a nun and a death pact and all the trimmings. The music is at times angelic with dirty underwear. Like a church scene, perve priest drooling. Ya, it gets corny but Armand was in prison at a young age, so he's melodramatic. It's also low volume, so be warned.

B. Macko



ELVIS COSTELLO
"MY AIM IS TRUE"
Stiff Records Import

(Welcome to the working week / Miracle man / No Dancing / Blame it on Cain / Alison / Sneaky Feelings / The Angels wanna wear my red shoes / Less than Zero / Mystery Dance / Pay it back / I'm not angry / Waiting for the end of the world)

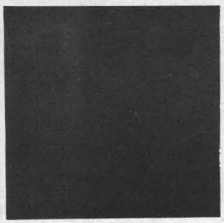
Don't know why I bought this one really. Maybe 'cause it was on Stiff.

The home of the Damned. Ha. Elvis don't look too heavy on the cover, I must have been drunk that day. Why do I want a record with a silly looking rockabilly dude on it?

Actually it's much worse. It's not that he's got a bad voice or that the music is bad. ***It's fucking boring shit that was boring already three years ago.*** It's Bruce Springsteen meets Van Morrison meets the rest of them down home slick rockers, it's modern country music to smoke joints to while the dogs are playing on the rug and the old lady is making her famous stew in her earth catalogue kitchen with the racks full of spices and the herb charts on the wall, it's laid back even when it rocks, and it don't rock that often. Sounds from the past, big nostalgia item. I couldn't swear but I believe they even use a fuckin' dobro. Wanna know more? These guys (Elvis anyway, there ain't no mention of the others) are dying to be American. They must have star spangled banner dreams every night. Elvis, why do you crave so much for the WRONG America?

And if dismissing adequate music just because it's got the wrong cultural connotations and a less than zero level of excitement is being a snob, I'm happy I'm one. Maybe next time it'll prevent me from having to listen to this mush even once.

Kickboy Bugger-the-Past Face



THE STRANGLERS
"NO MORE HEROES"
A&M SP-4659

Older, wiser, and more cynical than any of the other angry young bands, the Stranglers hold nothing back, but they couch their grim vision in a blistering irony that obliterates icons and melts down romantic delusions to a sweep sap. Relentlessly, they rip the pretty packaging away from even those things they must have once loved or desired, leaving in their wake a world without heroes or fair damsels, without fantasy or innocence. What's left is the grim matter of life and death set in a treacherous landscape. Yup, it's a bitch, girl, living in this crawl-space with no movies, spring water, doggie bags, or weekends. But then, the matter of life and death can be pretty . . . well . . . involving, once you get into it. When you got nothin', you got nothin' to lose—and nothin' to dry-clean.

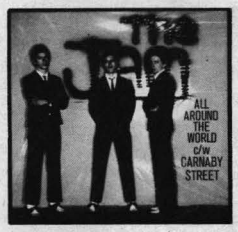
Which isn't to say that life's not worth living in the brave new world of the Stranglers . . . au contraire, there's something genuinely thrilling goin' on here on ***No More Heroes.*** It's like walking across the street—blam—getting hit by a car, picking yourself up, and finding out that you're still ***okay,*** even though everything looks a lot stranger than it did a second ago. Your world has just flip-flopped around on you, but you're still alive to walk through it. The thrill of the Stranglers—especially on the heart-wrenching "Dagenham Dave" and the fist-clenching "Something Better Change"—is that they look unblinking at the ruined world around them and they say, "I'll take that—it's mine!"

This is harsh, harrowing stuff, but it's not cold (like Zappa). Group visionary Hugh Cornwell strikes me as a lover who's been busted too many times to give love innocently again, so he abandons impossible yearning, and instead (like Beefheart) embraces the things that don't lie—the desperate creatures who offer nothing but the fact of their existence. In the barrens, the wounded heart can survive, watched over by a brutal sensitivity. The spirit struggles to accept things as they are; the creature eats, sleeps, relieves itself, fucks, scratches, seeks other like-minded creatures, learns some chords, starts a rock & roll band, rages away . . . it ***is*** a treacherous landscape.

"Bring on the nubiles!" the Stranglers snarl, as if the feel of raw liver were more enticing than a lover's touch. "Look at the poor school mam," they cackle, enrapt voyeurs leering at a solitary woman poisoned by her own decayed desires. These disturbing songs could (and will) be mistaken for sadistic revelries, but that's not the point at all. The feeling of these songs isn't lust but bellowing rage. Love hurts, but the failure of love hurts much worse. Don't gimme no false hopes, no paper heroes. Just gimme loose shoes, a warm place to shit, and an electric guitar. Some dreams die hard, and it's a treacherous landscape for those with the curse of brutal sensitivity. But that's life.

R. Crisco

Forty-Five's



THE JAM
Polydor Import
(All Around The World / Carnaby Street)

The difference between this and the Pistols is akin to the difference between a trained fighter and a potential maniac who got beat up once too often. "All Around The World" begins with Paul Weller kicking someone precisely in the solar plexus. The Jam waste not one single movement in their seemingly frantic attack. ***"Youth Explosion."*** They want it and they just might crack the mainstream open, in this country too. Maybe they should swing wide once, shatter through from the edge.

As things stand, this record is excellent and not marred by the fact.

Macko

DMZ
Bomp Records
(Lift up your hood / Busy Man / You're gonna miss me / When I get off)

More Boston boys trying to make me think they can sing/play. Funny thing is they can. The things I've heard from Boston lately made me think this would be more wimp garbage. Everything's produced loud, crude . . . sounds live.

"Lift up your hood" has good music, but just below the surface is another I'm - so - dirty - just - want - to - fuck song. Lyrics remind me of why I don't like the Damned as much as some. "When I get off" is pure moron sex, too . . . but it's got the works. Things get dynamic here. Slow buildup with Troggs' riffs evolves into a rave-up Stooges' "Dirt" style. The vocalist sounds like he's having fun . . . epilepsy when he comes, havoc for the last minute (it's a long cut). I got real impatient with "Busy Man." It goes on forever . . . bent up and fast like a flash flood carrying away your family but just too long and one dimensional. Maybe that's a virtue. How come I was bored by the end? Now "You're gonna miss me"—I was surprised to hear the 13th Floor Elevators' song. Yeah, I know, a cover. Might've been better to have something totally new. But this is so good. Sounds like the Elevators, deafening guitar and the perfect Roky voice . . . if someone had told me it was the Elevators reformed and live, I'd believe it. Perfect duplicate vocals! The closest copy of anything I've ever heard! Engineered genetics ***is*** amazing, isn't it? Modern science is a wonderful thing. Get it.

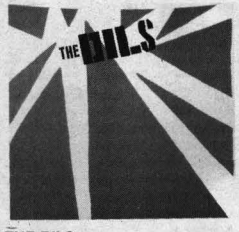
Clone of the Gardens

HAMMERSMITH GORILLAS
Raw Records Import
(You Really Got Me / Leavin' 'Ome)

"You Really Got Me" (recorded in '74) I guess could be termed a progenitor of the current English punk up. It's got I'm-in-such-a-state vocals and instrumentation. Only thing missing is a breakneck pace, but I like to stop twitching once in a while so the song has its occasional uses.

Song 2 is maybe why the Gorillas vacated just as the new scene was shoving its way to the front. I never even listened to the scrotum they stole it from.

Basho G. Primate



THE DILS
What Records
(I hate the rich / You're not blank)

Softies don't bother. This is strictly for the committed. Super brief super fast super violent rage anthem by our most politico locals. The opening chords of "I hate the rich" are enough to tell you you're in for a rough ride. The drums come in with that great bouncing riff that lasts throughout the song. Chip's rhythm chords fall on top of it. I hate the rich is spat out more than actually sung, and the rest is just one choppy relentless scream of anger at everyone. "I hate the rich, I hate the poor, I hate them all," and don't tell me it's just nihilistic nonsense. What is being hated with such conviction by the amazing trio is money (and lack of it) which has turned everyone into zombies and horrible living cliches. It is what we all feel when we realize how little control we have over our own fucking lives and how small our chances of ever being free. This song is a musical graffiti. It is meant to bother and disturb. It is punk stuff at its purest, most admirable form. I play it constantly, I hum it in my sleep.

B side is almost as good, with once again great drumming by Endre, fine bass (although buried) by Tony and super clashing chords by Chip, who also manages a breathtaking vocal break and condensed solo, like an exacerbated capsule of musical tricks reduced to their essence, something to be done away with before the real stuff starts. And this record was done totally independently, bypassing the usual channels and keeping all its life and intensity intact. The perfect example of what the future may have in store for us, if we are lucky.

Kickboy Face

LITTLE BOB STORY
Mercury Import
(All or Nothing / Hot and Sweaty)

Poured coffee in my ears, they still fell asleep. B-side triggeredgag reflexes. Horrible boogie raunch.

B. Disgusto

THE ELECTRIC CHAIRS
Illegal Import
(Stuck on You / Paranoia Paradise / The Last Time)

I distrust Wayne County on principle but I play this record. Partly for the band. Wayne's heard enough to pick one. Fact is, Wayne studied heaps of personalities, they didn't go in one ear and out another. Not just mimic queen sham. Don't push him because Wayne will throw up all down the front of your shirt, make you wish you never thought of lifting up his skirt. I'm glad he had the gall to make a record that's not just trend campy freak show.

Bromo Homo

FRED BLASSIE: KING OF MEN
Raunchy Tonk
(No Bout Adoubt It / Blassie, King Of Men / U.S. Male / Pencil Neck Geek)

Long live Fred Blassie, King of heavy wrestling live from the Olympic Auditorium. Mr. Blood and Guts, thee killer performer. Don't want to know how many noses he's bitten off, spare the gory details, I'm shaking already. John Wayne with two lungs and four balls would have it tough matching Blassie at geek extermination. I don't usually like country western novelties but I wouldn't dare put this down even if it is the most amusing joke I've heard since Helen Keller burned her fingers reading a waffle.

Penso McGeeko

THE WEIRDOS
Bomp Records
(Destroy All Music / Life of Crime/ Why do you exist?)

Now all you skeptics and snickerers can swallow your pride and admit it: this is one of the hottest singles to come out in a long long time, no matter which way you look at it. The Weirdos have put on vinyl all the crazed excitement of their live appearances plus lots more that always gets lost in those three-moist - fingers - in - the - air - and - the - rest - of - the - body - twitching moments.

"Destroy All Music" is fast, with great drumming and manic lead guitar fillers that pierce your brain in

between John's growls and shouts. But side 2 is definitely of an even higher caliber. This is the side that I play constantly, first thing when I wake up, perfect to get the sleep out of your head in ten seconds. Starts with that already classic Weirdos riff, the one that has the kiddies jumping up and down in ecstasy two seconds after it starts, perhaps their most popular song after "I'm Not Like You" and "Do the Dance," the infamous "Life of Crime."

To all of you who for some feeble reason have never experienced it, let me just say it features the already mentioned exquisitely sloppy riff, some amazing moronic grunts and other lobotomic noises by the singer and the most devastating off the wall harmonies by Dave and Cliff. Don't even try to understand why it works. The magic of the Weirdos is something that one day will have the experts working and analyzing for long frustrating hours. "Just can't figure it out, Hank, separately it's just a bunch of chords and noises and junk, put it together and it drives them wild . . ." A true challenge to modern science, this sound is. And it ends with my personal favorite, the supersonic "Why do you exist?". I mean it's so fast it hurts. The playing is remarkable, the singing breathless. Why do I exist? For this kind of music. But is the world ready for the Weirdos?

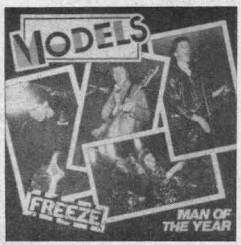
Kickboy "Spread the word" Face

THE RESIDENTS
("The Beatles play the Residents and the Residents play the Beatles")
Ralph Records
(Beyond the Valley of A Day in the Life / Flying)

And now, from the resident loonies up there in cold country, another . . . Well, one side sounds like . . . actually, it's . . . In other words, it . . . Fuck it. What it could be is a collage mixture blending of ***that*** sound but stripped down, shaken upside down and then painted day-glo with bits of incense smoke drifting thru. A two minute acid trip into the past, something that could be used as a musical theme for a radio show sobbing over the loss of the '60s if only they had the humor. It's funny but it's scary, 'cause there's so little left of those days, and what's left is on this record. Touching. But that's the Beatles playing the Residents.

On side 2, the Residents get to play the Beatles. So they take that burnt-out instrumental that we all drifted thru at one time or another (you kiddies that didn't have to 'cause you were not even born are so lucky I think I'll become a shameless alcoholic with the injustice of it all) and just do it to it. Tear it apart and reconstruct it and show us all what a drag and a zoo it was. Just like listening to the Top Ten on belladonna. I was gonna say: I'd hate to hear what these guys could do to punk music. But then, punk music does it to itself! And that's one on the '60s!

Kickboy



THE MODELS
Step Forward Import
(Freeze / Man of the Year)

Are the punks getting paranoid? "Freeze" is about a coming repression (" . . . if you think they gonna let you play you better think again"); I think they take it a bit too far but it's a fuckin' good song although it goes a bit in circles and drags on too long. Especially like the guitar and the singing is right up front, almost feel the singer's saliva raining on your face but you don't care 'cause you're pogoin' like there won't be any tomorrow, which is exactly what they say. "Man of the Year" is another pogo classic, devastating intro—1, 2, 3, 4, here they go, up and down, up and down, couple of false stops, I don't know what he is saying but I sure know this stuff feels good. Primal. The beat.

C.B.

THE LURKERS
Beggars' Banquet Records Import
(Shadow / Love Story)

From England, the Lurkers. Real lurking sound. Rehabilitated corpses recorded underwater menacingly loud with too much distortion. Somebody said they sound likt the Dils on a night when the Dils' sound is working right, guitars amped-up enough, etc. There is a resemblance; but while the Dils sing about the politics of plain old existence, the Lurkers get specific and sing about the politics of sex, all with an intro chorus that's a minimalist's dream: "Shadow / shadow / shadow / shadow" (they sound like the seven dwarves at 16 rpm) " . . . my heart's in the shadow / his heart's in the shadow."

B side, "Love Story," is a pounding metallic slam at merchandized romance; soap opera and true confessions magazine hucksters. Sound like the Ramones here, but more manic and less calculated.

Bob "Yo Yo Youth" Clone

THE DRONES
"Temptations of a white collar worker"
OHMS Import
(Lookalikes / Corgi Crap / Hard on me / You'll lose)

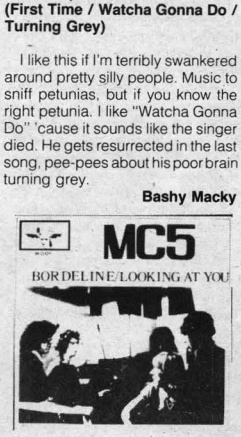
Protest punk rock. Covers just about everything from the dole to the monarchy to socialism to "the right to be different" to saying shit at key moments. Only stand-out song is "Lookalikes," the others being monotonous variations of the same sound. Their stuff is the type that probably works well on stage. On record, it is too uniform and indistinct to make much of an impact. Nice sleeve, though.

Jet Lag

THE BOYS
Nems Import
(First Time / Watcha Gonna Do / Turning Grey)

I like this if I'm terribly swankered around pretty silly people. Music to sniff petunias, but if you know the right petunia. I like "Watcha Gonna Do" 'cause it sounds like the singer died. He gets resurrected in the last song, pee-pees about his poor brain turning grey.

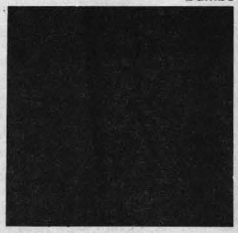
Bashy Macky



MC 5
Skydog
(Borderline / Looking at You)

I suspect that when mentioning all-time top-nut punk bands the MC 5 is scraping the bottom of the trash can. But Skydog got their fingernails dirty for this one. Side 1 is plain simple: I can't stand it for DUH harmonies. I'm embarrassed to admit I could relate. Song 2 is among the fraction of their songs I like to an extreme but not after side 1.

Dumbo



THE GIZMOS
Gulcher Records E.P. $3.50

(Amerika First / Human Garbage Disposal / Ballad Of The Gizmos / Kiss Of The Rat / Pumpin' To Playboy / Cave Woman / (I'm Just A) Regular Dude)

Round 2: the Gizmos make fun at themselves, they could do it for years. That doesn't mean they're not getting better. They still seem too happy with themselves but the sound is a mite tougher. Apple pie turbulence. They throw down the knives and have a spoon fight. Spew four-syllable street jive—(I don't mean motherfucker). If you smoke weed and think it's taking drugs, then this is your bet. No matter how loud I play this, it just won't make my neighbors hate me.

Macko Kacko

KILLJOYS
Raw 3
(Johnny Won't Get to Heaven / Naive)

Recording stands on its own merits, despite the fact that it's a veritable catalogue of what not to do with your first 45.

Like it would be more convincing if there weren't the inevitable yob bellowing "1-2-3-4" totally out of time with the song, if there wasn't a stringbending guitar solo (about six seconds too long), and the picture sleeve can only be described as air-brushed suicide . . . but I kinda like it anyway, it's nothing if not raw, and I think that any band with a drummer nom-de-plumed "Joe 45" deserves some kind of government grant/audience support. A little too English, but vital sound (oh you've heard all these new wave record phrases before, just substitute names and you could do it too, if you weren't so frigging ***helpless*** . . .)

Johnny Assai

THE RODS
Island Import
(Do Anything You Wanna Do / Schoolgirl Love)

THE MOTORS
Virgin import
(Dancing the Night Away / Whiskey and Wine)

Here's a pair of exceptional records with a lot in common: stately medium tempos that set up the shimmering - steel - symphony of massed 12-string electric guitars while a gang of *male* voices pours it on, attended by razor-echoes of chimes, claps, and drones.

Both "Do Anything You Wanna Do" and "Dancing the Night Away" make it big as stirringly simple declarations of young freedom hewn by young muscle—it's next to impossible to resist jumping up and storming along with 'em.

The Motors (put together by Nick Garvey and Andy McMasters, both ex-members of the seminal Britband Ducks Deluxe) have made the biggest, boldest-sounding new-wave anthem yet—with the aid of prolific producer John Robert Lange and the inspiration of the "Eight Miles High" Byrds. And the (Hot) Rods have without a doubt finally made the first string with their roaring rock hymn. I can't get enough of these records—they'd be great anytime . . . anywhere.

Bud Scoppa

THE ADVERTS
Anchor Records (not on Stiff anymore)
(Gary Gilmore's Eyes / Bored Teenagers)

I won't rave on too much about this, I'll just come right out and say it (after all, risktaking is my job here at SLASH): "Gary Gilmore's Eyes" is the best thing I've heard in months. Some'll say it's a novelty record; it's not. So the guitars aren't quite as loud as you'd like them, it's still up there in the ionosphere with "I Got a Right" and "Anarchy in the U.K.". T.V. Smith doesn't deify Gilmore, just empathizes with the pain and horror he must've felt in the jailhouse of the mind. Smith takes the point of view of whoever gets Gilmore's eyes (he offered them as transplants). The lucky party wakes up in the hospital and "...I'm lookin' through Gary Gilmore's eyes."

"Bored Teenagers" is a studio version of the live thing on the Roxy London record and just as full throttle: "...sitting watching our brains burn up through the nights like meteorites..." This boy has a sense of humor.

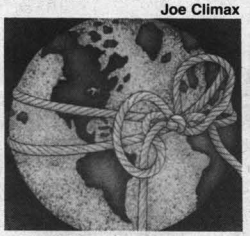
Bob Clone

THE ADVERTS

This record is a sham. I mean, Gary deserves better than this. The Adverts have obviously been responsible for their image promotion and it ain't much. Even if you admired Gary for his obvious and blatant racism & cruelty (viz. grease guns up service station attendants arses), I doubt you will like this record.

Take the dubious morality tale, add next to no musical and/or vocal distinction whatsoever, and steal the chorus of Graham "10cc asshole" Gouldman's "For Your Love" and you've got "Gary Gilmore's Eyes." And I wondered before I heard it why they're no longer on Stiff Records. One chord wonders.

Joe Climax

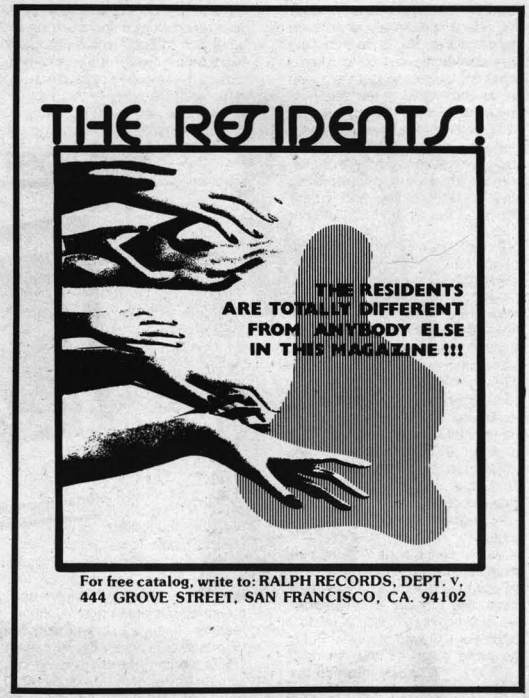


"RECONSTRUCTION"
MAX ROMEO
Mango Records ALBUM

Ex-rude boy Max Romeo produced his own album this time around. And although it lacks the bite of what he did with Lee Perry ("Revelation time" and later "War in a Babylon") it is still an album you will play countless times if you like reggae. It is simple easy music, about as far from the roots sound of Bablo Moses or the Gladiators as could be, it almost sounds like the soundtrack for an exotic musical (not surprisingly, Max Romeo is in charge of the music in the upcoming Broadway musical "Reggae), there are many instruments not usually associated with dread music, but above all it works. You may not give a fuck for the various "messages" and exhortations conveyed by the lyrics, you will nevertheless find it hard not to move, first the shoulders, then the elbows, then you discreetly get up and before you know it you'll be moving about the room like a horny worm. Lightweight maybe, but it sure feels good.

Chatty chatty mouth

(This and many other hard to find reggae records can be obtained at Barton's record shop, 1647 N. La Brea in Hollywood.)



THE LOST WEEKEND

(an unjournalistic approach to San Francisco)

11:30 P.M. the 15th: The St. Paul Hotel is the perfect place for out of town punx . . . cheap, minimal and two blocks from Mabuhays. We were both still blasted from the drive up the coast (we averaged a fifth of wine per 200 miles), and as quickly as we could check in, we were back on the street making our way up the hill to the club we'd heard so much about.

Nothing's as good as you expect it to be, but you keep drinking, everything's fun. Actually Mabuhays is a pretty swell place, lots of tables, dark corners, even a small area in front of the stage to dance. We walked in on the middle of the Dils set (the bill was Dils/Crime) and were amazed at (1) how good the Dils sounded, and (2) how well everyone liked them. Maybe paranoid, but from all the gossip, we expected the S.F./L.A. rivalry to be real intense (you know, catcalls & beer bottles flying through the air). Realizing it was all a myth, we settled down to some serious drinking, socializing and goofing off. Crime came on in police uniforms, but by that time we were gone (only vague remembrances of a fuckfilm & lots of verbal abuse from the Nuns . . .) . . . "we'll get an early start tomorrow" . . .

2:30 P.M. the 16th: "Oh Fuck My Head" . . . A late start, an unconstructive day (it was vacation, you know). By the time we got to the Avengers rehearsal we were half blitzed. They still sounded real hot (they also made sure we didn't sober up!). We conducted one of our less incisive interviews, mainly we just yakked about this and that between visitors & phone calls. We left after a quick photo session, trying to get in on a little thrift shopping before Mabuhays round two . . .

Mabuhays was packed, probably 150 punx, and about the same amount of nonpunx (nonpunx for the sake of clarity, meaning they didn't look like punx . . .) and first impression is that everyone gets along swell (meaning no hostility between humans that dress like punx and people that don't . . . savvy?). The Dils played and without sounding biased, they were terrific! Chip & Tony move like crazy, & Rand played like he'd always belonged . . .

Between shows we were again confronted by the Nuns (it seems they were upset with the coverage they received in our last issue), but the confrontation degenerated to a semi-humorous standoff, with Alejandro's girlfriend making vicious (and hopefully empty) threats.

Crime came on in police uniforms again (this time we could see), not as energetic as I had expected, but definitely louder. There's something about their music that makes it sound "heavy," but this aside, they look & sound swell—and they definitely make people dance! We hung out 'til the end and crawled back to the hotel . . .

4:30 P.M. the 17th: We had waited about a half hour for Crime to show (for an interview), finally called, and were told they wouldn't make it. We were sitting on the curb in front of the Golden Dragon (where the interview was to be held, also where a number of people had been killed in Chinatown youthgang killings . . . too bad—it would have made great copy), it was getting chilly, it was time for a drink.

10:00 P.M. the 17th: Blitzed . . . (it should be explained here that neither of us has a drinking problem, it's just that it was a vacation). Somehow we made it to Tattoo Lagoon (an ex-gay club gone new wave), and the guy was gracious enough to let us in (we were down to our gas money). The tropical look is definitely "in" for S.F. niteclubs . . . Not too crowded, and a weird mix of people. First band, The Readymades (I think . . .) & they sounded pretty good (not hardcore, but good). We ran into Howie Klein (an R&R journalist, involved in new wave), who was upset that more S.F. bands didn't play L.A. (we explained that we had no influence with L.A. club owners, but when we started having concerts, we'd bring down the Avengers).

The second band came on, but by this time, we were (how you say it?) ***shitfaced!*** Back in the car and back to Mabuhays (one for the road), and then off down 101 . . . By the time we reached San Luis Obispo, the sun was rising, we were sober & the coffee was good at the Budget Cafe . . .

Since it's hard to remember everything (much less put it in context), what follows is just random bits of news & gossip!

Bobby Death (real hardcore) got shot in the leg . . . The San Luis Obispo Sunday swapmeet isn't bad . . . Little Joe's restaurant is a great place to eat . . . There is no real rivalry between S.F. & L.A., it's just a lack of understanding . . . If you drink, don't drive . . . (and don't try to write) . . .

S. & M.

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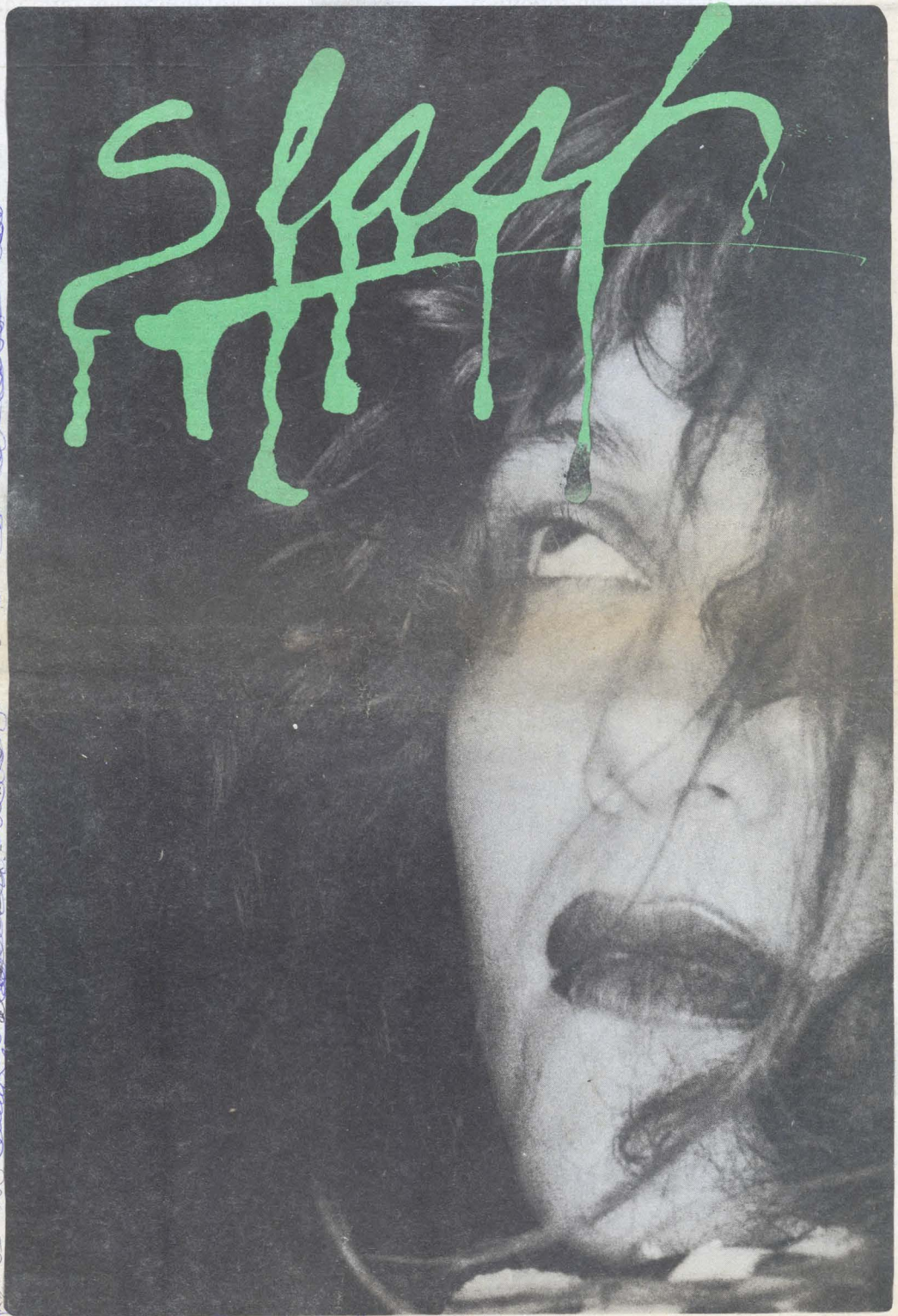

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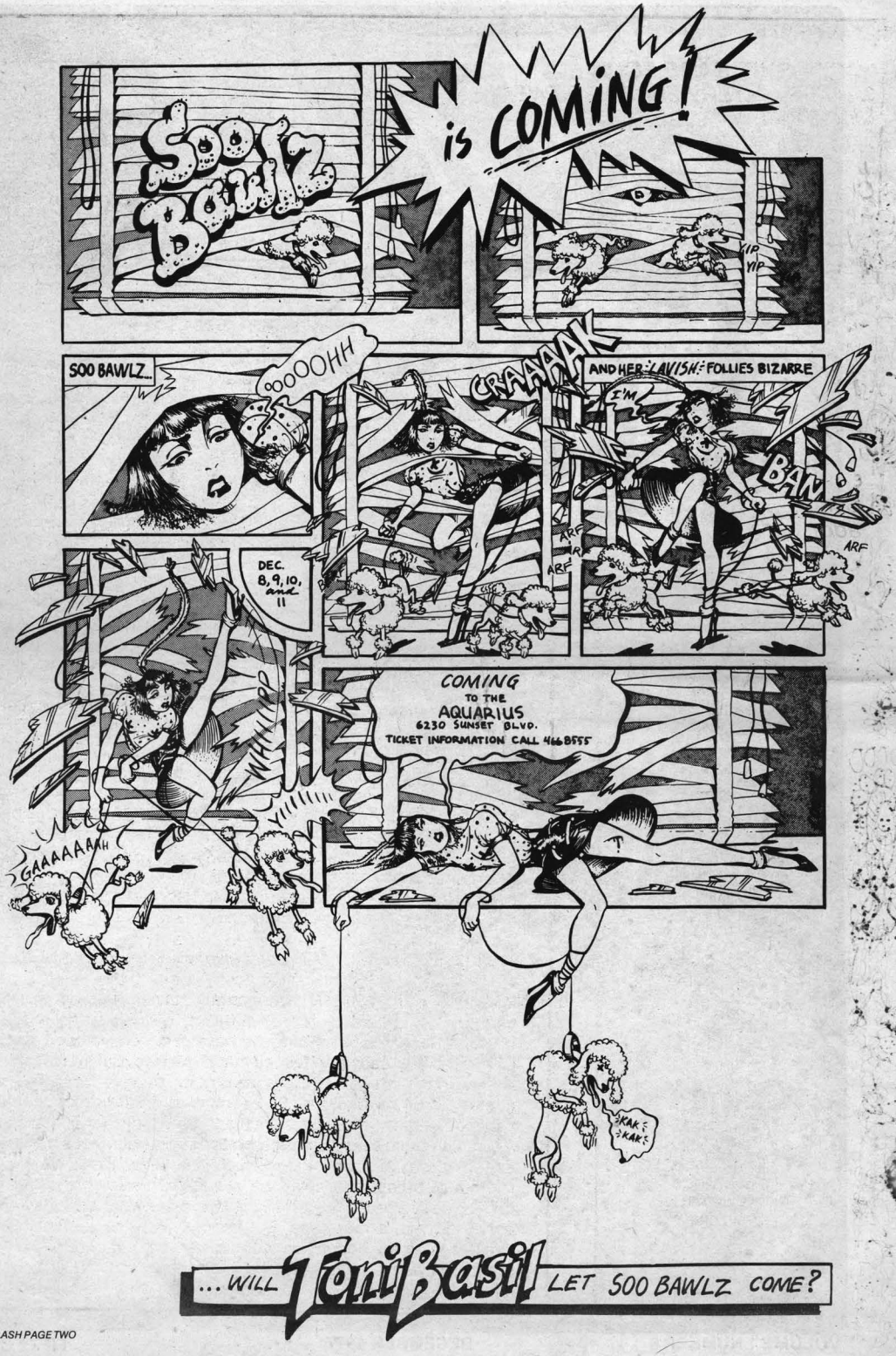
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EDITORIAL

WHY DO WE EXIST?

Holy safety pin! Number 6 already! Seems like only yesterday we were racking our little collective brain for a suitable name for a new music mag. And worrying whether there would be enough happening in the next few months to justify our existence! Pretty laughable isn't it? now that one night out of two is spent pogoing to groups that didn't exist a week before, now that the amount of new singles makes it impossible to review them all as they come out. And it is only the beginning.

So, when it is very late at night and the brain is slowly unshriveling, or when it is morning and the daily ration of new sounds hasn't started spinning on the stereo yet, we ask ourselves the inevitable "where the fuck is it all going??" And no simple answer has come up yet. Maybe it never will. Maybe it will go on developing, fusing and exploding without giving us the time to look back, look ahead, predict and analyze. Music for *now* means just that. You live it, you experience it, you consume it and you discard it. The record is a disposable item. The music magazine as another disposable item. SLASH #1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are useless yellowing pieces of paper holding no interest but for the nostalgia buffs. A lot of work went into them but so what? There was nothing else to do with our time anyway, except run around making a stupid living,mouthing stupid conversations and waiting for old age. Our standards of journalism had ups and downs and it showed. Our defense of the local scene was partial and subjective because that's the way we felt. SLASH never pretended (and never will) to be anything but what it obviously is: a passionate rag for today's kids, a monthly manifesto of off-the-wall beliefs and angry refusal, a desperate plea to musicians to bring back the fun and the madness, an amateur project to undermine a scene plagued by too many professionals.

When SLASH stops being all those things it will self-destruct. It's been called everything from "commercial nihilism" to "groupie oriented" to "the Clash's house organ" and it will undoubtedly be called many others. And we will laugh every second of the way because everybody's missing the point. It may have been every one of those things 'cause we felt like that at the time. But that's in the past. And we don't know what next issue is going to be made of. The past is a bore, the future a mystery. So bear with us when we fuck up, insult or misunderstand. There just isn't time to be ponderous and thoughtful. All we can promise is as many reports, insights and visuals on the new scene as we can catch. Later, much later, when the whole thing has run out of breath and notes,we will all get together and compile a catalogue of absurd SLASH highlights, a portable anthology of what *not* to do with a magazine. But for now we're all too involved and excited to worry about our obvious weaknesses. There's only one standard that, no matter what, we will maintain, and that's the sincerity in whatever we say. And we meaaaaan it, man.

LOCAL SCENE

Casualties list first (this should become a column in its own right): Bobby Pyn (or Darby Crash) leapt barefooted off the stairs at the Whisky, landed on a broken bottle and cut an artery. Now can be seen on crutches. Leonard, singer of the Dickies, leapt off the balcony (this time at the Starwood) and got himself one broken foot and one badly sprained one. Yet he finished the song lying on the floor. Title was: "You drive me ape." Now can be seen in a wheelchair . . .

Another kind of casualty (almost): Rodney Bingenheimer's punk and pop show was taken off the air for a week by the F.C.C. Apparently too many naughty words were heard on one of his Sunday night shows. Guests that evil night were Rory Johnston (L.A.'s Pistols representative), Brian and Mick of the Masque and Penelope from the Avengers on the phone. Penelope was found guilty of one "shit" and Rory of three "fuck"s. Bad timing it was since KROQ were in the process of renewing their license. One phone call from the F.C.C. and that was it. Except the next week the program director called to tell Rodney he was forced to put him back on because of too many protest calls. Rodney swears he didn't ask anyone to phone in. Only difference from before is that now there will be no guests or broadcasted phone calls until a delay system (that's a bleep machine) is installed. Only exception to the rule: Elvis Costello. Guess they know he's a nice guy . . .

Now the eternal mating dance of bands and musicians: The highly volatile Bags are now Alice and Patricia plus a new rhythm guitar by the name of Margo. Rest of the Bags left after too many arguments, especially after it was discovered Janet was having secret talks (??) with Kim Fowley . . . Cliff Hanger was detached from the Germs and is now part of a top secret new group. Jeff McGregor is the new piano player and "distortion chorder" for the Screamers, and will be seen in action after November 25th. Sten and Danny of the Skulls banged in the Masque alley, result of the collision being the formation of a new band . . .

The Weirdos' "Destroy All Music" is out in England as a 12-inch single (Bomp). X to put out a single on Dangerhouse Records, whose earlier package (Avengers, Dils, Black Randy and Randoms) will be out by Thanksgiving. Dangerhouse is also working on other projects to be released at the beginning of the year . . .

Those well-known perfectionists the Germs have re-recorded "Forming" plus Chuck Berry's "Around and around" (who said these guys didn't have roots?) for a tentative album on What records. Other bands possibly featured on this sample LP of local sounds are the Skulls, the Alley Cats, Controllers, Eyes, the Spastics and the Dils.

Devo have left town without saying goodbye and are now in N.Y. . . .

Punk press: new zines are Joy Ride and Generation X . . . Screamers newsletters out again, and Screamers Fan Club new address is P.O. Box 367, Ontario, CA 91761 . . . Flip Side is better than ever . . .

The Weirdos opened up a live show on radio station KPFK with their newest song, "We got the neutron bomb" . . . Big fuss at the Masque a couple of weekends ago when admission prices were unexpectedly raised to $4. Panic time with people running around looking for coke bottles to cash in, "Hey, pal, you got two spare dollars?" and other touching scenes. Many were heard muttering about "Quality not quantity is what we want" (six or seven bands were featured that night) . . . and talking of quality, SLASH's latest benefit was judged by many (honest, we're not making it up) to be the best ever. Attendance was good in spite of brilliant planning (opposite the Ramones' $1 show at the Whisky!). All three bands (X, Avengers, Dils) lived up to their reputations and even more. Zero Javier joined the Dils for their cover of "Wimp." Somebody from SLASH spent most of the concert asleep under the amplifiers, which is certainly some kind of dubious achievement. Next SLASH bash at the Masque, which does not mean we've become too good for old Larchmont.

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l e t t e r s

Dear Kickboy and Co.,

Take those blinkers off—Andy Warhol's SLASH!

There's more to the "new music" than narrow-minded "hardcore" posturing. If it don't wear leather pants and chains forget it eh? The whole punk scene out L.A. way is getting a bit incestuous it seems to us.

"Glam-Punk" comes to Hollywood.

Back in the old country so called punk fashion has become a cliche. A bad taste joke. This hardcore stance is about as new and alive as Cliff Richard. Please don't become B.O.F's and turn your backs on the people who are going beyond what was hardcore punk a year ago. Elvis Costello, Ultravox, the Tom Robinson Band are all trying to break away from the ageing "new wave." Check the casualty list: The Damned, The Jam, The Clash . . . relics of 1977. 1978 is two months away . . . Get Hip!

Britain is being attacked by the anti-new-wave, and not a moment too soon. Let's hope that the next reaction comes even sooner. This is the only way to keep the music alive. Every group we've seen makes its best music before signing to a record company anyway. O.K. enough said about U.K. Punk.

America and SLASH. The bands you are shouting the praises of so loudly would've knocked us out—a year ago. Things are moving too quickly to be impressed by Clash/Pistols/Adverts/Jam soundalikes like the Germs (What shit), the Dils and the Weirdos (Normals?!) any longer. The L.A. Scene seems at the same time dull, ultraconservative, unadventurous and . . . passe. Let's hear more about the original bands regardless of their rating in the weirdness stakes this month. This is all secondary to the noise itself. It seems that every new Californian band has somewhere along the line heard the Pistols or Clash and been knocked out. Weren't we all. But these bands are not what it is all about ***now.*** Listen to Sham 69 or Crisis. This is the music of the moment here—but I hope it won't be when this goes to press.

As for SLASH . . . things have certainly changed in five months. A magazine Rona Barret would be proud of. ***Two*** gossip columns. Who cares who's sleeping in Rodney's car anyway? We thought this sort of thing was what SLASH, and goddamit, Punk wanted to smash. The rag now looks and reads (though we know it isn't) like a big finance production put out to cash in on punk-rock. We tried to interview the Stranglers and couldn't honestly put any defence to their accusation that SLASH was for Kings Road trendies and full of crap.

The sonner you L.A. SLASHers take off your blindfolds and earplugs the better.

Harry Slime and Fleshy Parts

Dear Harry and Fleshy,

All of us here in Glam City were a bit puzzled by your accusations. So after much hesitation we did take off those blinkers and guess what? We still felt the same. It would be hard to answer you point by point (not to mention boring). Nevertheless some have to be tackled right away before the misunderstanding goes on any further.

One: SLASH is a California mag mainly interested in California new music phenomena. Whether or not the local bands measure up to your high British standards is irrelevant. These bands fill the need of thousands of west coast kids for new stuff, and criticizing them (and us) because of unavoidable influences is silly. Everybody gets influenced by everybody, including your beloved anti new-wavers Costello, Ultravox and company. Speaking of which we couldn't for the life of us understand what's so fucking modern and original in these guys. Saw Costello the other night and although he was pretty good at his stuff I must say what you call his "breaking away from the ageing new wave" is more like going back to even older stuff. So the trend is repudiating the punks eh? Who's calling who a trendy?

Two: More on this "trendy" business. The Stranglers turned down an interview with SLASH 'cause we're for Kings Road trendies. Most of us never been to Kings Road, have no idea what the trend is there and couldn't give a shit . . . Now if they'd say "for Hollywood Blvd. trendies" we might take them a tiny bit more seriously. There must be at least 14 or 15 of them there, and I bet half of them read SLASH. Touche! And who do these hot shots think they are? I've seen more than a few Stranglers interviews in publications that were not exactly committed or relevant. Could it be that success is making them slightly distant and superior? Hating SLASH didn't stop Rotten and his mischievous pals from talking to it, and telling it what they thought of it. Not nice of them depriving all the lovely California nubiles from a possibly controversial chat. Something better change all right!

Three: You're so intent on forever pushing whatever is super new you forget about a few basic facts of the music world. Hoping Sham 69 is already out and old by the time this gets printed is murderous and anti-music. Let them record and play for awhile, for punk's sake. If your wishes come true the old dinosaurs will reign for a long time to come with the new bands zooming by like comets and gaining absolutely no power or audience. We don't want to be flash and mysterious, we want to take over. ***And we'd love to listen to Sham 69 or Crisis if only we could. But London ain't exactly next door, you silly geezer.***

Four: SLASH not up to it? Maybe so. 'Cause deducting so quickly that the scene here is dull and ultraconservative suggests that we just can't communicate the excitement and energy of the past few months. We'll try harder. Take our word for it, there ain't nothing dull or old about it. It's just another scene, growing the best it can. Punk may have it made in England, here it's still precarious and survival-oriented. It does not need to be hit below the belt by intolerant and impatient scene-watchers.

Five (and last): Andy Warhol? Rona Barret? Come now. So we have gossip. Too much of it. In Hollywood, gossip is like the smog. It's in the air. You don't want us to have any fun, do you? Don't take us so seriously, old chap. Don't you think covering all the latest antics of the riff-raff is basically anti-society and revolutionary? Guess you don't. Incestuous we may be, but the family that pogoes together . . . (American joke). And if we hear one more time the SLASH-Andy Warhol's Interview comparison we'll punch some noses. I'd say that's an old ***punk attitude, this sloppy look let's be ugly and unreadable business. This is almost 1978 now. Wake up. I also think it's quite a joke, us looking like "a big finance production." And a compliment. Too bad you didn't mean it.***

So we have answered most of your accusations after all. It's not everyday one gets attacked from the inside. Nice to be so controversial. Be sure that if new music dies in England because of the scene makers' low attention span we will carry on the furious fun. Ta ta.

Kickboy, Pea, Mobo and the rest of the wayward not with it gang

Slash Trash Clash Bash Mash Cash Smash Gash

Something sometimes gives me the creeps about SLASH—like the obsession with blood and the continuous non-stop macho hostility and anger. Anguish and ennui—I understand. There's trouble in paradise! They never promised we wouldn't stand up with thorns in our butts—but; why the continual FUCK YOU SHIT PISS CUNT "My mommy doesn't love me"-temper tantrum-I want it no attitude?

When punk is reduced to this—it crumbles. What we have here is the biggest thing since the Woodstock (sic) nation. The potentiality of creation; artistic audio-visual (films!—yeah! Did you catch Bradley Lane's "Night of Terror" at the Whiskey before the Weirdos, Sunday afternoon?) I did say CREATE. Destroy is for England—where the economics and war have caused hatred to run rampant so punks release energy in club class wars of their own (a la teddy boys, skinheads, rockers, greasers, surfers).—Where the "ice age" has frozen Britons for centuries so that they're even more repressed and inhibited than the old-style Americans ("Don't be a cry baby").

Anyways—long live punk culture and consciousness!

(We've always been weird and always will be!)

Hoorah for great bands like the Controllers, the Zeros and the Dils (who played the ***wonderful*** Masque Saturday night—missed the Punchers [?])—Who bring us perfect audio fucks in the ear holes. (+ the Screamers!!!)

I ***love*** SLASH but ohmygod just a little less of the bullshit neo-nazi make war no love mirage image.

Sincerely,

Car—Madeline Mazereti

Miss Mazereti,

We do ***want it now. What's wrong with that? Why should we wait and be nice boys and girls and be polite and take our hands out of our pockets when we speak to our betters?*** Fuck this waiting in turn like a good number for the goodies to be laid on our laps!! ***We don't want to die stupid and meek. It's not temper tantrum, it's cold rage. Which does not take the fun out of it, on the contrary. And that's not neo-nazi consciousness, that's refusing to be ruled. Maybe the message does get muddled at times, maybe the attitude becomes more visible than the reason, maybe we do have big mouths. But that's because we are*** hungry. Heil punk!! ***(see, even got a sense of humor).***

Ubercommandant Von KickFace

P.S. Hey, I thought this was a music mag?? What's going on here? (the SLASH cleaning lady)

SLASH,

Just like to clarify this terminology. "New wave" and "punk rock" are ***not*** one in the same. New wave refers to all the ***new groups*** with ***new ideas, new statements,*** etc. ***Punk rock*** is one faction of the total new wave movement. Obviously, ***Devo*** has little in common with the ***Nuns,*** yet both are New Wave. ***Get it?*** (this is for the dum dums who can't think this out).

As for "poseurs" and "fringies," etc.: If you want this to spread and grow you must ***stop*** hacking the converts from the early 70's post-hippy crowd. I agree with the very small point made in Modern Boy's column of October 22 SLASH. Many of these hippy types are confused true hard rockers, too old for the teenybopy trappings of late 70's rock and too young for the Grateful Dead hippy jams, so their support of the new wave ***must*** be appreciated and ***accepted, gabba gabba!*** (Even Joey Ramone ***still*** has long hair, the ***archtypal punk***). And if you can't take it (how can you be so easily offended?) ***How tough are you? Fuck English fashion and all these dubious standards.*** I hate the hippy establishment just as you, they're bad as the ***foags*** (???—Ed.) The hippies ran out of power ten years ago, so don't get me wrong. But don't be so selective about who's fit for your punk army, ***they'll come around if you ask them in a way they understand. Use your head and build it to a frenzy*** the Stones never saw the likes of.

D V 8

We're not in the least offended by anything, we don't care about anybody's hair length (everybody has the sacred right to be repulsive if they wish—oops sorry, we did it again!) And we're not starting an army. Just small guerrilla groups to invade radio stations and recording studios. But that's a secret, okay?

Colonel Kickboy

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PRESLEY ELECTRIFIED...

ELVIS/LONG BEACH ARENA: Whatever other problems may occur during his show, the 60 or so seconds when Elvis Presley first comes on stage continue to comprise the most electrifying minute in the pop concert business. No one else—not Bob Dylan, Mick Jagger or Elton John—generates the same kind of guaranteed charisma or spectacular impact.

When the lights dimmed Sunday afternoon at the Long Beach Arena, the shrieks of delight began building toward the climactic moment. When he appeared, hundreds of flashbulbs began exploding again and again to produce a dramatic effect that no lighting director has yet been able to match. It didn't really seem to matter that Presley hadn't, the fact that he—the greatest legend of rock 'n' roll—was actually live on stage was what count-

...gs, both Presley and the audience ...what has become his concert ri- ...and manner that often re- ...ds than a hard-edged ... some familiar ...various ages ...accepted ...with

Your Horoscope

to April

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House said Thursday the Post Office Department has been reminded that summer jobs under the Youth Employment Program are to be filled on the basis of need rather than patronage.

The same word had come a little earlier from Chairman John W. Macy Jr. of the Civil Service Commission, who served to give it more emphasis and authority.

Meanwhile, the Post Office Department had beaten both of them to the punch—by minutes—with a denial that any patronage was involved. ...essmen in filling its ...obs under the sum- ...ment program. ...id it was a ...used be- ...ment

proposed by the U.S. Employment Service.

Moyers said the White House informed the Post Office Department it wants the original purposes of the Youth Opportunity Program to be met by every federal agency, including the Post Office Department. He removed from the original pronouncement a special pronouncement, saying that, so far as practical, jobs were to go to boys and girls 16 years old who need them most. ...complete their ...

Spec

Moyers ... stood ... reached ... that ... crite ... me ... li

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198 SECONDS OF

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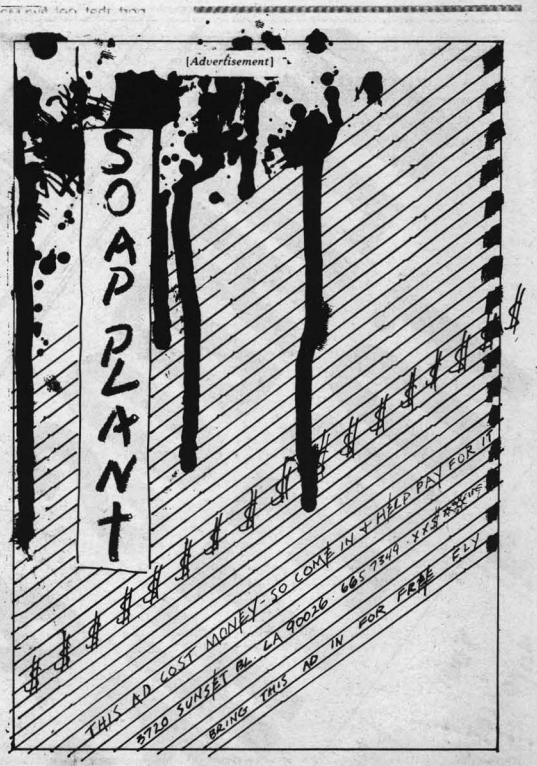


HOW'S THE COMPETITION DOING? PART 3
(Don't think we'll ever catch up)

ZIG ZAG:

Went from mildly interesting rock paper to quite interesting new wave mag in a period of 2 to 3 months, leaving countless faithful old readers baffled and angry behind. Kris Needs is now chief editor, and as long as he stays there our music will get a more than decent treatment in their pages. Lots of interesting features, you could do much worse than write to 10 Kennet St., Reading, Berkshire, England, and subscribe.

BOMP:

Greg Shaw's elusive encyclopedia of pop is out again after a year disappearance, and it's quite a comeback. I personally didn't think it could be done. Knowing Greg's insistence on historical precision and stuff, there didn't seem to be any way to catch up. Too much happened in the past year. Typical sensory overload. Yet they managed to neatly sum it all up, explain it and even predict new directions (probably the part I would most disagree with). The analysis of the L.A. scene is excellent but a bit biased (Bomp artists getting the big chunk of attention), the pictures are numerous and the layout busy and lively. I hope it's not another year 'til we get another issue on the stands, I would like to catch up on all the pop information and trivia only this gang seems to have the time and the connections to gather. I don't know about power pop (a bit contrived and regressive that—power's such an ugly word) but I know when a mag is smart enough to not only understand what's going on but to explain why it just had to happen in such a clear, obvious manner. Bomp is P.O. Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510.

JOYRIDE ("The first shot takes you straight to hell"):

Local nasties and pseudo-nasties having fun. Don't you know fanzines are so much fun? You can do whatever the fuck you want and lay it on the innocent public (who, god knows, always deserves it) and you got a goddam publication on your hands. Fine with me, except you better shape up with the music insights (none) and stop being so "in" or you gonna become the enemy before you can spell out new wave graphics. Fun's okay, but don't take your neighbor closet punk fan for an idiot. People wise up real fast these days, and there are many kids with mucho to say that are probably dying to make you look like shit as soon as the find the nearest xerox place. Eighty cents is almost a dollar, joyriders. Make it worth it. Write P.O. Box 3863, Beverly Hills, CA 90212.

HOOPLA:

Nothing trendy and flashy here. Yet it's modern and ***totally*** packed with info and reviews. Serious little package, don't look like much but that shouldn't stop anyone. Whoever (plural) is behind is highly informed and very interesting. They review a wide variety of albums and they don't fuck around with the price. You're bound to disagree with some of it, but you'll soon realize no one is playing games with you in this zine. And doesn't it seem game-playing and posture-taking is what most new publications are about these days? (I'm not being reactionary, it's just that my patience and tolerance is running thin. Too many one shot artists on the field lately.) 210 E. Morningside Dr., Peoria, Illinois 61614.

GENERATION X:

Another new one. Much more believable than JOYRIDE. Has something to say, but hasn't found a format yet. Picture reproduction is terrible, but that can change from issue to issue. Decent coverage of L.A. for a first issue. All it needs is serious improvement on the graphics, but some hard-core probably like it the way it is. Much potential. And congratulations for not going crazy on the price. 5810 Fulcher, N. Hollywood, CA 91601.

Now a last glimpse until next issue: TWISTED is out again. It's better (and the first one was not bad at all). NEW DISEASES has also improved tremendously, and the new TROUSER PRESS is full of nasty shit about the death of punk. Wishful thinking and pathetic foresights. Too many creeps in charge. And RAW POWER has actually improved beyond belief (going from slimey little zine to pretty good looking mag in a couple of months), the subject matter is still too heavy metal for our bunch but they must be taken seriously. Anybody who can clean up their act so fast and so thoroughly and still stick to what they obviously believe is great music, has to be reckoned with. Hate to say it, but well done! (I WANNA BE YOUR DOG can now be obtained from Choulette Gilbert, 1214 Clark St., West Hollywood, CA 90069.)

"LET'S MAKE THE SCENE"

RODNEY BINGENHEIMER

"Rodney is an apostle of Punk, his producers are New Wave visionaries, and this record is the result of immaculate conception."
PHIL SPECTOR

"I like the beat. It's really neat!"
JOEY RAMONE/ RAMONES

"A screaming Rock 'n' Roll scene maker . . . Number 6 in the New Wave hit parade."
RECORD WORLD MAGAZINE

arranged and produced by

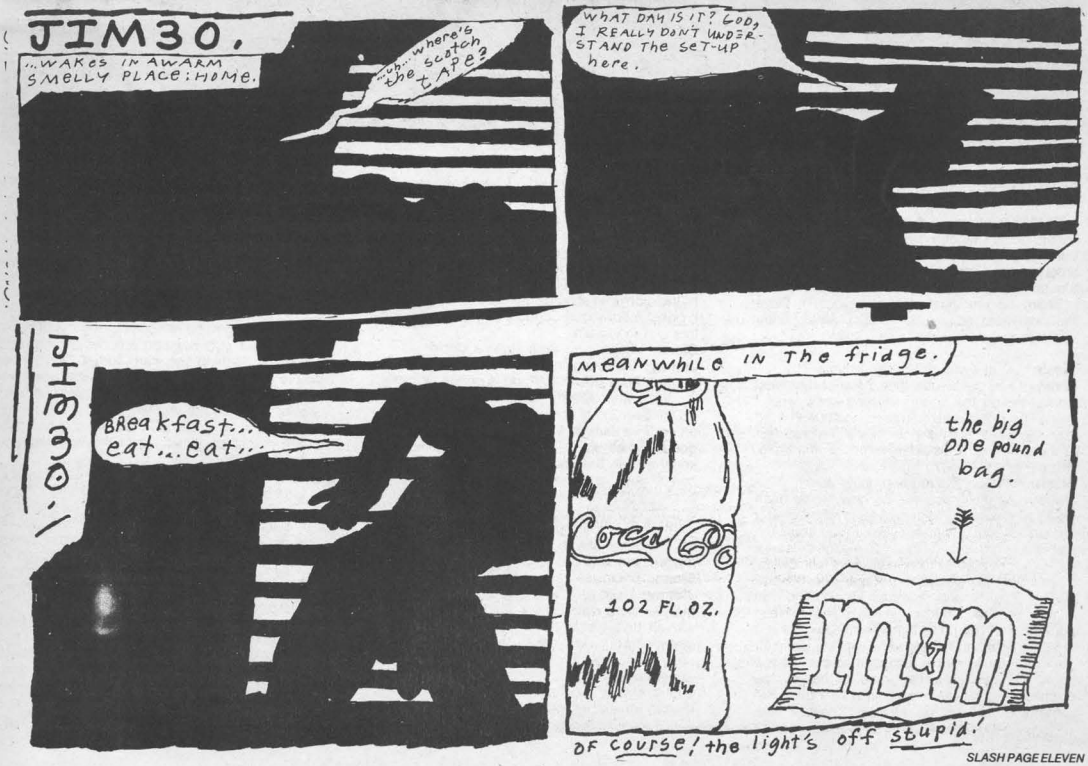
DAN and DAVID KESSEL

"Being the first to record Rodney, I'm proud to announce that his new record is a hit."
KIM FOWLEY

"Surf's up, America! Power rock meets bright madness as Rodney rides the New Wave."
DEBBIE HARRY/ BLONDIE

"Death to Disco!"
RODNEY BINGENHEIMER

Razor Records/Deep Sleep P.O. Box 3751 Hollywood Calif. 90028
Executive Coordination: Chimera



SLASH INTERVIEW WITH SHAM 69

SLASH's interview with Sham 69, by Chris Jelley, took place a few weeks back in the sprawling suburbs outside burning London, in smouldering Surrey. Jimmy Pursey did most of the talking over tea and bickies (bickies??!!).

Sham 69 are Jimmy Pursey (vocals), Dave Parsons (lead guitar and vocals), Albie Slider/ Tonto (bass) and Mark Caine (drums).

Slash: . . . and you get many groupies?

Jimmy: You get a lotta girls. Most of them just wanna be on the scene, do you know what I mean? I'm not interested. I'm going out with a girl anyway, like . . . if they're there, it's like breakfast in the morning: if breakfast is put on the table, you eat it, don't you?

Slash: How long have been going as a . . .?

Jimmy: As the group we are now, we've been going nine weeks. We done a lot in nine weeks. I formed it about a year ago, like. I read about the first Pistols gig and so I said, "this is the music for us," like. The others didn't really want to know, so it was like two groups on stage. The bassist, rhythm guitarist and drummer weren't into it at all, like. So three months ago I said, you'll have to go, like. So I got rid of them and I saw him at a gig one night and I decided he was the bloke for me. And I found ***him*** in a council house, like you know? He was like a Rembrandt in the loft. The drumkit he had was really shitty—it looked like something out of the Muppet show. I was amazed. Best thing I'd ever heard in me life, like. I said, "right, you're on."

Slash: How have things been going in the last nine weeks?

Jimmy: It couldn't go better. We've been rated as the best band out of punk so far, like. At the Roxy they turned 200 people away at the door. At the moment I should think we probably got the biggest following in London, except for the Pistols and the Clash.

Slash: I heard you were doing a single . . .

Jimmy: *We*'re waiting for it to be released. It's on Step Forward. The A-side is gonna be called "I don't wanna." It's about somebody going down. Everybody in the world just goes into factories. Like him (a friend of the band). Been a good boy all his life, like, for the firm, like, you know and in the end they'll say well done son here's your gold watch, there's your pension book. At 65, you know. Two days after you retire you usually fucking drop off and die, like. So what good is it to you? And also it's saying I don't wanna do what you want me to do. That's the main essence of the song.

Slash: What was your background then?

Jimmy: I just used to like getting into things. In the skinhead days, like I used to knock about with all the big blokes when I was about 13. I was really scared, like, 'cause they was really bad days. But the thing is, like, your mind only remembers the good things that happen to you and it always blocks out the bad things. You always remember the good laughs you had but you don't remember the good kickings you had. Like when anybody talks about the '20s they always say "the good old days." They always block out the . . .

Slash: . . . starving, no shoes . . .

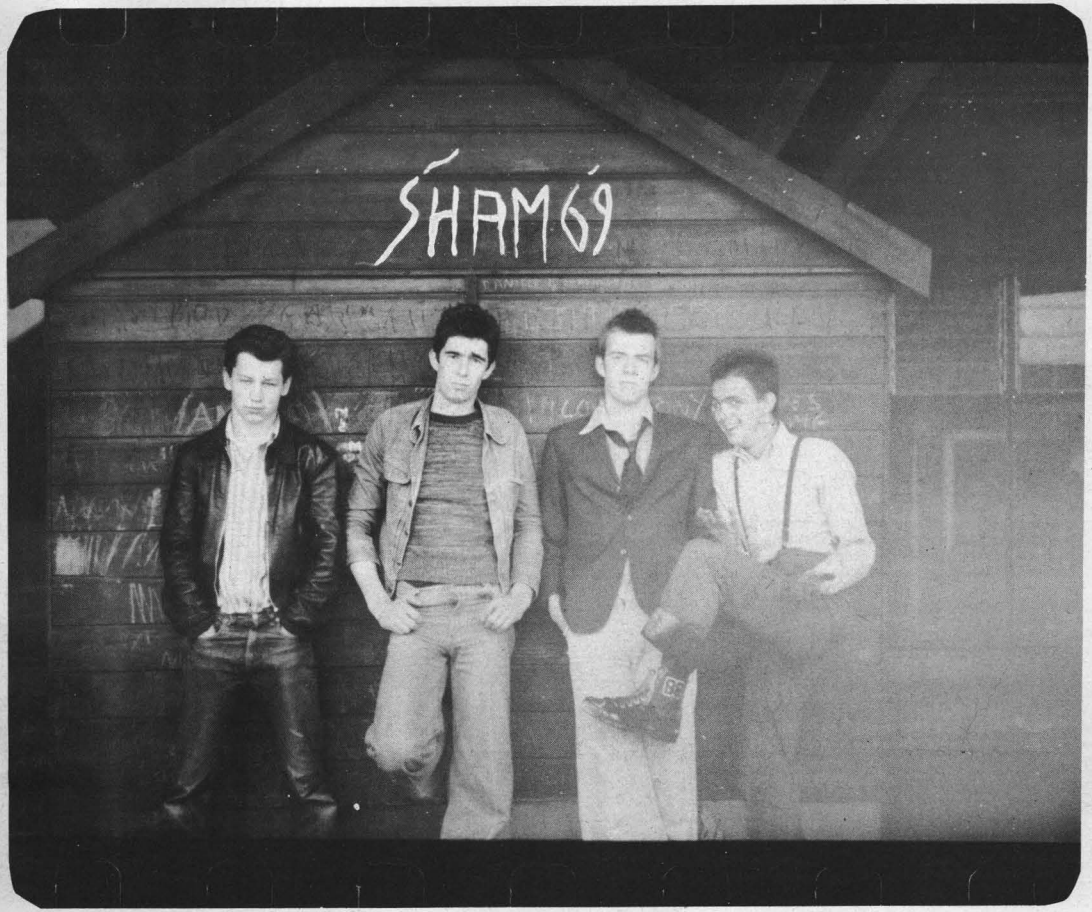
Jimmy: Exactly. But your mind always does that. And it'll always be like that. There's one thing I'll never forget tho', when I really did get a good kicking. That's one thing I could never blank out of my mind. When you've got your teeth knocked out, your nose broken, two ribs broken, it's just something you can't forget, like. When you've got somebody jumping up and down on your face all night long—for about three minutes.

Slash: How old are you all?

Jimmy: I'm 22. He's 20. He's 18 and he's 17.

Slash: What do you think of the way punk is going?

Jimmy: I think it's fancy dress. The essence of it in the beginning was to shock people, right? And to say, "look, we can dress really as bad as what we wanna dress and people are still gonna appreciate that you're getting up and doing something." Trouble is now people are trying to do things that were in the beginning that you can't do now. The essence is now, in my opinion, to just get out on stage and sing about the things you believe in, right? I would never get out on stage and sing a song if I didn't believe in it. I could come home every night and write a song, ten songs, but that would be ridiculous to me, and ridiculous to the people I'm singing the songs to. Because them songs have gotta come



from your heart. If they don't come from your heart it's just worthless singing them.

We can get up dressed exactly how we want and still put the message across. People do believe that we are real. Most of the kids would really like to get into punk music but they don't wanna go around with safety pins sticking thru their ears and thru their noses and that. They'd like to get in it 'cause it is about what they are but they're scared, turned off by the whole thing. That's why my band can get over to everybody. 'Cause we're saying it's not what you dress like it's what you think and what you believe in.

Slash: Exactly. You go down to Seditionaries and you've got to pay over 30 quid for a pair of zippered bondage trousers . . .

Jimmy: Everything after a while becomes commercialized. Everything you do. Flob could become commercialized . . .

Slash: If you could buy a bottle!
Jimmy: Exactly. This is how stupid it is.

Slash: We need an anti-new wave.

Jimmy: That's what we are. We're against groups that have been groups and couldn't make it and now they're saying "you gotta get on to punk 'cause it's the in thing." For me that's really fucking terrible. That's everything I'm against.

There's no such thing as punk. It's just a word. I would rather call it urban rock 'n' roll 'cause it's coming from kids off the street. We do songs like "Hey, little rich boy," another called "What have we got?", another called "They don't understand." Now how on earth, if we were signed by a big record company, can we sing those songs?

I said that to a really big audience the other night and I meant every word. It's like the Who singing "My generation" now. No way they can do it. The Rich Kids played the other night. Mick Jones jammed with them, right? And in "Pretty vacant," I got up on stage and sang. I didn't get up on stage to do that like a jamming session. I got up and I was putting different words into "Pretty vacant," and I got a glass thrown at me because I was singing, "it's a fancy dress ball, a fancy dress ball, I'm glad to see you're wearing your safety pins for your fancy dress ball" and they said, "you bastard."

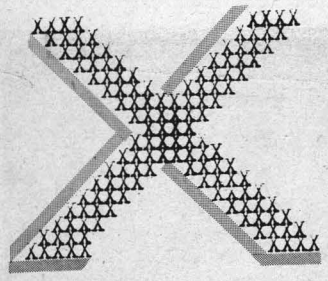
But that's what I want them to feel. I want them to feel I'm having a go at them, silly bastards. I didn't get up there to sing "Pretty vacant" 'cause it was a great in thing to do, I got up and done it because I wanted to say to them people that I fucking hate everything they believe in.

Jimmy: . . . one day, nobody wants to know what you're doing. The next day everyone wants to know. It's like we used to walk in the Vortex and nobody used to take a blind bit of notice of us. Walk in the Vortex now and everybody's rushing up, "Oh, wow, ooh . . ." you know? There have been times before all this happened . . . I sat down one night and cried my eyes out because—it's the way I am—I cried because I thought to myself, why is everybody gonna want to know me if I ever did make it when they didn't wanna know me before? It really upset me. People were treating me as an object to be known because it's the in thing, not because they wanna know me because of what I am, but because "oh, it's great to know him."

Slash: All the clubs are in London. But what can you do around here?

Jimmy: Nothing. We're the type of band—if they said tomorrow we could play down at the local youth club we'd go and play. And we wouldn't say, "Oh, we can't go and play down there." That's not our scene. We'd go and play in a garage if someone would give us a garage to play in. We'll always do that. That's what we are about. That's what we are.

. . . People can't understand why Sham 69 are so aggressive whenever they go anywhere. But I say it's the way we get treated. If we was to get treated a little bit better—sometimes at gigs they've shut us in the toilets and said, "get changed in there," like, and then they wonder. The main band's getting dressed in a lovely dressing room and we're getting dressed in the toilet . . . They can't understand why we rip the fucking toilet to bits, and why we smell sometimes.



1 2 3 and 4 X

X are: Exene, vocals; John Doe, bass/vocals; Billy Zoom, lead/vocals; Mick Basher, drums.

SLASH is a drag sometimes. See, we have this interview conversation meeting of minds with X all planned out a few days in advance, the original time we all agreed to meet at was 10:30 (of course at night), except a few hours before we ask them to change it to 11:00, a bit later we decide 11:30 would be so much better, then it's midnight and we're not there yet. Finally the three jokers on duty show up (20 past).

The band is waiting for us. Of course SLASH is drunk that night, not too drunk, just drunk enough for one of the three to immediately pass out in a corner of the new SLASH headquarters. Good impression! The remaining two pros disappear for a while (liquor run), come back, cans are passed around, my god, we might actually start the interview!

One thing we've already learned about X: ***They are patient!***

When SLASH 2 comes back after another brief disappearance, the conversation is already going strong with everybody talking at once about surfing on the Mississippi River (???!!!). You see, you can surf behind a boat going up the river and theoretically ride forever, well, for a long way.

SLASH 1 appears to know a lot about the subject but he may be bluffing. He then proceeds to what he probably thinks of as a smooth transition ("How long have you been riding the new wave?") but is politely ignored.

How embarrassing, thinks SLASH 2. He decides to take things in hand and comes up with the exquisitely original inquiry about the eventual effect of success on the band's life and outlook. God, are those two lame tonight! Nevertheless Exene bravely answers the trite question and reassures the cross-eyed "journalist" she's pretty sure she can deal with it emotionally (as well as with you bunch!).

John Doe thinks he would give most of the money he would make away. I've been pretty successful in small poetry circles, says Exene. No big difference.

SLASH 2 mentions something about being hated by many people like many bands still are. It's nothing new to this band. "Always been outcasts" (Exene). Hated by dozens or hundreds, only so many people can be near you at once, thinks John. They all agree the worst fate for a new band is indifference. Billy Zoom: "mediocre press is the worst." What would they do if this was the general public reaction? "We'd change. Do something to evoke reaction."

Playing in X is fun, but they'd like to play more. (X have so far played very few gigs, their latest at the time of writing being the Starwood with the Dead Boys. Each one was considered successful and exciting.)

First parenthesis: How can you tell a lousy journalist? Answer: When he breaks up an interesting train of thought with an irrelevant question. SLASH 2 gets the medal for asking them about liking pizza with or without anchovies at this point. They're tolerant enough to answer (some with, some not), but they might be wondering by now what the fuck they're doing here. Nice going, number 2!

The talk drifts to boring interviews (how surprising!), astrological signs and ice cream flavors. Number 1 panics and goes for relevance. "What's unique about X?"

John: "We're truthful." Meaning they don't care what's in this week. Billy has played briefly with some 30 bands before he found his spot as the group's lead guitar. The others had "unprofessional attitudes." Number 2 suggests professionalism reminds him of Led Zeppelin but Billy will have none of it. He's right.

For some obscure reason, 1 and 2 are suddenly arguing about the Dead Boys making it big or not, number 2 swearing they'll be very big and number 1 wondering where he gets all this information. X couldn't care less about the Dead Boys.

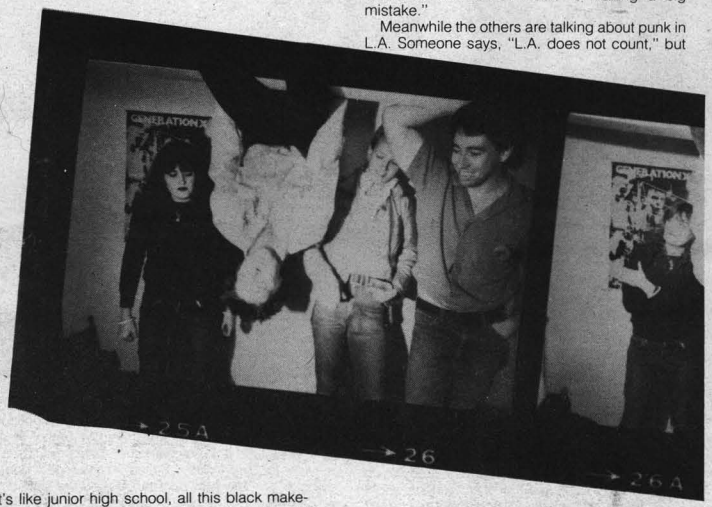
"Do you think new wave is the new commercial direction?" (The first decent question?)

"If my primary concern was making loads of money, the music biz is the last thing I'd be in" (Billy).

Asked to rate their personal musical abilities, their answers vary. "Excellent," thinks Billy. Exene just says she's new at it but improving rapidly.

Conversation now into young farts, old farts, and how the need for security kills life. John says all his friends seek non-security. SLASH 1 admits to finding security appealing, but "I'm drunk!"

SLASH 2 wants to talk about sex and punk. Billy does not believe punk is sexually liberating.



"It's like junior high school, all this black makeup, black eyes . . ." says John. Exene?: "All superficial glamour." What's sexy anyway? Nobody agrees. Sexy means nothing to Exene. John was shocked to see what he calls "four or five clones of Exene" at the last Larchmont Hall concert.

Number 1 and 2 are arguing in a corner. John breaks into a song (to calm everyone down?): (heavy country western twang) "God save the queen—(silence)—of the Honky Tonk . . ." On this odd note, the tape ends.

By the time the tape is running again, the talk is centered around (could it be? yes) ***Braille menus.*** Yeah, Braille menus in restaurants. Late night talk can get pretty strange, but this is ridiculous!

"What should we talk about?" somebody asks. Someone else is going thru a stack of records. We talk of the Jam concert (they were not too enthused). Number 1 declares that he thought it was good 'cause you just couldn't stand still.

What bands impress you? Boring question, but it starts a lively discussion of early Jonathan Richman (whom they liked) during his Pablo Picasso-Hospital phase. Billy points out that some parts of the Pistols' "EMI" are strangely similar to "Roadrunner." But J. Richman's wry humor has become ridiculous, hasn't it? Sad nods from the company.

SLASH 1 makes a small attempt at humor himself by suggesting one can hear the line, "Paul is dead," somewhere on the "Bollocks" album. X Ray Spex is played on the stereo and all of a sudden things are really cooking. Looks like Number 2 and Billy ***totally*** disagree on whether or not this particular single has any redeeming musical qualities. Billy can't stand the sound of the saxophone and argues that these people shouldn't make records until they sound good.

Number 2 is outraged, this happens to be one of his favorite singles. Also, there's nothing he likes more than a good argument, which in this case could go on for hours since, as Billy points out, "it's all a matter of personal taste."

Funny things are said: "Don't lay that political shit on me, I just don't want to hear that sax . . .", "squeaking chalk on a blackboard . . ." and other cutting judgments and comparisons. Looks like Number 2's losing the argument, but John spares him total defeat by explaining that "it has nothing to do with classical training or not, it's just that Billy is going for a different sound."

Everyone realizes that they in fact feel pretty much the same way. "People have different opinions of what hits them at the gut level. If bands would just go to their audience and have one thing developed right, that's all you can ask" (Billy).

The perfect conclusion to that discussion also comes from Billy: "Anybody who says this is music or this is not music is making a big mistake."

Meanwhile the others are talking about punk in L.A. Someone says, "L.A. does not count," but we'll pretend we didn't hear it. Exene is all for "just getting together and having a real good time." Continuous party. But yes, clubs are also necessary. After Billy remembers having played for three months at Barney's Beanery in a rockabilly band everyone decides Barney's should be the new hang-out (which was promptly dismissed and forgotten by the next morning).

In a last attempt at seriousness the subject of recording and releasing records is approached. X are planning two singles on Dangerhouse records, the first one due out in December-January. One recording session already took place but didn't work out. "It was just an experiment." Tentative titles are "We're desperate," "I'm coming over," "Adult books" and "It's who you know."

John: "I would love to get to the point where all new wave groups are signed with small companies and distributed by bigger companies, so there would be none of the production and pressures of big groups."

The interview is over. More records are played. Some leave 'cause they're tired. A couple stay behind. Number 1 calls Number 2 a primadonna ass. It is very late.

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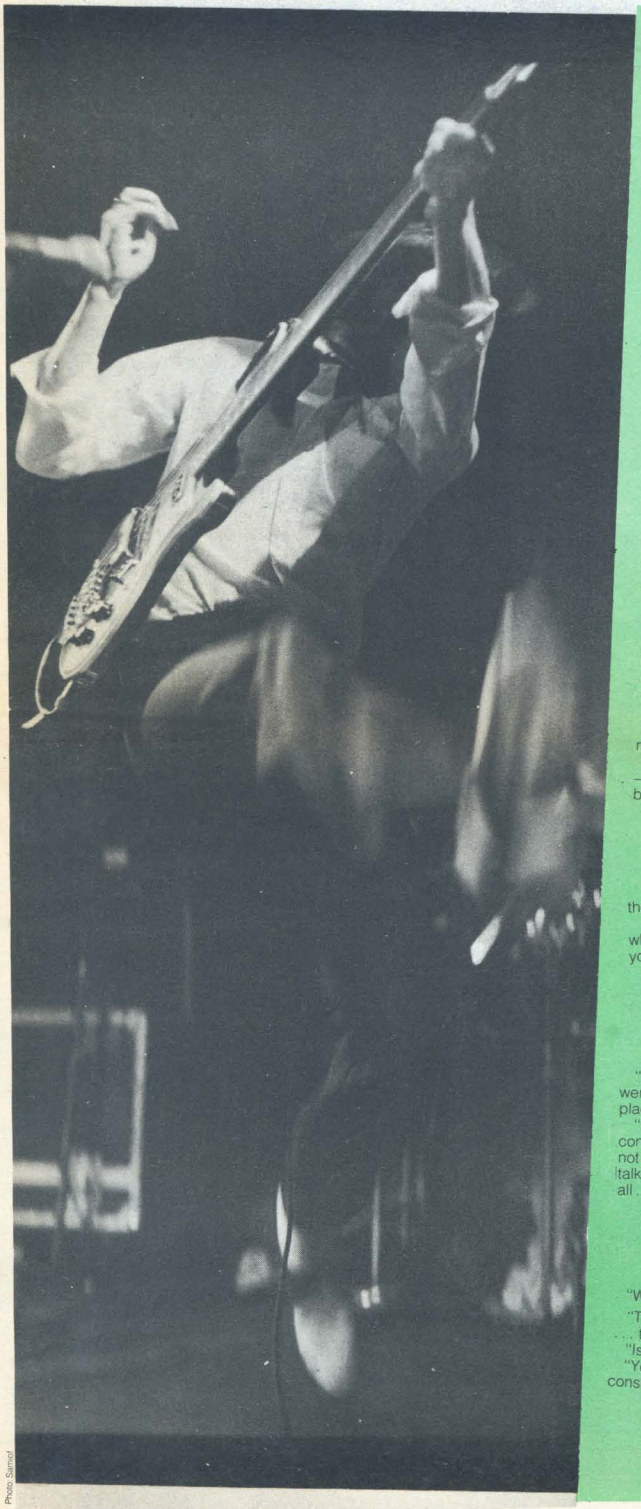


The JAM

It was a long wait to interview the jam—they had to do a sound check at the Whisky which took about two hours. There was something wrong with one of the mikes and Bruce had been getting shocks the night before. We hadn't seen them play yet and they sounded good. Anyway they were worth hanging around for. We interviewed Paul Weller (guitar, vocals) and Bruce Foxton (bass, vocals). They were nice, they bought us coffee in their hotel room. Rick Buckler (drums) wasn't there.

Paul and Rick met in high school, they left school at about 16 and they'd all been in bands individually. Had some "silly jobs." Bruce was a printer. They played a long time in clubs and pubs, making five pounds a night which hardly covered their transport costs then. After two years the contract was signed with Polydor and things really started moving.

"Do you think you've benefited from this whole new wave business?"

"Maybe it wouldn't have happened so quickly —it was a question of the press putting us on the bandwagon."

"Do you think the American kids are ready for the new English bands?"

"I dunno . . . maybe it's gonna take a little while, if we get maximum exposure . . . when you're forced to play in small places . . ."

"Do you think your music would suffer if you were forced to play in one of those gigantic places?"

"It depends how big, there's obviously some contact lost in some big places we've played but not enough to make any difference, but if you're talking in terms of 10,000, there'd be no point at all . . . can't play to faceless people."

"What do you think of the British press?"

"The dailies, you mean! . . . we hate the dailies . . . they really are atrocious."

"Is it true you burned Sniffin' Glue on stage?"

"Yeah, bunch of assholes . . . we can tolerate constructive criticism but this was just crap."

Photo: Sainsf

The new album is finished, it's supposed to be out in January here.

"Did you change the lyrics of 'In the City'?"

"There's a 'fuck' in it live, but we had to leave it out for airplay . . . but there's also a 'crap' in it."

"People said the first album sounded like it had been rushed."

"We don't think so . . . it's a bit rough but it took us ten days."

"Are you perfectionists, does it bother you if you fuck up a couple of notes?"

"Yeah, it does, in that sense we ***are*** perfectionists."

One of their first performances was in the street, Soho market, they had the power laid on by the stalls in the market, the drum kit set up in a van. They attracted quite a crowd, people came out on the rooftops to see them play.

"What do you think of everyone putting down the '60s groups?"

"We don't really put any of the bands down, the songs, the old classics are still really good. The actual bands themselves and their policies are becoming a bit redundant now, they're obviously not relevant to the 1970s."

"Are you very close to your audience, do you know your fans?"

"That's one thing about playing in clubs in London, you can get out amongst the audience, it's good to walk out to the bar and have a chat, that's one of the things that's lost in some gigs, the security's so tight no one can get through, not even your best friends."

Their favorite band is the Sex Pistols . . . "A great rock and roll band." At the press conference, when asked about the Queen, Paul said, "She's alright, I never met her." Many people there seemed disappointed that they didn't come on with safety pins and the lot. They were ***real*** polite. Some idiot asked why they were dressed as undertakers . . . they're really dressed similar to the Mods from the '60s. It's caught on quite a bit with the kids in London (again).

"What do you want out of life?"

"I just wanna be happy" (Paul).

"Personally I'm already getting it, now . . . having some money to get gear, having a chance to tour around . . ." (Bruce).

"Do you think of yourselves as pop stars?"

"It don't really affect us . . . we're not short of money. I [Bruce] was sitting up top (they got a pool up there) basking in the sun. I s'pose that's a bit pop-starrish."

Cheetah Dead Boy

SLASH TALKS WITH CHEETAH CHROME (BUT DOES CHEETAH REMEMBER??) with occasional remarks by JOHNNY BLITZ on the bed

A motel room with the color TV on. A cassette recorder blasting music is on. Cheetah Chrome, lead guitar of the Dead Boys and Johnny Blitz, drummer for same outfit, are also on, Johnny less than Cheetah. We immediately decide to screw the question-answer type of thing (formality would not work under these conditions) and let the conversation flow (as obviously has the beer in the past few hours—there are empty cans everywhere). We attack two new six-packs and sit back, letting Cheetah do the talking. (Also present: Michael, New York head of the Dead Boys Fan Club, 5412 New Utrecht Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11219.)

Cheetah explains that today (Sunday) being their day of "leisure" between the Los Angeles shows and the San Francisco ones, they are smashed out of their heads. We realize we will never quite catch up but it's worth trying, so we opened a few more beers.

Los Angeles surprised them, the audience being wilder and more enthusiastic than they've seen in a long time. "They were fuckin' nuts," thinks Johnny. Not like that N.Y. crowd, uh?

Upon finding out one of us is British, Cheetah wants to know if he looks like J. Rotten. He is told he is much uglier. He likes that. We learn that the album is #189 on the charts this week. Johnny shouts, "Sergiano de Verjac" as he is watching TV cartoons. "Cyrano de Bergerac," corrects Cheetah. "Just what I said" (Johnny). More beer.

The word p--k is thrown around. "We're a rock 'n' roll band, we identify much more with the MC5 . . ." (Cheetah). Johnny admits the new wave helped a lot: "We wouldn't be here this fast" is how he puts it.

Cheetah says he used to be a raunchy hippy, has had his dog collar for seven years. Talk of bikers. They like bikers. "Born to be wild," shouts Johnny. "Now Steppenwolf, that's an influence," adds Cheetah.

Then a shock: They used to be in a Cleveland band called Slash. "We were ahead of our times, once again," notes Cheetah. We tell them we used to have a paper called Dead Boys but they don't believe it.

Cleveland talk. Pere Ubu (Cheetah played with them for a month).

Ohio talk. Devo: "We know them pretty good." Last New Year's Eve highly publicized fight with them was all due to alcohol. Devo badly wanted to play last ("if they're crazy enough to want to follow us, why not"), it's not very clear what happened, anyrate Cheetah admits the Dead Boys didn't come out on top that night. "I was too fucked up on T-bird."

More beer. Talk goes to Iggy (his and Stiv's idol, confides Cheetah) and their playing on the same bill. "Sometimes Iggy follows us and blows us away, I mean he takes our set and blows his nose with it," declares Cheetah, in a strangely proud way. "He is shit," adds Johnny.

Do they disagree a lot? Cheetah: "If me and Johnny don't have a monthly fight then it's wrong." Like that night at the Starwood (when some of the band wanted to play and some didn't)? "Yeah. Except that night it was more between Johnny and Zero." So what went wrong that night? "The whole problem was, and I state: ***these boots do not fit me,***" explains Johnny.

Houston, Milwaukee and Kansas City are the oddest places they ever played, "especially us, having never been out of Cleveland or New York!"

Time for a beer or two. "Look at the nose on this fucker," goes Johnny (Cyrano's still on the TV). We all admire. We talk of noses. We talk of hair. They tell us they cut their hair 'round the first of the year. As Cheetah puts it, "we got to the point where we could look like hippies or we could look like rock 'n' rollers."

The conversation is getting more disjointed by the minute, everybody throwing in a good bit and developing on it whether it has any relation to what was said a few seconds before or not. Slurring is in, so is tripping over mounds of empty beer cans ("watch it, we paid a fucking deposit on this room," warns Cheetah).

Suddenly we're talking about England again: "All this dole talk . . . I can't even get welfare in this country," moans Cheetah.

Change of subject, we're still trying to cover some ground, ***we're*** not drunk yet. Violence? Yeah, good subject. Who's the meanest of them all? "Johnny's the meanest," says Cheetah. Johnny seems to agree. "But I've got the worst temper." What about Stiv, the drooling wonder? "He's a wiry little fucker" (Cheetah). Conclusion: "If you're smart you won't fuck with any of us."

Cheetah patiently explains to us that it's a kind of family thing. You take up one of the band and you end up with the whole pack breathing down your neck, roadies included. We're treated to a few choice descriptions of before and after of various fools throughout the country who did think they could mess with this bunch. Colorful and unprintable. Gore. The ultimate word on the subject is Cheetah's: "We don't fight fair. There is no such thing as one to one in this band."

Definitely time for some beer. Suddenly Cheetah worries: "Let's start this fucking interview!"

By now the atmosphere is as relaxed as you can get in a motel room soaked with beer and punx and TV, we like them a lot and it strikes us as funny. Half the interview or whatever is done and Cheetah still thinks he's warming up! Can't wait 'til they become big and Time magazine tries to do a feature on the band. These guys (these two anyway) wouldn't know how to spell poseur (poser?) if their lives depended on it. And that's one on a lot of us! (Don't look around!)

My brain's starting to drift. I feel good here. "There are punks in Milwaukee . . ." but the rest of the sentence disappears (the tape recorder has had a few beers dropped on it).

Sometime later: talking about the early days (Johnny and Cheetah claim to have been together for seven years, when Johnny was "just a skinny little turd in 4th grade" and they played Time Machine and stuff). Then for mysterious reasons we're going on about cowboys (they like them) and "big tall Texans, twice our size." "They don't bullshit," says Johnny. "All you gotta do is drink whiskey with them."

Knock at the door. It's Jimmy Zero and some photographer. Hello, hello, and they're gone. I don't think he ***really*** believes we're doing an interview. ("Hi, we're from SLUSH . . . sorry, ***LUSH,*** I mean . . .") Then Johnny also disappears, and it's us with Cheetah, "shooting the shit" (Cheetah's very own words).

"I'm sick of all this glamour in rock 'n' roll" (Cheetah). "We're only human beings [by now please don't even try to keep the thread, it's raw stuff, slices of life, out of context quotes, your average drunken yakking, we'll worry about our professionalism when we get more subscriptions!], we're only human beings. Not even that. We're drunken human beings. I'm getting so sick of that elyte . . . elite whatever it is shit" (nods of agreement from us).

We stare at the TV. Cheetah takes a piss. (Sounds of Cheetah pissing.) Cheetah (back): "Give me a Camel" (the fucker is smoking me dry!) . . .

" 'Anarchy in the U.K.' is the first single in a long time that got me off my feet. Like when I first heard 'Raw Power' I ran around the room throwing things. Used to be ***the*** biggest Stooges freak in Cleveland, Ohio."

Knock at the door. "If it's not female, go away," shouts Cheetah, but he opens anyway. It's not female and it's pointing a toy gun attached to a key chain. "Wanna see my gun now, Cheetah?" Cheetah nods and starts introductions. The gun does not go off. Everybody cracks up (the guy is really dismayed by his mechanical failure. Who is he anyway??) but finally—bang—it works. "Loudest key chain I've ever heard," says someone. Exit the stranger.

Cheetah picks up the interrupted monologue somewhere at random: " . . . in that Funhouse album, he (Iggy) wrote those lyrics which I used to listen to in pretty much the same condition I'm in now. Iggy put my life into words then. I couldn't have done it. Now the Dead Boys put Stevie into words . . ."

Who writes the songs, Cheetah? "Stevie writes most of the lyrics, and now Jimmy, on the newer stuff. We all write the music."

We talk about the album, which took four days to complete, and future singles ("good question," says Cheetah, but he does not announce any forthcoming releases). Also of the Old Waldorf in S.F. ("it was a mistake playing there" and of the Mabuhays). Let's have some beer (by now the wall to wall rug is literally soaked, squish squish when you walk on it).

We have some beer. Cheetah bursts out: "The Dead Boys! Big fucking deal! All this billing shit . . ." We realize Cheetah hasn't come to terms with the world of rock and business yet, and feel even closer to him.

How's New York treating you? Nicely, says Cheetah. "New York accepted us when nobody else would." But now they get shit for not being originally from New York, which bothers him. "They say we were not economically deprived when we started." Yet he likes it there. And "you can do anything there and not get busted for it," which is definite day to day realism.

Speaking of realism, here's a good one. One of us asked him why he kept drinking his beer out of a glass. " 'Cause you get drunk quicker. Got to do with the air, the hydraulics . . . it's all scientific." "And we thought you were just being a gentleman." "Oh no no no," says Cheetah, worried we got him wrong.

Over the last beer (tape almost over too) we chat about high school. He quit two months before graduation, shortly after "getting a girl knocked up, which is heavy," and when he suddenly realized (bless those teenage realizations) that he "didn't want to work in a factory, didn't want to own a house, just wanted to play, you know."

We all sit silent, each one remembering or trying to remember when it was that ***we*** decided to take a short cut on the long arduous road to nowhere. Tape running out, one last inoffensive question to package it all. Someone asks, "Are you happy now?" "Not really," says Cheetah.

Photo: Samiof

LIVE

Photo: Michael Yampolsky

THE MASQUE REOPENS (DOES IT EVER!!!) by the usual gang of red-eyed, hoarse-voiced, always tipsy "reporters"
(Some chapters are missing, not because those evenings were not worth it, but because we were either too tired to go or too drunk to remember. How's that for honesty?)

Chapter One: Black and Blue, Controllers, Zeros and Dils

Almost empty room. Black and Blue doing heavy metal to no one. People drifting around looking for something. In and out of the alley where the heavies stand about in studied nonchalance. The Masque's advertising campaigns being a bit more than limited, I'm surprised there is anyone at all. Yet people do come to the war zone, and most more than just out of curiosity. You see, it's the only place in town where ***they*** leave you alone. No one to tell you where to stand and where not to sit, you're good friends with the guy who takes your money at the door, and no one is making sure you don't wreck the joint 'cause there's nothing to wreck.

After a long wait came the Controllers. Odd looking assortment of misfits. Great strong music. There are two guys with long blond hair but nobody gets snotty 'bout it 'cause theylet you know real fast they know their punk stuff as good as any bullethead around, there's a great singer and guitar player who stands on the side and seems to be in charge and there's this girl that dresses like a valley go-go dancer on her day off and who does mean things to her drums, but her legs kept distracting me. Good audience reaction although it's still half-empty.

Later, the Zeros. Better than last time, as usual (they should stop improving for a while. I mean, it's depressing!). Javier, Hector, Robert and Baba, the masters of mean teen music. A few more people by then. Some pogo, some try to. Some are taking chances with their life, bumping into spectators like that. Some have just been warned. More waiting, posing and giggling, then the Dils, complete with new amp and new drummer (new for most of us anyway—not everyone can afford these little weekends up north). Dils very loud with Chip's vocals lost in the chaos, new drummer famed Rand McNally sweating puddles on the stage and keeping a ferocious impeccable beat (joining the Dils is like joining the Marines—you gonna suffer a lot in the beginning, the easy life is over), the P.A. is threatening to quit under the pressure, it is dark and smokey, audience abusing itself here and there. It looked like the end of the world. Fast encore, the Masque then slowly drains itself. Back to the working week.

Chapter Two: Models Citizens, Spastics, Dickies and Deadbeats

By now this sleazy little alley off Cherokee starting to feel like home (this corner here is where so and so threw up last week, this porch is where . . . and so on) which goes to show how low you can get because of this new music thing! Just had a few slugs of medicine with my pals before entering the sacred subterranean chambers (even them scroungy no-respect-for-the-nothing bunch would not bother to sneak anything in—last thing we need is to lose the Masque because of someone's selfish insistence upon being shit-faced every second of the weekend, and anyrate they couldn't care less if you show up at the door on two unsteady feet) and I feel good and rosy. Always exciting to wait for two new bands upon which there's been hardly any reports.

The first one has already started. Must be kind of a drag being the first band at the Masque, there is no time to wait for a sizable crowd (too many bands in too short a time) and the crowd in question is known to trickle in for hours, so I guess the openers just treat it like one more rehearsal, which is probably okay if you didn't expect this first gig to send you to the top of the alternative charts in a flash. Which would not happen to the Model Citizens in any case. They play rock 'n' roll of sorts (even that became questionable towards the end) that relies on very old standards (no, older than that, almost '50s), they look like seedy bank clerks and they move about like little kids imitating a rock group to amuse the family. At the end they became simply boring. Emcee of the evening, screamer Gear, offered to bring them back for an encore, "but make it brief!" Though nobody really felt like a few more minutes of silly solos.

Spastics were next. Spastics look like nice kids from nice families (nothing wrong with that) who decided that punk thing was the perfect vehicle for their imitative brand of rock 'n' roll. So they decked themselves out in every "outrageous" garment and garbage bit their little imaginations could come up with, stuffed countless "offensive" words in their lyrics, stood a long time in front of the mirror and decided they were ready to take over and knock 'em punx dead. Tilt. Back to the drawing board. It was ridiculous, and the audience (always more perceptive than some may think—remember that, all of you out there dreaming of making the Weirdos look like old farts) would have none of it. They sounded and looked like fakes and got treated as such.

Lead I'm-the-old-Iggy singer pranced and squirted the crowd with a hollow dildo (outrageous) and screamed grammar school naughty words (daring) and the rest of the clowns puffed thru various harmless heavy metal riffs. Crowd told them to play faster, crowd turned its back. They would not cut out the crap, so things got somewhat hairy. A girl tried to put out her cigarette on lead singer, singer I'm-still-the-old-Iggy was grabbed and only reluctantly thrown back on stage (not before half of his oh-so-punk rags were disposed of), rude words were exchanged, and the whole combo was hosed off stage by impatient watchers who got hold of a fire extinguisher.

Moral: Don't underestimate your audience. They can see thru your poses, and they can be cruel about it. They were listening to this stuff when you were still going gaga over Ted Nugent. As they left the battlefield, drummer shouted "I hate punks" into the mike. Why the fuck did you all want to come on as such, uh? P.A. segued into "You're just a wimp" by the Os (cute) and there were suddenly four vacant seats on the bandwagon.

The Dickies was next on the list to martyrdom. By now there was an almost nasty atmosphere in the caves, like a Roman circus game who's-the-next-victim-tonight feel. Well, the Dickies came and within five minutes there was no doubt left: this was another league altogether. I don't know where they've been hiding but I sure know we're gonna see lots more of them before this decade is just another blurry memory in our old wrinkled brains.

Here was the sound everyone (at the Masque anyway) craves for, tight hard fast songs that hit you below the belt after three seconds and have you bopping uncontrollably for two minutes. Then the song ends, another starts and here you go again.

They're all excellent players and the singer looks like absolutely no one else in the market, and sings with an intensity and passion rarely seen. The guy just knocked me out, and when I managed to take my eyes off his wiry jerking person I noticed everyone in the room felt the same. Pogoing and more generally rolling around and hitting the walls repeatedly was at a peak, ladies were offering their tits to this new demon only to be ignored or shoved off stage, the monitors were constantly knocked off but immediately straightened up by thoughtful dancers, everything was toppling and rocking and the joint was jumping. There was even a killer version of "Eve of Destruction," which I always believed was one of the old songs that was dying for a new treatment. And a new treatment is what it got. I think the encore was a Simon and Garfunkel number (done a la Dickies, of course) but I couldn't swear it. I was exhausted. Guess the band was too. So far this ***has*** to be the new band of the month. Go seek them out.

Photo: Michael Yampolsky

Deadbeats (ex-Whores) were last on this long eclectic bill. If you've seen them in their past incarnation you have a slight idea of what these loonies can and can't do. They can play some music, they can come up with that off the wall image, they ***can't*** decide where the fuck they're going and they ***can't*** for the life of them keep their set tight and interesting throughout. It started good, with a nice fast modern (if slightly schoolbook surrealistic) approach and ever so slowly came apart at the seams, with people drifting out before the end and excitement dropping below average. Just too too, if you know what I mean. Nice try, better than last time. May be, eventually. And it was back to the working week.

Chapter Four: The Cars, Shock, The Alleycats, The Eyes

The first band's usually in a rut at the Masque and the Cars proved to be no exception. The place was nearly empty except for the filming crews who appear to be threatening this hot spot. Who needs a movie? I remember every detail the next morning. I remember the Cars had a few hotsy totsy rhythms, mixed review vocals, and a well-acted presentation. Actually they were not bad at all even if the vaguely female bass player sucked in her cheeks harder than she played her bass. The guitar singing guy forced things a bit exhorting the audience to "jump up and down, it feels better." Much like Lardo Copo and his fire hazard fetish. The chick (excuse me, woman) singer hit her cues with much ado, never broke character, stifled her smile during applause. For encore time, Mr. Fuzzhead Guitar brought an accordion on set. Only thing missing was the monkey with his spare change cup but nobody noticed because Geza the deadbeat filled in. Afterwards the mainman was reluctant to reveal his age.

Next was Shock, the Masque token blah of the evening. I wouldn't care if they were 15 they should be retired. They've so called improved by tacking on countless heaps of tried and true pure punk paraphernalia. But they forgot to take the earth shoes off one of them and cut his shag. They do a rock star imitation, the singer modeled down the Iggy as disaster area line. I walked out and tried not to burp.

First the emcee was verbally shoved off then the Alleycats aroused the evening's first spurts of certifiably jubilant behavior. They did start the loco motion rolling. I couldn't tell you if it was punk but that scrawny guy plays too fast to be rock and roll of the expired sort. They do hyped up covers and multi-notch originals, trading off vocals he to she and back again. Anyone can dance most any dance you can name. They do it with nothing tacked on, not to mention sex appeal. They attracted much verve and received an encore or two for their efforts.

Next the Eyes adorned the stage with much calamity, he stumbling about and she straddling her instrument. Blippity blippity blam blam blap. I bet they was maybe in a lot of school plays and have considered teaching as an alternative lifestyle. The drummer seems different and is partially why I refuse to scratch the Eyes out of my list. Another factor is if they were in those school plays they enjoyed it and expended energy and effort. Actual sweat and bones, they enjoy themselves. They might have used a visual aid for special effect but if so I forgot.

Chapter Five: Halloween at the Masque

Short chapter. Many advertised bands did not play. Many bands acting too big for their shoes. Kipper Kids had a rumble outside with parking lot attendants. Kicks in the balls, punches, aggro time. Kipper Kids deciding they had enough action for the night. Not many people in the basement. Hard to tell if it is because two other clubs are also having a Halloween "punk-out" or because it's as much fun (and a bit scarier) roaming Hollywood Blvd. watching the legalised insanity and the paddy wagons swallowing whatever steps out of line.

Three bands did play that night. The Controllers, the Skulls and the Skulls. No, I'm not repeating myself. The Skulls have split up (split open?) with Sten Gun forming a new line-up with himself on drums and Danny keeping the old outfit and adding mysterious Margaret (that night a ghoul from the grave) on vocals. Both bands played well and fast, Danny's band (which will eventually go by another name) is more musically oriented and does solos; Sten's band concentrates on the rhythm and the speed. Margaret seemed a bit terrified with the whole ordeal although she had no reason to be: considering she had only been singing for four days, she was incredible.

By now (three weeks later) she must be amazing.

And the Controllers did another fine set. We will come back to them in next issue. One of the no-bullshit bands around right now. Not one of the most packed nights at the Masque. Good vintage (what??). It was already Tuesday morning, a few hours away from the working week.

Chapter Seven: Ripper, Model Citizens, Deadbeats, X

So this week the Masque fired their congenial host and imported a pair of doorkeeps from somewhere I'd vacate. These two new yokels collected the cash with a smirk, making out like bandits on bankrupt celebrities. At the end, an innocent latecomer, arriving in time for a dispersing crowd, requested at least a partial refund: "But man, this money supports the scene." Hari Krishna to you too. They tried to make Exene pay even and she played that night. I couldn't believe. I stood there getting hemorrhoids until I missed Ripper.

I went in the bathroom and threw up until the Model Citizens. From the bathroom they sounded like something I tolerated a long time ago. I flushed away my nausea and walked out into the present. There was the Model Citizens. They didn't look all the same like last time, at least they didn't all wear the same clothes. Two or three harmonize regularly, their music drifts between directions. Looks like they haven't quite caught on to the stream of things yet although they have made leaps and bounds in the progress dept. Hopefully they won't over-jump the point by next time.

Next came the Deadbeats, who I'm certain never heard the point of no return passing. Definitely avant, they could be the real Devo. Brief periods of noisy as in jazz sometimes with a poindexter squawking on a horn. They sport Ziggy suits and the singer does 28 costume changes. They want to confuse and I do wonder why they be that way. They were inhuman so I stared and gawked. At one point they shoved their way to the front and demanded their own encore.

X came on and demanded attention. Captivating horrorshow, frugging down to the cordova milk bar. Only X is not a scientific future where every other word is over your head. I'd like to have Exene singing all the time and I'd like to have John Doe singing all the time too. Bring the band along too, fuck hell, we'll have a party. Exene dances every kind of hit dance and the band does 'em all too. They got the guitar player up there looking like he knows where he's at. The drummer wore his glasses because he couldn't believe the rest of the show. Response from the front was unanimous, X is a good way to go. And . . . working week . . . working week . . . working week . . .

Photo: Michael Yampolsky

JOHNNY COUGAR and THE JAM at the Whisky

Never heard of this Johnny Cougar dude before so you can't say I'm prejudiced or nothing. Just seemed like a pretty likable egomaniac doing silly flashy rock and flopping all the way. And the audience wasn't even your hardcore bunch that will snicker at just about everybody but the chosen few. Just your average record company comps-professional photographers and the rest of the uesless nighttime Hollywood bunch. But when the Jam came on I knew within ten seconds this was going to be a hell of a show. They looked fucking great in black suits and ties and white shirts, kids putting everything they've got into the only thing they know how to do and then some extra stuff that nobody is supposed to bother with, that is an insane belief and passion in their show.

I suddenly realized what the whole fuss was about with the Jam in England: it is absolutely impossible to label or categorize them. Punk, new wave, '60s stuff, who cares! There is a definite '60s feeling as far as looks and melodies are concerned, but the energy and the message of the songs have very little to do with "love me do" or "Happy Jack." It is urban music which is totally rooted in the late '70s, it is unpretentious, fun and relevant. But enough abstract talk.

The Jam are visually one of the most exciting live bands I've seen in quite a while. Paul and Bruce (guitars and vocals) are so much into their songs you can't help but envy them. They trade vocals, smash their power chords into their guitars and bounce about like crazed pinballs from electric mushroom to electric mushroom, they are rock 'n' roll personified, they are what we want to see every weekend night. And drummer Rick Butler just sits there, mister cool, thumping on his kit with absolutely no feelings or strain showing, the pop machine, the beat. They did all of their songs off the album plus the singles stuff ("Modern World," "Carnaby Street") and everyone of them was great. No bullshit, no flash, no watch-us-now-we're-cool shit, just tight tune after tight tune, and it was like that hypothetical rock 'n' roll show that I somehow never managed to catch. Even the bloated-in-the-middle audience was pogoing and shouting for more. I just hope the Jam does not become too big too fast. I'd hate to see them next in a big sterile hall with overweight ex-surfer security guards keeping everyone in their seats and out of the aisles.

Unfortunately, this is most likely what ***is*** going to happen. A band of their stature is bound to bring in the money, and . . . the sad parts. Unless by that time we have become smart enough to make sure rock 'n' roll does not necessarily mean nightmare time in your local concrete police-ridden auditorium. This music deserves better treatment. "Sounds from the street sound so sweet, sound from the city sound so pretty, young bands playing, young kids digging, and I dig them." ("Sounds from the street"—The Jam)

MUMPS and DEAD BOYS at the Starwood

Da duh daed boys fall down go boom get hurt. Show everybody. Want ta see me make you sick real good?

"Cheetah Chrome on orange hair." Stiv Bators on the floor and rising. He fingers his fly from the inside out. He's got a girl on the end of his dick. He rips her dress off. The photographers go popping.

They all drip all over the place. Throw 'em a knuckle sandwich they eat it right up. Then they'll throw it up in your face.

There were photographers everywhere, it was like war on the news, deadboys kicked out the photographers. A lot of people got kicked out in the process and I bet they got beat up even more than usual. Stiv whatever-his-name, is a nasty little pill. Sometimes he's funny and sometimes he's mean as hell. There's beer all over the place, and spit.

They stick out their tongues and make faces. They had ZZ Top for roadies. They had fights with each other.

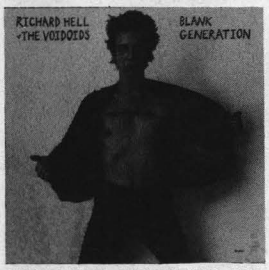
They played good enough at least. They never stopped hardly except to be taken to the hospital or have personal problems. By the time you'd left you'd completely forgotten about the Mumps.

CRIME and THE DILS at the Whisky

Plenty of crimes are committed on Sunset Strip. Latest one was on stage at the Whisky. Composition of a Revell San Francisco punk band kit: parts include: drums, lifelike person to sit behind them, two guitar players, lifelike on sturdy ***molded*** bases, one lefthanded bass player with sturdy molded facial features, all resplendent in San Francisco police uniforms and simulation toupee hairstyles, one tape of melted jello-brain San Francisco damage punk muzak. These cops played to a guest-list house and will probably buy Ramones albums after they go sour.

For some strange reason the Dils were there (Dils playing with uniformed cops?) and for no strange reason they were excellent.

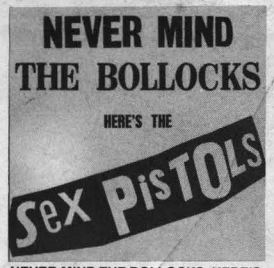
Albums



RICHARD HELL AND THE VOID OIDS
"BLANK GENERATION"
Sire Records

Little Dickey Jewel is a trend-setting scene maker. He wears real boss apparel and takes a punked-out suave city picture. He's one of those advance guard people who's sure he knows that he doesn't know and if he did know it wouldn't make any difference anyhow. I like a lot of songs but I don't need another I'll-tell-you-kids-like-it-is poet from New York New York where with increasing obviousness they don't know like what it is at all. My favorite song is a cover of John Fogerty. This Dick's got a good pose but I can't forget, everytime I listen, he knows it's a futile effort. Nothing's worth nothing unless it's worth cash. I wish he'd have stuck with the Heartbreakers, Johnny Thunders could maybe do something with him.

B. Macko



NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS, HERE'S THE SEX PISTOLS
Virgin Import or Warner Brothers

Do they mean never mind all the shit you've heard about this group, the hype, the filthy reports and the hateful innuendos, here's the ***music,*** here's the sound they're all dying from, here's the stuff they can't take? Probably. Unless they simply mean never mind fancy covers and pics, here's the package, no frills, no effort, listen to it or get fucked. Here's the Sex Pistols.

The English release that first came out is missing one song, "Submission," apparently added on after an initial run of a few thousand copies. Only heard "Submission" once so I can't really say anything about it. The rest is the same, and that I listened to already so many times I don't even need the fucking album anymore. Just a little memory click and it's all there in its unbelievable splendor. This is such a mother of an album I could drool just trying to convey its multi-faceted beauty to you.

Four of the songs everyone already knows by heart. Yet they are in no way the highlights of the LP, the others may actually be better in every way. They are "Seventeen," "Bodies, "New York," "EMI," "Liar," "No feelings" and "Problems." Every one of those unheard before tunes is so tight, so packed with obsessed energy, so unbelievably raw and essential in its sound that it will either make you revise your musical standards faster than anything you've heard in the past ten years or send you shivering in a corner with the sudden fear of tomorrow. Any other reaction will only be a simple and pathetic defense mechanism devised by your own chickenshit self to protect you from the truth. For this is the sound punk rock has been promising us, this is what has been hinted at, flirted with and finally dodged by the past few chaotic months of musical experimentation. From the righteous outrage of "Liar" to the sarcastic egocentric strutting of "No feelings," from the vicious psychological warfare of "Seventeen" to the anti brotherhood-sympathy manifesto of "Problems," Rotten and his gang attack every one of our soft spots, every little nook and cranny where somewhere we have kept a few comfortable notions and illusions of good life and easy goings. Nothing is spared, from girl friend to big corporation. Especially not even oneself. This is the most lucid vision rock music has given us in a long time, and it will generate a lot of hate and resentment because of it.

The music is scary in its precision and power, with the drums and guitars burning their way through your head as napalm through the jungle but it is Rotten's voice and stance that make any comparison useless. The shady little character has to be the most mesmerizing visionary ever produced by the underworld of rock 'n' roll, an unholy prophet of instant unavoidable nihilism, the common voice of everyone's darker side. It's not often one can ***taste*** honesty seeping through one's latest album, and it's not often one can feel grateful for such a load of so-called nasty immature and self-destructive emotions.

Even if the Pistols were to disappear tomorrow the music world would never be the same. It may take a while for the scars to show but they are permanent. One funny little group's first album and suddenly there must be more than 10 to 20 acknowledged professional outfits marked for oblivion. Relevance is an elusive thing, as the ones in high places are about to learn. They are all liars, liars, liars.

Kickboy

TALKING HEADS
"77"
Sire Records

The first song is a studiously disguised "Come And Get Your Love" by Redbone. The rest gets much better. The flip side of their hit song is nicely remade. They dropped most of the horns and added a Modern Lover. Some of this is very catchy in a lighthearted melancholic way. Once I heard it when I was very drunk and alone. I peed my pants and wished I could wring out my underwear so everyone who wasn't there would mistake the urine for bona fide tears.

I taped some of these songs on my wall. "I wanna talk, talk as much as I want, I wanta give the problem to you." I haven't admitted it often lately but I have periods of saccharinity when pop is my favorite music. At those artificially sweetened moments I play this album because it's arty pop and I can feel superior because I listen to arty pop and not just crafty pop.

And you can dance to it without being a complete maniac or total moron. It's got beats, melodies, counter melodies, all those things I know nothing about but can act as if I appreciate. Well, Talking Heads, namely that guy who plays guitar and does all the pinching g-string vocals, well, that guy knows all about beats and melodies and contra posto, whatever, he knows all about everything.

But I know something he seems to have neglected. If they want ten top hits and all the money in the world then they need to take the arty out of the pop. Lyrical pretensions are something we all in the hit record buying public can live and gladly identify with. Musical pretensions, well, not everyone's been to a nifty school of design. But I listen to it. I want to better myself.

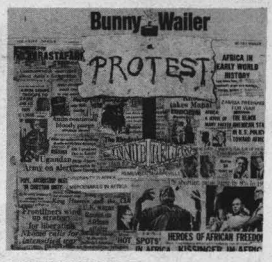
B.O. Macko

THE DEAD BOYS
"YOUNG, LOUD AND SNOTTY"
Sire

My neighbors hate this more than anything I latched onto since Mettle Machine. The Dead Boys are human, if they blanch your ears and turn your stomach, what did you expect? It's offensive, it could get you evicted. It's true and it don't make excuses, it don't skirt no subject. You talk about directness, these guys are one exposed appetite. No, they are not content. Yes, they will do your anger justice, providing you've been kicked around to get it. If you haven't, turn down the TV, you might hear something. That growling and the panting? You're getting fucked up the ass no matter who you are and these guys know it. They won't shut up just so you can catch what Fonz has to tell Ritchie. "I'm gonna get on out of here find me something to do."

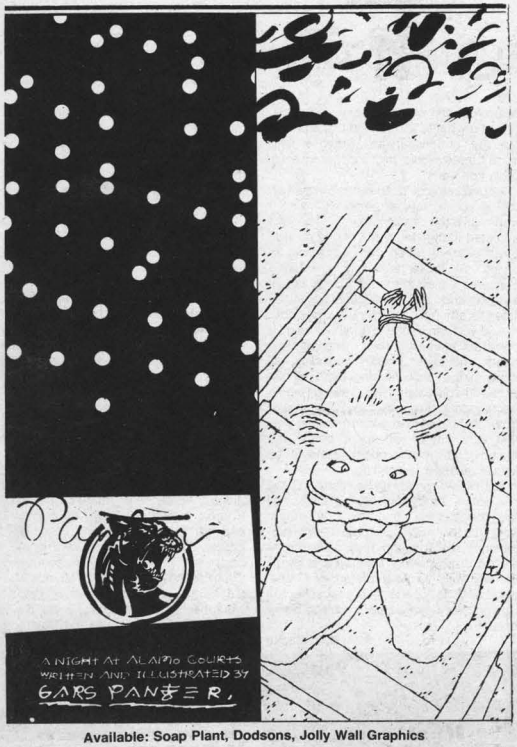
There really isn't so many things to do. It sounds like the Dead Boys listened to a lot of records and watched real close at concerts, things like Iggy and Alice when they had the raw power to be called sick. Don't get me wrong, these Cleveland reverts studied moves like a pimp but their rendition is anything but academic. At worst they wipe the Dictators off as no-content, at best they revive a tradition that has seldom been done justice. That tradition of high intensity, this-is-all-we-can-do guitar singing teams. Theme: multiple desperations. Method: pound it into the dirt, guitars screeching, there's the sirens where's the lights? That's right, it's rock and roll and I like it. You could say it proves I'm no punk new wave whatever purist and if you want to talk about it just "Don't touch me I'm a high tension wire." It's in the blood, it's in their blood, I wouldn't call it nostalgia, I'd call it what can a white boy do? Sure, they want to be rock stars but they don't pretend not to, maybe they just can't do nothing to hide the desire. Either way the odds are there and the chances aren't, still the Dead Boys bid like they're playing to win. I repeat: I don't care if they do get rich and shitty. Look out, babe, here they come.

Basho



BUNNY WAILER
"PROTEST"
Island Records

Ain't it a shame??!! All the right musi-



Available: Soap Plant, Dodsons, Jolly Wall Graphics

cians (Robby Shakespeare, Tosh, Earl Lindo, McCook and company), good record company, good (super good) past musical history (one of the driving forces of the legendary Wailing Wailers), and the fucking album is a tremendous bore.

First solo album by Bunny (O'Riley) Wailer, better known as Bunny Livingston, was okay, no breakthrough but it held together and even had some rather obsessive moments, in spite of the overproduction and lack of bite. This one is just more of the same and for some reason it just don't work at all. Jah or no Jah, it's closer to disco than to roots reggae. On and on it goes about injustice, cosmic directions and the plight of the black man, and although reggae is known to drag on a bit on the philosophy and the platitudes it is ***not*** known to rely on musical mush to drive its message across.

Bunny Wailer has chosen the easy way out of the reggae impasse. Do bland music, let's see if the white folks will like it. If they do, it's a drag for all the incredible reggae musicians who so far have not compromised their sound to any fashion. And the last thing I want to hear is a below average rendition of "Get up Stand up" (that song has been done enough times, wouldn't you say?) or a heavily didactic variation on "Johnny Too Bad" (the original being such a perfectly understated masterpiece) that goes on and on and on, driving whatever point across with the subtlety of a grammar school teacher. It gets to the point where the still wonderful rhythm disappears, and all that is left is the annoying lameness of the whole enterprise. Don't even think a pound of ganja would help. Hopefully, next month we'll talk about new LPs by Yabbu Yu, The Abyssinians and Trinity, and maybe have reason to praise Jah again.

Chatty Chatty Mouth

P.S. Also coming soon, a biased look at a few all-time classic albums of reggae persuasion, some obscure, some not, but all under very heavy manners.

THE BOYS
Nems Import

Some good tunes ("No money," "Tumble with me," "Box Number"), some not too, some plain horrible (Lennon and McCartney's "I don't care" is the worst cut on the album—***really*** bad). Nice hooks in places and the drumming and bass make it most of the time. Vocals nothing special throughout. Another six months before entering the studio might have made a hell of a difference. As it stands, it's just another fast rock album a la new stuff, alternatively catchy and thin, it won't destroy you and it won't make you mad. Decent party record.

BOOMTOWN RATS
Mercury Records (Import)

The Rats' debut needs a little work. Rather than rave over one cut ("Lookin' After Number One"—a gimme gimme punk anthem that's got bigger nuts than . . .), I've a better idea.

DIRECTIONS: Purchase album, gently remove from dust sleeve, lather well. Starting with Side One, carefully shave off the groove from the end of cut one (aforementioned cut) to the center of record. Now gently turn disc over and surgically remove cuts two and three (leaving one and four). Wash gently with lukewarm water and the job is completed. You now have an incredible debut E.P. (enjoy).

Modern Kinda Guy

Forty-Fives

X RAY SPEX
Virgin Import
(Oh Bondage, Up Yours / I am a Cliche)

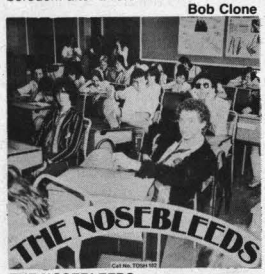
Virgin are really moving their tails for you. The greatest decision they ever made since signing the Love Revolvers was grabbing this bunch. Genius is the only word that comes to mind when talking about this single. "Some people say little girls should be seen but not heard, but I say Up bondage up yours . . ." is how Poly Styrene introduces her mind (and ear) shattering studio version of the already famous song off the live Roxy album (pant pant) and from there it is sheer pleasure, sure to turn off two-thirds of your friends after five seconds and to send the remaining third (the disturbed ones) into instant ecstasy. Everything is as it should be: Poly's voice is one long shout with absolutely no modulations, the pace is breathtaking, like a spring for the nearest exit, the lyrics are superb in some obscure hidden way, Ari's sax laces the mad little package with brief extremely simple gargled bursts (such a shame she left the band—I bet she would have become a very important figure), the drums are relentless, I'm telling you this song is a new step in the history (already??) of punk. Bound to become a classic. Too bad it's so short. No time to get into some serious twitching. On the other side you'll get treated to another little masterpiece, "I am a cliche." "Yama yama yama yama yama yama boredom boredom" is the message, there's less shouting but it's not quite singing either, just X Ray Spex blasting out their unique brand of '70s music, no wonder many folks think the new stuff is crazy. And no wonder some openly worry about what's to come next. I'd be scared too.

K.B.F.

THE DRONES
Valer Records Import
(Just Wanna Be Myself / Bone Idol)

Probably the best produced punk in some time (aside from the Pistols and the Clash). Too good, as in perfection obsession. Simple derivative riffs played by rote. The Drones aren't being themselves; no one can be this mechanical. Or can they? MJ Drone delivers his lyrics in a voice that sounds like Johnny Rotten if he decided to go mainstream: a smooth caricature, every line right on cue . . . more concerned about whether his voice synches up with the track than expressing any personal angst. Nothing new's said, 'cept maybe for "Bone Idol." Still trying to figure that one out. A wanker's battle hymn? Or something more subtle? Guitars are played nice and crazy (within their self-imposed limits). Okay to play if there's nothing else around. Just be ready for boredom after a listen or two.

Bob Clone



THE NOSEBLEEDS
Rabid Import
(Ain't Been To No Music School / Fascist Pigs)

Yes and I bet they let it scab up all down the side of their face. Their trouble is going to be the curse of jumping on the bandwagon. But side one has some authentically neat guitar and a suggestive refrain. "Finger licken finger licken finger lickén good." Side two is about "Fascist Pigs." Those poor fascist pigs have been getting mucho bad moutho lately and have probably changed their names again by now so what's the use? Still it doesn't hurt to hear it.

B. Macko

THE CLASH
CBS Import
(Complete Control / City of the Dead)

Frustration. I want to hear the lyrics so badly but this shitty stereo won't let me. Unless that's the way it was recorded. Bury the message and see if anybody is going to bother decipher . . . No, must be my stereo. No matter, it's fuckin' stupendous just the way it is, full of layers of beautiful noise, many directions that turn into one of the most haunting singles to come out lately. People in the know say it's about artistic control and their constant struggle with their record company, a kind of manifesto and declaration of intent, sounds dry and boring (probably would be with anyone else) but the end result is fantastic.

Starts simply with choppy guitars and very little drums, the singer joins in ("they say we're in complete control") and within a few seconds the tune builds up from mild breeze to serious hurricane. Guitars screeching, drums full blast, voices shouting. Takes your breath away. And when you think it's reached its peak it goes into high gear, everything at once, a maze of sound. There is a strange contrast between the highly melodic (almost pretty) background and the raw hoarse strength of the singing. It could be two or three very good songs. All put in one, it's strong stuff. Also a couple of unusual breaks with voices popping in and out at different levels, the lead carrying the basic line until the grand finale complete with ominous chanting, angry shouting, drums crashing. And it's over. No flourish, not one unnecessary bit.

The Clash remain the most original new band. Doing what no one else does, experimenting while others are regressing. And not losing one speck of relevance. Lee Perry co-produced this song, yet I can't detect much (except maybe for the breaks) of his usually more obvious influence. It is Clash throughout, as pure as it gets.

B-side is a very catchy tune that starts somehow like good Roxy Music (yea, they have a sax on this) and bounces along rather energetically. Less shattering than the other side but exciting. The drummer also does some mean stuff with his sticks, pushing the song on to the final frenzy. And some people don't like this single. (It's too this, it's too that . . .) Well, maybe it's just too good for them. Snobs!

Workingclass Face

WANTED:

Lead guitarist & bass player
& percussionist
by legendary male singer
into the Drunk Cops,
Clash, X-Ray Spex
Jamie Golden—(213) 466-7126

SOMETHING DREADFUL HAS BEEN HAPPENING AT...

DANGERHOUSE

Nobodies trying to be somebodies.

XTC
Virgin Import
(Science Fiction / She's so square / Dance band)

Another 12-inch single. It's fine at first, fast no-nonsense beat on the opening of "Science friction" (except there is someone torturing his guitar in the intro, kinda weird but not weird enough), the singer does some okay singing complete with on the beat gasping and then it just collapses: the chorus is just too cute and rock musical like (you'd swear it was the Rocky Horror show soundtrack), there are all this sudden stops and starts at pseudo breakneck speed to show you they're really in control, it's catchy but too much like a novelty. No meat, no direction. B-side has a great pop song ("She's so square") and a not-so-great one. The great one is a mixture of many things that appealed to you at one time or another with updated lyrics aimed at the new wave consciousness, the sound is super clean super cool but thoroughly enjoyable, the not-so-great one is a messy stew of Devo android jerky stands, avant rock pointless solos and show-offs, general lack of cohesiveness and basic appeal. Altogether not punk at all, new wave may be, arty and ambitions most likely. Anyway listen to it and make up your own fuckin' mind. Someone you know is bound to like it, and it might turn out to be someone you like.

Kickboy

SEX PISTOLS
Virgin Import
(Holidays in The Sun / Satellite)

They did it again. Great subject matter. Great sound. Great performance. Great drama. Great b-side. Great impact. So what if you think they're puppets like everybody else. Somebody's pulled the strings. Someone flipped the right switches. This record's been given the most fully exposed studio treatment of any Pistols single. It starts with a lovely simulated seashore getting drowned out by trooper boots tramping all over any wall of sound. It's a barb wire fence. Johnny's the rusty razor blades and Steve's guitar is the electricity.

The A-song's all charged up and strung out about something political I know nothing about. But I agree totally. "I don't understand this thing at all." He's right, he knows what he's talking about. The b-side appears to be another of Mr. Rot's heart-rending love songs. " . . . acting like a dirty lavatory . . . when you look me in the eye I just remember that I wanna die . . ."

This is the best record to come out since their other three. Some day they'll make a lousy single but from here it's easy to pretend they'll go on forever.

Basho

SEX PISTOLS
Virgin Import
(Holidays in the Sun / Satellite)

Maybe the only optimistic sign from the recorded literature from G.B. this month, "Holiday in the Sun" is a nice record for nice people. Touching story really, no rebuffing over teenage hormones here, just a smack of Sunday illustrated self-indulgence. Escape with the s. pistols within a sensible budget.

Actually, the record has the odor of brains-as-moldy-papier-mache, who else but the beloved Pistols could write "cheap holiday in other people's misery"? (With all the sand-stabbing and self-flailing the Pistols & their little buddies already laid down in the books notwithstanding, it just ain't been so accurate before.) None can accuse the S. Pistols for holding out on valuable information like some groups we could mention. People have the right to know these things! hooraw for the new Pistols 45.

Joe Climax

THE DAMNED
(Stiff Buy 19) Import
(Problem Child)

It's currently vogue to slag the bloody crap out of the Damned & far be it from SLASH to be non-vogue.

Too slow, more like the Dreaded '60s than ever. English punk is always played up to be vicious and uncompromising. On any level I can understand, this record is neither.

Stiff should withdraw this piece of shit immediately (they're so fond of withdrawing things anyway) and release "Stretcher Case Baby / Sick of Being Sick" instead 'cause (no way) if it ain't stiff it is not of no earthly use no how.

Johnny Assai

BLACK RANDY AND METROSQUAD
Dangerhouse
(Loner With A Boner / Sperm Bank Baby / Trouble At The Cup)

I listen to this harder than anything else. That's Black Randy talking. He's the guy shouting dirt with a big voice so you hear it to there. He's plenty loud and out of place but he's no big mouth. Not at all the kind of guy you call punk for nothing. Black Randy gets wise.

He ditched run of the mill by forever with his Metrosquad. There's a prodigy quirk on offbeat keyboards doubling on double jointed rhythm machine. The guitar's got some sort of violent tic coming on. Scratching. Waiting.

You could call side two ("Trouble At The Cup") an invocation, you could call it a threat or an invitation. I'm tempted to quote the whole story, someone else will make a three-record concept album. The song's story is about Hollywood Blvd. The cops come squeezing and the indigenous habitants respond in kind. "I got no use for drugs I never get high I want to shoot a cop I want to see him die." The double-jointed keyboard is sole conspirator on this side, undulations set at suspense-terror. Definitely surpasses your everyday sex and violence.

THE DESPERATE BICYCLES

Militant one-dimensional sound (intentionally minimal), generous helping of slogans, some good enough to be made into badges ("zeroxed music here at last," "it was easy it was cheap go and do it"), terrible singer sounding much like a politico in search of a cause and odd flat back-up vocals that remind one of the Incredible String Band's simplistic moments, ***yet*** I like this record a lot. I couldn't tell you why, except I'm glad it was made (not only because it gives confidence to the latent [hopefully forever] singer in me). I don't know how much of a following the Bicycles will get but I hope it does not stop them. Everything will probably get sorted out soon with most of the offbeat combos falling into oblivion and it will be sad. Right now the chaotic world of new single releases is the most exhilarating thing in the business. And the Bicycles are another intriguing part of that chaos.

K.B.F.

THE AVENGERS
Dangerhouse
(We're the ones / I believe in me / Car Crash)

San Francisco's only hope for the future. And the future is what it's all about. Unusual positive anthem (yep, another one) expressing total confidence in who's worth what and who's gonna be in charge soon. I'm talking about "We're the ones," an honest to goodness modern youth statement with the perfect vague-enough philosophy behind which countless outcasts and left-outs can rally. "We are not Jesus Christ, we are not fascist pigs, we are not communists, we're the ones." Penelope and the band make you believe in it so much you'll be hoping for a revolu-

Something ungodly has
been happening at....
DANGERHOUSE
Bring your lunch —
it's going to be an all-day affair.
AVENGERS
DANGERHOUSE
WE ARE THE ONE

tion, any kind of revolution, by the time it's over. The fucking music drives you to it.

"I believe in me" is good, with intriguing buried ramblings by Penelope, all of it sounding nasty and very aggressive and the chorus is fine until the repetition starts getting you.

But B-side is the gem, the (*the*) masterpiece that you won't be able to shake off. "Car crash" is a beautiful mournful (and that does not mean limp-wristed) tragic tune with Penelope's voice giving you goose bumps as she tells her tale of blood and death. It is both matter of fact and romantic, cynical and idealistic, the music is as powerful as the subject matter and the chorus, with Penelope and some extra voices moaning the unforgettable "ooh woo woo no no, nononono nononono no no" will fucking haunt you for many nights to come, supposing, that is, that you have any life left in you at all. Imagine "Leader of the Pack" done in a thoroughly modern new wave approach, not the style but the gut feeling of the song. Can you? ***Can you???***

Kickboy Face

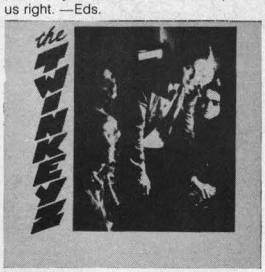
SQUEEZE
Deptford Fun City (Import)
(Cat On a Wall / Night Ride / Back Track) DFC 21

A John Cale Production . . .

Oh gawd, it's like more of the same old shit (very clean group, this), real "pleasant" music. (Actually, its sole function as a record is to remind us that John Cale needs to be put on the dole ***bad,*** I mean whatever famous government that has a few extra bucks to keep J.C. in smack & out of the studio would be doing the listening ear a big favor. A public service really.)

Johnny Assai

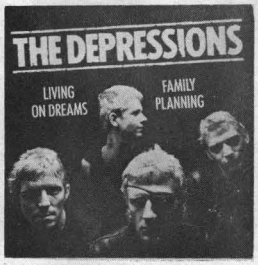
P.S. The editors disagree as far as keeping John Cale out of the studio but unfortunately this is not the record to prove us right. —Eds.



THE TWINKEYZ
Twirp Records
(Aliens In Our Midst / Little Joey)

Twinkeyz wins this month's tribute to Lou Reed award. Brainchild Donnie Jupiter has his phrasing, subject matter and all down pat to the last rubber hose. But it's not just "Sweet Jane" with different words, Donnie adds touches of his own and I don't mean tacked on. There's this sitar style everpresent guitar that I never thought I'd be able to stand again and it's good just like the Eclectic Electric noises they get out of the bass I think.

Side two is just "Rock and Roll" with different words but that guy got expelled from the band so I'm waiting for any future releases. From P.O. 28343, Sacto. Ca. 95828.

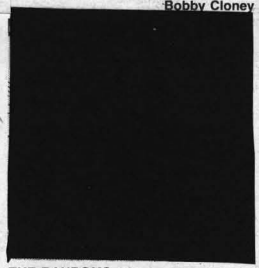


THE DEPRESSIONS
Barn Records Import
(Living on Dreams / Family Planning)

A mutated '60s invasion. Veritable Billy J. Kramer/Billy Fury types back from their show-biz graves in a scrapping mood with a bit of sociological concern thrown in for good measure. "Living on Dreams" would be interesting for that, if nothing else. And there's not much else: silly pretensions and dubious sincerity. In fact, the Depressions almost sound like they're feeling sorry for themselves. Come now, boys, no need to make excuses for being punk.

"Family Planning" is their rave-up about the breakdown of our favorite institution. Starts out with steamroller blasts, guitars catapulting off each other. I can just see them stumbling headlong through this in some ruined cellar, barely enough light to see their instruments. It loses a little steam near the end, and the singer strains to impress like he ***really*** knows how to sing . . . could be a lot worse. Not bad, but nothing to get excited about either.

Bobby Cloney



THE RANDOMS
Dangerhouse Records
(ABCD / Let's Get Rid of New York)

The only thing wrong with this 45 is that the Randoms didn't make an LP instead. The two songs on this record are so perfect it's scary. The Randoms came out of nowhere with music that's catchier and more "classic" than the Ramones, and more addicting than heroin.

"ABCD" is the antidote for a rotten party, a boring evening, or a fight with your parents. It's the perfect cure for a hangover, put it on first thing in the morning and you know the day's gonna be great. The guitar on "ABCD" is hypnotizing and the vocals are whiney, pseudo-falsetto, off-the-wall harmonies.

Flip over the Danger-disc and you've got "Let's Get Rid of New York"—a snotty, vicious venom tune to play when in a killing mood, or feel like bombing CBGB's. The lyrics are great: "King Kong knew what he was doin' / when he left the town in ruin . . ."

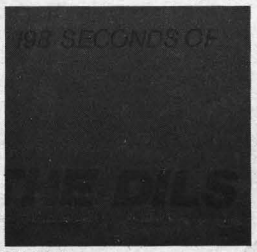
The Dangerhouse motto is, "Buy it and leave us alone," which will be impossible; once you play this record, you'll need a Randoms fix at least once daily.

Pleasant

GENERATION X
Chrysalis Import
(Your generation / Day by day)

Little guitar toggleswitch wah wah wah guitar. Somebody whiskbroomed all the dirt out of these plastic trenches, leaving one hot touch-hole recording. This cat can sing, this combo can play. Slap a good producer on the hibachi and it sizzles. Surely these are outtakes from "Pin-Ups"? The carrot-headed dabbler wished he'd written this. Sure '60s but just being the only record played more than three times this week besides "Complete Control" makes this group second only to a real touch-hole for entertainment under seven minutes.

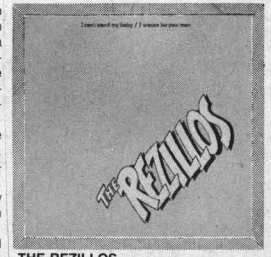
Spiggy Topes



THE DILS
Dangerhouse
(Class War / Mr. Big)

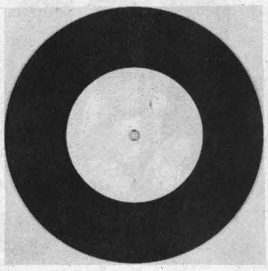
Side one makes this record worth it to buy (and then some). I like this song so much better than their other single that it's pitiful. The singer sounds as American as a Nashville teen. He probably didn't even try to sing English, just he never liked much American. So the undaunted non-corrupted Dils overcome their patriotic shamedness on this venture. They're not so bashful this time you can actually hear 'em and make out some musicality on the thing. Dil Chip plays some good sounding guitar throughout A and B. It's got a quick step beat that connects this time. The solos are clear and restrained from over-excessive indulgences. The song stands up to a lot of the English of a similar genre.

Side B is also very short. It's the (and then some) that makes this record worthwhile to buy.



THE REZILLOS
Sensible Import

Unlikely combination of punk soundtrack with spaced-out inflatable Barbie Doll voice chatting about wanting to play with toys and other strange habits. Disturbing effect although bland and innocuous at first. The total lifelessness of the singer makes one think of sophisticated robots built for their rich owners' secret pleasure-seeking experiments. The music is good and fast but also slightly remote and gratuitous. Bizarre little experiment by a band hardly ever mentioned in America.



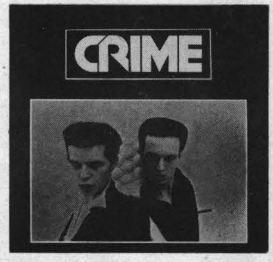
THE MUMPS
Bomp Records
(I like to be clean / Crocodile tears)

The Mumps are a really talented bunch who are, in the words of a band member, "Not ahead of our time, not behind our time, ***beside*** our time." Yeah . . . if you're sick of anarchy anthems and pinhead parables, and tired of faded early-'60s remakes, Mumps is the band for you.

Their songs have you boppin' along before the first chorus, and the lyrics (if you can decipher them) are funny, tongue-in-cheek arty. "I like to be clean" could easily be an AM-radio hit—not to say it's mediocre—au contraire! It's just got that pro top-ten sound.

"Crocodile tears" is the kind of song you could play over and over, and still get a big reptilian grin when you hear it. It's minor, but upbeat, sort of Russian. Lance Loud's singing is super, and there's that classic Mumps guitar and nice, loud bass and drums thumping. This record is really infectious, so I suggest you catch the Mumps as soon as possible—it's a rock 'n' roll disease.

Pleasant



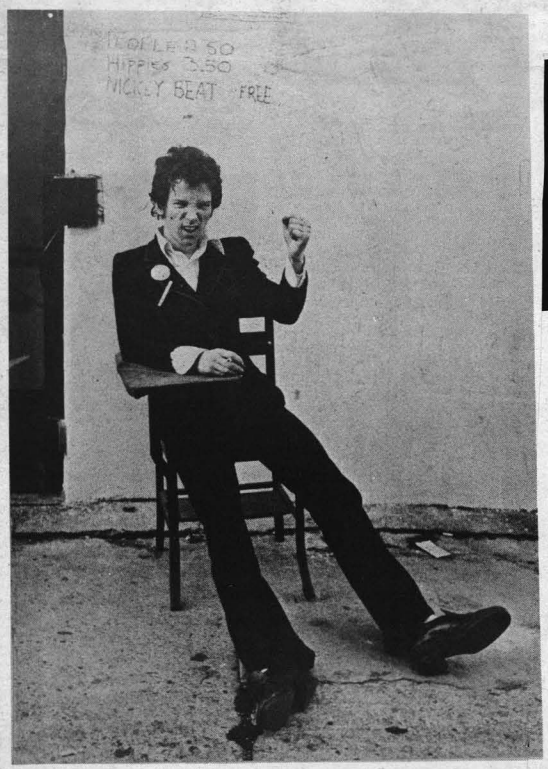
CRIME
Crime Music
(Frustration / Murder by Guitar)

Both are recorded better than the first record, and the improvement isn't always to their advantage. Things are more mechanical, not as much of that shock wave drone. All the same, "Frustration" 's still a dynamo, enveloping everything in adrenal whirlpools of black noise. Vocals are spat out in nervous nightmare shouts. You can see Frankie Fix's porous, corpse mouth gasping this stuff in palsied overamplification. "Murder by Guitar" does slow builds, sonic tinkertoys of a particularly slimy underworld. Johnny Strike screams while on the run from a self-made prison of no escape. The modern sleeve deserves mention, too, so feverishly lurid with their bad dream image.

Bog Clone

MASQUE

A CABARET OF THE MACABRE
(WITHOUT SIN)
AMEN



A SPECTACLE OF SIMULATED LONDON
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[illegible] OF CARBONATED
[illegible]D TERMINAL SWIMMING
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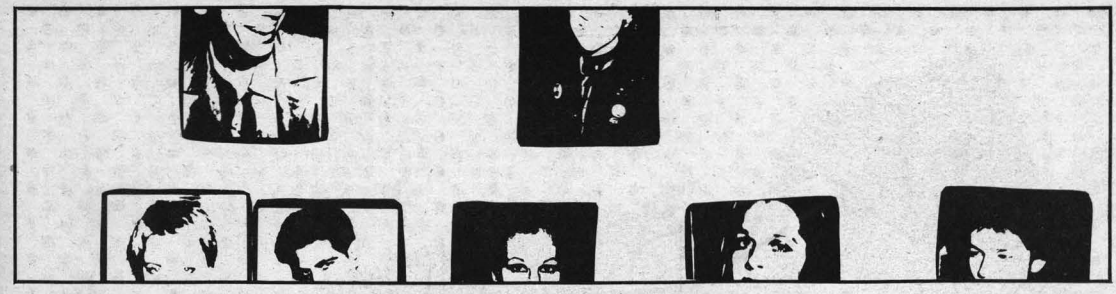

COVER: This month we couldn't decide who to single out, so instead we just stuck YOUR ugly mugs on it.....

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EDITORIAL

HOW MUCH LONGER?

. . .and even when punk/new wave is at times irrelevant, it is still more relevant than anything else going on because it is ***now,*** and that's about as relevant as you can get. I'd rather stay home and watch the Brady Bunch than go to parties devoid of punk rockers, everyone else is so boring, one foot in the grave, the other on the disco floor (same thing) . . .

So they are now moaning in the English music press about punk's lack of direction. Something like: "what's wrong with you people, you promised us and threatened us with total chaos and anarchy and now everyone's touring and recording? And what's more you've stopped sounding all alike. What kind of a movement is this??"

End of imaginary quote. Could it just be that punk and its various manifestations have become too vast (in England) for anyone to see it, grasp it all in one quick glance? For there is no way to put the Jam (progressively pop), the Rods (traditional blah rock), the Pistols (aggression terminal rock), Eater (traditional punk) and on and on in the same tidy bag, is there?

Phase one of the punk adventure (in England) is almost over. It could have been called "let's get some attention—let the shit hit the fan" period. And that was done. (Was it!) Phase two is "let's get in, kick the corpses out (leave a few token ones) and take over." And until someone comes up with a better idea, it's back to the old routine of concerts, recording sessions, chart-climbing, the whole capitalist consumer grab-bing bit, and let's keep our fingers crossed hoping it won't change us. Selling is ***not*** selling out. Well, it doesn't have to be. It's all up to you. Anarchy is not forgotten. It is seeping in. Nobody has been defanged, and when ***that*** happens we'll know it, we'll say it. Expose the fuckers!

But that's over there. Here, punk is hardly born. No one yet has seen a punk in Iowa (dozens of letters proving us wrong within a few days?) and even though New York has had something for a while, most of it (Television/Patti Smith) was more representative of the end of an era than the beginning of a new one. Some of it (Blondie, Talking Heads) is just stylized doo-dlings with very tenuous connections to the new music and what ***it stands for*** and one of it (Los Ramones) is simply timeless eternal art that needs no connection to anything or anyone.

But now the real ***new*** bands have only started rcording, as they have here on the West Coast. And, as opposed to Limeyland, the established record companies are still mainly watching. Hardly anyone in the flashy offices is picking up the phone frantically trying to stick their token punk band in their stable. While in England everybody's settling in their newly found security (a la show biz, of course), learning to cope with recording rooms, promoters and endless sound checks, their unfortunate American counterparts are still wracking their brains for that brilliant whatever that will get them noticed. We are a year or so behind England the the gap is widening every day. What that means is that most real American punk sounds (not revamped old metal stuff) is rawer, more primitive and often more incohenrent than its British (okay, Scottish, Irish) counterparts. (We're not saying that, given time, it will sound the same. On the contrary. It will eventually differentiate itself, happily forget about dole queue lyrics and will instead concentrate on the real American nightmare.) It has already started to find its own language. But it hasn't had the time to define itself, and it hasn't had the money and the clubs to grow. Soon there will be too many bands to be ignored any longer, which will, among other things, bring a greater variety to the sound and which will hopefully force the record execs to take the dive (as long as they give up on the outdated practice of 5 year-long contracts and other soul-killing demands).

In the meantime, there still is an enormous majority of English releases in our review pages, and a strong tendency in everyone to look at England for what to do next. Only thing is that there does not seem to be any kind of answer coming back. ***We just might have to figure it out ourselves, mightn't we???***

LOCAL SHIT

Germs held their own benefit at the Masque a while back. Everyone turned up and contributed, making sure one of our most famous bands wouldn't have to sleep on the street for non-payment of rent . . .

Pleasant's own 'zine "Lobotomy" ran into the dreaded censorship monster right with its first issue. Seems a certain Fowley (Kim) objected to certain sentences concerning his holy person and threatened to sue and other charming retaliations. All the copies were retrieved from various sales places, only to reappear a few days later with the controversial bits neatly razored out, making it a crystal clear living proof of what had happened. Should we suggest that all freedom-loving individuals go out and cut out Mr. F.'s name from all publications, articles, records and TV programs on which he is mentioned? And I thought any publicity was good publicity!

. . .Richard Hell did a second successful appearance in L.A., proving to be almost as elusive as his lyrics. I know that, being part of the blank generation, he can take it or leave it anytime. But does he have to leave it ***everytime?*** The Ramones also cancelled, but they're bound to play within a couple of weeks anyway so we can forgive them.

. . .Dangerhouse on the war path again with two planned releases: The Weirdos' "We've got the neutron bomb" (B-side "Solitary confinement") and first vinyl venture by the Alley-Cats (titles not chosen yet). Both records to be released by the end of January. More L.A. bands coming out of the closet: Black Randy, the Wildcats, F. Word, Arthur J. and the Goldcups, the Plugs, Blow Up, The Plastic Eaters, the Flesh Eaters. All recently performed at the Masque along with the more established outfits, most may be heard from again.

. . .Instant success for Delfina's new fanzine "Female Trouble," the first local one to exclusively deal with girl punks.

. . .First punk package to hit enemy territory: the Skulls, the Controllers and the Dickies played the Mabuhays Gardens. Someone was going to review these evenings for us but someone turned out to be almost as disorganized as us, missing the deadline by about a mile! But on all accounts the shows were a success. Wish we knew more.

. . .Dangerhouse (again) might do a benefit for KXLU at Loyola College . . . upcoming nice young guys from the De-Evolutionary Army, also known as Devo, signed to Warner, who might (or might not) be able to talk them into coming up with slightly more attractive single covers.

San Francisco's Nuns recently spent a week in L.A. playing the Whisky and the Masque (where they almost had to build an extension to the stage) a few times and even mingling with the locals. Rumors that one of SLASH's men on the scene tried to carry the mingling a bit too far (during the set) and was removed by a mean-looking roadie are founded . . .

SLASH's nth benefit was the most beneficial so far, with the Skulls playing way beyond anybody's expectations, the Weirdos racing thru one of their most streamlined sets ever and the Screamers making one of the most awaited come-backs of the year. Sincere thanks to the Dogs for the use of the P.A. and for their admirable patience and cooperation throughout the day (and the night). And the usual although you'll never know how much we mean it (maaaan) thanks to the bands for lending their talents.

And now a couple of ***really*** significant bits, just in case we get accused again or being shallow or superficial: Amber's party (in the valley) almost turned into the first big scale rumble on the scene as local hoods and vacant trouble makers tried to attack the partying punks, first with hosing down the premises, then by challenging anyone in sight to come in contact with their crowbars and bricks. Punks were not in the mood that night and were content to exchange pleasantries ("you ugly faggots go back to school") with the bloodthirsty future leaders of tomorrow. Everyone left as the obligatory helicopter came from above to add its bit of confusion.

And now the ***really really*** significant stuff: Germs and followers were evicted from the Berlin Brats' party on New Year's Eve for setting Fritos on fire and generally behaving like animals. How's that for significance??

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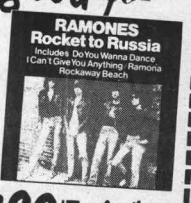

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Just thought you'd like to know where SLASH is available (who knows, maybe you'll move, or wanna tell a friend).

In Los Angeles: Tower on Sunset, The Soap Plant, Virginia's on Melrose, Poobah in Pasadena, Tiger Rose on Melrose, Zed in Long Beach, Bomp, Moby Disc in Van Nuys, Las Palmas News (next to the Gold Cup), Cahuenga News—actually, most news stands (if there's one near you that doesn't carry it, demand it!)—Aaron's records, Chattertons Books, Papa Bach, about 3 places on the Venice beachfront, Music Plus on Vine, Rhino Records, The Record Depot, Peaches on Hollywood, and starting this month, we're available at all Licorice Pizzas (thanks, Phil).

In San Francisco: Aquarius Records, Rather Ripped (in Berkeley), City Lights (sometimes), and various newsstands.

In San Diego: Monty Rockers Records and Scratchin The Surface (unless they've closed).

In New York: Manic Panic, New Morning Books (& all the places they distribute to), and Jan Rowton & all the places she gets 'em.

In Seattle: Distributed through Chatterbox Magazine (thanks, Neil).

In England: Compendium Bookstore, and Rough Trade.

In France: Sirenes Music in Paris, Lyon & Montpellier.

In Canada: CEAC (home of Crash N' Burn), Toronto.

In Japan: Goku Raku Cho in Harijuku.

Also SLASH is available at various locations around the country via Bomp industries. If you know of someplace that should but doesn't carry SLASH, tell them to contact us. Also, for you late bloomers, back issues (#1 thru 6) are still available for $1 each (postage included) to the address on page 3.

letters

Re wha pussies you are:

slash:
las mon h i wro e you assholes wha i hough was a genuinely in elligen and cordial le er . . . .
of course i wasn prin ed.
do you guys really hink *you* discovered Fuck, Cun , E c, e c.
Of course if ha s wha i akes o ge prin ed
I know a load of hem as well.
I also hink he wierdos arn really all ha weird.
good luck
signed
moon river
Ci y of indus ry
p.s.
sorry abou he 's on he ypewri er

What some people will do to get printed! This one broke his typewriter just to get that original touch! How weird how everyone wants the Weirdos to be weird. What's weird anyway?

(Hey moon rivers, have you noticed all the z's are missing in this reply?)

Babylon, 197?

Dear Mr. Face,

I have found that the more SLASH grows, the more the reviewing gets worse and worse, with more and more indecisiveness. Get rid of all the asinine beat-around-the-bush record reviews! What's wrong with taking a side or is taking a stand passe. I can hear you singing "I just came in, I can't decide," but please leave all the sociological hype cutesy word puzzles to the "mainstream" hippie papers.

Speaking of hippies, has Basho converted lately? Someone should tell him that he isn't writing for Rolling Slash! His reviewing has deteriorated to worthless wastes of words. And who the hell ever told Pleasant she could write is full of shit. Her mindless, recycled conglomerations called reviews are unoriginal attempts to be oh-so-punk. A sexist I'm not, just someone disgusted by shallow high society pseudos.

Finally, the review of the Dils current single would seem more appropriate for a pathetic disco record. "A quick step beat that connects this time"???? Fuck. The relevance and importance of this single overrides any other that has been produced in L.A. yet. How can all the punks rave about the Weirdos, the Dickies (The Kiss of punk) and the Germs (glitter rock chest-slasher meets country western twang) when the Dils and their stance is so much more ***alive.***

Still, I'm not looking for the wrath of Mr. Boy's vengeance, instead I want to see an underground phenomenon like SLASH get better and better instead of becoming an apathetic businessman's newsletter.

Death to Power Pop shit!

Hey you!

So we beat around the bush eh? So we are not single-mindedly dedicated to one band, one opinion, one outlook and that's wrong? It must be pretty cozy where you are: everything sucks but . . . (fill in your fave band, one only), no strain trying to understand what others are doing, I'm right they're wrong don't bother me I've made up my mind . . . Maybe you'd like every band in town to sound and think like the Dils, the sounds of one drummer and all that. Shit!

And our writing does not do much for you either, eh? Too bad we can't please everyone and live up to all you guys' high literary standards, we try but our obvious lack of a higher education just gets in the way. What Basho's writing has to do with sociology is a mystery to us, and nobody told Pleasant she could write. We're not at school here.

"An apathetic businessman's newsletter"??? Boy, that hurts! Touche!

In conclusion, accept our apologies for not taking the right stand on all the vital issues. It is true we have about 10 to 12 stands so far, and maybe it is high time to revise everything, select one attitude and ignore the rest. Then we'll change our name to PRAVDA and start hunting down dissenters.

Tovaritch Kickboy

P.S. I believe even the Dils are open to other bands. They know the old cliche, "together we stand . . ." has some truth in it, so why don't you?

Hiya,

SLASH is a bash. I eat it up. For L.A. punks I got words. You want to hear your music on the radio? ***Call*** the fuckers. Five times a day. Play the phone game. Here are the numbers for L.A. stations:

KROQ: 578-1067	KMET: 520-5638
KWST: 520-5978	KNAC: 437-5622
KHJ: 520-1977	K-100 (10-Q): 520-5100
KRLA: 520-5752	KIIS: 520-1027

Punks in other cities, get the numbers to your local stations and post them at your school, at the local music shop, at your local punk club, on every street corner where local punks hang out. The radio belongs to you. It plays your music so let's get our music played over the air waves. Give us punk. We want punk.

Sally Sue

P.S. All right. 10-Q plays punk!

Sally Sue,

We'd been meaning to do this for a while. Something should be done all right!

Kickboy,

Here are what lyrics I and my friends have figured out from 'Complete Control' (easily the best single in the past 100 years). ??? indicates I haven't figured that part out. It ***isn't*** "they said we're in complete control": "They said release Remote Control/but we didn't want it on the label / They said Fly to Rotterdam/The people laughed, the press went mad/ Oh oh oh someone's really smart/Oh oh oh, Complete Control, you just had to laugh/On the last tour, when ??? ???/open up the back tour ??????/At every hotel ???/Come for the party, get a great show/Oh oh oh have we done something wrong?/Oh oh oh complete control, even over this song? (guitar solo) . . . You're ***my*** guitar hero . . . They said we'd be artistically free/But that was just a bit of paper/They meant Well we'll make you lots of money/worry about it later/Oh oh oh ??????/Oh oh oh complete control, now we see your upper-hand/I don't trust you, why do you trust me?/ (unintelligible ramblings) You're dirty, you're filthy, you're not even alive/This is Joe Public speaking/What goes on with your money/What goes on in your mind/This is the punk rockers (rockers, rockers, rockers) ***Total control*** (background vocals), we're in control, that means you!!! (random shouts by Joe).

As you can see, Kickboy, this song is about the common consent between artist and corporation to use each other but how the corporation always goes beyond its territory. This song is not all that hard to figure out if you just ***listen*** (while sober).

Dear translator,

Well done! We need more dedicated people like you around here. I still think it is a mother to decipher, especially while jumping up and down. What are the Clash trying to do to us? Make us think and dance at the same time? We'll all be nervous wrecks real soon at this rate! Don't they know rock 'n' roll is mindless stuff for pimply morons?

Kick Face

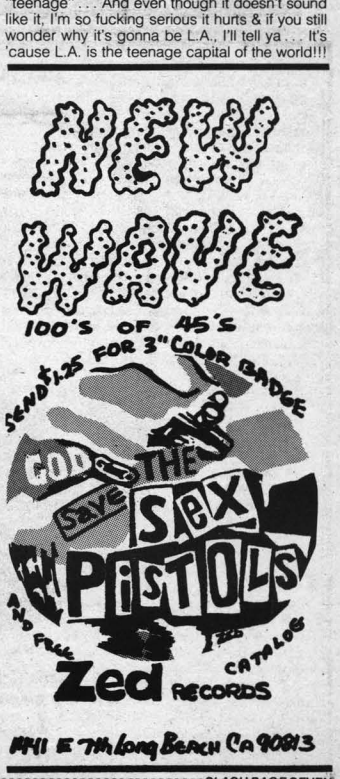
Dear people at SLASH, Hi,

I'm a 22-year-old prisoner doing time up here in Washington. I'm writing you cause I'd like to get a subscription to your paper, but due to my circumstances I'm unable to afford it. If you people are doing well enough to send me one I'd really appreciate it. Thanks.

In struggle,
Brian Kottse #247818

modern boy modern
y modern boy moder
rn boy modern boy
modern boy modern

1978 . . . And daddy there's only one place I wanna be, and that's right here!!! I'm talkin about this cultural wasteland: Los Angeles . . . 'Cause it's gonna be ***this*** town, ***this*** year, that shows the whole fucking world what new music is all about!!! I don't wanna hear about the scenes in London, N.Y., S.F. or any other hole, they're either too old, or boring, or burned out . . . And don't believe me, just ask anybody (and listen till they start intellectualising, this ain't anything to do with cocktail chatter) . . . It's just gonna happen, you can feel it, and if I'm forced to give a reason I'd simply state: ***teenage!!!*** (boy, this sucker's gone over the edge, in addition to being closer to 30 than 19. —Ed.) ? (fuck you, Ed., I know what I'm saying & I got more teenage than you got brains. —MoBo) . . . Where was I, oh yeah, teenage . . . I'm tempted to go on and on about the socio-politico-economico-cultural motivation behind punk, but you and I have heard it all (or read it) enough (and I mean enough!) . . . So why teenage? (I know a literal interpretation will immediately alienate about half the bands and fans). 'Cause "young" is too vague (especially in L.A., everybody "thinks young") and besides, teenage conveys the spirit of it all . . . I guess when I say teenage I mean too old for children's records but young enough not to be embarrassed by the word (sure, MoBo, fit yourself right in, the only thing you're embarrassed about is the size of your . . . —Ed.). (listen, Ed., if you don't get outta my column, I'm gonna remodel your face! —MoBo) . . . Oh shit, now I'm all screwed up . . . From the top (redundantly): Punk is gonna be bigger & better in L.A. than it has been (or is, or gonna be) anywhere else . . . It's gonna happen this year (1978) because of something to do with the word "teenage" . . . And even though it doesn't sound like it, I'm so fucking serious it hurts & if you still wonder why it's gonna be L.A., I'll tell ya . . . It's 'cause L.A. is the teenage capital of the world!!!



Warsaw Pakt recorded the fastest ever album —in the shops the day it was recorded—by playing all the tracks for each side in one take and recording directly onto the master disc. Will recording tape now become as uncool as safety pins?

Magazine (Howard DeVoto new combo) has officially signed with Virgin Records, now home for a few of the new ones.

999 will have their first album released sometime in January. Possible title: "Emergency."

The Pistols album may now be displayed in record stores across the country without local constables feeling obliged to show on which side they stand. Next Sex Pistols single is expected to be "Belsen is a gas."

British bred reggae bands (Cimarons, Steel Pulse, to name two) are playing at punk gigs with much success.

The Clash are (middle of December report —Ed.) in the middle of a very successful national tour.

Malcolm McLaren (well known shop owner) insists the group will not play N.Y. or L.A. during their upcoming U.S. tour. Johnny Rotten agrees.

A survey here by Harlequin Records (a large chain of record stores) stated that only 18% of record-buying youth thought that 1977's pop records were exciting. The majority, it seems, decided they were either terrible or boring. Looks like punk still has a long way to go in this green and peasant land.

(A local survey done here by the SLASH staff indicated that local youth thought only 18% of British youth were exciting. What a coincidence! —Ed.)

by Harry Slime's auntie

THE ALL TIME NEW WAVE JOURNALISM AWARD (until something better comes up) or "AND YOU AN DANCE TO IT . . ."

". . .The realm of ***art*** exists beyond that mask, in a kinetic well-spring never plumbed by the 'single vision and Newton's sleep." The syncretic vision of harmonic opposites, the multiplicity of causations; these manifold qualities must be captured, extricated from time for a paralytic moment, the artful balance . . ."

Know what this is about, don't you? No? Come on, isn't it obvious? This is an extract from a simple little article about the Devo film by a certain Steven Seid which appeared in the all English November edition of "I Wanna Be Your Dog." Don't believe me? Read on.

". . .even with the insinuation of entropic forces into their musical structure, something was absent. If the band was to navigate through a constellation that recognized elements then the fullest recognition of this multiplicity would involve the creation of the band's antipode, a sonorous doppelganger. The negative band would then form a complement of opposition. And Devo would be a complete aesthetic system embodying harmonic opposites."

And it gets better. Here's one last one for the road:

". . .No longer are they governed by the irresistible certitude of formal movement. Linearity is shattered by a centrifugal push outwards, away from the 'vital center.' The stultifying rigidity of filmic causation is devolved, mutated. Devo then becomes an illustrative tableau, a dramatization of the forces that govern, the awareness of the natural laws beyond 'Newton's sleep'."

Don't accuse me of taking anything out of context. The whole page is as crystal clear and down to earth as these extracts. Makes you feel like giving up altogether on writing about music and going back to digging ditches. I think Steven should start a fanzine of his own, and call it "Entropy" or "Linear Multiplicity." Or simply "Ph.D"? Can't wait to read about Johnny Moped's conrapuntal modalities.

Kickboy I've-been-to-school-but-I-guess-it-wasn't-a-good-school Face

The slash show at the masque..

Photo: Alain Saintaix

Skulls

Photo: Kerry Colonna

Screamers

Photo: Alain Saintaix

Weirdos

thanks everybody...

I WANT RODNEY BINGENHEIMER'S LET'S MAKE THE SCENE WITH THE PICTURE SLEEVE

"LET'S MAKE THE SCENE"

RODNEY BINGENHEIMER

His New Single...

On RAZOR RECORDS!

photo: Johnathan Postal

ROCKERS TIME, THEN AND NOW

As promised, here's a pathetically incomplete list of what I consider to be among some of the best reggae albums ever recorded. Of course it only covers a minute part of the field, and there was no attempt to represent all the aspects of the music. These ten just happen to be some of the ones that get constantly played around this place, whatever that means. And at least half of them can be easily found if you look for them, some even in bargain bins. The future certainly looks bleak for reggae in the States at present, not that it makes any difference as to the output of music in Jamaica and London. Future fad or not, here's some of the real stuff.

FROM THE ROOTS
The Maytals
Trojan records

Rather old recording, faster and more gospel-like than most of the music done now. Leslie Kong (who died in 1971) produced this, and the Maytals (Toots Hibbet, Gerry Mathias and Raleigh Gordon) cook thru 14 great songs, with an unknown backing band that is relentlessly pumping the beat. Toots' voice is amazing, not unlike Otis Redding at times, but more syncopated, rawer. The two remaining Maytals do their inimitable back up vocals with gusto and joy. The whole thing is lots of fun.

AFRICAN HERDSMAN
Bob Marley and the Wailers
Trojan records

Recorded before the successful first American Wailers release, "Catch a fire," this is the Wailers' sound just before their better known phase, and in no way does it lack the excitement of their more popular songs. The playing is fantastic, with the rhythm guitar lightly accentuating the beat, the bass bouncing somewhere in the back and the drums hardly there, just a trace, all so cool and subtle, hypnotic and with no beginning or end. Marley's voice is raw and husky, singing simple obscure repetitive phrases that cling to you for hours, suggesting or recalling you don't know what but are always about to find out. Haunting. There's even definite traces of spaghetti western soundtrack bits here and there, which combined with the reggae feel makes for very disturbing music. The album was done in collaboration with Lee Perry (most of the songs are his), but the sound of the Wailers is already all there, like an etching about to be made into an oil painting. Just let this album penetrate you and you'll get silly and lyrical too!

THIS IS AUGUSTUS PABLO
Augustus Pablo
Tropical records

Dub music. Dub is instrumental reggae, extremely popular in dances and Jamaican get-togethers. It is deceptively simple and catchy, providing you like to dance for hours. Stoned stuff. It is the beat and a few melodic lines weaving in and out, either in a straight manner or, as it has become fashionable, with lots of electronic gimmickry distorting it, stopping it at random moments or bouncing it around until you don't know what's going on. Dub is repetitive ***on purpose,*** it's another approach to music and its charms are not evident. This Augustus Pablo album is more the straightforward kind, with Pablo playing strange little lines on his melodica and the band backing him with an even, bouncy rhythm that hardly fluctuates from song to song. The tiny sound of the main instrument gives every tune a pleasant melanchonic feeling. Very soothing, addictive music. That particular style was then called "rebel rock music." One of the Barrett brothers (of Wailers fame) is on bass and rhythm guitar.

SCREAMING TARGET
Big Youth
Trojan records

One of the greatest "toasting" records. Big Youth (Manley Augustus Buchanan) growls, chants, raves, rants thru 12 songs that to this day haven't aged one bit. Big Youth is not a singer, he is a toaster, a (constantly) talking kind of D.J., using studio tracks of other songs, adding a real singer at key moments (Dennis Brown on some) and "riding the rhythm" with lyrics of his own (more or less). If this sounds strange and complicated to you, just wait 'til you hear it. There is nothing quite like it in recorded songs. Eerie. Since then the Youth has had ups and downs (the downs mainly when trying to become a legitimate crooner) but it does not matter. This album is enough to insure him a choice spot in whatever is your idea of a music hall of fame.

TRENCHTOWN MIX UP
The Gladiators
Virgin Records

Released last year as part of Virgin's massive entry in the reggae field, this is to my opinion the best of that batch (the Front Line Rockers advertising campaign). I had never heard anything by the Gladiators (a trio which plays guitars and sings and uses studio musicians for back up), but within a few seconds I was spellbound. Here were highly musical, highly catchy reggae tunes which were performed with none of the heaviness and rhetoric that lately seem to invade the field. In a year almost totally dominated by toasters and dub wizards this was like clean water after too many juices. And a year later this still holds true. The vocals are fantastic, the rhythm is perfect, the harmonies beautiful. Rave rave rave. I hope this does not remain the only thing we'll hear from the Gladiators. But you never know with Jamaicans.

(to be continued)

Chatty Chatty Mouth

Eat your heart out you Kings Road trendies!

STRANGLERS

SLASH/STRANGLERS
1 of 1

THE STRANGLERS MAKE IT BRIEF
Guildford University, 28 October, 1977

Would've been nice to put an interview of some substance into SLASH cos J.J. had a lot to say about politics, America and punk but due to the lack of Mr. Slime and his machine it is impossible for me to repeat half of what he said . . . I'm not Mr. Memory and my shorthand speed ain't no 250 words a minute. So this interview is a bit of a non-starter ennit? Still, I shall endeavor to write something and I did get a couple of quotes down for the record.

The Stranglers are, if you categorize English punk bands, probably the hottest band—musically—of the moment and are certainly as popular as the Clash though there aren't any upfront political banners, it's still good blood, guts and gorum.

. . .Still, just where are the Clash at, now that they're playing big venues and not putting up any fight and they're getting mucho bread for it?

So the Stranglers hit the stage, or rather they walk or, may I say, amble, on but from here on it's sheer energy for an hour. I've seen the Stranglers three times and they're hotter now than they've ever been . . . real tight . . . Hugh doesn't jack off his neck anymore, mmmm, I liked it like that . . . They play just about all the songs from "No More Heroes" and I won't go into them cos you saw the record review last issue . . . I'm not into sexist stuff and I'll never think anything other than Bring on the Nubiles and Peaches suck but there you go.

Stranglers have their every need (oh yeah) catered to by the Finchley Boys . . . a group of about a dozen heavies sporting Finchley Boys T-shirts and looking mean.

The Stranglers style detaches them from other punk bands: their own fanzine, their own Hells Angels, their own bodyguards—the Finchley Boys—all seems to make for big wheels and big deals but somehow as yet it ain't too big and as long as it stays that way it's okay I s'pose.

Jean Jacques: We get a lot of shit from the papers, but we are still playing to people, we're still accessible and why the fuck not. If you make yourself inaccessible you don't get the girls.

J.J. did go on to say something to the effect that he really does consider the provincial gigs just as important as the city dates.

They didn't arrive in a limo . . . an old Granada

(trendy layout)

J.J.: If your manager is anything to do with boutiques, shops or films, you're in trouble, ours is a Welsh sheep-shagger.

Slash: "Bring on the Nubiles" is a very sexist song.

J.J.: I like sex.

(Yeah, so do I, J.J., but the two are different.)

J.J.: I like 14-year-olds.

(So that's the difference . . . Nubiles in the audience simply ***adore*** J.J.)

Slash: Are you going to America?

J.J.: We were going at Christmas but we're not going to fuckin' kill ourselves for any Americans. We'll probably go next year but we're definitely not playing New York or L.A. cos everyone plays there. We don't want to get there and kill ourselves like the States has done for other bands. I'm European and I'd rather stay in Europe.

Slash: Have you a message to American SLASH readers?

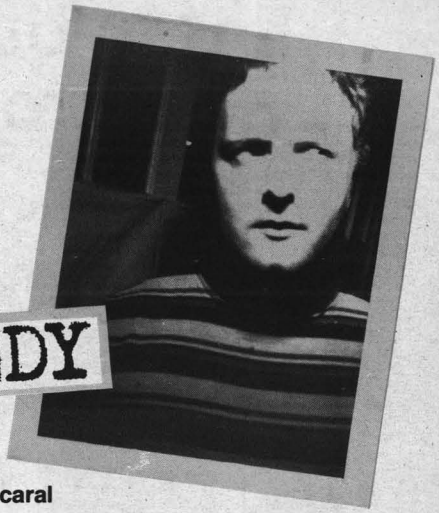
J.J.: Yeah, eat your hearts out, America, cos we ain't coming.

Slash: Do you want to say anything to American punks, Hugh?

Hugh: Fucking SLASH magazine . . . that's for Kings Road trendies . . . you should see our fanzine . . .

(I have, it's turds stuff.)

Fleshy Parts



BLACK RANDY

by A. Macaral

BLACK RANDY AND (SOMEWHAT) METRO SQUAD

The first time I met Black Randy I wanted to kill him but nobody had a big enough gun. He kicked my wife in the leg then he took off with the cash box from the first SLASH benefit. When caught, Black Randy claimed, "I didn't do it, it was my twin brother, he looks just like me but he's smart. He steals things, he gets me in trouble, he's smart, he steals things." Black Randy kept it up, calling the black security guard a nigger. They didn't even kill him. Black Randy walked away from his atrocities feeling very blessed and got religion.

The Negro Question

—Is it true what they say?
—Yes, it is bigger.
—When did you first realize you were black?
—One day my mother showed me a picture of a negro man. "That is a negro, Randy. He is not like us." Then I knew that I myself was a negro.
—Have you encountered discrimination?
—I can't get a job. I put down on the application that I am black and they look at me funny and tell me to go away. I'm not shiftless, I'm a hard worker and they tell me to go away.

What Is An Elite Metro Squad?

Police chief Davis has one. He uses it to clean up Hollywood. Black Randy's elite metro squad is David Brown on piano (he has had no previous experiences with negroes), Bob Dead (guitarist) has heard of occasionally using one for a maid. In team with David and Black Randy, Bob is out to clean up Hollywood.

—When people see us I want them to tally dispel the idea of ever forming a rock and roll band again. (Black Randy)
—We won't be surprised when the competition gives up. (David Brown)

David Brown is not David Braun and has never been connected with the Screamers. So he says. Black Randy has destroyed things including himself but he's nicer since coming out. So he says.
—Are you really the fifth Ramone, Black Randy?
—We're just old friends. I taught Dee Dee how to play guitar. Last year I was flown to get Dee Dee off dope, mainly heroin and angel dust. We used massive doses of mega-vitamins and prayer.
—Why did Black Randy stop shooting dope?
—Because of David Brown and the ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus gets up with me every morning, he's in there when I brush my teeth, he takes a piss with me and sometimes a shit.

Last Words On The Past

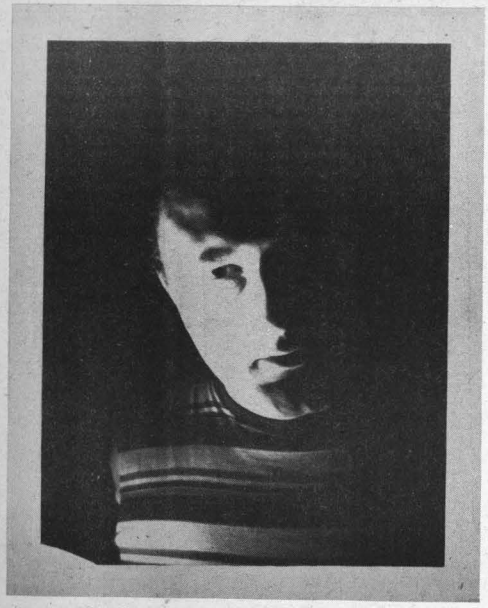
—I believe a sin you don't remember is a sin you didn't commit.

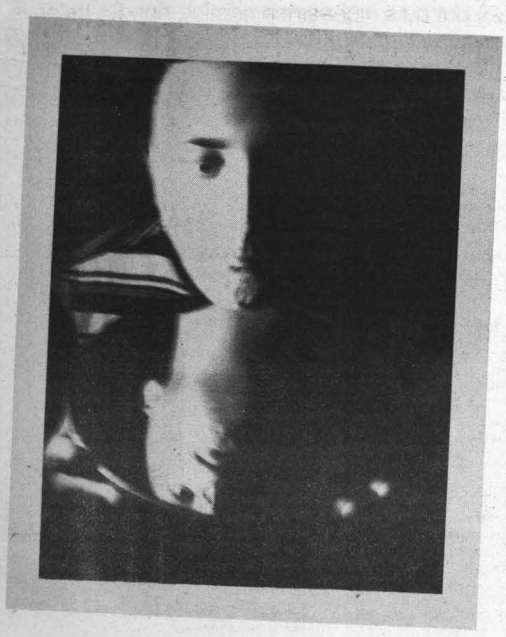
State Of The Neighborhood

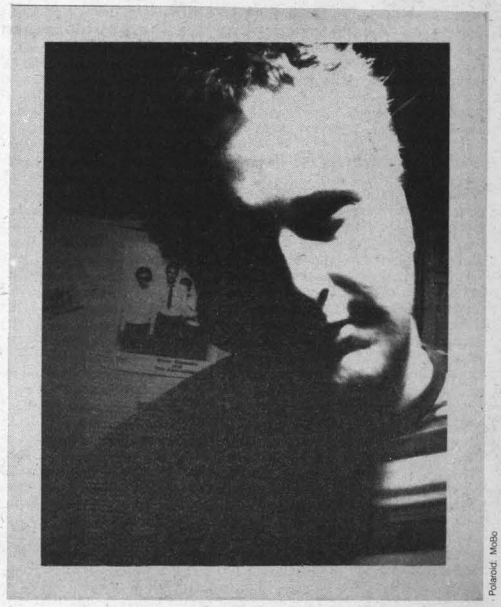
—You have to punch people at the Masque, some of them. We carry a baseball bat in David's car. Nothing like it. The trouble with a lot of these new wavers is they don't read anything. Like something K.K. loves to say: "I don't read books, I don't read books, I rely on my looks."

Future Plans

—Black Randy is not to become one of those things where I am the only spokesman.
—He's the main poser. (David Brown)
—But he never lies. (Bob Dead)







Polaroid Mobo

C R CRISIS S I S

Found this lot playing a Rock Against Racism gig at Guildford University a few weeks ago . . . their first gig . . . all local punks and average age is 20 . . . and all their material is original. A good sound and great visuals.

Crisis are: Tone Deaf, bass; Frazer Razor, vocals; Lester Pick-it, lead guitar; Doug Pearce, rhythm guitar, focals; Insect Robin, drums.

And they play titles like "PC 1984," "S&D (Search and Destroy—not the Iggy Pop one)," "S.P.G. (Special Patrol Group to you)" and "Militant."

For our American readers: Lewisham was the scene of clashes between the left (the S.P.—Socialist Workers Party, the I.M.G.—International Marxist Group) and the National Front (Nazis) . . . also at Birmingham and Manchester.

CRISIS 1.11.77

Slash: How long have you been together?
Frazer: Since April.
Slash: Were you in any other bands before?
Lester: Tony and Doug were.
Rob: Clash wanted me but they weren't committed enough.
Slash: How are you fixed for recording or management or anything like that?
Doug: Got no recording. Got no management. Just hassling people—going up to managers of clubs and saying, "Can we play?", knowing people at universities.
Slash: Have you a following around about?
Doug: These are the effects of Crisis. They are very good because they come from a long way—and before we hae even played a gig.
Slash: Are you still doing jobs or do you make enough money to pack them in?
Doug: We all have to work. We got paid two pounds for the Rock Against Racism gig cos we didn't want anything but petrol money. The other bands asked for £12 and £14 apiece. After all the point of the gig was to get as much money as possible for the people who were arrested at Lewisham. It only made £135.
Rob: There you have a concert against racialism, division of society and you stop the general public going in, just limit it to middle-class students.
Doug: That was the law of the university officials not the organizers.
Slash: What do you think of the Stiff talent idea?
Frazer: It works for the bands that want to go for it . . .
Doug: . . .and also for the record companies that want to make lots of money.
Slash: You write most of your own songs?
Frazer: We write all our songs.
Doug: Iggy Pop wrote a song called "Search and Destroy" and we have a song of the same name. We didn't even know Iggy Pop had done a "Search and Destroy" until the Dictators started doing it. We might have to change the name to something like "S&D"—don't sound so good though, does it?
Slash: I liked it better than Iggy Pop's.
Rob: Tell the Dictators to change their song.
Doug: The title really is based on Lewisham because we had a contingent there and during the fighting, it got so we had been fighting for about five hours and at the end we were running around, linked arms, chanting "Search and Destroy"; as soon as we saw the police or the National Front it was "Search and Destroy."
Slash: Were you there with the S.W.P.?
Doug: Tony is in the S.W.P. I am in the I.M.G. Like the Clash say they write about life as they see it through their eyes, we write about life as we experience it.
Slash: So you would say that the group are a political band?
Doug: We are pleased to be a political band.
Slash: What do you think of the fairly established punk bands like the Clash and Pistols?
Tony: You can see them now beginning to shift.
Slash: Clash are now doing big gigs but it was bound to happen.

Doug: But they don't seem to have put up any fight against it. They seem to be really willing. From their first White Riot tour of small halls their next tour is playing ultra big halls. You can see it on a map—get out of control at about five places —when before it was lots of gigs.
Tony: They were a protest band because people wanted a protest band then.
Slash: At least the Stranglers are still playing small places.
Doug: And they are more commercial than Clash.
Slash: What do you think of the way the whole punk thing is going now that it's been around for a couple of years?
Doug: I was thinking after the gig the other night that we kind of lacked an actual identity, which was what started it, but as far as I can see what makes us different is that we are very political.
Tony: Every band is political. The Bay City Rollers are political in a sense that they don't want to change anything. If you are not against it, you are for it.
Doug: No bands have actually come up with a solution, they always said, "Oh, National Front, they're really nasty" or "I don't like the Labour party, Tories or Liberals," but they haven't come up with any solution to solve this problem. They go the National Front because it seems like a solution to them.

I know that we haven't got the answers to everything under the sun but we are going to put forward a Socialist principle basically because that is the way we see the solution is. We're not going to tell the kids to join up here, just tell them to bloody start reading some papers and get educated themselves because West Germany has got it now, and we don't agree with Baader-Meinhof methods and all that kind of stuff, but Heavy Manners, to use a nice cliche, is going to come to this country. What they have done in Ireland they are going to apply here, they are already practicing it. Despite all the crap that the Labour party will hold on, they won't, the Tories will get back in and they will have harsh immigration control, harsh control of demos. They said at Lewisham that a march was not in fact a particularly good thing for freedom of speech, that it doesn't mean anything. They are going to ban all marches; not just National Front, they are going to ban them all.
Tony: But that is a defeat for the National Front because they have to hold secret demos.
Doug: The whole point of fascism is to grow by having demos so they show other racists and other neo-fascists what they are going to do for Britain. It puts a lot of people off when a few bricks start flying at them . . . they don't enjoy it then.
Tony: You got some little rat who is nothing but if there is a thousand of them he feels big then.
Doug: That was the strategy of Hitler. The whole situation is much like Germany.
Slash: The time is very ripe now for the N.F.
Doug: Always has been at times of economic crisis. They will always sacrifice for the nation and the bosses because you have got that long tradition going back to the empire. The ruling class had to give the masses a little bit more than other people for them to go over and beat up everyone and that kind of thing. That is how they are more willing to do things.
Slash: Because you are such a political band and you are tied up very much with what is happening in England, what do you think of punk in America?
Doug: It isn't very political is it . . .?
Slash: No. But what do you feel about New York and L.A.?
Tony: It seems to be just a lot of different people who can't class their sort of music.
Doug: Andy Warhol the other day was hanging out with the Shah of Iran. He should go and live out in Iran. I am sure he'd get a real kick out of being fried alive.
Slash: The origins of English punk seems to me to be dole queues and high rise flats, social pressures which I don't think are so apparent in the U.S.
Doug: They're driving 'round in their dad's cars at 16.
Slash: It's nothing to do with money out there, it's just musical boredom. And they have got a lot to be bored about when you think that Peter Frampton and all our British tax exiles are out there.
Tony: It *must* be pretty bad. We have the old establishment, they have the new.
Slash: The new one is worse than the old. It is more frightening because the new one used to be the rebellion.
Doug: I saw a program with Rod Stewart and Brit Eklund in Paris and he went into a shop and bought 2 candlesticks at £1000 apiece and he was saying, "Just think, in three years they'll be worth three times as much." And everyone goes goody, goody.
Slash: As if they need the money . . .
Tony: He was okay when he started, but now he is a shit.
Slash: And he comes here once a year and plays a football stadium.

Doug: "You're lucky to see me, mate" . . .
Slash: These people aren't gods, they're not even demi-gods.
Tony: . . .and Elton John.
Doug: The only good thing about Elton John was that he came out and admitted that he was bi-sexual, and when someone famous admits it, it always makes it far easier for people.
Tony: Like David Bowie.
Doug: But he denied it since.
Tony: But he denies everything, even that Britain needs a fascist government.
Slash: When he last came to England he said England was ready for a fascist government, but on the radio the other day he said it just appeared that way after he'd been traveling.
Doug: "I need a fascist dictator after this trip." He did say on the radio that it is the last thing we want and probably the last thing we would get. I don't know about that, though.
Tony: It is really very dangerous when people like that say things like that. If someone like Elton John got up and said he was pro-N.F. it really would get big. Some people are doing gigs for the Liberal party cos the Liberal party has promised to lower the tax rate and if you keep going in that direction . . .
Doug: It has already happened on the continent because most gigs are put on by political parties.
Slash: Those Italian ones . . .
Doug: They get attacked by the fascists. That is the way it is going to be in England, but I think it is a good thing.
Slash: This country is heading for a crisis. You've really got the right name.
Doug: I was inspired . . . This guy flew down on a flaming chariot to my window and he looked out and he said, "You will now be called Crisis, not the Silver Beatles."
Slash: I think somebody should get hold of that name pretty quickly. It's out of step with everything.
Tony: I see that's an ITT tape recorder. It's got blood gushing out of it.
Doug: You know what the red buttons are made of. Blood from the Chilean worker. There's mucho profit in Chile, baby! When the coup happened, we had a Labour government; they still didn't stop sending them arms and submarines, yet they are refusing admittance to Chilean exiles. Send them back so they will get butchered.
Tony: Scotland has a nationalism and the great thing about their nationalism is that it veers to the left.
Slash: Have you got anything to say to the American readers?
Frazer: You don't come from the Southeast of England and therefore you ain't punks.
Doug: Why don't you cut your hair. Are you afraid to change? You might as well go and join Edward Heath's lot. We know what it's like, we used to have long hair, we sympathize with you. We understand.

DICKIES

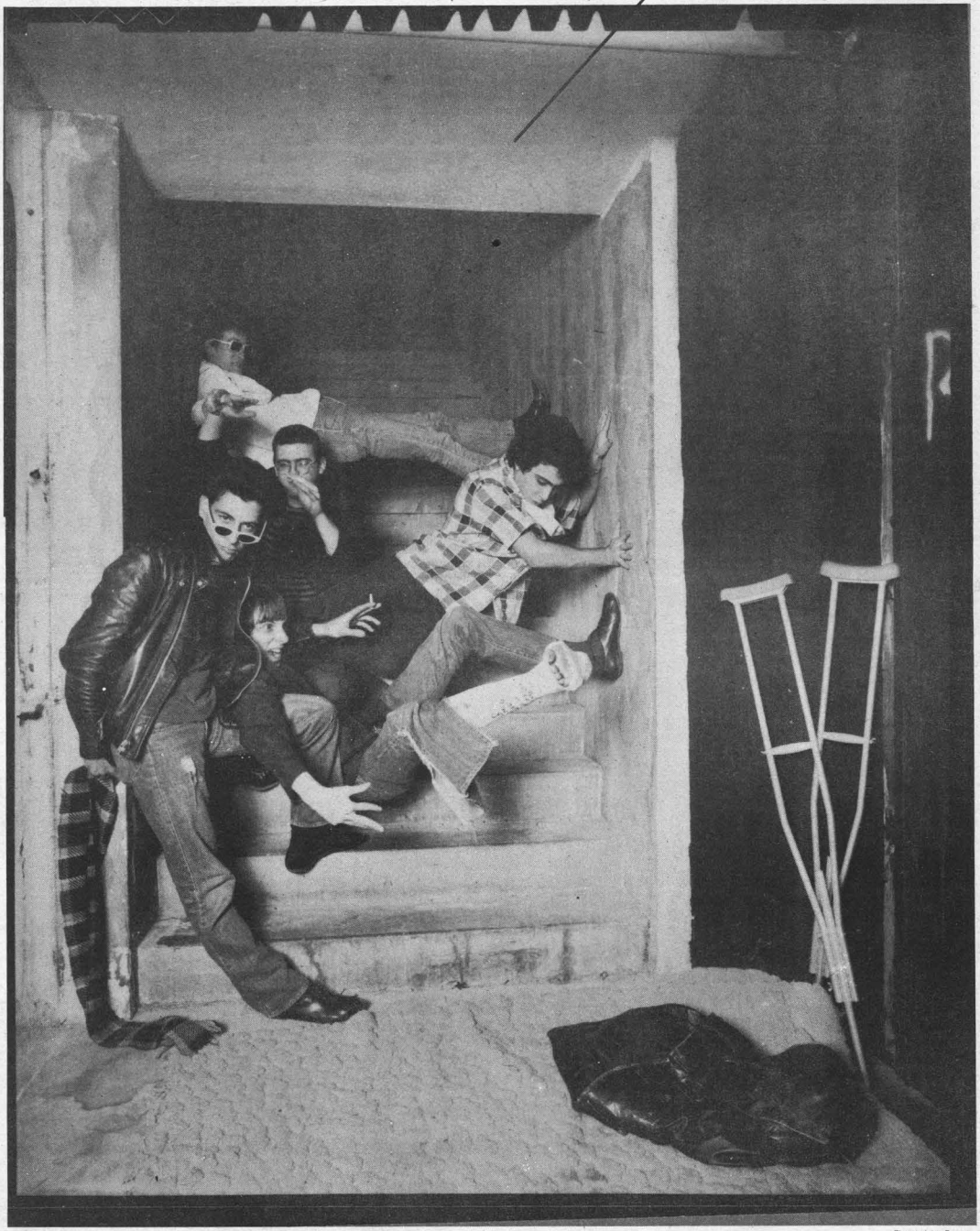


Photo: Jules Bates

SLASH proudly brings you the inner thoughts, hopes, wishes, likes, dislikes and phobias of everybody's favorite fun-generating, feet stomping (and breaking), old songs revitalizing, hysteria-creating and producer-attracting loonies. The Dickies. (Taped in the serene surroundings of the Masque.)

(I was taking a spin backwards down the fast lane in my wheelchair. I missed all the offramps but crashed into the piano. I juggled childhood memories and tossed the masses a banana.

Down but not out they picked me up in an ambulance. Its guitar cleared all the intersections, attracting much attention and remark. Everyone's looking at me. I must be the Dickies. —A. Mackaral)

"Everybody loves a clown."

(What's with the instant success?)

"Eve of Destruction had a lot to do with it . . ."

"We're just a real fun non-stop action band" . . ."everyone was waiting for a strong new band good to pogo to . . ." . . . "at our first gig at the Masque (after the Spastics) we thought we were gonna get killed . . . like, that's what it's all about!"

"At our first gig at the Whisky (Oct. 4th—we rehearsed for 3 weeks prior) there was nobody there. We were playing under the Germs."

(Where did you rehearse?)

"We shared a garage with this hippie band. They let us 'cause they thought we were funny. Everybody loves a clown. When we started playing the Whisky and the Starwood they kicked us out!"

"Leonard is a pain in the ass." (Stan)

"Leonard had no car so he wouldn't have been in the band 'cause he couldn't come for the rehearsals. So he knew Chuck and said let's have him, and that way he had a ride . . ."

"He called me up and said I've been masturbating for two years, now I want to be a punk guy."

"I was in a band sort of with Chuck last summer, it was called The Blobs, a bit devo-ish, with songs like 'I'm Turning Into a Table, Take Your Plant With You,' kind of low key stuff . . ." (Leonard)

(What's the titles of some of your songs now?)

" . . .'You're So Hideous,' 'I'm OK you're OK,' 'You Drive Me Ape,' 'Walk Like An Egg'," . . ."The songs we threw out we should have kept."

(Why the Dickies?)

"Because of the Dave Clark Five." . . . "I wanted to call ourselves the Imbeciles" (Stan).

(Who writes the songs?)

"I write most" (Stan).

"The queen of our masturbatory fantasies"

(San Francisco)

"It went really well . . . two encores. The Nuns packed the place for us."

(What about the Nuns?)

"They really treated us well." . . . "besides, the keyboard player is the queen of our masturbatory fantasies" (Leonard).

(Crime)

"They are slime. Real boring."

"He could not shit for a week . . ."

(The famous jump)

"At the soundcheck I saw the balcony and I thought it would be a cool thing to do . . . I could have done it if I had been wearing jump boots."

(How was the pain?)

"Real good!" . . . "I stayed a week or so in the hospital." . . . "He couldn't shit for a week." . . . "That's right, they kept wanting me to B.M. as they call it."

(How is it now?)

"Fine . . . I get a lot of amputee offers . . . now I'll have a walking cast and a cane, and three weeks later the cast goes off. I'll be scared to perform without my chair" (Leonard).

Vacuuming the lawn

(Chuck)

"Chuck only speaks when ordering at Jack in the Box or when provoked."

(Are you into science fiction, Chuck?)

" . . . . . ." (means yes).

"You should go to Chuck's house: they have a recording of a dog and speakers blasting it in the yard." . . . "Chuck's dad also vacuums the lawn."

"The feeling of these ultra violet rays is penetrating . . ."

(Politics)

"I'm just a pacifist. Not a peace-monger or a hippie faggot, but a pacifist. We're all TV watchin' kind of guys" (Leonard).

(Favorite shows)

" 'All My Children' . . . 'Colombo,' 'What's Happening,' 'Leave It to Beaver' reruns, 'Outer Limits.' I like the feeling of these ultra violet rays penetrating . . ."

"Temporary fun"

(What if there was no new wave suddenly?)

"We'd go back to what we were doing before." . . . "I'd go back to watching 'All My Children' " (Stan). "He (Leonard)'d go back to masturbating and studying philosophy."

(Jobs)

"Chuck sets up chairs for a black orchestra and gets a couple of dollars." "Carlos worked at the Pussycat Theatre." . . . "we're all a bunch of fuck-ups." "We take this as temporary fun, but we could get into success."

A midget as the baby Jesus

"Bryan (the midget roadie) was a friend of ours. He was gonna sing for us before we found Leonard, but he chickened out. He decided to be a roadie, but he was really scared in the beginning . . ."

"For Christmas we wanted him to be an elf, or the baby Jesus . . . Charlotte of The Eyes could be the Virgin Mary . . ."

"Bryan is really strong. He is good."

"The Dickies are incapable of love"

(Girls)

"No comment" (Leonard).

"The Dickies are incapable of love."

(Family)

"Yeah, sooner or later, probably later, I'll have a family" (Stan).

"But no kids" (Leonard).

"Why not?"

"I wouldn't want to subject the basic fuck-up of life on anybody . . . it's better to have never lived" (Leonard). (Rest of band strongly disagrees.)

"I want to cut you guys a single . . ."

"Greg Shaw is going to do a single for us . . ." "We really want to do it . . . singles are great" . . . "He came up right after our first show at the Masque and said: 'I want to cut you guys a single' . . ." . . . "Other small companies have approached us. Siamese, Dangerhouse . . . I think Greg is our best bet . . ." . . . "Some well known producer wanted us to do a cover of 'Sounds of Silence,' but it's really like a cash-in." . . . "Greg sees us as having sex appeal."

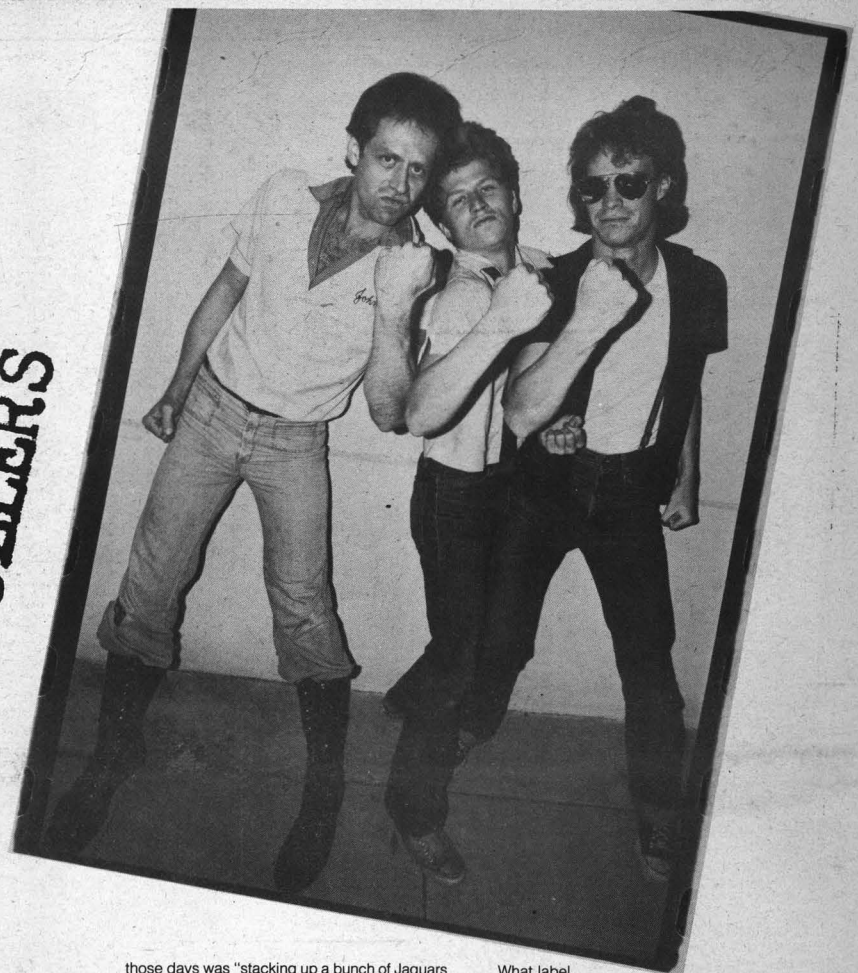
"I think we're a punk band but people are telling me we're not"

(How do you fit in this scene?)

"I think we're pretty well established . . . I don't think we have any proving to do, except are we going to be around in 3 months." . . . "I think we're a punk band but people are telling me we're not. Greg doesn't think we are." . . . "People were waiting for a funny act to come along with this type of music . . ." . . . "We want to put a smile on everybody's face. We don't want to lose our humor."

The Dickies are: Leonard, Billy Club, Stan Lee, Carlos Caballerro and Chuck Wagon.

CONTROLLERS



BRINGING IT BACK
TO THE NEIGHBORHOODS
(Charlie, Controller drummer, talking about the new music)

The Controllers are: Johnny Stingray (rhythm guitar/vocals), Kid Spike (rhythm guitar/vocals), Field Marshal D.O.A. (bass), Charlie Crash (drums).

Almost one of the Masque's house bands in the beginning, the Controllers have hardly played anywhere else. One exception was a gig at the Orpheum with Sky Sunlight and the New Seeds, the famous white robe combo. Sky was then heard telling one of them: "We got 3 records in the all-time top 40 in England... Can we borrow your mikes?"

Half of the Controllers (Kid and Johnny) are from Michigan. They met Field Marshal while heckling Pop and Mink De Ville at the Whisky. Later, they were joined by Charlie (who was brought to the band by Kid's sister and an early influential member of the band, Gaye). Charlie is from San Francisco, and was "kind of a gypsy" before her present role as a punk drummer. Field Marshal is from a town called Lafayette, where "it was very hard to get laid." The kind of town that "if you had any brains at all they think you're queer"!

Field Marshal has some fond memories of his youth, though, especially some dating back to riots in Berkeley. One of his favorite highlights of those days was "stacking up a bunch of Jaguars and setting them on fire."

Asked about her move from San Francisco to L.A. Charlie was very reticent in doing any kind of comparisons. (Field professed his admiration for Crime and their high decibel sound.) Someone said that in L.A. the punk scene was really "all-American boys and girls," hinting that in other places the morality level was not as high!

We talked a lot (over an hour), and the resulting tape proved beyond any doubt that some SLASH interviews are reaching new peaks in formlessness. Here it goes:

"We used to live in Hollywood next to a bunch of fuckin' drag queens playing disco"... "I used to be in a band called Cobalt Men From Sector B" (Field)... "we can pick up where Blue Cheer and MC5 left off"... "the Weirdos stole our fuckin' title ('Neutron Bomb')"... and the Weirdos are not the only ones resented by this band, they had bad things to say about "cops that hassle you on every street corner," blacks "that hassle us on Hollywood Blvd.," the hippies ("guys who look like girls and girls who look like trees"). And yes, finally, we did talk about music:

They're now working on a song, "I'm destructive," except they have to learn to play it fast enough. ("Fast enough? you're already killing me!" [Charlie]). Kid has only played guitar for a year, and Field used to be into old Kinks songs, "Talk, talk," Terry Knight and the Pack songs. "Neutron bomb," written by Johnny Stingray, will be on the upcoming compilation album on the What label.

Musical abilities? "We're not very good so we have to practice a lot" (Field). They think their sound is more important than their lyrics ("since nobody can hear them anyway!") but they are proud of their lyrics.

Where was "Neutron bomb" recorded? "In someone's garage, but the engineer did a really good job."

"What do you try to get across with your music?" "We want to get across the fact that punk bands (like blondes?) have so much more fun. Older bands just play, pack up and go home. Not us." "I want to play in a beer joint, get drunk, have a good time," said Charlie. "We want to get rid of boredom," added Johnny. Someone else wondered if punk bands will ever play prisons (interesting conept). Everyone but Charlie declared their deep hatred of Led Zeppelin, but "don't say nothing bad about Black Sabbath" (Field Marshal).

After everyone agreed the future of the music was eventually in the hands of the 13- to 14-year-olds, we asked each one which record they would play when they got back home. Charlie picked the Damned, Johnny the Saints, Kid the Ramones and Field Marshal the Germs. Pretty unified front, wouldn't you say?

Some Controllers song titles (they have about 15 songs, with an average set of between 7 and 9): "Neutron bomb," "Combat rock," "Urban sophisticates," "I'm destructive," "You make my head hurt," "Doggie style."

Photo: Melanie Nissen

GREG GREG SHAW

Greg Shaw (Bomp records and magazine and famous Brian Jones look-alike) recently got back from England where he spent some time checking out the scene. We asked him to describe what he saw and, for the benefit of our L.A. readers, to compare it to what is happening on the home front. It seemed a good idea to recapitulate where everything stood before the new year starts unveiling its surprises.

G: I was in London almost a year ago and the changes I saw were overwhelming. The people I know who have been there all along didn't seem to realize how drastically things had changed.

S: What precisely has changed, the people, the scene?

G: Everything about it was not what I had expected. I knew there was a lot of punk mania going on, but last time I was there in December '76, no one looked like the Sex Pistols except the Sex Pistols, the Bromley contingent and a few of their friends. The big group was the Hot Rods and the whole r&b thing was still going on, punk was just beginning to catch on. Since then all these bands have come along, I knew it would happen but it was still a shock seeing everywhere people with green hair, ripped clothing, the whole thing.

S: Is it on the radio and TV?

G: Yes, I only turned on the TV once and "So It Goes" was on and in one half hour they showed Poly Styrene (X-Ray Spex) giving an interview that was hysterical, then they had footage of the Jam, Elvis Costello and several other bands. It was one of the greatest half hours of TV I've ever seen. There's a lot on the radio.

S: Radio one? (the BBC pop radio station)

G: Yeah, they're the best, Capitol Radio (London's commercial pop radio) is still against punk. There's a crying need for a pirate radio station at this time because so many records are coming out, probably about 20 a week and the only ones that get airplay are the major groups, there's no reflection at all on new records out every week by the Nosebleeds, the Jolt, Sham 69, the Maniacs, 999 . . .

S: What about clubs and discos?

G: There are punk discos advertised though I didn't go to one. There are several venues; every night in London there are half a dozen gigs where you can see new bands. The interesting thing is you don't hear punk records between sets, you hear nothing but reggae. It's all the groups listen to.

S: What clubs did you visit?

G: I did check out the Vortex, it was very interesting. I'd heard so much about it. If you can imagine a place underground like the Masque, but as a nite club, it's really a sort of discotheque, it holds about 1,000 people. The night I was there there were over 2,000.

S: Who was playing?

G: The Heartbreakers. I went to three gigs that night and every one was packed.

S: Are they all hard core (the punk audience)?

G: It's hard for me to judge. The people that I know there are people who are very close to the center of the scene and they all told me that the Vortex was absolute shit, a joke, that it was full of identipunks, etc.

S: So what are they calling a real gig?

G: Well, there is no place. Apparently the golden age of the Roxy was it. That was when the outrageous clothing was first coming in. People there aren't dressing so strangely any more, it's back to basics. L.A. is a lot more inventive.

S: Is London aware of the other scenes?

G: They have no regard for what's happening in the States, they've heard New York is dead, they know something is happening in L.A. but they suppose it's pretty phony. The English are pretty chauvinistic about the scene. It really did start there. New York has a lot less justification for being chauvinistic and they're even worse! . . . I go to New York all the time and it astounds me how much it's stayed the same since I first went there 6 or 7 years ago. The same people hang out at Max's, the same at CBGB's, everyone's trying to look like Lou Reed, junkiechic. There's no dancing whatsoever, let along pogoing. London at least has created something viable and the scene now has filtered down to the regular average kids.

S: Is the English media still horrified by the scene there?

G: No, the shock horror period is probably over with. I think the performing ban has been lifted. It's been accepted by now, just as it will be accepted here. When something is that new the immediate response is to back off. The punk scene in England is so well established there's nobody that doesn't encounter punk every day. I saw no violence at all, the dancing is much more restrained than here. The best pogo dancing I've seen is in L.A. I think as the scene here gets more developed L.A. will have the strongest scene anywhere in the world except London. From what I can see we have the basis of a real

breakout; with the Dangerhouse label and other independent labels, the groups and the Masque —the Masque is crucial, it's better than any punk club anywhere, including London, it's the punkiest, the absolute most intense venue I've seen. I think any kid from London would step in that place and be in Nirvana. The next step is that some of the records coming out of here be placed with English labels and come out over there so that they have a chance of getting in the charts. Then we'll see if England really is an island unto itself or if it can accept musical influences from other areas. The English influence has been much stronger here than anywhere else and when that is interpreted through the whole L.A. approach, which is basically to glamorize and make anything more extreme, when that's thrown back at the English it might just be a fresh stimulation to them.

S: What are the new bands in England?

G: Most of them were playing outside London. That's really where all the energy is, in the provinces, in Manchester, Edinburgh and some of the other cities where they have local labels. Cambridge has half a dozen bands, some of the best, the Soft Boys and the Users. The Soft Boys are amazing, the first psychedelic punk band, I guess; they're what the Stranglers ought to be. I didn't see too many new bands in London; I saw Alternative Television who I thought were awful, they reminded me of Television. There were a lot of major gigs on like the Richard Hell thing, that was phenomenal. On that show I also saw Siouxie and the Banshees who were excellent. Another thing that surprised me was that all the "stars" are very evident on the scene, Johnny Rotten even got up on stage and called for an encore at the Richard Hell gig.

S: What impact has the Pistols album had on the charts?

G: It's number 2 or 1. At the time I was there this insanity was going on. Shop owners were being busted for displaying the album. They had dug up some 1891 law against displaying the word "bollocks" (bollocks is an obscenity in Britain). The newspapers and TV were refusing to accept advertising even though the word "bollocks" wasn't used in the ads. They had huge posters saying "Never mind the bollocks etc." in fluorescent ink, at least 5,000 of them plastered on walls all over London. They had been put up before this thing came down, so someone had to go 'round scratching out the word "bollocks" on each one. It was hysterical.

S: Is the standard of English bands high?

G: I don't think so.

S: How do they compare with L.A. bands?

G: The Weirdos are better than any band I saw in England except the Adverts. The Dils have a lot more to say than a band like the Depressions, there's no imagination or depth to it. I'm only talking about the Depressions because I saw them, but there are about 300 other bands whose records are identical to the Depressions. It's much too easy to write a song saying we hate this, we wanna kill that and have it come out on a record. There's no group in England that hasn't been together 10 minutes that doesn't have a record deal. Everyone's been influenced by the Pistols and the Clash; the Stooges influence has gone, the Velvets influence has gone. The only new development I see coming out of punk is the power pop thing. Most of the new bands people have been raving about—the Rich Kids, Generation X, the Jam, the New Hearts—are doing very pop-oriented material, but with a really punk stance. These are gonna be the next generation of big groups out of England, the first ones that are gonna dent the charts around the world.

S: Yeah, "Your Generation" is a very broad statement. Is there a commitment by the English record companies to promote and push this stuff abroad?

G: Companies in England don't have much say over what happens outside England.

S: CBS for instance.

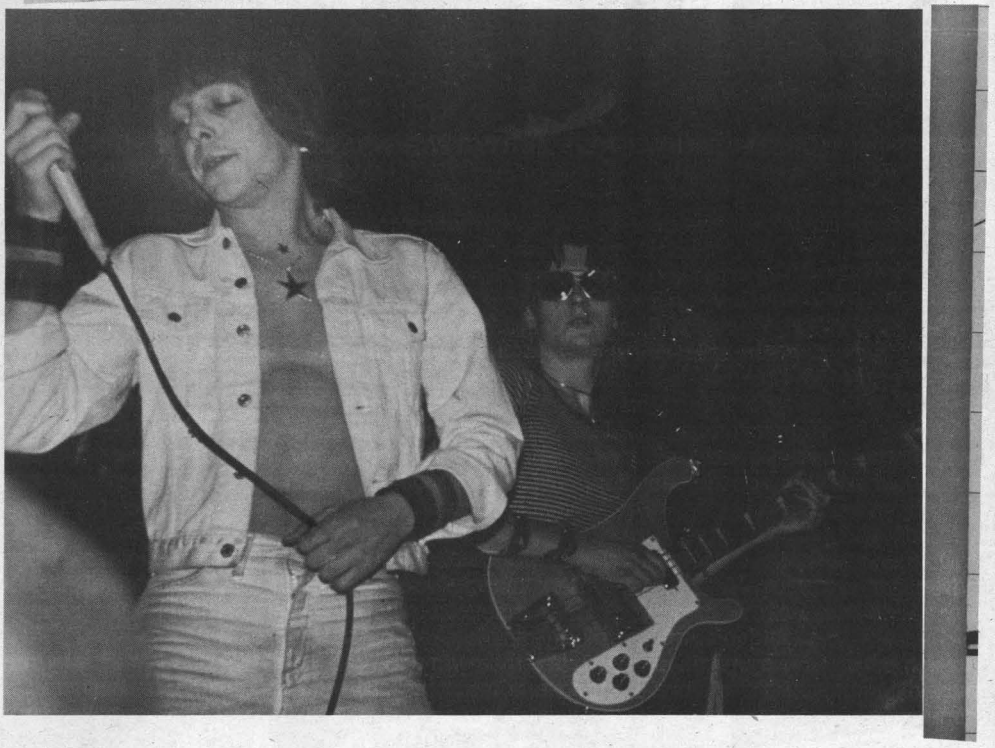
G: Exactly. Bernard Rhodes, for all he is exalted as a brilliant manager, was an idiot to sign the Clash for the world to CBS. You don't sign for the world with any company because no company is the best everywhere in the world. CBS is a great company for Elvis Costello, they'll make him a star. Sire would have been better for the Clash, even Bomp, at least I would have put the record out. But there is a commitment from the British companies, they spend a lot of money. Most of the bands that released independent singles have been signed to majors. I think what the record companies understand is that if a band can make good records regardless of the political dogma of that time, there are still thousands of kids who want to have good music. But it's still an underground scene, because very few of the records are in the Top 10. Right now it's not everybody, so if a good record sells 50,000 it isn't much. In England a hit single can sell as many as a million and the only thing that's going to break it is if it becomes more pop. The Rolling Stones, as big as they were, were never a phenomenon the way the Beatles were. And the bands coming out of America have always been more aware of that. When all these records go into the charts, then it will be "punk mania" or whatever. Punk is an influx of new ideas and styles. We don't have the cultural foundation it has in England but it's still viable because we're desperate for new ideas. That idiot at CBS that said they wouldn't put the Clash album out because they don't think Americans would understand it . . . I mean, that's so missing the point! People here will interpret it their way.

S: It's always been the same with rock and roll. If you couldn't make out the lyrics you always got the beat.

G: I don't think Americans will unerstand what the Sex Pistols are screaming about either, but they get the attitude behind it. I don't think that kids in England understood what Elvis was singing about—they couldn't without having grown up in the South—so what they got was the aggro, the defiance of it. Punk won't go away, it's just the first stage, but it's a style so intense that the masses in the world are never going to accept it. There's always going to be a hard core of people who will support it. Punk will stay around forever, it was a transitional step towards something else, toward a type of music that's basically new wave but can reach millions of people, not just a few thousand, and that's what we're on the threshold of.

LIVE

Well, the early days of one concert a week unless you'll settle for heavy metal valley or the latest hypoe from god knows where are over. There are just too many bands playing around now, some good, some bad and many totally undecided yet. So there's no point in going on and on about how so and so were "not bad, not too good really, maybe they'll be all right but I doubt it unless . . ." The Masque is steadily featuring brand new groups, the old timers (two month-old bands and over) are also regularly playing there and other places, we're not saying we can't keep up (not us, pal!), we're saying we've got to keep this section interesting and this means a heavy editing, sorting out, separating the jokers from the prophets and the carbon copies from the originals. So, from now on, until it changes again, this live review will pick out a few bands *(are there still solitary performers out there?)* that for one reason or another made this month worth living for (or worth committing suicide for). *Each bit will be about one band, its reasons for being in this section, and the date and place of the performance in question will only be mentioned as a historical footnote. No more differentiating between the "heavy" concerts and the regular Saturday night bash in the basement. If a local unknown band generates more excitement than the latest N.Y. or London big names and there ain't no room for both of them, it's goodbye the biggies and stuff those press promo packages up your ass. In other words, you better interest us or* really *disgust us. This section probably should be titled: the good, the bad, and the ugly.*



EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS

So they don't want to be called punk, uh? Too good for that kind of shit and all that? So what do they want to be called? The new Herman's Hermits? Creedence Clearwater - especially - heavy - on - the - Revival? I remember readng in various U.K. mags about the acrobatics and the amazing energy and on and on . . . What I saw (what ***we*** saw—this is probably the only review we all agree on) was a lame rock band with a rather credible line-up of competent musicians (but that drum kit was, shall we say, a least bit too flashy—specially for what came out of it), some of them looking into it and some not, and the most obnoxious lead singer the Whisky has seen since the Quick. I swear I will shoot down the nxt mop head in clean levis that urges the audience to clap along. And as far as acrobatics, it was pretty much zero, unless marching from one end of the stage to the other beaming at the audience and strutting like a high school stud are acrobatics. Maybe Barry was worried about the crease of his pants, maybe he was trying to prove to the record company audience that this was a good old rock 'n' roll band, never mind what you heard about England lately. Thank you, guys, for making me hate rock 'n' roll all over again. ***The Rods are soft.***

P.S. I still listen to "Do anything you wanna do." I just pretend it's another band.

THE AVENGERS

Much more than the SLASH benefit, this was ***the night*** the Avengers became one of the top bands of the area (their living in S.F. is only a geographical mistake). Not one cynic in the place was left unturned, not one pogo maniac was left standing against the wall. A faultless show from beginning to end, an incredible demonstration of power and energy (and sex), a great punk band that hasn't even started to show us what it can do. (But what it can do, among other things, is the most incredible version of "Paint it black" this pinhead has heard in years.) Fuck that filipino supper club up there. I want to see the Avengers every weekend. They are the one. (At the Masque, early in the month.)

WHEN YOU JERK OFF WITH YOUR LEFT HAND, YOU CAN (ALMOST) PRETEND IT'S SOMEONE ELSE DOING IT TO YOU. (old continental saying)

Congratulations to VOM for having managed to be written about in a few major publications (Village Voice, New York Rocker) without having to play at all. Almost sounds like the early Screamers saga, doesn't it? Except that, as opposed to the Screamers, they guys are ***really*** ugly! And some of them are even literate! You see, they haven't played anywhere yet, so they're a bit short on reviews and public reactions. That could stop some people, but not those jokers. They solved the dilemma by writing their own praises. And what's even funnier is the fact that they got it published. Well done, uglies! How about an exclusive story (by one of you, of course) on how the band disbanded after its incredible initial success due to "musical differences"?? (Like agreeing on who's gonna play what instrument when show time finally arrives?!)

Photo: Bruce Robertson

"Three hippies & a rich kid" (catcall) . . . A couple of more well known bands were asked by the Whisky to open for the Wildcats, a band making only its 3rd appearance anywhere. Why? "A Warner Bros. deal." The bands refused . . . The bill ended up Rubber City Rebels / Clique / Wildcats. Missed the Rebels, the Clique were another Fowley "discovery," that brings us to the "headliners"; you wanna dislike 'em 'cause it's common knowledge that the lead singer Gerard Taylor, "Son of Derek," is getting the proverbial push from papa (PR wizard for the Beatles back in the $ixties / gone VP at WB). You wanna but you can't. This cat stands on his own brothel creepers. During "Stupid Boy" he beats back the adoring female faction from the footlights with the mikestand and hawks a couple of well placed lungers at the jealous males who heckled his pretty face. The band provides the music, but they are still unsure of their roles. There's only one performer on stage. He moves the way I've always envisioned Johnny would (the Rotten One), but even more so. And all this without meningitis.

Ms. Simplex

BLACK RANDY
AND THE METRO SQUAD

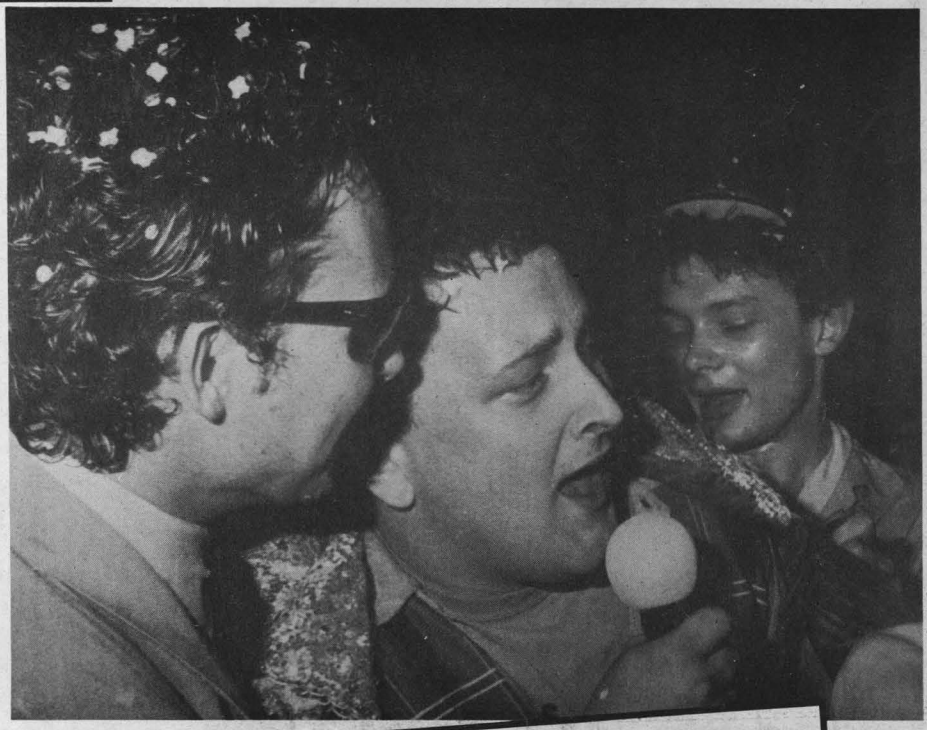


Photo: Gabriela

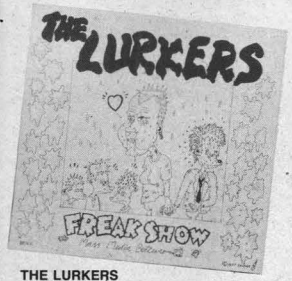
Total pandemonium tonite in Hollywood. Traffic jam on Hollywood Blvd., small scale riot outside the Whisky with bottles flying low above the black and white police cruisers, a drunk hyper crowd getting high on its once a year tolerated disorderly conduct. Definitely a night for the metro squad. And appropriately, Black Randy's own shock troopers are at the Masque, helping the growing ranks of local punkers to start 1978 in befitting anarchistic fashion.

The sound is loosely organized around the implacable beat of two drummers, Nicky Beat and K.K., it's like big beat punk, the intro to James Brown's entrance, it's exciting and it's quite a laugh. There's also David Brown's elegant touches on keyboards, the guitar riffs of Bob Dead and a tall stranger (K.K. is to switch from drums to guitar to drums throughout), and after a few seconds (newcomer DJ Dick Brain did wonders bringing the excitement level from high to unbearable) the presence of the mad dark eminence of the new L.A. underground, Black Randy.

Many impolite songs are screamed and pogoed to, there's an impromptu joining of forces with willing band members in the audience, the control board is buried under layers of confetti (always count on the crazed ones for that traditional touch), the singer's spivvy garments are in bad need of a dedicated dry cleaner's attention, and there's a brand new year just sticking out its spikey little head (typical 2 a.m. lyricism—just ignore it). It was quite a potent way to start it (the year), and hopefully a perfectly symbolic one. An elevating atmosphere of arrogance and confidence. (Speaking of symbolism, I'm still pondering upon the hidden meaning behind that stuffed goose being tossed back and forth. Was some unnatural act planned and then forgotten?)

A
B
a good kick in the head

Forty-Five's



THE LURKERS
Beggar's banquet records Import
(Freak show / Mass media believer)

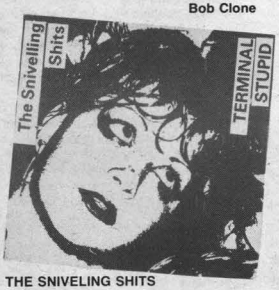
I can't stand this. Moral: what was okay 6 months ago is crap now.

K.B.

THE NEW HEARTS
CBS Import
(Just Another Teenage Anthem / Blood on the Knife)

I don't care how many people say this is some kind of punk breakthrough . . . it just isn't. Don't hate it half as much as I did on the first listen, but it's still none too good, with the A side being worse than the B side. "Blood on the Knife" does have a few good lines and a couple of hooks you can get your teeth into. On the whole, though, the music is boring and brittle, the harmonies bordering too close to saccharine. Above all, the biggest fault here is the superficiality. If there's any conviction in the New Hearts, I missed it.

Bob Clone

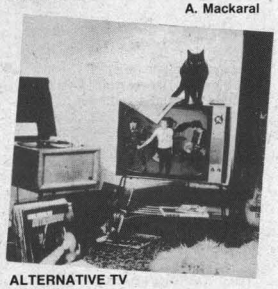


THE SNIVELING SHITS
(Terminal Stupid / I Can't Come)
Ghetto Rockers Import

At first it takes some getting used to, then it's the greatest original since all the rest, then for a few days it's a novelty that gets more than ordinary earplay, then for a few days it's great and never been done before. A true original classic. ¶ never know when I'm going to get tired of it but I thrive on it until then and I thrive on it afterwards.

Both songs are explicitly about the war in Sexual Politics. I could snivel off a string of musical influences but you'd just say, oh well, another list of hall of fame candidates.

A. Mackaral



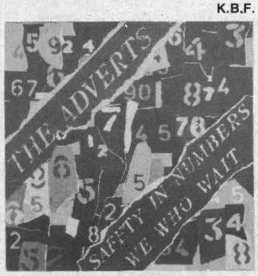
ALTERNATIVE TV
Deptford Fun City Records Import
(You bastard / How much longer)
ALTERNATIVE TV
flexible single in SG #12
(My love lies limp)

The real test. After all this talking and writing 'bout punk, Mark P (P is for Perry) goes up there to show us how things should be done. It'd be fun to say go back to fanzines, Mark, and all that mean shit 'cause I really distrust writers and editors that get carried away and think ***they*** can do it too but I'll have to wait for someone else as a victim. These two recorded things are quite good, and what's more they are totally original and like nothing else being done right now.

The hard single is Mark insulting everyone—"the punks don't know nothing, the straights don't know nothing, the hippies don't know nothing, you don't know nothing, we don't know nothing . . ."—with an odd jerky backing and little bits of lead to tease your right side; A side is about someone wasting his precious time and he means it 'cause the song lasts all of one minute 19 seconds.

The flexible bonus in Sniffing Glue is a hard core reggae tune that is totally addictive. So Mark may not have the ultimate crooner's vocal chords but he makes up for it by being his own man and not giving a shit about much except meaning what he says, and his band is right along there with him. Offbeat but essential. But then I don't know nothing either.

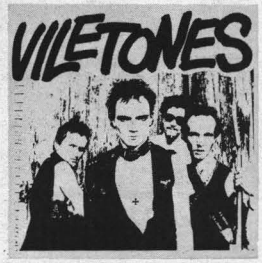
K.B.F.



THE ADVERTS
Anchor Import
(Safety in Numbers / We Who Wait)

Another double-sided drama from the Adverts. (This bunch is prolific!) Definitely a sound of their own, with soaring guitars (that's what it's called), intense voices and big drumming to drive everything home. It's all right at times but I never know what they're getting at. A message with no content. Now it's fashionable to put down the scene but, goddamit, you better be a bit more specific. And what have you done with the great looking bird on bass? (Hers is the only pic missing on the back of the sleeve.) I'll do every one of you in if she's been removed.

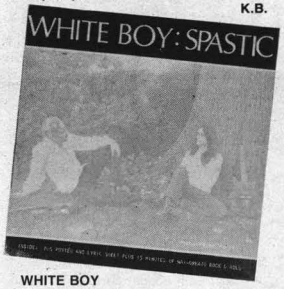
K.B.F.



THE VILETONES
Vile Records
(Screamin fist / Possibilities / Rebel)

One pretty good song. Two others between average self-indulgent and plain pathetic. No originality, not much energy. They only ***look*** mean.

K.B.



WHITE BOY
Doodley Squat
(Spastic)

If the first single showed any potential palatibility whatsoever, this denies it. I'd prefer not to mention what it sounds like. It may be unprecedented. One or two chuckles. "Is that a wart or is that a goiter? Looks like a hamboiger." What is to become of the race?

Anglo Saxo

GENERATION X
Chrysalis Import
(Wild Youth / Wild Youth Dub)

Title song for a movie? Billy Idol has the looks all right. Proving that punk rockers can be good looking and be wild but still fun. No anarchy or mutilation, relax parents. Just kids having a good time, it will pass. Very very good teen pop, I'll play it a lot but it won't change my life. B-side is a first (as far as I know). Do like the Jamaicans, stick the instrumental version, fuck around with a minimum of distorted vocals of the same. And it works. One hundred per cent. Brilliant, kids. Might even play it more than A-side. Generation X has no choice but to make it.

K.B.F.

THE VALVES
Zoom records Import
(Robot Love / For Adolf's only)

Know what happened 11th August 1977 in Edinburgh, Scotland? Not much. That's when this was recorded (it says so everywhere, on the record, the sleeve, god knows where else). One decent song except for the solo in the middle (where else?) and one incredibly useless piece of comedy rock called "Robot Love." Not funny at all. Not anything. Bad choice. Another song like the first one and this would have been one of those decent punk releases you play at least 5 times.

K.B.F.

IAN DURY
Stiff Import
(Sex, drugs and rock n roll / Razzle in my pocket)

Mild lunacy from one of Stiff's loonies. Mild music.

K.B.F.

GAZOLINE
Egg Import
(Killer man / Radio Flic)

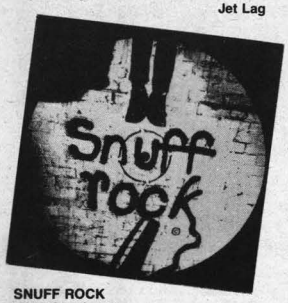
STARSHOOTER
Emi Pathe Import
(Pin Up Blonde / Quelle crise baby)

Ha, ha. Direct from France, les frog punks. Unlike their fellow countrymen, these kids have been listening to England and have been knocked out. Fuck this Pink Floyd-Chick Corea stuff, we can't play it anyway, let's go punk. And did they! Gazoline (heavy sleeve with handcuffs, pistols, spikey hair, sneers, every-

thing!) make the Clash sound like the Beatles. Lyrics full of no future running away from the cops wanting to kill, it's all there. And the playing is actually good, if a bit jumbled (they try to go so fast and hard they almost trip). Also great J. Rotten style intro on one of the two.

Starshooter (pas tres punk, that name) get less involved with society and more with the girls. Sound a bit like Johnny Hallyday gone punk. Weaker than Gazoline. Problem with both bands is: do they mean it, or are they just attracted by the newest fad from across the Channel? Who cares! I bet they're having a great time shocking les bourgeois. I still miss Stinky Toys, though.

Jet Lag



SNUFF ROCK
Stiff EP (import)
Alberto Y Los Trios Paranoias

This one kills me. I mean it really knocks me dead. Of corpse it's only a parody, but I've succumbed to this posthumour. Musically, it's a brilliant execution & I'm dying to hear their album . . . it's all I've left to live for . . .

Dead Guts

LOCKJAW
Raw Records Import
(Radio call sign / The young ones)

Raw records rarely flop. This is the exception.

K.B.

999
United Artists Import
(No pity / Nasty nasty nasty)

Some people I know really hate this. I can't see why. It's pretty fast and straightforward and it's got a couple of catchy moments. "No pity" ain't much of a melody but "Nasty nasty nasty" 's okay, although the guitars only come thru halfway like an afterthought, first part being drums, singer and a vague hum in the back. Energy but no distinction. Useless? Liked the first better.

K.B.F.

SOME CHICKEN
Raw Records #7 (import)
(Blood on the Wall / New Religion)

I know what I want to say about this disc, but I don't know how to spell it. It's the sound you make when you wrap your lips around your extended tongue & blow.

E. Guts

THE WASPS
4 Play records Import
(Teenage treats / She made magic)

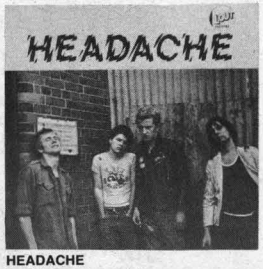
Irritating teeny poppy stuff with no meat. Cute hook on "Teenage treats," cute drumming on intro of other. They sing like rich kids: Confident and bland.

K.B.F.

THE SPITFIRE BOYS
RK Import
(British refugees / Mein Kampf)

Genuine angry sound from these unknowns. Both songs are real good and raw, but "British Refugees" is incredible. Real grabber. And no, they are *not* Nazis. Far from it.

KBF



HEADACHE
Lout Records Import
(I can't stand still / No reason for your call)

Different. Kind of subdued (low key guitars) sound with the odd impression that they're holding a lot of energy back. Extremely basic playing and singing but they convince you that's a stylistic choice they've made, not an inability to do it differently. I keep playing it and getting puzzled. Maybe a second release will clarify things.

KBF

PCV 2
Zoom records Import
(Put you in the picture / Pain / Deranged demented and free)

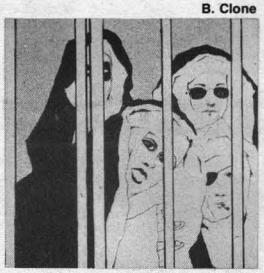
Three notes on the guitar and you know you'll like it. Raunchy, noisy, rowdy, your kind of music. One of the best of the month. Not much else to say, just put it on and tear down the fixtures. Slap your friends. Be a pain. Just don't sit, you passive morons. (Good vicious pic sleeve too)

K.B.

TOM ROBINSON BAND
(2 4 6 8 Motorway / I Shall be Released)

Virtually worthless. "2 4 6 8" comes close to being catchy but falters from a lackluster performance and too mainstream an attitude. The B side is yet another Dylan cover, this one having the distinction of rivaling only Bryan Ferry's "It Ain't Me Babe" for abysmal pointlessness.

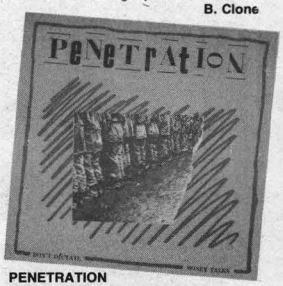
B. Clone



JOHNNY AND THE SELF-ABUSERS
Chiswick Import
(Saints and Sinners / Dead Vandals)

Addict nuns behind bars. The song titles look like this'll be cliche, but the band proves the assumption wrong. Dynamic and to the point, "Saints and Sinners" tells a dirty street story about the microscopic thread separating right and wrong. "Dead Vandals" pushes even further, lullaby for an urban nightmare. The vocals are especially tough, romantic and slurred with the agony of total isolation.

B. Clone



PENETRATION
Virgin Import
(Don't dictate / Money talks)

Always wanted to know what that gang sounded like. Not as nasty as the name suggests, but nastiness's out anyway. Great girl singer named Pauline who really knows how to carry a song, super tight band and super neat recording. A-side is the best but that don't mean the other one is dismissible. Something a bit early Jefferson Airplane in the whole thing, maybe in the way she sings above the melody. Don't mean that as a put-down. This band sounds well and alive.

K.B.F.

IGGY AND THE STOOGES
Bomp Records
(Sick of you / Tight pants / Scene of the crime)

Take your money to Bomp and you too can own a piece of history. Sad but true you can listen to Side A and mourn the passing fact. It's called "I'm sick of you" and is a very fine lament to God. Other side is the two fast songs so they don't sound as worn out, speed doing wonders. "Tight pants" plays more ass than the Raw Power version which was well dressed under heavy manners. Then we get the new original of the batch, "Scene of the Crime." It is a jubilant song about finding true love and getting out of there fast.

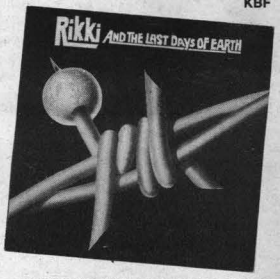
Not for collectors only.

Basho M.

BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS
Island Import
(Punky Reggae Party / Jamming)

Lovely up-tempo number from the Rasta king. A definite celebration of unity, a great dance tune, an uplifting single. Side B was already done on an album. Let's hope the message gets heard throughout "this world of hypocrisy."

KBF



RIKKI AND THE LAST DAYS OF EARTH
DJM Records Import
(Cities of the Damned / Victimized)

If Bryan Ferry and Roxy had gone punk this might be what they would sound like. Hard to imagine, until you hear this. Amazingly clean production with super tight playing, fancy balance between the various elements, couple of tricky spots that work without being flash, and an unusually slick singer with a voice that was made to be recorded. Everything's just so right without being boring or just too pro. Many will hate it; fuck them. It's a masterpiece. They look punkier than most, they sound better than most, what's bothering you, purists? Maybe they would sound just as good in a garage!

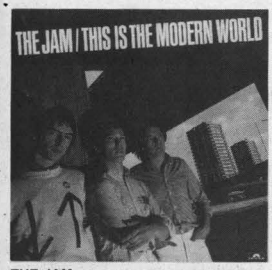
K.B.F.

CELIA AND THE MUTATIONS
(You better believe it / ?)

Probably this record is more musically competent than the debut and she probably sings better and all but I never played it more than I had to because they don't do "Mony mony" like the first one. Maybe I should have skipped over her life story in the press releases. The record sports an all star cast and may have grown on me if It didn't get stolen by a Berkeley Social Science Major female.

Basho M.

Albums



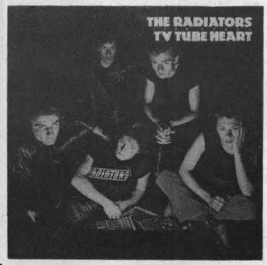
THE JAM
"THIS IS THE MODERN WORLD"
Polydor Import

This LP is gonna look pretty funny in a couple of months: one side will be all scratched and funky, the other in perfect just-out-of-the-sleeve condition. There are 3 songs on Side 2 that effectively prevent me from ever playing it. "I need you" and "Tonight at noon" are just too pretty and soft for this day and age (although well done, but who cares?!) and Wilson Pickett's "Midnight Hour" I have heard probably one thousand times too many. Even if Nico did it I wouldn't listen! It's one of those rock "classics" that should be swiftly killed before another generation of rockers decides to have a go at it. And the Jam's version ain't too special anyway. So there are three good songs left on that side, but who wants to constantly pick the needle off the grooves?.

Leaves us with Side 1, which as mentioned before is quickly disappearing. "Modern world" we already know and love (beautiful proof that even pop can be aggressive and tough), and the others are just as tight and fast and super energetic. It's almost impossible to take them separately, they blend and complete each other so well.

The Jam's songs are unique in their excellent mixing of melody, relevance and hard edges. Yes, it's pop, but the hardest pop being recorded these days. It makes you feel good and strong. And it even has things to say and feelings to get across. Even its occasional naivete is exciting. The Jam only sing of what they know, but with more conviction than many would-be instant world reformers.

C.B.



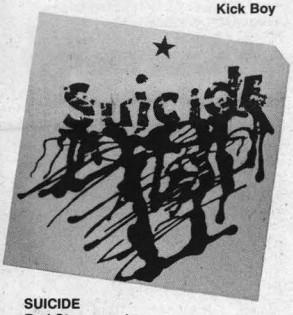
THE RADIATORS FROM SPACE
"TV TUBE HEART"
Chiswick Import

You didn't think the feelings of despair and oppression were purely an English youth exclusivity, now, did you? Ireland ain't so rosy either, as you will quickly gather from this first Radiators album. Although not always in total musical control, and at times heavily borrowing from left and right, the Radiators have still come up with an interesting and sometimes rather good collection of songs. It might not be all candy to your ears at first approach, but you will pick out enough moments here and there to go back to it again, and again, and some songs will soon become kind of favorites, although you might find it hard to explain why to newcomers.

One thing is certain: they really worked at separating their songs, giving each one a different style and mood. Unlike the Clash (who they will remind you of occasionally), there is a lot of sadness in their despair. (Everyone knows the Irish are not ashamed of their tears.) And if their anger lacks direction (TV is about the only enemy they're sure of), they certainly aren't to be blamed for it. How many of us *really* know what we're mad at?

This album hasn't got much of a chance on the so-called alternative charts (no Stranglers uniformity and slickness here) but that shouldn't matter to anyone really interested in what's going on. The Radiators are an important group, and sometimes that's much better than being a good group. And there are 2 or 3 songs ("Great Expectations," "Ripped and Torn," "Enemies") that are right up there with the best. I even like the sloppy harmonies.

Kick Boy



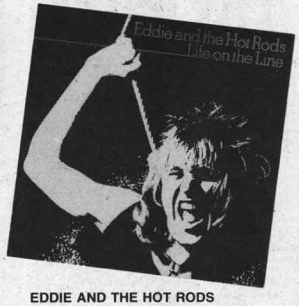
SUICIDE
Red Star records

I took this record to the stereo store, it convinced the owner his systems were defective so bad he cancelled his subscription to LET'S LIVE magazine. He dropped me his store for Dexoxin and morphine.

This album is like pre"Landed" Can coming off an American dose (twice as much, two times) doing songs like "Crimson and Clover." The combination sounds innocent enough but it's the only truly sick and self inflicted album I've heard in over a year. Where's the new Nico? I just pawned a bunch of receivers for too much demerol, sounds like Suicide, I'd stand up but the chair's too far over my head the kitchen table's a skyscraper from here. Look at the insects, see the rodents, they crawl all over my body I don't notice. What am I doing in New York?

Sometimes here in New York they prop me by the TV, I hear the news and those world disasters don't seem much. They talk about the guy who used to be at the stereo store. He pushed his mother out the window, his wife went down the elevator shaft, his kids never got out of the oven. They gunned him in the kitchen. The blood on the walls spelled my name. I heard the story from his brother and I'm not affected. I hear Suicide. I am normal.

A. Macaral



EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS
"LIFE ON THE LINE"
Island

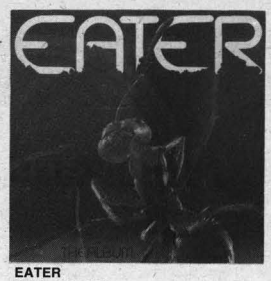
Some cover! It sounded catchy when I first played it, then I had a desire to try it at 45 for a bit, that sounded good. From then on I couldn't like the album. It has a boring theme, kids growing up and facing city life. It gets a lighthearted Beach Boys feeling. I hate those guitars and constant annoying little drum rolls throughout. It turns into a fast disco-type beat, Barry sings with an American accent. They're traveling fast, it smells like smart clothes, fast cars and all that stuff. The songs are all too long, some of them are ballads. For one they launch into a rocked up Pink Floyd (sort of) instrumental. I want to hear something new! Last song—"it's too late the damage is done" (cutting this album, I think). This one goes on for 8 minutes and 16 seconds. I've had enough.

Pea

RAMONES
"ROCKET TO RUSSIA"
Sire SR 6042

Fourteen more number one AM hits, but you still can't get a Ramones lunch pail. By the time the 4R's get the recognition they deserve and put out a greatest hits LP (at the rate things are going, anyway), it'll have, hmmm, what's 20 times 14 songs? I betcha the Ramones are pissed off. They & everybody else knows how much commercial appeal their sound has, and they & everybody else thought that this album would break in a big way. Who says there's no censorship in America? We punks are victims of repression. This fuckin' album should be #1.

Eddie Guts



EATER
"THE ALBUM"
The Label Import

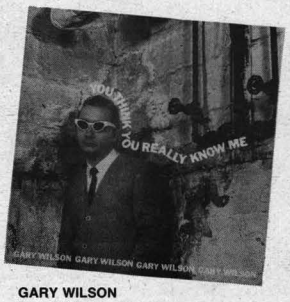
Feel like zooming down a dark tunnel full of unidentified stench, peopled by aggressive street kids with venom in their mouths and contempt in their hearts, with a continuous sound that fluctuates from mild heart attack to serious amphetamine overdose? No? Well, it's lots of fun actually, providing you're not the delicate kind.

Eater's music is a meat-grinder, churning out more or less similar piles of something. Even when they put others' songs in that meat-grinder of their (one Bowie song, one Alice Cooper, one Lou Reed), what comes out is pure Eater. Some pansies out there will cringe away and dismiss the reslt as garbage, but there's lots more to Eater than one may think at first. Their whole abominable sound creeps up on you, although I haven't found myself humming it yet. And there's something admirable in their one-dimensional attack on our finer side.

Their humor is, of course, a bit mysterious but that John Lennon/Pink Floyd parody of their ("Luv and Piece") that gets interrupted in the middle by a full scale atomic explosion must be *some* kind of humor. And they have some fine lyrics. And then they have some other types of lyrics: "I don't want to see you no more / coz you're just a scabby whore / Get raped / Go get fucked." There's even some sweet mentions of necrophilia somewhere.

I play it with earphones 'cause I don't want to show the darker side of my psyche to everybody, but some of you who ain't that refined may find it a great party album. Just don't invite the mellow contingent.

Kickboy



GARY WILSON
Gary Wilson Label
(This is an album with many songs)

This guy tried to bother me all the way from 204 Bermuda Ave., Endicott, N.Y. on the phone. Please, Gary, next time just send money. So you're bent on making a comedy album sicker than Berlin. Fine, great you're far away.

If you pay attention to this album it may put you in a light jazzy sleep. You will dream about your little sister and not remember it when you wake up.

Sigmundo Macko

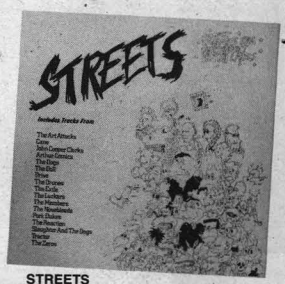
THE HEARTBREAKERS
"L.A.M.F."
Track Import

Johnny Thunders makes a comeback album after never getting anywhere in the first place. For some reason it sounds like the New York Dolls which means it sounds somewhat stoneish, but those bums got slim chance of a comeback. These Heartbreakers may drug down at times but they never just drop dead on you and do nothing.

They do one or two ballads and loads of medium to upbeat tempo tunes about day to day living. There's a heavy portion of lost love and world weariness in the Heartbreakers potion, which is not at all unusual except this album is one depression you can dance to, in a vaguely old fashioned way. It's like maybe you smashed in my brain but I wasn't saving it for anything special and anyhow someone smashed me up worse last week.

It's a real good album and should keep J.T. and crew in Chinese Rock until death do them part. This is the ultimate optimum accessibility cross-over album in the world and I haven't even heard Elvis Costello.

Basho M.



STREETS
(Featuring: The Doll, the Members, the Lurkers, Arthur Comics, Art Attacks, the Dogs, the Reaction, Cane, Slaughter & the Dogs, The Nosebleeds, the Drones, the Zeros, the Pork Dukes, the Exile, Drive, John Cooper Clarke and Tractor)

Quite a collection, uh? This great LP is a compilation of various independently produced singles of 1977. A few of those singles made their way to our stores, but most didn't. Fuckin' shame, too, 'cause there are some gems in there.

I don't know who some of these guys are and if they're still together, I don't know why they're never mentioned anywhere, I just know there are songs on this platter that just won't leave my head. I don't care if the sound is muddy on most, the vocals buried, the production a hit and run job. What still comes thru is real raw music with feelings to match.

Favorites of the moment are "Trash" by the Doll, "College girl" by Cane, "Bend and flush" by the Pork Dukes, "Jerkin" by Drive, and most of all "Innocent" by the intriguing John Cooper Clarke. In years to come this LP will be a testimony to the formidable level of anger there was in 1977. Let's hope laid-back has been killed for good.

KBF

P.S. Now, the inside dirt (from our secret investigator on the spot): the album is a compilation by the management of the Vortex (ex-mercenary and assorted gangsters) of groups who have played at the venue . . . most of them have basically signed away their lives (the contract), too naive to read the small print . . . for the sake of appearing on an album and getting their names around. They have signed away their rights to future recordings: they have to record for the *Vortex* label *only* or pay the price of breaking away.

"My Sun Glasses are Better than Yours"

ON ONE SIDE there is a full performance of a great musical work, just as on the ordinary

ON THE OTHER SIDE is an illuminating analysis of the music, with the

IT MAY BE TRUE! Awkward and ugly, of course.

10 LINE — 15 PICAS

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me WANT BREAKFAST!
JIMBO.
KANT SEAM TWO GETT THE EASY TWIST-OFF LID OFF.'
JIMBO.
FINALLY GOT THE CAP OFF!
URITCH.
GLUG GLORP GLUK.
I MUSTA BROKE THE LIP OF THE BOTTLE!!!
UH! MUH FINGERS BLEEDIN'.
MVH LIP!!!
JIMBO.
I should wash it out good to pervent infection... yeah lather up good... SHit! I might As well SHAVE while I'm IN HERE.
GLARS BY TATER
RONNIE

K-ROQ and Rodney Bingenheimer present:

RAMONES
RUNAWAYS

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Slash

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PHOTO: RON ZAK

SLASH PAGE TWO

DIANNE BLELL, *OH YOU PUNK!*, A DATED ISSUE. 1978

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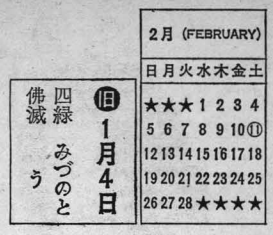

Cover: We ain't stupid, we know that glamorous women sell more magazines, so what else could we do but put the lovely Poly Styrene on it...

Pic: Virginia Turbett

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EDITORIAL

WARNING: CRAZED PUNKS AHEAD

All right, children, let's get something straight. Since it looks like you and us are going to be around for a while and not disappear as good taste and the spirit of moderation say we should, it seems a good time (Pistols break-up/Masque closed/Pop Punk predictions—three disturbing thoughts to throw anyone's pogo off balance) to clarify our eternally muddled positions and to show what the unsuspecting world may and may not expect from this rabid tabloid.

Warning Number One: There ain't no SLASH philosophy and there ain't no SLASH T-shirts. If we ever rounded up* the multitude of misfits who write, doodle, sell, snap pics and punch noses for our cause ***in the same room*** it would be a disastrous pandemonium sure to lead to a full scale rumble. The only thing anybody would manage to agree on is that it shouldn't be otherwise. There are even a few in the crew who secretly have a shameful fondness for other musics besides punk! And we don't mind too much, as long as they keep discreet. How could we offer a united philosophical front under such conditions? Which means that you too with the Roxy Music hangover, can write for SLASH, as long as you've reformed and are humbly willing to start a new meaningful life. And there ain't no T-shirts 'cause in this new life there won't be uniforms. There ***are*** SLASH badges, but badges are only happy in the company of other badges which more often than not add confusion to the overall statement.

Warning Two: Narrow-minded as we are, we are vaguely aware that there are other things in life besides punk madness. There are Kiss, Rick Wakeman, Idi Amin, Ed Davis and the Dictators. There's probably more. When we do not review your band or publish your poetry or your erotic novel it is by no means a sign of disapproval. We are simply completely disinterested. Others may not be. Good luck. This year you're gonna see all kinds of attempts ***on the punk movement*** to defuse it, clean it up, polish it, and make it palatable and respectable. The record companies will work at it, the bands will hesitate about it, the media will help with it, the fashion designers will dabble in it. SLASH will not break down and give up the fight. It will not age into mellowness and pacifism. It will scream, "Liars!" to the liars and "Sell-out!" to the sell-outs. When a band or a magazine stops having something to say (even if the message is only "have fun, goddamit!") it will be unpolitely asked to step aside, there are kids behind you itchy to have a go at it, it will be added to the long list of success casualties and its name will be scraped off the record. When SLASH does the same it will self-destruct or become a porno rag. It will not become a Rolling Stone and gather moss. It will not love everybody, brother.

Warning Three: As for the music itself, it cannot stand still. Just as more songs are being written everyday, more ways to do them will have to be found. Experimenting is vital. Some of you have even discovered that if you take chances and actually move your fingers into another position on the guitar neck you get a different sound. Keep at it. You'll soon find that the ways to get all those burning formless urges and thoughts across are countless. Even if our noise becomes sophisticated and varied it can retain its purity and its life. You ain't been to no music school but you gonna blow them off stage anyway 'cause you're real and you mean it. Don't ever just ***sit down*** to play that guitar. We want ***from you*** every particle of energy you've got. And don't let record people replace one of you in the studio for that crucial intro or that difficult ending by some wizened studio musician on their payroll. Actually, don't let record people tell you shit. They don't know what they're talking about half of the time anyway.

Warning Four: The delicate matter of who's paying for all this, or the advertisement dilemma. Juicy, uh? You little fanatics are bound now and then to come upon a page, or a half page or just a tiny quarter page that offends your purist values and makes you question our sincerity. Some of us in this great glass building with the ten-foot SLASH neon sign on top may even react similarly to that same page. And even though a paid ad is not a SLASH statement, you have the right to expect a certain consistency between what we say and what we help to sell. So a certain consistency is what we'll try to have. It was painful turning down that ad for Peter Frampton last week but we did it (come on!). And when we do get the occasional surprise plug for something we don't know nothing about and it turns out to be a bomb, a rip off and an embarassment but we didn't check it out or we were fucking desperate that month or we just got fooled, you can always express your righteous anger in the letters section, burn your copy in public or take another ad to counterattack. Tell the world what low scum we are, make us crawl in a hole with guilt in our hearts. Then wait 'til ***you*** fuck up!

And if you're still wondering if anything's gonna be said about the Pistols superstars breaking up or the Masque stopping its weekend hootenanny nights, relax:

One. Pistols break-up is only logical conclusion to their meteoric rise to fame. Pistols' image was starting to suffer from overkill publicity. Contradictions arose. Fear of becoming what they despised when they started. If they reunite, fine. They may be more careful next time. If they don't, fine. There are other bands. Other records. Other living outrages. Time to imitate someone else, kiddos. ***It does not matter.*** Over. Two. The Masque. ***It does matter.*** As soon as we know what has to be done we will do it. You too. Over. Pure punk lives.

LOCAL SHIT

The Dils are minus a drummer. Rand McNally will shortly leave the famous hard-core band, either after their latest S.F. gig or after an Arizona concert on the 18th of February. If Rand leaves before the San Francisco concert, the Dils will appear there under a (momentarily) new name, Police and Thieves. It will actually be a Dils/Avengers composite band with Danny on drums, Greg on guitar, with Tony and Chip on their respective instruments. The set will include a selection of Dils and Avengers songs plus a version of, of course, "Police and Thieves." Almost makes us feel like going up there again! The Dils have already played two dates in San Francisco this month, one co-starring with the Avengers and one with the Ramones.

The February Arizona thing (first local band to strike the wilderness) will include two local punk bands. One is known as The Consumers, the other is still unknown.

The reasons for Rand leaving the Dils are obvious to anyone who has been watching the local goings-on. It became too big a responsibility for Rand, considering his growing involvement in Dangerhouse records, the Black Randy world and his recently admitted (and proven live) allegiance to the Randoms. On the other side, the Dils had been looking for a drummer for a while, the two parties having too many "ideological" differences. Both sides insist that the parting was amiable. We certainly wouldn't want it any other way . . .

Germ Pat Smear was evicted from the Whisky during the Fast set for the Bomp night. Apparently it had something to do with the lead singer's hair and what Pat tried to do to it . . . X now has a new drummer, Don, formerly with the Eyes. X's single still awaited on Dangerhouse. Main track will probably be "Blue Spark" . . . speaking of Dangerhouse again, that rapidly growing offbeat label has been doing a brisk business with England's Rough Trade Records and is now negotiating with the already mentioned Arizona band the Consumers . . . F-Word upcoming night at the Whisky with the Dils (who cancelled and were replaced by . . . oh yes, the Quick) was advertised in the L.A. Times Whisky box as simply "Word." Deletion of the "F" was no doubt due to moral reasons! . . . John Ingham, mastermind behind British fanzine London's Burning and now one of the managers of Generation X, was in town, checkout out the possibilities of a tour by the group later this year . . .

Melissa's 21st birthday in a seedy Hermosa bath house was mucho fun. The Germs played (if not their most proficient) their most unique set . . . Highlights included Darby crashing & gashing his head, Pat smashing & bashing someone's face, and many of the guests pashing out . . . The fun fun fun continued on into the night, as many ended up at Canters on Fairfax, drinking all of Melissa's presents . . .

More Music Shit: The Dickies are releasing a single produced by Earl Mankey (to be distributed by Bomp/JEM) . . . The Rubber City Rebels are cutting an LP with Moustique (the legendary Frog Rocker) & rumor has it Little Richard is gonna tickle the ivories . . . They are also planning a possible tour of the Northwest . . . Canadian new wavers the Diodes will be playing the Starwood April 15-17 & hopefully they have more to offer than their N.Y. counterparts . . . The L.A. bands should consider importing drummers from the West Indies (where they are abundant) as it seems like everyday one leaves a local outfit (Skulls—Mick, Dils—Rand, and, dare we say it, Screamers—KK [a vicious rumor at this point] not to mention the Germs continuing search) . . .

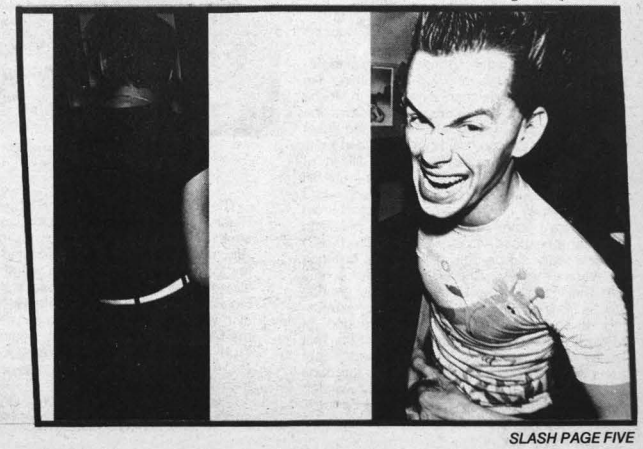
The Troubadour is trying its hand, watch for Zeros/X/Flesheaters on Feb. 26 . . . Phone calls at the office indicate a possible Don Kirchner TV punk show & they seem to be doing their research . . . And meanwhile . . . New mags on the newsstands—New Poseur ($2) with neat approach to the fashion attitude . . . New Flipside chock full of (their always) unique slants . . . New Lobotomy with its usual slander (but a great ad on page 5) . . . Also, the latest Punk Rock is out in its typically shitty format, but there is a full page/full color pic of none other than Nicky Beat (and an absurd article on the Weirdos) . . .

Helen & Trudi are facing eviction (they've been quoted as saying the reasons are mass complaints from neighbors jealous of their tasteful apartment decor) . . . Basho Macko has left his position with this mag; seems he's had offers from Larry Flynt &, coupled with his current executive position at one of L.A.'s finer stores, he just couldn't see any way to balance his schedule . . . Possible replacement: the writing team from Mary Tyler Moore . . .

Photo: Melanie Nissen

Trivia: James Destri wears his favorite group's button (Screamers) on the new Blondie album . . . Phast Phreddie is tentatively DJing a new punk radio feature on KXLU . . . A car full of rastas has been seen driving around Hollywood . . . in the passenger seat was none other than Punky Reggae B. Marley—you gonna play 'round, brudda? . . .

Our last words this month are about ***your future***: there is one (or several) benefit(s) being planned at this very moment for The Masque. Chances are every band you'll ever want to see will perform and if this does not pull you out of your stupor and your hereditary lethargy nothing ever will. There is growing unrest in the cities of the dead, in the cities of the dead, in the cities of the dead . . .



"LET'S MAKE THE SCENE"

RODNEY BINGENHEIMER

"Rodney is an apostle of Punk, his producers are New Wave visionaries, and this record is the result of immaculate conception."
PHIL SPECTOR

"I like the beat. It's really neat!"
JOEY RAMONE/ RAMONES

"A screaming Rock 'n' Roll scene maker . . . Number 6 in the New Wave hit parade."
RECORD WORLD MAGAZINE

arranged and produced by

DAN and DAVID KESSEL

"Being the first to record Rodney, I'm proud to announce that his new record is a hit."
KIM FOWLEY

"Surf's up, America! Power rock meets bright madness as Rodney rides the New Wave."
DEBBIE HARRY/ BLONDIE

"Death to Disco!"
RODNEY BINGENHEIMER

Razor Records/Deep Sleep P.O. Box 3751 Hollywood Calif. 90028
Executive Coordination: Chimera

SNIPES

Saturday Night Fever met Power Pop in a cultural drug crossover: "poppers" at the Whisky for Greg Shaw's Bomp-A-Rama featuring the nerves, the Zippers, 20/20 and headlining the Fast from NYC with a vengeance. Bumped heads with guitarist Mickey Zone at Ralphs—he was picking up a smart set of crew sox in dayglo stripes. Never one to say die—he played his mouth, his ears and the sweat off his brow that night to win over a fighting mad L.A. crowd. Frankenstylish lead singer Paul Z. sprayed the rustling throng with Cheerios for dessert after feeding them his entire body. The Zone bros. were staying at the red-lite Hollywood Palms "Whorehouse" Motel on Sunset Boulevard—right on the battlefront of the Cops vs. Hookers war for control of the streets.

What if the Screamers threw a party and nobody came? The last one went something like this: Jenny Lens rubs contact sheets with Moshe Brahka—KK & the Weirdos skate across the kitchen on a sea of spaghetti—Punk mag editor Leggs McNeil locks himself in a closet and kicks his way out—Andy of the Paley Bros. fills in for rockin' writer Phast Phreddy on quips—SLASH brings 27 cheeseburgers from McDonalds—Etta James phones in a pizza—art directors from Larry Flynt's Slam prowl for phoney punks to pose for an expose—Spaz of the Goldcups on a window ledge taking bets on going the distance—"Wasn't that Ava Cherry?"—Two Zeros plus two Dickies plus one Dil agitating the general kinetic frenzy—Singer/model Jane Gaskal refusing to be anyone's coatrack—Brendon of Masque fame giving instant replays of his "not really closed" speech—Flashbulbs and beer cans popping one-on-one—And then the cops strobe through the digs and can only wonder: "How did you get the spaghetti on the ceiling?"—Tommy Gear never did show.

The Ramones/Runaway post-San.Mo. Civic bash turned the merry-go-round room off the Santa Monica Pier into what looked like a leather lover's cruise bar, after counting up the number of cockrings, silver-studded cycle jackets and shredded levis parading the midway.

"food you can wear"

The Crown Prince of T-Bone Liquors himself, Black Randy, elaborated on his plans to lens a shock-doc biopic titled "Black Randy Goes to Africa." Locations are being scouted in the Valley for the bloody epic which will chronicle the slaughter of 200 zealous wetbacks and features Flo Ballard as the Great White Goddess. B.R. also wants to use Connie-who-serves-Cokes-at-the-Masque and that "love 'n' death" covergirl Trudi as back-up Randettas in an upcoming Bar-B-Q Revue. Craig of the Bags is gonna "whip them bitches into shape."

"I want you for my next picture," Charles Bronson has reportedly said to Debbie Harry. Which next picture is unknown. Blondie fans might have caught Chris & Debbie on Channel Z faking chords to a metronome as part of a glittering rock band in a 2½-year-old Don Murray turkey called "Deadly Hero." Eagle-eyed cineasts will also catch Tad Screamer on keyboards, Snooky of the Sic Fuks on somebody's laps and—yes!—Gorilla Rose as "lead dancer" in the group—it turned out there weren't any words to be synched.

To counteract the rash of punk-junkie OD stories about those boys who just can't cut it & wind up getting hauled off the plane on a stretcher, here's a tale about one who could: "Leroy . . . stated that he had been addicted to the morphine and coke since he was a boy of 14, and had recently been making injections a hundred times a day, every ten minutes or less. The whole of his body from head to foot was simply one mass of tiny scars." (From "Fame & Fortune Weekly," dated 1914)

A band of socio-religious, angelic street toughs just popped up in New York City. They are Blessed. Yell King for the group is monikered Excessive—and that's a sure start to a rewarding future for a bunch of rowdy 14-year-olds. Discovered by Manic Panic ragshop proprietress Gina Franklin, the teddy-clad young dudes have penned a string of holy hits—"Burning Churches," "Disco Holocaust" and "Bloomingdale Punks."

Brendon set up a private performance of the Deadbeats at the Masque and videotaped their set as a demo for Dangerhouse, who is said to be courting the jazz-punk combo. The last group known to have Betamaxed their future the big screen Advent way was—the Babies.

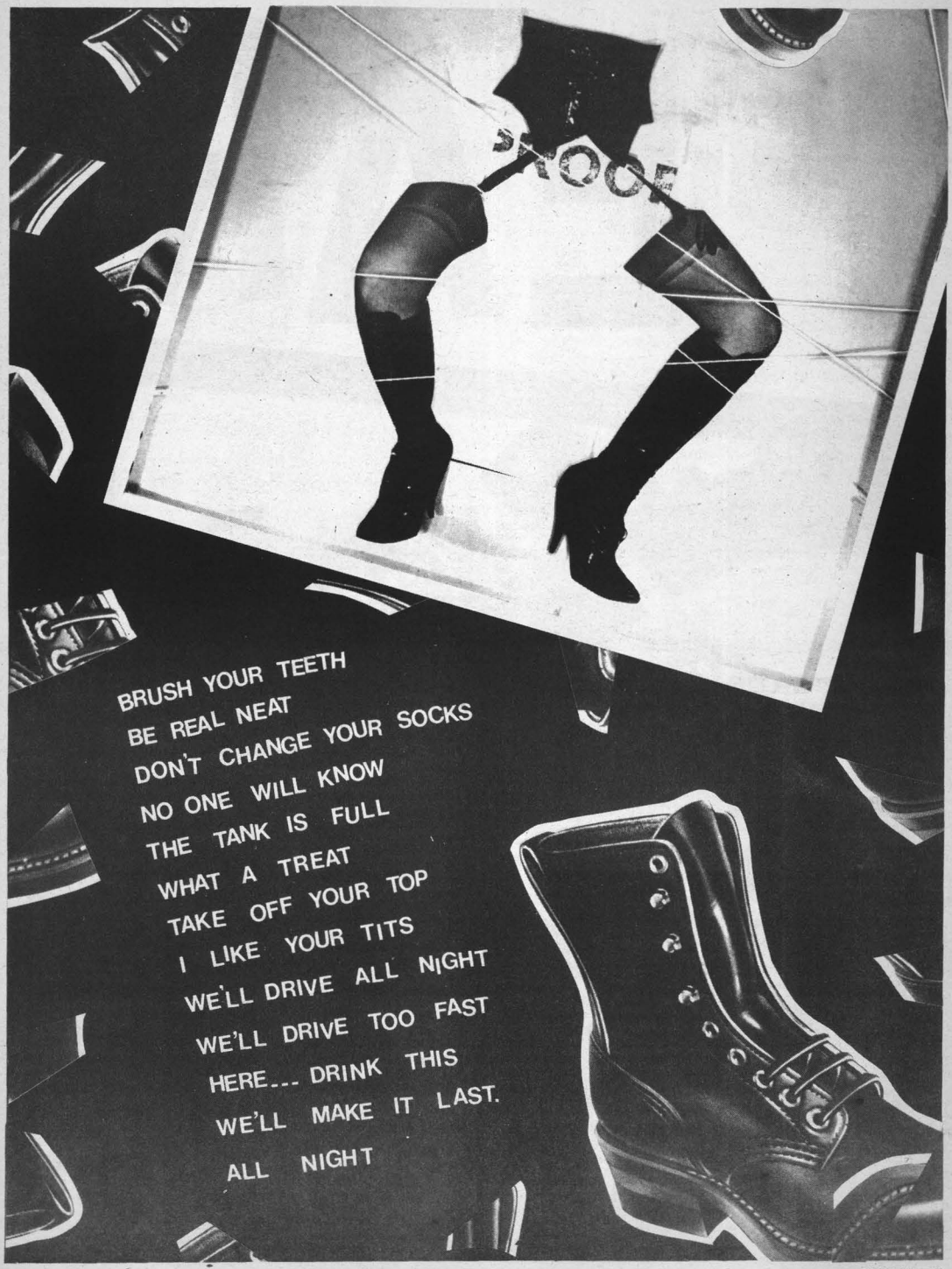
According to London's New Musical Express, there are only 70 punks on the L.A. scene. It's just that they move around real fast so it looks like more.

It's been punk
Gorilla

FEAR

GRIPS THE CITY

BS


BRUSH YOUR TEETH
BE REAL NEAT
DON'T CHANGE YOUR SOCKS
NO ONE WILL KNOW
THE TANK IS FULL
WHAT A TREAT
TAKE OFF YOUR TOP
I LIKE YOUR TITS
WE'LL DRIVE ALL NIGHT
WE'LL DRIVE TOO FAST
HERE--- DRINK THIS
WE'LL MAKE IT LAST.
ALL NIGHT

BLUE LEACH

"YOU'VE BEEN DUPED."

"For years you've been duped. You thought you were getting real rock 'n' roll...you were just getting cabaret."
Eddie.

"There are bands today who are making music which is very relevant to 1968. The Vibrators' music is relevant to 1978."
Knox.

"Knox is the best songwriter of the late seventies. The Vibrators are the best band of the late seventies."
Gary.

"We are people." **John.**

The Vibrators aren't kidding.
"PURE MANIA"
On Columbia Records and Tapes.

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dread greats!

PART II More reggae classics from Ja

REVOLUTIONARY DREAM
Pablo Moses
JigSaw Records ?

The question mark after the record label is because this was purchased as a pre-release (common practice in England among fanatics—a few hundred copies get released before the record is officially put out on the market, and sell for to to five times the normal price) and I don't know what label it is on now.

This is extremely thick, "gummy" reggae with a hint of jazz in some of the longer cuts. Progressive reggae, except progressive has such bad connotations (Genesis!) and in this case it only means it is carefully structured stuff that nevertheless retains its "roots" feeling. The percussion is strong and pushy, the horns tasty and totally controlled, and Pablo Moses' voice is highly unusual. It goes from a monotonous drone to a charged intense wailing and back to a mumbled moaning from song to song. A bit like Burning Spear but with more scope. The mood of the album is dark, oppressive. It stands a bit aside of the others. If LPs have personality, this is a loner.

CB 200
Dillinger
Mango Records

One of the few DJ records to be released in the States (Island), Dillinger is one of the newer Jamaican toasters. His stuff is quite original, owing very little in style to the U. Roys, I. Roys and others. Very rapid delivery (have fun trying to decipher it) with a choppy uptempo instrumental track, social comments mixed with Rastafarian philosophy and obscure (for us anyway) jokes and allusions, the whole LP is a serious challenge to reason. It is full of mysterious hiccups, lost horn sections looking for a tune, bells that ring at unexpected moments, long stories about Bruce Lee, Babylon, your grandmother, cocaine and Buckingham Palace, not forgetting the constant advertisements for ganja.

SUPER APE
The Upsetter (Lee Perry)
Island Records

Dub extraordinaire. One of Lee Perry's new epic endeavors, an amazing mixture of sounds and voices, rhythms and echoes, catch phrases and phrases hard to catch, all filtered through the master's console. Purists may resent such an electronic mumbo-jumbo, zealots may object to the indiscriminate use of dread imagery, the general public may pull away in terror from such an insane baroque approach to music, but the Upsetter (Perry's newest name) keeps on recording his mind-boggling sound. Check the album cover first (a giant gorilla-like creature with bloodshot eyes and spliff in hand emerging from some primal swampy jungle) and then proceed at your own risk. Not for people who put good taste above all.

RAM A DAM
Yabbu U and the Prophets

The record sleeve says IEVAE or something similar as the record company, the sticker on the vinyl says LUCKY, and it's probably another company altogether. The creative force behind this is called Vivian Jackson. Beautiful, forward reggae music—simple, effective and attention grabbing. These guys really mean every note and every word. Although not great singers, the overall effect is one of tightness and tension. It moves you even if you have no idea what they're talking about. And just about every important Ja musician is listed as having somehow participated. Which, as opposed to the same thing with rock albums (remember the super sessions fad?) does not mean an orgy of conflicting ego gratifications. Nobody's here to show off. Only the sound counts. In "Ram A Dam" it's a hell of a sound.

M.P.L.A.
Tapper Zukie
Klik records

The biggest reggae chart hit of the past few months. Every track is outstanding toasting, with "Pick up the rockers" and the title cut dominating the pack. Zukie's style is slightly offbeat (he sounds like he has a permanent cold and is always on the verge of running out of breath), he repeats each sentence in a different manner, drops it to let the backing sound or vocals take over then takes it up again with more amplification and more urgency. Not unlike a revivalist preacher driving his point home until he has hypnotized his audience into agreeing with whatever he is saying. When other DJs simply ride the melody and stick pretty much to the already laid down pattern, Tapper Zukie totally takes off, which sometimes results in his voice being left totally by itself for three or four seconds until the music catches up again. Of course this is not the way it is really recorded, and the beat is always right there, no matter how faintly, but the result is puzzling.

If this record is any indication, Ja sounds are indeed going in some pretty strange directions (Zukie's second LP does go further, with mixed results). If only Patti Smith's highly publicized friendship with this man helps in any way in making his music more available, she might even be forgiven for her recent behavior.

To close all this, let me just say that words are only words, and in no way can they convey the beauty and the importance of such records. It is not too late to give these people an appreciative audience, it is not too late to show the bastards and the idiots who think they can decide what music we can hear and see that they do not completely rule and dictate the public taste. There are more important matters than going platinum or hanging in the charts for three months in a row. Or are there?

Chatty Chatty Mouth

letters

Dear SLASH,

. . . When are the L.A. bands gonna come East? Most of the new bands around the New York area suck. They don't ***suck,*** it's just that they're just more lame power pop shit. The last good new bands were the Cramps and the Dead Boys. Oh no wait, I take that back, the Sic F*cks are great! But I mean your new bands are so much better. Another good new N.Y. band is the Blessed. They have a fourteen-year-old guitarist, a sixteen-year-old lead singer, a seventeen-year-old bassist and no permanent drummer yet. They look great and their songs include "Bound and gagged," "Kindergarten Hardon" and "Burning Churches." So how are the SLASH-BDM gangwars coming along?

Arthur Bremer

The L.A. bands will go East when they are able to read less biased opinions about them in the Eastern music press. No, seriously, we don't know and they don't know. But perhaps they'll answer more specifically your question in the next issue. And there are no SLASH-BackDoor Man "gangwars." Just skirmishes and bad-rapping. All very healthy.

KBF

SLASH,

Thank you for the extensive coverage of our debut performance at the Masque. I'd just like to point out that our name is spelled ***Plastikeaters*** not plastic Eaters. Oh, and you're quite right, we just might be heard from again. Also, be on the lookout for other concerts and records by Plastikeater-sponsored groups such as The Fuck, the Barry Manilows, the Beethovens, the Urge, the Digesters and others.

Robert Willner
. Plastikeater Productions

If these bands REALLY exist, that's good news indeed. The more the merrier and all that. But where the fuck are they?? Come out and play for all the starved punk rockers 'stead of sitting home searchin' for killer names! With a name like The Barry Manilows, I'd say you've already got quite a head start!

Kick Face

PUNK IS DEAD, LONG DIE PUNK, or time to E-volve

Let's face it kids, it's over, the last remaining scraps still being chewed over and spit out back at us by the media (watch for the upcoming movie in your local theatre—about what you just lived thru!)

The Pistols have come and gone (forever?), the Masque has closed (& re-opened—only to be closed again), and AM and FM radio ignore it, the records don't sell, the Screamers are slow, Blondie's gone acid, the Weirdos are normal, even the second single releases by groups who wowed us on their first (Eater, 999, Dils, etc.) now bore us.

Trash your pins—on to the next phase—Change is life!

an x-punk
(actually a poser like 99 & 9/10% of you)
(It's just safety in numbers anyway)

Pessimistic poser,

Maybe what's dead are your own private expectations of a movement you yourself admit you were just playing at being a part of. But we see more music coming out than ever (most of it showing amazing examples of a constant improvement in quality and excitement), more kids digging it and more commitment on the part of all concerned. The radio battle is bound to be a tough one, you can't expect the bastards to surrender so easily. You're right on one small point though: safety pins are not anymore the symbol of sophistication they used to be. That's terrible!

If you find something else exciting, let us know. We've looked and looked, and lemme tell you, it's a bleak, boring world out there!

Face

SLASH,

How can your writers and contributors condemn the dreadful disco craze and then stand idly by when an equally mindless wimpy music is looming in our own backyard? That interview with Brian Jones look-alike (how archaically appropriate) last month seemed to be a full page advertisement for "power pop." I'm sick of these capitalistic money-grabbing entrepreneurs riding the coattails of punk. Mr. Shaw, it seems, has a valuable interest in pushing this kind of shit music, as most of the "power pop" bands (Mumps, The Fast, 20/20, etc.) are on his record label. His main message was that punk started the whole thing, now don't you want to progress on to the newest thing in music? ***What kind of trendies does he think we are???*** This kind of music is totally worthless, unaggressive and assumes that the nice little boy-girl Donny and Marie rah rah high school relationships are far-out, further stabilizing the mediocre, middle class apathetic ethic. And Mr. KROQ is just as bad, playing one punk song and then an endless stream of adolescent, high-pitched whine coated with sugar. He probably doesn't even like punk music (he might have earlier when he thought it was new and trendy). He must also have some (capital) interest in this "power pop" (i.e. The Quick with the Ramones, a part Rodney production, and the big push for Nick Guilder). Let's hope this venereal disease of music never gets past California. Let's hope SLASH exposes the fucking exploiters of punk for what they are, let's hope the punks never get taken in by this campaign of moronic schmaltz. You might as well be listening to "Heaven on the Seventh Floor" which I happened to hear for a tortuous five seconds in a local pizza parlor . . .

Hate and War
El-Tot sira

Well, there goes power pop! Greg Shaw's page was mainly a comparison between here and there and if he wanted to add his own predictions as to new directions it's his privilege. I don't think we're just idly standing by while the menace spreads, we just haven't seen many purveyors of the stuff, and when we have we were as blunt about it as with everything else. (Also check out this issue's review of some of the groups.)

Trust us never to push the "mediocre, middle class apathetic ethic" on anyone, ever. But I think you may have to look somewhere else (some of the bigger companies maybe?) to locate the true "exploiters of punk." Hey, what's "Heaven on the Seventh Floor"??

Kickboy

P.S. Heard of a British group called The Pleasers? Not only do they have the ultimate wimpy name, but they sound like the Beatles reincarnated. Thought you'd like to add a name to your list.

Eddie Guts, you ass,

The Ramones are peanuts. Boob tube bodies with no brains. NYC. I'm waiting for the big bands. (And when they come they'll come from the West. They did in the '40s, the '60s and they will in the '80s.) ***The West is the best.***

Sally Sue

Reply (via long distance collect call): What can I say, the only girls I know that don't like the Ramones are repressed bull dyke truck drivers with ugly enema fantasies. I could care less.

Eddie

Dear SLASH,

In your January issue you printed a letter by Sally Sue who tried to encourage everyone to phone their local radio stations and demand punk. It's a great idea if one wants it on the radio. But personally I wouldn't want it on the radio everyday. If too many people start liking punk/new wave, it will soon become big business. If so, we will have to deal with scalpers, bad seats, football playing bouncers (who will make you sit down) and all those other pains in the ass. We will no longer be able to watch the bands from the stage and talk to them. ***We have it made now!*** We shouldn't want it to be liked by most people. I am just happy that I like it and can enjoy it.

Keep Punk Underground!

P.S. I know the bands will disagree.

Richard Humbert

No way we'll agree with you on that one. If punk remains some kind of secret club for the happy few, it will die. Its format is perfect for the airwaves, and if played regularly it would make the other music look like the dying joke that it is. Let's spread the musical anarchy, I say, not act like a bunch of meek losers with shameful habits. Hiding will never be the way to change anything.

KBF

Dear SLASH,

The break up of the Sex Pistols has affected me greatly, as I'm sure many of your other readers. To pay my respects to The Legendary Sex Pistols, I enclose a tribute to them in this letter. If you have any room, which I am sure you do, I would like very much for you to publish my tribute. Thank you.

Tribute to the Sex Pistols

Although you were with us only a little while,
We've grown to love your sinister smiles.
You have made your mark in history,
How you did it will remain a mystery.
No matter what happens, we'll always be with you,
For you have changed our minds, and changed the rules.
And now you're a legend that will never grow old,
I write this tribute to the Sex Pistols

Written by Peter Gee

Pull yourself together, Peter. There will be more break ups than you've got rhymes.

Punk poems??

This month we received a strange little book of "Poems for Deviates" that we kinda liked 'cause it's homemade, it says "Remove Art Scum" on the back, it's small and short and it's got a cover like a miniature fanzine. A second issue called "Blades Inside" is coming out soon. As far as the poetry part is concerned, you decide for yourselves. We got a giggle or two from it. Contact Sonny "Birk" Maggit or Total Eclipse Jones, Rats Ass Press, 720 #2 Spurgeon St., Santa Ana, Ca. 92701.

P.S. This is NOT a call for poetry submissions. Only an endorsement of the do-it-yourself attitude. Don't bother us with the state of your soul. Publish it yourself.

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GORILLA ROSE TALKS TO CHLOE

Photo: M. Rolston

She uses a spectrum of colors once favored by the pharaohs—and still used heavily by Big Daddy Roth. She likes to bash faces with thumbfuls of metallic powders & stroke them into brilliant Kustom Kar Krash bruises. She wants to take your face and stab it with a fistful of shadow sticks then hose it down with brushloads of offbeat toners. She also wants to bleach her initials into your hair and set it on fire with a bottle of magenta ink. She will also consent to clip and bash new contours into the dead cells of your scalp with her barber shears—if you ask her real polite.

Her name is Chloe. You might have seen her around, or heard her clipping down the boulevards of glamour and crime on her way to paint up a face for a "shoot" or clip the locks of some unruly rocker. She walks like she owns the world.

How did you get into New West magazine as an illustration for an article on the Masque?
Topless shots. I guess I was just prettier than Brendan.
Where has it gotten you?
Nowhere.
You're an aspiring make-up artist, trying to carve out a career in the vicious, competitive world of cosmetics, right?
Sort of.
I see a classic Cosmo make-over story here: you come down into Hollywood from exotic Montreal, you see what's going on, you pull some talent out of a bag & say, "This is for me." Right?
No.
Well then, just what is your story?
I was more like shoved into it. I was staying at the Screamers house, which is like living in a hurricane. There was kind of an Oklahoma land rush to my door by everybody wanting me to cut their hair.
Whose hair have you cut?
John Doe of X, David Brown from Dangerhouse, Christian from the Mumps, Cherie the Penguin. Nobody with a name, really. Some models.
About make-up. Is there a "Chloe look"?
A lot of people say I make the girls I've done look like prostitutes. But I just like to give them some color.
So who needs this "Chloe look"?
Half the town.
Which half?
The bad half. The people in this town need some frightening up. There are so many pretty faces here it's boring.
I hear you like to laugh at cripples and the misfortunes of others.
(Chloe laughs.)
Your walk, can you describe it? Teutonic? Fast clipped?
Goose step.
You walk like a woman who knows her destiny. Is that true?
Sort of. I think I have my scissors with me . . .

XRAY SPEX

An interview with Poly-Styrene of X-Ray Spex . . . December, 1977 . . . In a bar in Shepperton studios . . .

Slash: ***Tell me how X-Ray Spex started.***
Poly: Well, I don't know really—around the beginning of the year, about Christmas, no, it was before, I decided to form a band and then we all got together and then we just happened.
Slash: ***You weren't in any other groups before?***
Poly: No, this is the first one. Except the drummer, he was in another punk band called Shag Nasty but that band only existed for a few weeks and then he joined us.
Slash: ***So when was X-Ray Spex formed?***
Poly: About Christmas, around January.
So it's just been a year—a pretty amazing year, eh?
Yeah, I s'pose so, pretty good.
You must be knocked out by what's happened the past year. Did you ever expect X-Ray Spex to get this big?
I don't really think about it—I never thought about it and I still don't. I just carry on.
You got a lot of reviews in established music papers here.
Yeah, I s'pose so—don't read them much.
What about tours? Have you done a lot of gigs? You've been playing in London but what about 'round the country?
We've done all the big cities nearly, I think.
What sort of size places do you play?
It all depends really. We've played quite big places and then small places—anywhere really.
What's the reception been like from your audiences?
I think it's been pretty good really.
How about Europe or Scandinavia?
No, we haven't been anywhere yet.
Have you plans for going abroad?
Yeah, I think so. We may be going to America soon.
I think you'll go down well over there. Do you know where you'll be going or where you want to go?
I don't really care. To me a gig's a gig. Plonk me there and I'll play. It is a bad attitude but that's my attitude towards it.
No, it's great. Better than the people who say—"I'll play New York and L.A. if I can fill them up with 5,000 people." The Pistols say they don't want to play N.Y. or L.A. I'm sure you'll go down really well. What do you think of America as a place now?
I just think it's interesting 'cos I think everywhere's interesting, that's all. A load of people say I don't want to play America and that it hasn't got a culture but to me it has got a culture, it's got a new culture—a culture of its own and you can't judge it until you've been there and you know about it. So it's interesting
A plastic culture?
That's why I'm interested in it.
"Bondage" was a great single. Have you any other plans for singles/albums?
Yeah, we've recorded quite a lot of material. We'll probably put out another single in January and then another one after that and then an album.
What title can we expect in January?
It'll either be "Identity" or if not that it'll be "The Day the World Turned Day-Glo."
Do you do all the writing?
Yeah.
Have you got any heroes or influences or anything like that?
I don't know really 'cos I'm influenced by everything. I don't pinpoint my influences to one person. Everything you see or hear is an influence. Obviously you can't say you're not influenced 'cos you're influenced by everything.
What about the other punk bands that are around at the moment—how do you rate them? Are there any you really admire?
I think the band I still like best is the Pistols. That's it for me.
What about any of the older bands before the whole punk thing started?
I never really liked them. I never really liked heavy rock or anything like that. I like reggae. I only ever liked two other people and that was Janis Joplin and Tina Turner.
What are your feelings about reggae now and the way it's going in England?
Yeah, I think it's good. I think it will be good when, like, young black bands start coming up in England . . . that'll be great.
'Cos it's not really happening yet.
It's beginning to, but they're not very young, a lot of them.
That doesn't matter.
No, it don't matter but it'd be nice if they did.
The time's pretty ripe for young reggae bands to come up and it's going to be great . . . Brixton Reggae. Are you living in Brixton now?
Sometimes.
Were you born in Brixton?
I can't remember where I was born—must've been in a hospital somewhere . . . but not actually in Brixton . . . I lived in Brixton after that.
Did Brixton affect you at all?
Well, everywhere affects you really.
What did you do before you were Poly-Styrene?
Everything really. I've done loads of different things. I left home at fifteen. I've done nothing, I've done boring jobs, just loads of different things really.
How old are you now?
Nineteen.
People have been telling us you're fifteen.
What a load of rubbish, I'm definitely not fifteen.
Who's your favorite reggae artists?
I like lots of different records. I like Tapper Zukie. I like him 'cos I like his words.
What about Augustus Pablo?
Don't know him.
How did "Oh Bondage" do as far as sales are concerned?
Well, it did quite well considering it had no promotion or anything, it just sold without any promotion. It wasn't stocked in all the record shops. It had no record company promotion and it was banned on the radio. They didn't really ban it, they just kept it very quiet. They didn't want to make a fuss about it. It was Secretary's record of the week but the producers didn't want to play it.

What do you think of Virgin Records?

Well, at the moment we're not signed to them, we just wanted to put a single out. It was just a one off deal. As far as our single's concerned they weren't really that good 'cos we weren't signed to them they didn't get it to the shops.

They've done a lot of bands like that—as a one off deal. I guess it's up to them to pick up on you if they really want to or if you really want them to. So you're still waiting for the right record company?

Well, we might sign to Virgin, but I'm not sure who we'll sign to 'cos we've got a few record contracts on offer. We just want to get the best one really . . . the one with not too many ties basically.

What do you think of Andy Warhol?

I don't really know a lot about him . . . only what's come over on the media and things like that. He was very good in his time but I haven't really got into him.

I asked you 'cos of the way you look and what your songs are all about—plastic and commodities and things—it's similar to what he was doing initially.

Trade names are great . . . Hoover and Electrolux . . . How did you get into New Wave? Were you attracted socially and politically?

Not really 'cos I always wanted to form a band quite a long time before that. Since I was fifteen I've been with other bands but they never got past the rehearsing stage. I used to go and watch quite a lot of fringe theatre and things like that which was quite political and I thought it'd be a good idea to combine the two things and I always wanted to do that. When the Roxy Club opened it was possible. Before that there wasn't really anywhere to play so even if you formed a band you couldn't play anywhere.

It's great now that it's possible for people to play gigs. There's hundreds of bands now though that are being signed by record companies that are really rubbish. Record companies are grabbing for almost anybody, especially the big ones.

There's only a few bands that I like and they're the ones that have got their own style basically.

Do you ever think about what is going to happen to music now? The last year's been so self-indulgence. But the point is that sometimes you may want to, so it's stupid to say you're never going to do anything.

What about other interests apart from the band and music?

At the moment, not really. Well, I do—I like collecting plastic things and all that.

Your clothes are very original.

Well, 'cos I put a lot of my energies into clothes and things like that, colors and things I'm collecting. It's just part of the same thing, though. Oh yeah, I wouldn't mind making a film or something one day and that's all.

With yourself as the director or the star?

Well, I don't know. Just to write an idea, a script I suppose.

Did you get into writing at school or is it something you've got doing in the last year or so?

I didn't learn very much at school. I learnt the basics at primary school—reading and writing—secondary school I didn't really go to very much. I attended for the first year then after that I didn't go. I used to go but I didn't do the work. So I learnt everything myself after school.

Effects: R. Price

Yeah, I s'pose it is really but I'm not trying to copy anyone in that idea; I just write about all the things around me, it's like his art and consumer things is my art. I just take everything around me today.

It's great that you're into Day-Glo now. It was a big thing in the States about ten years ago but never came over here.

I don't know about that but I just got into the socks and things—all the colors.

What do you watch on television?

I don't really watch television very much. I do if it is around but I don't particularly like to watch it. I like the adverts though.

Who are the other people in your band?

Jack, Paul, B.P., but I don't know where they are.

Do they do any writing or is it all you?

It's all me.

Did you know them before you started X-Ray Spex or did you audition?

Well, let me think. I always wanted to form a band and I was looking for people and gradually found them and then the drummer we knew already before 'cos he was in another band and then he decided to join us.

Do you play instruments yourself?

Not really, but I can play drums a bit.

How exactly do you write the songs? Do you work them out together?

No, I just write the songs and sing them to a tune so that they've got a tune already and then Jack just picks up the chords and plays.

How did you get your name?

I got it out of the yellow pages.

weird . . . just wham bam.

Well, I think it'll be quite good actually 'cos I think it'll just develop. Bands'll just change a bit or get into other things.

Do you think it's going to get more technical, bands may get more musical?

The music is what you feel, it's not something that's technical in any case and if you've been playing for a while you just get better, you just change your style. It's just affected by what's around you and as you change, your music changes. I don't think the technical side of it's important. Good music is what you feel.

Do you think that young people are still going to want to see the highly technical musicians in two or three years time if they get bored with music as it is now?

I don't know 'cos my age group never considered that was very good music. It was just like if people liked it, it was 'cos it was fashionable, it was a cult to identify with. It wasn't the music. Well, some of it I s'pose was alright if you was into acid and things like that, but you have to just look at it like reggae. Reggae's not technically very good but it's still really popular because you can relate to it on a more basic level.

Do you take drugs?

Sometimes, if I fancy a drink, I'll have a drink. If I fancy a smoke of a joint, I'll smoke. If I want to trip once a year, I'll trip once a year.

No rules.

I don't believe in rules, that's one thing. I'm not a drug addict and I don't believe in over

What do you want to do in the future, apart from a film? What do you want to see happen to X-Ray Spex?

Well, I'd like to see X-Ray Spex go as far as we can go and that's all. And after that I don't know what I'm going to do as long as I'm always creating something it doesn't matter whether it's my own or whether it's for somebody else. I like to just keep doing things, that's all.

So you don't necessarily want to restrict yourself to music?

Well, at the moment, yeah, I do, but then there's a limit to where you can go. It's not entirely up to you. People may not want to go and see you any more and then it's the time to move out while you're still at the top.

X-Ray Spex's a great name. Where did you get it?

In an American porn mag.

Those little things that make you see through ladies' clothing. I've got two pairs myself . . . Have you got any message for American SLASH readers—anything profound or mediocre to say?

No, not really.

Front page stuff, eh?

Nylon, man, really nylon. That's a new word, it means nice. I don't really know what they're into over there. I think from what I can see they've copied very much what the English have done over here.

In some ways.

modern boy modern y modern boy moder rn boy modern boy modern boy modern

. . .It seems like a good time to once again contemplate the bandwagon . . . You know, the one everyone keeps jumping on . . . For months, just about everyone has been speculating & worrying (even fearing) just when, how & why the more conservative (meaning big bucks) factions in the music biz (radio, record co's, promoters, etc.) would jump . . . The ***why*** is obvious, the ***when*** appears to be now, but it's the ***how*** that's pissing me off . . . The natural assumption (mine anyway) was that the record co's & promoters (this category including clubs supposedly adopting a "new wave" format) would start jumping on all the really hot punk bands on the street . . . This was the case in England, and although the results were questionable, at least some lovely music came (and continues to come) out of it . . . But here on the home front, the parallels begin and end with radio censorship (or whatever you want to call the obvious lack of airplay) . . . The record co's* here are so much more ***creative*** . . . Rather than signing relevant new bands (many with international underground followings), they dredge up old, has-been glitter/heavy metal groups, give them a "hardcore" name, and try to pass them off as you-know-whats . . . Others perceive the "new wave" as an open seam in a sewn up music biz, & think it's open for any odball combo that never made the mainstream . . . The clubs & promoters aren't doing much better . . . While they are booking some good street bands, they invariably book them alongside some irrelevant hippie band . . . The results are an audience with mixed sentiments; the punks think the hippies are boring, the hippies think the punks are a joke . . . There's always at least one good fight . . . It's obvious someone's missng the point . . . Whatever the punks are they ain't naive (musically) . . . They know what they want & nobody's gonna sell 'em a bill of goods . . . I ain't saying every music related business should bend to the whims of the punks (god knows they would go nuts trying to please everyone), but if they are trying to cater to the punk audience, they oughta at least get off of their fucking asses and try to find out what it is before they try & package it . . .

Thought of the month: The only real subversion is in a new consciousness and a new alliance—the location of the struggle in the banalities of everyday life, in the supermarket and the beat clubs as well as on the shop floor . . . Art and the Labor Movement are dead! Long live the Southern California Situationist Movement!

*do not infer that I mean every U.S. record co., as there are many small independents & even a few biggies that seem to have a handle on this madness.

LATE PISTOLS NEWS : WARNER DOES NOT KNOW ANYTHING. BUT VIRGIN DOES (A BIT). ACCORDING TO THEIR INTERNATIONAL PRESS OFFICE (LONDON, FEB 10), JOHN IS IN JAMAICA, SPENDING SOME TIME WITH VIRGIN'S REGGAE ARTISTS, STEVE AND PAUL ARE IN RIO WITH THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBER AND SID IS IN LONDON (THERE IS A RUMOR THAT HE IS ALREADY PUTTING ANOTHER BAND TOGETHER). ALTHOUGH THE PISTOLS ARE NO MORE, THEY MAY PLAY TOGETHER AGAIN, POSSIBLY WITHOUT SID.

LIMEY NEWS

by Harry Slime

E.M.I., the ones "who only did it because of fame," are to release a single of Glen Matlock's band, Rich Kids, sometime in January. Title is "Rich Kids" . . . . Beat group The Pleasers are going down well here with an EP, "Lies," on Arista. Sounds remarkably like the early Beatles . . . Virgin Records has signed Magazine, featuring poetical ex-Buzzcocks vocalist Howard Devoto . . . The Stranglers have postponed playing L.A. for fear of being connected with a native strangler currently enjoying anonymous celebrity status . . . Their new single, titled "Five minutes," out sometime in January and a third album is being worked on already . . . Other albums to be released soon include the Adverts in February (Anchor), the Wailers (also in February), Buzzcocks in March (UA) with a single titled "What do I get" coming out in January, the Tom Robinson Band in March (single number 2 out in January), Generation X (Chrysalis) also in March, and Paul and Linda's latest very soon. Vibrators recording their second album right now (titled "V2," which should definitely appeal to older Londoners' sense of humor), and so is the Clash. Elvis Costello is now on Radar Records . . . . Burning Spear (or what's left of them) has just released a live album on Island . . . Slight possibility of a second American tour by The Damned . . . and for all of you thinking of moving to England where the music is sweet, the top selling albums of the past year are Abba, the Shadows, Diana Ross and the Supremes, "A Star is Born" soundtrack, Fleetwood Mac . . . want me to go on??

P.S. ***Late news from Australia*** by Ken Guru (Please!! —Ed.). Blondie have been at Number 1 here in the charts for over two weeks with "In the Flesh."

UPS +

- *—"Nothing means nothing anymore" by the Alley Cats*
- *—Screamers' Whisky show*
- *—Flip Side latest*
- *—Avengers in Winterland*
- *—Robert Hilburn's extensive coverage (for a daily)*
- *—Sid Vicious' amiability*
- *—"Wild Youth" (dub, dub, dub, dub)*
- *—The Bags/Spots Masque show*
- *—Tomata's spaghetti bash*
- *—SLASH's new Brazil outlet*
- *—The Randoms' 1st live appearance*
- *—"Two Sevens Clash" Culture*
- *—Search & Destroy (thanx for the champagne)*
- *—The Skulls*
- *—life in general*
- *—Black Randy's future plans*
- *—the long awaited hard-core local LP??*
- *—"We got the neutron bomb"—Weirdos*
- *—Rotten's "fuck this shit" attitude*
- *—Fat Burger, 2 a.m.*
- *—"Be my baby"—The Drones*
- *—Melissa's 21st*
- *—Canters, 2 a.m.*
- *—John Ingham's visit*

&

DOWNS —

- *—the one from Punk mag who made a fool of himself on Rodney's show*
- *—The Damned LP*
- *—San Diego punk scene*
- *—Bill Graham and everything he stood for, stands for and will always stand for*
- *—The Masque saga*
- *—Billboard's "new wave" special*
- *—Ramones' concert prices*
- *—The Dils' loss of a hell of a drummer*
- *—Blondie's new LP*
- *—The Post Office (for carrying SLASH subscriptions at their usual supersonic speed)*
- *—The Fast's shaky posing*
- *—life in general*
- *—Basho's defection*
- *—Helen & Trudie's eviction*
- *—The Post-'77 English blahs*
- *—The radio's deliberate politics of the ostrich*
- *—"Gloomy Sunday"*
- *—Darby's umpteenth crash*
- *—The Heartbreakers' one-track mind*
- *—the gutter (anywhere) at 2 a.m.*
- *—the bandwagon*
- *—the lack of bandwagon*

MASQUE ?

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Photo: Jules Bates

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A CHEAP HOLIDAY IN OTHER PEOPLE'S MISERY

No doubt this is SLASH's most extensive report ever done in its short history. It now also looks as if it might be the last thing we'll do on the Pistols, at least as we know them. So we offer you this shimmering, multi-faceted journalistic piece de resistance (say that again?) in the spirit of the new day: no more heroes. What you worship today will be gone tomorrow. And, as the last Pistols shots ring in our memory, it is time to take a final look at one of the most confused and contradictory concert tours of all times. Rock 'n' roll will never be the same. Thank god!

Photos: Sastof

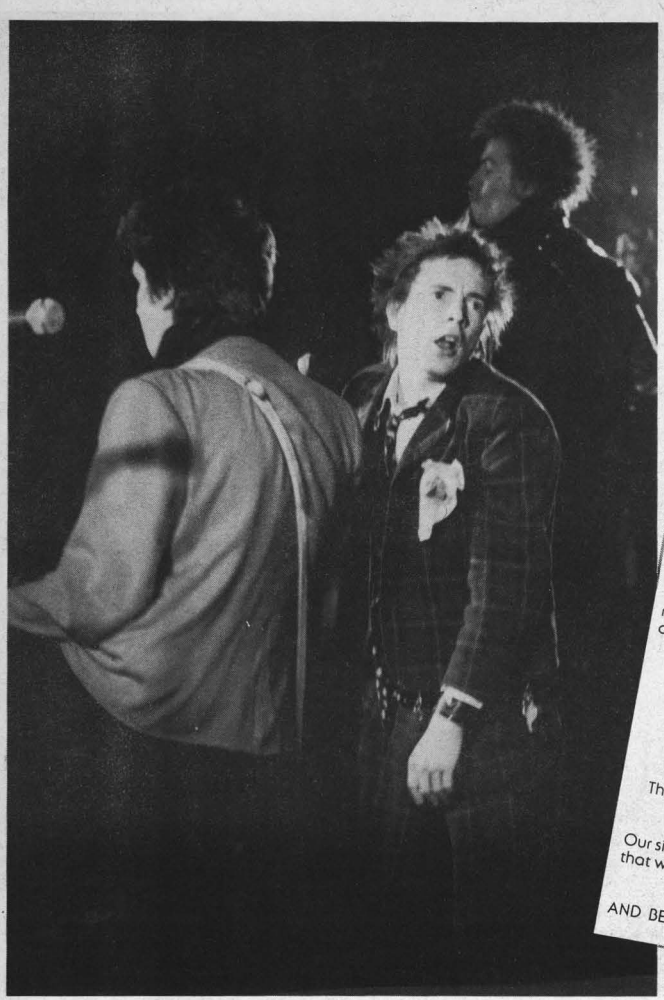
A CHEAP HOLIDAY

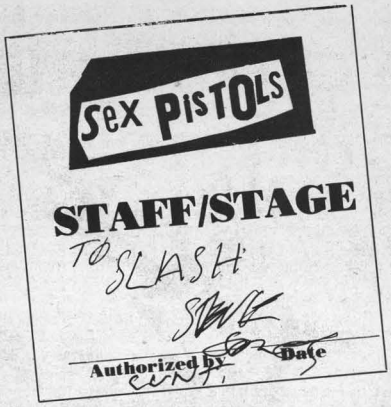
How I ever scammed my way onto a 727 to Dallas (with a waiting hotel room paid for, etc.) is incidental. Suffice it to say it wasn't your usual record co. PR payola package, in fact all I got from the WB rep was ignored . . . I was feeling guilty (although deserving—I'd never been east of Las Vegas), 'cause I knew everyone else back at SLASH hated my lousy guts for going. In fact, it took a full pint of brandy to overcome my guilt (as well as my pre-conceived notions/fears of Texas/shit-kicking/USA. The sauce also helped in overcoming the pleasant 20 degree weather as well as other obstacles throughout the evening (okay, I'll quit bragging—just keep in mind that for the rest of the evening I was thoroughly fucked up).

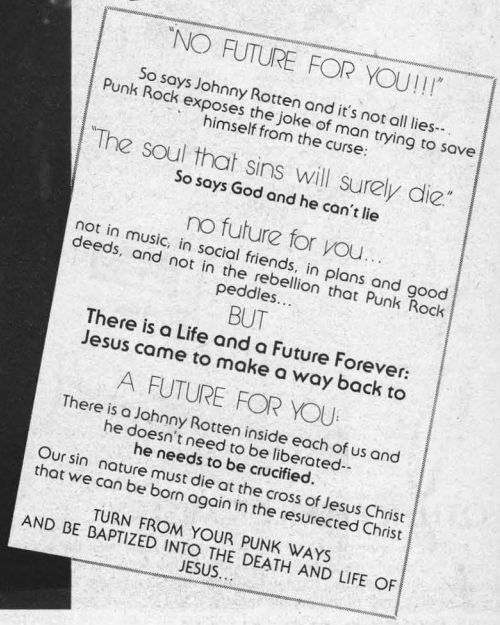
The Pistols were playing at the Longhorn, a C&W ballroom. Out front, above a giant fibreglass bull, there were two names on the marquee, Sex Pistols & Merle Haggard (unfortunately Merle t'weren't playin' till the 21st). Also in front was some of the most interesting audience that ever played the place. I was really impressed that Dallas youth had such a deep understanding of the art of "dressing punk" (I think they used 20-year-old Mardi Gras programs for reference material).

Inside, the place was swarming—cowboys, (lotsa) hippies, and (lotsa) the aforementioned "punks." By the door was Malcolm McLaren (self-proclaimed capitalist, but he does it with so much anti-style he's okay with me . . .). We exchanged polite how-do-you-do's. (Malcolm [smiling incessantly]: You're from what? Me [slurring]: Why don't you have the fuckin' Pistols play L.A.!?) A definite culture barrier. Malcolm's great . . . He merely sets the scenario & then stands back & watches everyone try to enjoy themselves out of a clumsy/uncomfortable situation. He had his hand in all the sensational hype that preceded the Pistols to the U.S., then he booked 'em into all the naive (punk-wise) towns he could. He had everyone waiting for puke & blood (well, they did get a little blood), hardly anybody came for the music, they wanted to be appalled (like slowing down & eyeballing a pile-up on the freeway). I thought I knew better—expected only some Pistols-style rock, but the PA sucked (all I could hear was Steve's geetar & backing vocals). *I* was appalled (well, disappointed anyway).

One step back: The show opened with some local punk talent, the Nervebreakers . . . the band was easily forgettable 'cept for the lead singer's torn cowboy shirt & some of their songs ("Neiman Marcus Trendies," "No Bull," "Lone Star Anarchist," etc.), but you could hear the vocals. Finally the Pistols make the stage . . . "Holy fuck it's really them" . . . Jones in spurs & Stetson, Cook in T-shirt & jeans, Vicious in regulation leather & biker boots (sans shirt, what a build!), and Rotten in tartan plaid suit (w/ the usual straps & buckles), mussing his hair like a Stan Laurel in Charlie Chaplin's clothing . . . harmless . . . Vicious gives the crowd a sneer and an appropriate introduction, "We're the best fuckin' rock 'n' roll band in the world" . . . They start into "God Save the Queen" . . . Rotten lunges forward, grabs the mike . . . all of a sudden the fucker's not so harmless . . . he's a cold-blooded, demented genius . . . You couldn't hear his vocals, but the screwed up, snarling twit carried the set on visuals alone . . .







After the show I approached Malcolm again (him still smiling, me still you know what), and between bitching about the PA & insisting the boys play L.A. I demanded (?) to go backstage. With his own delicate style (what's the big deal, it's only four wankers) he sidestepped all the issues. My traveling companion (fairly sane at the moment) convinced one of the English roadies out of a couple of stage passes so we just sidestepped McLaren.

Backstage was just a tiny room behind a curtain; inside Johnny & Steve, sitting with a few muscular looking roadies & women. Leaning against the wall, a guy taking notes w/ a photographer at his side. I look at Johnny (who's looking at the floor) and foolishly think I can take control of the situation. "Why don't you fucking cunts play L.A.?" (typical one-track/ overreaction). The biggest roadie starts to advance on me, but Steve Jones saves all ("He can stay if he gives me 10¢"). I give him a nickel & he gives me a wink & Johnny gives me some bullshit about not playing N.Y. or L.A. because of blahblahblah . . .

It turns out the guy taking notes is from "Rolling Stone" (you'd think he could afford a tape recorder) & Johnny turns back to him and his back to me. I mean, I wasn't exactly charming, but Rotten was a snob.

Back in the hall, the men in the uniforms are urging everyone to clear out. The L.A. contingent is hanging around the stage (after driving all that way, they sure weren't gonna just leave) and as a cop tries to usher them out the exit, Vicious bounces up and intercedes ("Hey, any fuckin' girl who fuckin' pops me in the face is fuckin' alright with me; let 'em fuckin' stay"). Vicious rivals McLaren in sheer intellect. Reggae is playing over the PA (as it had all evening) but food sounds better . . .

The next day it's snowing and it's a panic rush to the airport. On the plane are about five other people following the tour, the rest are mostly Southern businessmen with big mouths. The plane is delayed an hour but is finally pulled out on the runway, awaiting de-icing. I had made a solemn promise with God earlier in the day not to drink but we sat in the plane for eight fucking hours for take-off, and as one good ol' boy said, "We may not have any de-icing fluid, but I'm sure gonna sip on a few" . . . cheers . . . after a day with this crowd I knew the Tulsa audience would be a let-down.

Finally got to Tulsa at 11 p.m. & the Pistols were supposed to start at 11:30. The girl from WB (who was on the same flight) was renting a car, but informed me there wasn't enough room (sure, bitch). She was gonna follow the girl from the rent-a-car place, who was happy to give us a ride (*she* should work for Warner). More snow outside and in all the confusion we pulled away from the airport without the other car in tail (tough luck). En route we learned that a Baptist minister had been holding a vigil outside Cains Ballroom praying the Pistols wouldn't show. We got there to learn that he wasn't praying hard enough . . . thank God.

We all slipped in the back door just as the Pistols sulked on. No time even for a beer, they simply walk on & play. And did they fuckin' play!

I'd seen the pictures, now I heard the noise . . . From chord one thru chord three they were everything I'd ever expected (and more). Puke

would have been a let-down. Rotten was vicious, Vicious was cooking, Cook was . . . (sorry). Rotten's performance was polished. Only for a moment (he got carried away & broke into a reggae dance ditty) did he ever let loose of the crowd. Even between songs, his back to the stage, you'd expect him to wrench around and spit venom. You can't take your eyes off *him*, yet he looks right through *you*. Enough about Rotten. Vicious deserves a line or two.

He is the best fuckin' bass player in the whole world (oops, I left out a couple of "fuckin's," sorry Sid) and it pleases me no end to see a competent musician emerge from all this . . . no bullshit, just tough, unrestrained bass riffs. Steve and Paul have a hard time keeping up with him, what with all their antics. They clown around & incite the audience and occasionally hit a beat and/or chord yet, miraculously, it sounds better live than it ever sounded on record . . . and that's incredible.

A bonus hi-lite was the debut (for Tulsa, anyway) of "Belsen," their latest hit (it's got a demonic hahahaha chorus that makes the one on "Anarchy" sound milquetoast).

. . .Afterwards, it's hanging around the hall, rubbing shoulders with TV cameras & whoever else is blessed with a pass. Cook walks out, then Jones, but all the press people seem more interested in the 6'2" blonde (in springolators & big tits) that's standing by the stage than the former. Vicious bounces out, grabs 6'2", & heads for the door. By the time the cameras get whirring, they're gone. Everyone's waiting for JR, but not me, I decide to have a little mini-interview w/ Jones.

INTERVIEW: What do you think of America? Jones: I'm not sure what to make of the audience. END OF INTERVIEW.

Poetic ending: As we stepped through the door the biting cold nipped at the arse. Outside in the snow, the Anarchy coach stood, motors purring, rising in front of a bitter Oklahoma skyline. I knew my journey had come to an end & my mind swelled with words & phrases for I knew the obligatory reporting lay ahead . . . I dreamed of a day (today) when I would complete this task and never have to say one more word concerning the Sex Pistols . . . One more word: Goodbye . . .

And now Mr. Kickboy Face will (in his typically resplendent form) describe the more enjoyable aspects of THEIR tour . . .

OTHER PEOPLE'S MISERY

And so, in spite of contrary rumors (should have seen the Masque the night the telephone grapevine announced the *Spots* were playing!), the fuckers were not going to play L.A. after all. Damn them all! Didn't they realize that most of the people making it to San Francisco would be the very record company people and hangers-on they were so supposedly intent on avoiding?? Malcolm what's-his-face may be brilliant when he is dealing with his group and their impact on the funny little island but as far as I could tell he sure blew it out here. Snobbery is not a good policy no matter what your deep reasons are. Depriving hundreds of genuine fans of the *one concert* they've been looking forward to for the past year or forcing them to scrape the bottom of their drawers, bug everyone for a ride or go into debt and hope for a stand-by flight in time for *the event* is definitely 100% playing the horrible game we're all supposed to be rejecting. (Anyway I thought the tickets would be around $3.50, and the admission price posted in that dump they call Winterland was $5.00. Who made the extra buck fifty? What happened? There was too much mystery throughout this whole scene, too many last minute deals.)

So here we were, with the pathetic choice of snubbing the snobs or being like the sheep someone obviously wanted us to be and making it up there at any cost. We made it up all right, but the money we had to borrow for that trip hasn't been paid back yet and as long as it's not I hope I don't run into Malcolm what's-his-bank-account.

But I better save some of my gripes for the other shady characters involved in this media extravaganza. See further down. It was a stupid weekend anyway, it rained in L.A. and it rained in San Francisco. Not much to do 'til show time but locate our tickets (was that fun!) and get boozed up in some nondescript cocktail lounge (Happy Hour from 5:30 to 7:00, all drinks double except for the ones that aren't).

Some people say S.F. is really small and easy to know but to me it's like foreign territory, you just trust the cab driver, close your eyes and here you are, Winterland. You pay the man and wait for the others to pull out of the cab. *Then, like in some fucking movie about 1984, there's some big black mother with a uniform on telling you to "keep moving, can't stand still, you gotta keep moving . . ."* I think it's a joke, something to get you into that paranoid punk spirit, another catchy ploy from Malcolm what's-his-game to lay on the show real thick, but one look at the "extra" and I *know* this is for real.

Then I realize other people all up and down the sidewalk are being hassled in a similar fashion. This may be a public sidewalk but somebody took it on himself to declare it a "no standing-no waiting-no looking around" area. I am outraged but not so outraged that I don't notice the billy clubs and the open look of contempt in the uniformed pack of muscles. I guess these guys have been briefed tonight about what audience to expect and it shows. "Bunch of perverted destructive no-goods, the scum, potentially dangerous, keep them scared . . ."

Interesting point is that every one of those bullies is black. Could it be an evil plot by capitalist entrepreneur Bill Graham to further disassociate the punk audience from everybody else? I mean, I don't usually think in those terms, but the scene that night on that rainy street corner would have made anyone not too stoned or too terminally racist quite edgy.

I hate security bastards at any rock concert that get their rocks off by shoving the stoned/drunk sheep around, be they overgrown surfers with the brains of Godzilla and the peepee of Barbie Doll's boyfriend or black racists out to give a hard time to the stupid, meek white kids, but I *really* hate the bastard who has hand-picked that task force of frustrated morons and told them to go ahead and shove the little fuckers around, we're in charge around here tonight and you have as many rights as any licensed cop. Since there's bound to be friction anyway, why not make sure it does not get mixed with ugly racism? Or is it done to sidetrack any righteous anger at rock promoters and confuse the customer as to who the *real villains* are?

So here I am, ridiculously pacing up and down under the rain, waiting

Photo: M. Zampelli

for our ticket connection to show up, cursing the already mentioned hippie pig and wondering what Johnny Rotten and company would make of that scene were they to drop off by mistake in front of the theater instead of in the back. Anarchistic thoughts indeed, but I'm not here to see the Eagles, am I?

And so we kept moving, the tickets showed up, we filed inside like the wet, grateful losers that we were supposed to be and immediately got lost in the arena.

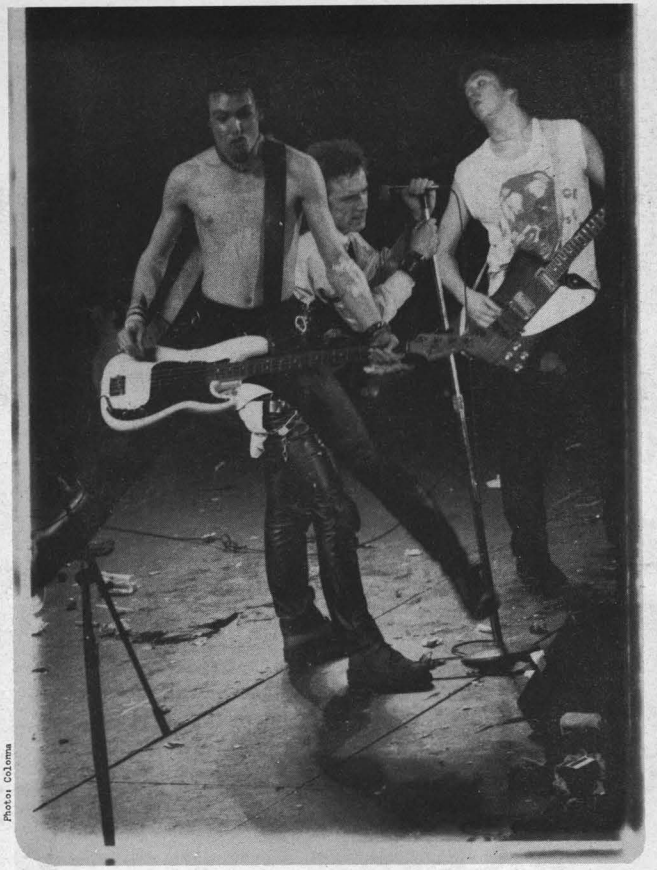
It was packed, it was funny, it was sad. There were gawkers with Led Zepp T-shirts, transvestites with whatever they could grab in their drunk/stoned haze, toughies from automotive workshop in neighboring high schools, glitter closet leftovers with their glitter leftover girls, hard-core punks and Saturday night flash punks, straight S.F. hippies with one too many tabs in their systems and leather fetishists from Castro Street with motorcycle caps on their shaved skulls and rings on their cocks (guessing). There were drunks and heads and quaaludees and old-time creeps with no excuse, there were dozens of muscle boys with their boss' name printed on the backs of their windbreakers (blue jacket/white letters spelling "Bill Graham"), there were photographers making sure they would snap every phony's picture; and there was the whole SLASH staff checking out Armageddon, Sodom and Gomorrah and Babylon, oh my god, *they* actually are that popular! Well done, Malcolm what's-his-fame!

Then there were The Nuns. The Nuns are obviously loved by the local contingent; they know it and they play it up. All I remember was the singers spending most of their time with their clenched fists up in the air (I remember that gesture from somewhere . . .), a bunch of long-hair rowdies around us with *their* fists up in the air ("Suicide Child" had many people singing along—must be a hit), a transvestite asking for my fist in his face and not getting it (I knew I should save myself for later) and a pretty decent shower of spit, beer cans and what-nots falling indiscriminately around and occasionally on the performers. There was electricity in the air, as they say. I didn't become a new Nun convert but I would have hated to be up there facing that zoo. They loved it. They must mean it.

During first intermission we were subjected to a vile film+soundtrack of The Dictators, complete with some sickening plug for S.F. rock 'n' roll audiences, guitar solos and indecent displays of torsos, contorted faces and frizzy hairdos. Another sick touch to the evening, courtesy of what square mastermind? How many times do the creeps have to be told that The Dictators are about as relevant as Blue Oyster Cult? When will they stop reading those press releases and listen to the fucking music?? I'm not even a hardcore punk but I can tell the pseudo leftovers from the desperate kids, and the Dictators . . .

By the second song on the PA, I'm in the throbbing crowd (standard expression to describe the indescribable), naively hoping to make it thru to the bar. The way they checked you out at the door it would have taken a genius to smuggle a bottle in (one person on your chest and arms, the other on your legs and feet), and it was *thirsty*. Obviously no one else had outwitted the searching squads in the doorway 'cause the line waiting to be cleared into the drinking area was half a mile long and forty bodies thick.

Once again the charming security goons welcomed you in (didn't matter if you had white hair and a cane, no I.D., no beer), you shoved and punched your way past the rest of the lemmings and, bless the gods of rock 'n' roll promotion, you could actually trade in your dollar for the most watery, piss-like beer I've ever tasted yet. And guess who was serving the vile brew and still managing (key word) to insult various people and bark orders to his private army? Bill Graham, the people's promoter, the famous visionary who was heard on the Tom Snyder show saying that he couldn't find any musical qualities in punk music but if people wanted to pay for it . . . . Well, people were paying for it, and old Bill wasn't home watching the news reports and shrugging his head in dismay at the new madness. No. He was right there, a dollar a cup, I know



Photos CoJonna

it's piss but what you gonna do about it, haven't you seen the heavies with my name on their backs? next please . . . .

Since it would have taken around twenty glasses of the stuff to get a buzz I buzzed off and went to get depressed in the men's room. After two minutes of druggie-watching I was depressed fine and ran out. I stared at various lumps crawling in the aisles under God knows what influence (Pistols music's supposed to make you feel destructive—too bad so many could only think of themselves as the only target), got even more depressed and actually considered getting the fuck out.

But publicity is on top of us all and I was already totally conditioned to see the bleeding Sex Pistols, come what may. Malcolm what's-your-aim, you did it perfect. (This is now the end of January and I sincerely hope Johnny did quit. For honesty's sake, if that still means anything.)

Anyway, by that time the Avengers were on, and it was time to do some serious pogoing/appreciating. I knew they were terrified and I knew how much I loved them and I knew I was gonna do some serious thumping if any of the geeks up front misbehaved with one of my fave bands. The beer cans flew all right, so did the gobs of spit (so far, so good, I've read enough on the goddam so-called "phenomenon" to know it can mean some form of appreciation . . .) and within two songs I was certain that bobbing mass of slobs had been won over. There was still a sizable amount of creeps that pointed their middle fingers in a desperate attempt to be "punk," shouting obscenities to Penelope and generally showing what pathetic, wayward little masturbators they really were. There were others that alternated between their own homemade version of all-out pogo and puking on everybody's shoes; there were terrible sights but there also was a growing rapport between that incredibly tough little band up there and the anonymous mass which, like it or not, was being shoved some of the toughest punk music they would ever hear.

One Weirdo (of the famous combo) next to me wondered aloud if the Pistols would be able to compete. Musically speaking, I don't know if they did. It was the Avengers' tightest set ever, they had one of the best PAs they ever had (one good point for the organizers) and they were on the war path. They were fantastic, and everyone knew it, save for the stoned-out jerks who didn't know who they were in the first place and had drifted in under some publicity impulse. There were even some very appropriate ad-lib comments during "I believe in me," all to do with the apparent financial rip-off they were putting up with that night. (The Avengers were paid $250, take it or leave it, as they were told two days prior to the show.)

Somehow a local punk band means so much more to me than a famed group from overseas I hated to see them go, and I screamed myself hoarse for more. I had already threatened two junkies with death and one red freak with a good bashing, all for various minor offenses. I was getting the spirit all right.

Then we had another film on that bleached-out screen above the stage. It wasn't the Dictators but it was as hard to focus on. Something about punk in England with interviews with band members (lots of Pistols), live shots, sociological clips, colleges, your average liberal TV approach to the scene, a fucking bore especially when everything's fuzzy and you're in no mood for lecture or essays.

I mean, here you are, *wondering* what the fucking scene is about anyway, and some cold film is trying to tell you what it's about. It's as meaningful and enlightening as shooting dope and watching a TV educational documentary about grass. A giggle for two minutes and a reason to riot anytime after. On and on it went. Everybody gawked, everybody likes films that tell them they're for real. If the media think that of us, hey, we must exist.

Probably worked the other way with others but the more I saw Rotten's face on that screen the less I wanted him on stage. I'm here to see a fucking band, not a sociological phenomenon. Cut the crap, you cunning limeys. Malcolm, your hidden presence is overpowering. Let the boys speak for themselves.

And the boys came. Steve, Paul, Sid, and Johnny. Real at last. Looking just like the Sex Pistols. Pretty vulnerable, but with that extra something. When I find out what it is, I'll retire. It's one of those mysteries that will forever bug me. Some people have it, most don't. The Pistols walk on stage and they burst thru the millions of layers of hype and shit and slander that have surrounded them since the beginning of time (well, who remem-

Photo: Colonna

bers anything prior to '76?). I mean, they don't even look like a group, they don't even look like a bunch of pals. They're an assortment of oddballs, they just shouldn't be together raising all this hell but they are.

There's a guy with a waiter jacket on and a smug aura, there's a kid off a basketball court with a T-shirt and a shy shadow, there's an alcoholic teenaged animal in leather and a face asking for bruises goosestepping around like an idiot and there's a little monster who never learned how to dress or how to tie his shoelaces leering and eyeballing the multitude already worshipping him.

Johnny sneers (if the word didn't exist it would have had to be invented after the little geek appeared) and welcomes everyone to England! After that, the show gets underway, one song after another, all of the album with a couple of exceptions (new tunes, no surprises, pure Pistols stuff—I mean, whatever they've done so far is a classic, why split hairs?). The crowd goes nutzo, every wet dream come true, every fuzzy vision of madness is solid and subject to verification, pandemonium. All the predictions of doom, anarchy in the streets, Vicious hams it up, abuses the faces below, pretends to get real mad, he knows he's the scum, he knows that's why they love him; Steve and Paul just play (never had such a big audience before, they admit afterwards) and make sure the chaos does not get in the way of their power chords/drumming, and Rotten just eases his way thru the set like an eel, playing it up, playing it down, constantly surprising the most jaded observers with his thoroughly unique approach to rock 'n' roll singing. From angelic to demonic to pure moronic within a few seconds, always keeping everyone fascinated by his offbeat approach to his material, always keeping you guessing what the little mother is really about. His charm is totally unexplainable to anyone not present, yet so enormous and incredibly obvious as to make Jagger and that whole school of androgynous fantasies look like dusty yellowish pictures in your aunt's country house.

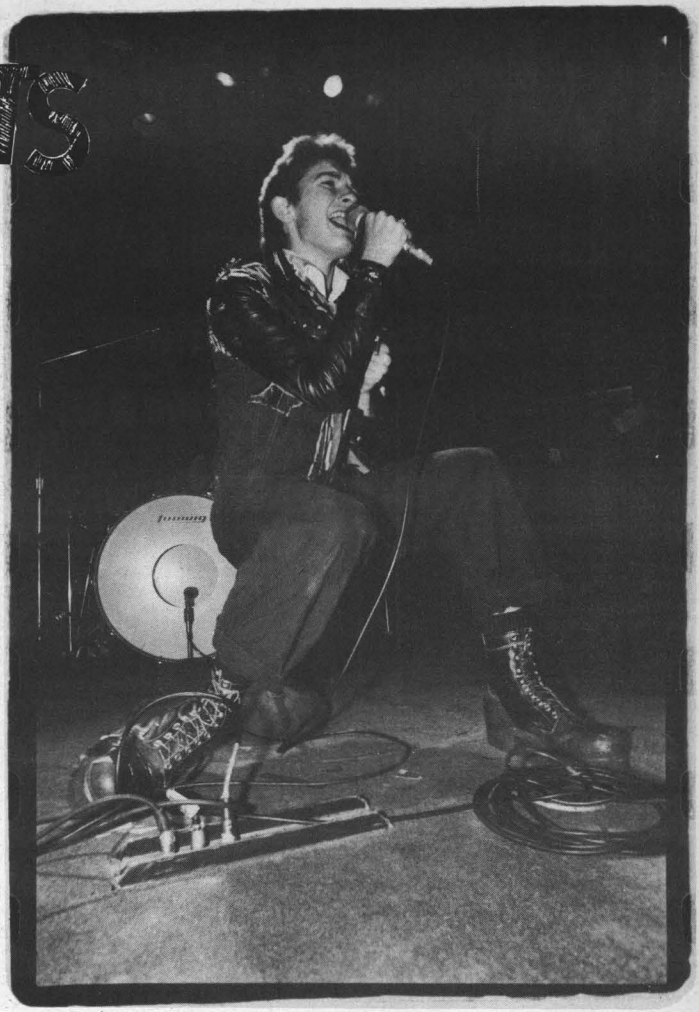
Those Southern preachers picketing their gigs in Georgia or whatever are completely right: This is the menace, this is what destruction and mayhem will look like, when it finally comes. If Rotten *really* means half of his lyrics civilization is indeed in trouble. I pray that he does, 'cause I know there's some kind of god out there for this breed of angels. The friends he has gathered around him may be less terrifying, but knowing his tastes I'm sure they're in some way as unredeemable as he is. Vicious does not give a shit about his bass, being too busy picking fights with the starers and the hostile toughies down below, showing off his scars and his mean mug; Steve and Paul are just along for the crazy ride although they could be accepted in much straighter circles, proving that anarchy has many faces indeed.

After much throwing of objects (from umbrellas to Tampax boxes to chains to shades to *anything*) and much shouting, touting, abusing, playing and singing, the show ends, not in the normal climaxy good-night good folks manner, but in the we've-run-out-of-songs-let's-just-drift-off-stage type of thing. Johnny grabs everything laying about (like a rodent piling up for the winter), they disappear, Sid hangs around for that last bit of abuse like a junkie for the last drop in the plunger.

They come back 'cause there's no way that audience will let them get away, they do "No Fun" with Rotten really pulling a weird one, crouched on the stage, totally mad, outraged at the very idea that there is no fun to be had, not here in San Francisco, not in London, not any-fucking-where, not for his type, anyway. Of course he is right, but I don't want to know. I wish that for a second I could drag him out of his maddeningly realistic vision, shove a couple of beers down his scrawny throat and make him relax. Would be like convincing Jesus to join Pilate's latest orgy. (Don't know what it is about this religious connotation—must be that antichrist bit).

And right he was. The backstage party (I swear it must be easier to get backstage to see the Rolling Stones than to get a glimpse of this bunch) was *no fun*. Vicious threw beer on a few delighted gawkers and Rotten just sleazed thru with black shades and a hunched back. It was over, good-bye, get fucked. Bill Graham was somewhere counting his money, the security heavies were escorting the dazed customers out, the wind was blowing and the fishnet stockings were not keeping anybody's legs warm. Somewhere, Malcolm what's-his-plan was planning the Second Comeback. Somewhere, Rotten was planning something else.

WILDCATS



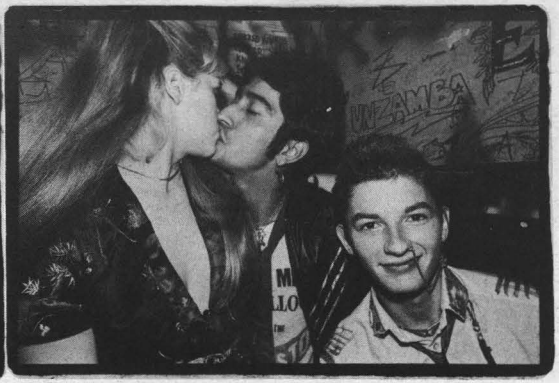
MIAOOWWW!

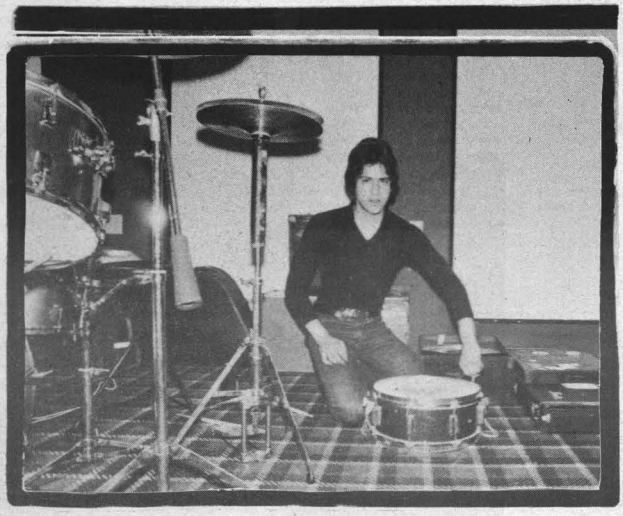
The Wildcats are Gerard Taylor (son of Derek) on vocals, Nash Rivas on bass and backing vocals, Holly Cardosa on guitar and Charlie Ogar on drums. Their average age is twenty. Gerard, the youngest (and the most talkative) is seventeen. Met them in a very flash rehearsal room (part of a bigger complex) in Hollywood where the band was due to work out some new songs. Derek (father of Gerard) was also there although we only found out midway thru the interview. (When I asked Gerard about his father's feelings for the new stuff, he pointed to the back of the room and said, "Why don't you ask him?" Derek said he always liked it and understood it. He is actually quite young looking.)

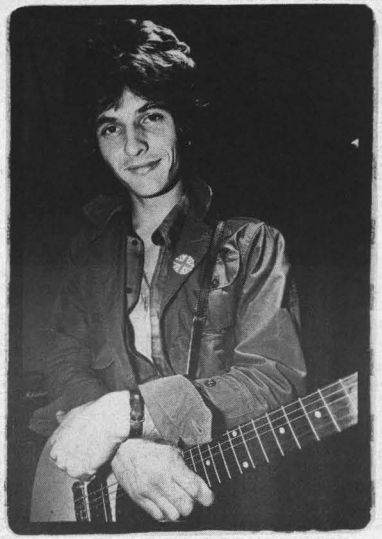
The Wildcats are one of the newest L.A. bands and have played the Masque an the Whisky.

Slash: How did you like the heckler with the "three hippies and a rich kid" comment?
Gerard: It's his problem but I don't mind this kind of thing at all. The more aggressive the audience gets, the more aggressive I can be. It's more fun. I agree with people shouting.
Nash: We're not hippies . . .
Gerard: . . .and I'm not a rich kid.
Slash: Let's have the pre-Wildcats story . . .
Nash: Holly is French. He was with a band called the Wildcats there. Then he came here and met Charlie and me.
Holly: People were not ready for it in France, so I decided to come here and check it out . . . that's about a year ago.
Gerard: I started with them when I came here from England, about 5 months ago.
Slash: Did you sing there?
Slash: No, I was just an enthusiastic fan. Before punk I lived in a world of Dr. Feelgood and '50s music. Up to "Anarchy in the U.K.," like everyone.
Slash: How did you meet the other three?
Gerard: At the Whisky.
Nash: Me and Holly were always on the street. For about 5 months we didn't want a lead singer. Not until we were good enough. Then we got a lot of weird people wanting to sing . . .
Gerard: When I came here it didn't look very hopeful. There were the Germs and Devo, who I liked . . . we saw the Weirdos (without a drummer) once at the Orpheum. Us and four other people! the whole front row was almost taken!
Slash: Like the scene better now?
Gerard: Yes, I like being in it. The English scene is fine but I like this one, it's getting more authentic by the month. I think we're already getting more accepted and that it will get easier.
Slash: Did you like playing the Masque?
Gerard: The Masque has a marvelous atmosphere. Yeah, I enjoy the audience there. They're really on to what's going on, they *mean it.* Playing the Masque is like a test. If you succeed there, you're like one step further. It's a shame it closed down. We'll play a benefit for it anytime.
Slash: You've also played the Whisky . . .

What was that shit about some bands not wanting to play the same bill 'cause you were to headline?
Gerard: I didn't know about it . . . I first heard of it by reading SLASH.
Slash: Are you a musician?
Gerard: No, I just know what I want in the lyrics and I write all of them. They write the music. I'm learning the guitar but I don't play well. I play around the house.
Slash: Do you write a lot?
Gerard: We have about 15 songs and we're working on more. Our set includes "Don't slow down," "Monotony," "Young American rubbish," "Wheels to destruction," "Stupid boy," "More trouble," "Lights out," "Military minds," "Don't bother," "They gonna fight you" . . .
Slash: What's "Young American rubbish" about?
Gerard: All these young kids that are really so straight, all these middle-aged young people.
Slash: How did you do with the Van Halen (famed heavy metal combo on its way out) crowd?
Gerard: Some came around to us afterwards. They liked it . . .
Nash: About half did, the other half hated it.







(We're interrupted by Charlie exclaiming, "What happened to my bass drum?" It's just been brought in and has multiple bumps and marks on its rather high-class frame. Looks like it was thrown down the Masque stairway twenty times in a row. We tell him it's real punk-looking but he is dubious.)

Slash: Charlie, what music do you listen to?

Charlie: I go down to Nash's house and listen to the Pistols.

Nash: The Dolls and the Pistols.

Gerard: I like Elvis. He's my main influence. And Jerry Lee Lewis, George Melly, people with deep voices. I listen to the Clash, not so much for the voices but for the guitars. And I like the Rockabilly Rebels. I like them better than the Weirdos.

Slash: L.A. versus N.Y.?

Gerard: L.A. wins. I don't like Talking Heads or Richard Hell too much.

Slash: In your opinion, what is needed in '78?

Gerard: More music, as long as it's not too deafening. If it's power pop it won't be the same. If more young people see the bands they will ask for it, they will call in the radio stations. California has come to believe only sophisticated music is good music. It's gonna take quite a lot . . .

Slash: Can punk here break thru if it comes to a dead end in England?

Gerard: I'm confident that it could. It's got the right attitude, it's taking it back from the days of the Cavern . . . good instinctive beat music . . .

Slash: Use drugs?

Gerard: I don't mind getting stoned. I just don't like talking about it the next day, how stoned I was and all that. People should talk of other things, it's like the people at L.A. Valley College talking about their bongs, their new pipes . . .

Slash: What's this about Valley College?

Gerard: I'm a student there, freelance article writing and acting. But the courses are falling apart. The acting teacher never shows up . . . the college system here is rubbish.

Slash: Other students in the band?

Charlie: No. I clean up Sears in the morning for $3 an hour.

Nash: I used to do the same but I got fired for eating an ice cream cone!

Holly: I have my own landscaping business.

Slash: Will you hire me? *(Holly does not take me seriously but I meant it. O well.)* What do you want from the L.A. audiences in the next few months?

Gerard: We want them to pull their socks up and come to the concerts, and not just stand there, shaking their heads and tapping their feet. If they jump they'll feel a lot better the next morning! They haven't got enough guts at the moment, leading their sheltered little lives . . . they're so stoned they can't enjoy themselves. Watch out, L.A., we're gonna skin your bums!

Photos: Jenny Lens

The Last (last) Nite At The Masque..

The Masque should require no introduction or explanation to any of the readers of SLASH. It represents (I refuse to talk of the Masque in past tense) a very real alternative to the cash-register consciousness of the bogus nightclubs that have suffocated rock and roll for years. This is no mere tirade in defense of punk capitalism, however. It is a challenge to all of you. As Brendan Mullen, new wave entrepreneur-creator of the Masque, said: "... safety pins were redundant and unnecessary at its inception." A maturity had been reached even then, five months ago, which makes it damn hard to return to the mausoleums of liquor-license mentality for our entertainment. The challenge is this: can you stand by and watch, comfortably, while what little hope our music has shrivels and collapses due to corruption and greed?

Fortunately, we don't have to rely on the average freeloading punk/punkette to ensure that something will be around, for there are just too many of us willing to do something about it. There are many possible approaches to a reopening and/or relocation of the Masque as it was conceived. Not to suggest that things will not be different: change is probably our biggest friend in this life and there is no reason to deny it. The real musical forces behind this movement haven't even made themselves known as of yet, and they must be given a place to play, free of the vulturish commercial interests.

The last night of the current Masque's incarnation was a good example of just what is going on. Hastily (due to necessity) organized, it was poorly attended because it was normally an off-night for the Masque (Monday). Those who came walked around with inappropriate long faces, already committing themselves and the rest of us to lives of no-fun. The Dickies played a couple of songs on somebody else's equipment, more dutifully than anything else. Real touching, kids. The Skulls played one of the most exuberant drunken sets I've ever seen, leaning back almost prone to the stage, guitar frying out in midsong, fights breaking out between the group & friends in the audience. Highly appropriate, Skulls, as well as entertaining.

At some point here, two of the so-called "famous" dubious punk-rock combo, The S*x Pist*ls, came to hang out and be cool at the Masque's closing. Interesting to note that Steve Jones, the group's half-baked guitar player, refused to pay admission. He had, however, no easy reply to the cash-man's response that a large majority of the people in the club had paid good American $$ to see a rather disappointing Pist*ls show at Winterland a few days previously. I have an easy reply to him, however. I have not yet bought the hype-of-the-year S*x Pist*ls album & have no intention of doing so.

But L.A. got its final revenge—the only band that Cook & Jones of the Pistols got to see was the Nerves, who have turned in their extremely offensive pop musica for an even more offensive brand of pseudo-punque masquerade. Why do they exist? The only other band that Cook & Jones reportedly saw while visiting was the Dogs at the Whisky. Like I say, we get our revenge one way or another.

Things were getting sticky about this time as a lot of the groups who had promised to play (won't mention names—you know who you are) defaulted for lack of an audience. I was walking out the club myself when I heard some vaguely familiar strains of a song. Realizing that it was the Random's "Let's Get Rid of New York" (as immortalized on a Dangerhouse single), I sprinted back as fast as I could to see Mister Rand McNally screaming and playing guitar (thanks to the Nerves for the use of their equipment), backed up by the inevitable K.K. on drums and the imperturbable John Doe (of X fame) on bass guitar. It was an indescribably raw version, don't know where to begin, except they did follow it up with a rather haphazard rendition of its flip side, "ABCD." This is the kind of thing I'm talking about when I say that the real musical forces of this movement are still in nascence and I find it logical that the Randoms would be the last group to play this life of the Masque.

This life, because there will be others. There is talk of a benefit performance, among other things, to help preserve what little we've fought for and won. Any little groupies or scenesters who intend to get in for free to this one have a surprise coming. The groups performing may have to pay to get in.

Bird Protractor

SD Stands For Slow Death
SD STANDS FOR SLOW DEATH

I was ready for a different environment and it was different in San Diego. The Weirdos and the Zeroes played at Straighta Head Sounds—a huge hall.

The Zeroes were playing when we arrived, the stage was too high, it forced them to be more detached. It looked like a youth club, full of kids with nowhere else to go, some checking out who looked the most punk, some long-hairs sitting at the few tables in the back, looking smug.

It wasn't like L.A., these people had been punk-starved!, like the beginning of it all. It wasn't packed, far from it. A few dedicated Zero followers stuck close to the stage, ready for action; the others wandered around buying hot dogs, soft drinks, potato chips, sitting on the stairs. John Denney was walking around saying he felt like Alice Cooper. It had a really small town feeling.

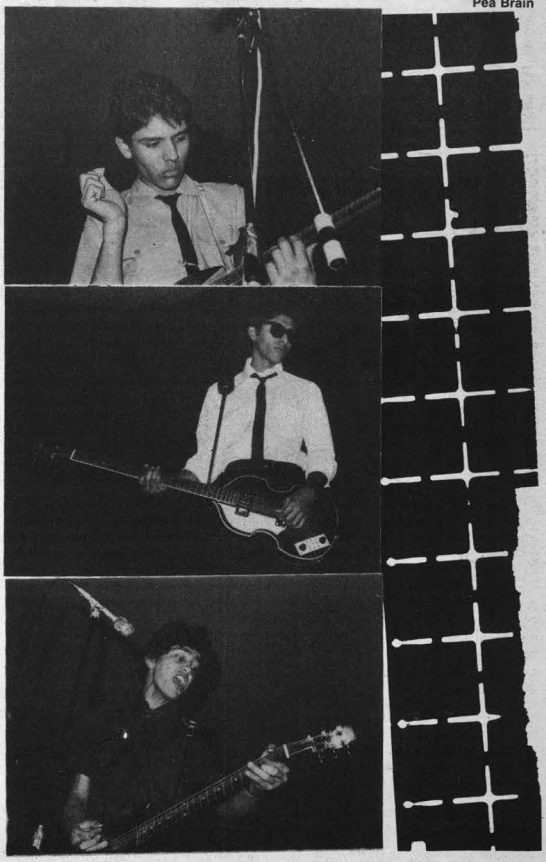
A few people from L.A. were there, subdued because the Masque was closed. As far as I know, the Zeroes didn't do anything new. Sometimes they play a great set, this wasn't one of them, the place just wasn't inspiring. A kind of boxing area formed in front of the stage and if you didn't want to box or shove you could watch from the side or further back in front, actually, the side was what they called "backstage." Some guy came up and for no reason said, "I'll have to ask you to move up front"—(just practicing for the big time, I suppose).

The applause was lost in a big, half empty place, I don't know why some people were there, they never even listened and there wasn't anything to drink. Maybe it was just better than home with nothing to do. We left to eat a pizza and came back late (again) for the next set.

It was the same with the Weirdos, nothing new. It was hard to tell the reaction of the crowd, they seemed to have a good time, some were drunk when they came, some pogoed in a funny way and they pulled John Denney into the boxing arena where he slid around on potato chips and Dr. Pepper for a few minutes. It turned into a skating rink.

The Weirdos seemed lethargic, they couldn't have played a very long set unless I was ***very*** late. It ended with someone getting mad because a mike got wet. The Zeroes had an amp stolen. People cleared out slowly. There was a party... San Diego was too dreary for me.

Pea Brain



Photos: Philomena

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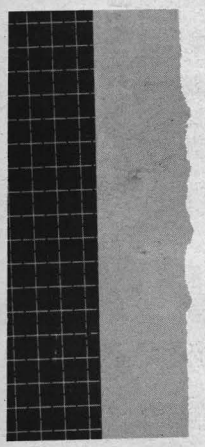
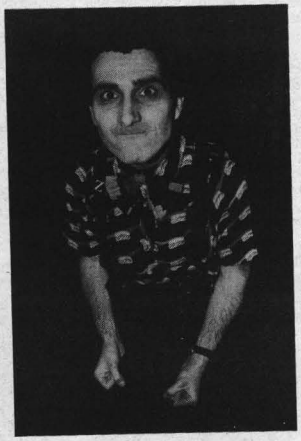




POWER POP PROPHECY PETERS OUT???
(catchy headline courtesy of the catchy headline dept.)

Greg Shaw is a man obsessed. He has visions. One of them has something to do with punk, pop, and the future of music. I believe it's about punk being an extreme but temporary reaction to mid-'70s music shit, just a necessary phase before the ***real*** thing reaches our jaded ears again: the youthful carefree sounds of pop music. But pop music having grown to mean Abba/Shaun Cassidy syrup, Greg calls his dream sound power pop, meaning that it doesn't have to lack energy or enthusiasm. In other words, good fun melodic punk is around the corner. The growing popularity of the Jam or Generation X (accused by Mark P. of going after the Bay City Rollers market) seems to support the theory, and there are more and more singles, either English or American, that could make you believe St. Greg's prophecy shall be fulfilled. Unfortunately for the new movement, the "Bomp presents . . ." nights at the Whisky made me even more skeptical.

Initial disappointment: The Zeros pulled out of the show. Financial disagreement or aesthetic doubts about the whole venture, no matter. The Zeros are one of the bands that could have lent a lot of credibility to the night. At least they were in the audience and not sulking in some Chula Vista corner.

Remained four bands (at least on Saturday night—if another band another night made a liar out of me, please contact the editors immediately. I will be punished by having my entire punk singles collection replaced with the complete works of the Dave Clark Five). They were the Nerves, the Zippers, 20/20 and the Fast. I'm so out of touch with the healthy fringe of the new music I truly believed the Nerves went around in three-piece suits, had long hair and sang sweet harmonies. I vaguely remember their single as something entirely too clean and neat and forgettable, and I wasn't ready for their show. No filth and fury, but an honest, energetic, basic approach to rock 'n' roll, with only now and then traces of Beatles influence in the vocals. And I like drummers that stand up. And guitar players that do a whole set with five strings. But why did I keep thinking I was watching an old movie of summer fun with some obscure British beat combo making all the cool cats and kitties dance the night away? Time warp? Return of innocence? Even if the world does ***not*** want another Sid Vicious (which isn't proven yet), this is going a bit too far.

Last time I saw the Zippers they were headlining in some small club in Redondo Beach and lending their equipment to an unknown bunch that called themselves the Weirdos. The Weirdos were throwing themselves about, being total nuisances and having the few regulars choking on their beer in disbelief. The Zippers were more well behaved and passed out fliers with the list of the songs they would perform printed on it. I liked the way Danielle sang "He's a Rebel" and I liked the way she held her bass. I still like "He's a Rebel" and I still want to be her bass. But their style of music never did anything to me; it's competent and I can tap my foot to it, I can look at them and not feel hatred or contempt, and I can understand why they have a following. I can also understand why my rock 'n' roll nerve endings deadened a few years ago and reggae became ***the*** sound.

20/20 did the most economical set of the evening: two songs, one of them the "Hippy hippy shake" oldie. By the time I was getting ready to check them out, praise them or abuse them, they were gone. Clever. Could there be a budding Machiavellian Malcolm McLaren managing the group?

I think the Fast ended the evening but I'm not sure 'cause I had to leave halfway through due to personal reasons (personal reasons is someone close to me who thought it'd be fun to pass out and be carried out. Some people haven't been told yet about the return to wholesomeness.). The Fast are from Brooklyn, N.Y. That's what lead singer Long Locks (definitely not dread) said when the heckling started. The audience was not from Brooklyn, N.Y. That's what they were saying. What we had there was a definite lack of communication. It appears the audience decided they would have a bit of fun with what looked like a "freaky," flashy, snotty pack of New Yorkers. Maybe what started it was the already mentioned locks of the guy with the leotard. Or maybe the way he moved. Tricky business, playing for these new wave audiences. One wrong shake of the hips and they dismiss you as glitter. One whirl of your lovely jet black hair and they start doubting your manliness. Even if they pogo to your music, you can't trust them. I left after watching a few of the more hardcore locals being bodily thrown off the premises for their discourteous behavior.

Next day I suddenly realize why no "Power Pop" badge would ever appear on my shirt. If ***one*** look from Johnny Rotten, or ***one*** moan from The Avengers' Penelope, or ***one*** guitar chord from the Dils can mean more to me, can ***do*** more to me than an entire night of bouncy tunes and catchy riffs, then there's no power in the pop.

POD, DILS, AVENGERS
at the Whisky

Not many punkers this Wednesday night, everyone is at the Masque, cursing the fire department, coming up with various unrealistic solutions to the very realistic dilemma of the month: where the fuck are we going to go now??

Meanwhile, at the Whisky, there's a handful of new wavers watching with disbelief the POD thing make total asses out of themselves. Kind of a psychedelic/funk/glitter/heavy metal monstrosity; it is so incredibly phony, so abysmally vulgar, so terrifyingly dated it makes you dizzy. Has to be the most ludicrous billing the Dils/Avengers have ever ended up with. I know this year we should be positive and all that but there ain't no way I'm gonna say something good about that tarty chick who does the singing, the grinding and the tongue flicking and her pack of satisfied egotistical musos (muso: bellbottomed, turquoised, mustached musician of the old order).

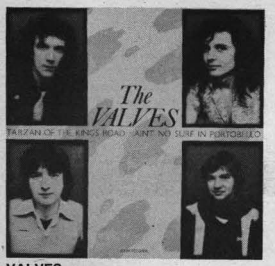
Frighteningly enough there were quite a few goons and their dates who were really "getting off" on that musical diarrhea. Shouts of "get it on," "get down" and "right on, sister" could be heard, probably making the Dils tremble backstage. Maybe this was just a big acid flashback after all. The nightmare went on for what seemed like hours, one endless boogie after another, one pathetically gross attempt at sensuality after another. I was nauseous. If this was the only music available I would immediately commit suicide. It took the greatest set the Dils have ever done before my eyes to restore my faith in living.

Quite intent on erasing the opening disaster off our memory, they zoomed thru their fiery bunch of songs, all the ones from the two singles ("Mr. Big" is so much better live) plus "Penelope," "Concentration," "Maximum penalty," "World does turn," "Citizen," "National Guard Live Dub" (real tasty reverb, should be a gas on vinyl, soon please) and "Down at the boondocks." Triumphant encore with a classic "Waiting for my man." Really pumping raw energy into that almost defunct ditty, Tony obliterates one unnecessary string off his bass (the fucking thing snapped off at both ends, tortured beyond its metal limits), Rand shoves his demented beat further and further into your skull, Chip spits out the words as if he just had written the song an hour ago in some tenement room and crashes vicious chords on top of each other. They make it an angrier, more urgent song than the almost plaintive, cynical, original version ever was. I'm glad it's over. Something in me was gonna snap too. When a band gets that strong in front of you, you're just another bloody instrument. You get battered, swung and crashed. Beyond listening, beyond the detached "grooving" feel. You are it. You are the music. Rare stuff.

I liked the Avengers less than at their stupendous Winterland performance; maybe they gave everything they had in that challenge and need another week or so to recharge their batteries. It was still good fun; even when they're not on top, they'll do more for you than most; nobody can do it all the time, like machines. The Pistols can't, the Jam can't, The Clash can't. Kraftwerk probably can. Their soul is a bunch of circuits and condensers. Next time the Avengers drop by, let's kidnap them until they agree to live down here. All this commuting back and forth is a waste of energy. Or maybe we should trade them for something San Francisco might want. Like Studio One, with all its occupants thrown in as a bonus.

Face

Forty-Five's



VALVES
Zoom Records import
(Tarzan of Kings Road / Ain't no Surf in Portobello)

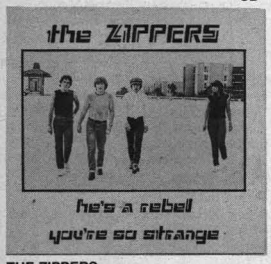
Like, man, I dig parodies & novelty tunes but it'll be a sprung twenty-four when I re-spin this platter. This attack is strictly squaresville.

Edd Burns

THE SUBURBAN STUDS
Pogo Records import
(No Faith / Questions)

No picture, no reputation, I bought it 'cause their name is neat. They play fast, nondescript rock 'n' roll but "Questions" is growing on me. It's good if you want to grapple and all that in stuff but don't count on remembering much of the song after. Very momentary music. Fleeting.

CB



THE ZIPPERS
Back Door Man Records
(You're so strange / He's a rebel)

If you expect me to slag this just on principle, fuck you. Ain't got no principles. The Zippers are good at what they're doing and they don't give a fuck what label you decide to stick on them. It's not my fave type of noise but that's not their problem either. Good effects, clean stuff, the return of innocence. They and I probably have nothing in common except a deep hatred of phonies. Excuse me, Zippers, while I tiptoe out to the alley to do some intensive sipping with the rest of the spikey degenerates. Nothing personal.

Kicboy

THE SNOTS
Edge City Records
(So long to the Sixties / New York love-letter / It's later than you think)

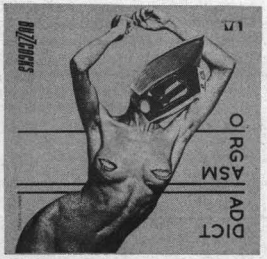
It's a 33 the size of a 45 so it drags on quite a bit more than it looks like it will. Side 2 ("It's later than you think") is instrumental freak-out time, kitchen sink included. It grates my nerve endings in a most vicious way but maybe it's the pills I took. I'll keep away from it until I'm healthier. A-side is mostly chaotic with undecipherable singing, unidentified sounds (guitars in pain?) twenty feet behind then right there, too close for comfort and random endings 'cause enough is enough, we made our point, take that, world! And the world couldn't take it. End of a sad story.

Kickboy-Simple-Folks-Face

DIODES
Columbia Canadian import
(Red Rubber Ball / We're Ripped)

The A-side is just fabulous! Great sound, hot playing, and a tongue-in-chic (cover versions are so *in*) attitude. For a local L.A. reference, they sound like the Dickies will probably sound when they record. For you others, think of Generation X with a dash of Monkees. By far the best number on their LP. The "Ripped" side also sounds really good, but this band is still in the developing stages and should only get better.

Bo Clifford



BUZZCOCKS
United Artists (import)
(Orgasm Addict / What Ever Happened To?)

Both sides have great back beats, perfect slam-your-ham tempos, even if a syringe of jizz ain't my favorite habit. What ever happened to sensitive record reviews? Worth $1.50 . . .

Lou "Lawnboy" Peters

DOC. ALIMANTADO & THE REBELS
(Born for a Purpose / Reason for Living [Dub])
Greensleeves import

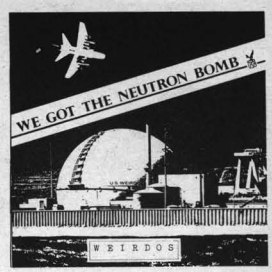
This is the one we've been hearing so much about lately. Yes, it is one of J. Rotten's favorites (consoling him thru times of trauma), but that's not the only reason you should hear this one. It's without a doubt *the* finest reggae track these Ja-loving ears have heard all year. Crystal-clear with just a hint of echo, the vocals soaring above the groove; the Doctor is in splendid form on this one. "If you feel you have no reason for living, don't determine my life." That just about says it all, doesn't it? This record refuses to leave my turntable and I hope you can have a chance to hear it, too.

A. Dubb

SOFT BOYS
Raw Records import
(Wading Thru A Ventilator / The Face of Death / Hear My Brain)

Uh oh, just what all you simping piss-artist punks have been waiting for, "acid punk." Well, you could call it "production punk" and sound twice as fucking stupid. I mean, who thinks up these stupid names? However, this is a great EP. The Soft Boys' music is shaped by a dense and discordant guitar sound which is not without a bit of sublety reminiscent of the Who or Beatles (though I'm no expert) and even bits of Stranglers. Only no wimpy organs and pet shop gothic for these boys. All three songs are instant hits & I could hear "Wading" on KROQ if they weren't already deaf. Definitely "a band to watch in '78." Anyway, get it.

Dave A.



THE WEIRDOS
Dangerhouse
(We got the neutron bomb / Solitary confinement)

First definite "political" song from L.A.'s finest, it will prove once and for all that the Weirdos have hardly begun to do it to us. Wall of noise, back-up vocals, manic protest from extraterrestrial John Denney ("We don't want it, we don't want it") that will go unheard until it is too late, a song to be played within everyone's earshot until they bleed, begging for mercy from the noble punk guerrillas. Holocaust music, doomsday bells. We got the bomb, we got the Weirdos, what a time of mixed blessings. "Solitary confinement" standard Weirdos clenched teeth stuff, yeah, they'll probably all put us away some day if we don't shut up.

Kick Face

SKAFISH FEB. 22-25 THE WHISKY

ART MEETS PUNK

You're invited to get down with the artists (or get trampled by the crowd) at a special opening night preview of 'DREVA/GRONK 1968 - 1978: TEN YEARS OF ART/LIFE.' The preview and party will take place Thursday, March 9, from 7 to 11 p.m. at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, located at 240 S. Broadway (Third floor), in downtown Los Angeles.

Be a part of this anti-historic occasion celebrating the return of Jerry X. Bonbon to Hollywood. Make headlines with Dreva and Gronk as they tear down the gallery walls and take art to the streets. Be on hand when Art meets Punk at the opening of this important exhibition of new art.

It wouldn't be the same without you.

THE SECRET
Arista Import
(The Young Ones / Handel a Vandal)

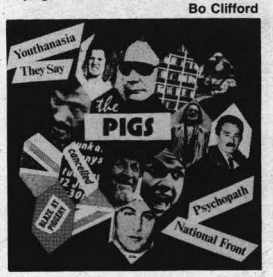
Good time rock 'n' roll. They're having fun, sweet things. Nothing to say, but they like to rock in front of an audience and take funny poses. They bore me stiff.

Kick

SHAM 69
Step Forward import
(Ulster / I Don't Wanna / Red London)

Sham 69 have been getting a lot of publicity lately as a committed, concerned band. Indeed, the sleeve on this debut depicts lead singer Jimmy Pursey (I believe) being bodily hauled off by the cops after Sham's infamous rooftop gig and bust. The music in these grooves reeks of politics: all three tunes are comments on the social situation in Britain. "Ulster" has a very clear message: there are no winners in the long stalemate in Ireland. The next one is your typical ode to boredom and no future and they're not gonna be kicked around anymore neither, bub! "Red London" is concerned with the recent riots there and the fear of what might happen next. Music for people who listen with their heads and one worth buying.

Bo Clifford



THE PIGS
New Bristol Records Import
(Youthanasia / They say / Psychopath / National Front)

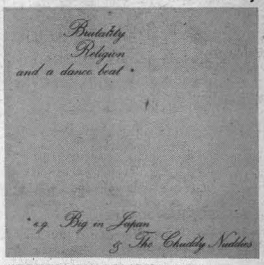
"Youthanasia" is great, not sung, more chanted, like at a protest march. Grim, grim. "They say" is okay but a bit useless. "Psychopath" and "National Front" are more variations on the same nervous sound. Some gutsy metal chords in the middle. In "National Front" we are assured that "there ain't nothing wrong with the black kids no way." Obvious, but the way it is said warms your heart. They do sound like they're ready to fight for it. Every generation has to discover a few basic things for themselves and a big up-yours to the cynics who have heard it all before. They haven't done much about it.

Kickboy

CULTURE
Joe Gibbs Records Import
(Two Sevens Clash / Mighto two-version)

Already a classic in England, this rocker's obscure prophecy of Babylonian doom will soothe your spikey soul, mon, whether or not the actual meaning of that beautiful tune gets thru your unpure brain. "What aliv bam ba yeh, when de two sevens clash" might (I have doubts) be enlightening to the dread brethren up there on cloud nine; to the rest of us it remains a haunting, alluring cut, a voyage to other moods, a promise of a future with no walls between cultures, and no need for arduous rationalizing. There's a piano that comes and goes on the waves of the rhythm, a bass that cuts slices in your space-time continuum, and three lazy singers with very musical lingo on their lips and visions in their eyes. I don't know what happened in '77 that Marcus Garvey said would, I hope he had things to say about '78, '79, and on and on, so we may get more culture shocks. The dub side is quite swell too, too too too too . . .

Chatty



"BRUTALITY, RELIGION AND A DANCE BEAT"
Eric's Records Import
"Do the Chud," The Chuddy Nuddies
"Big in Japan," Big in Japan

"Do the Chud" is okay a couple of times, quite Eno ish in its "we're all mutants around here let's get mechanical" approach. Maybe they're good friends with Devo and maybe they're not. Who knows with aliens . . .

"Big in Japan" is probably supposed to be a joke. Either it's totally beyond me or then I don't know. I find it offensive to our overseas friends. Get out of the studio, you lame jokers. You're wasting everybody's precious time.

Kickboy no sense of humor Face

BABY BLUE
Baby Blue Records
(Rock and Roll Rebel / Fantasy Man)
NEEDLES & PINS
Cavern
(I Wanna Play with Guns / Don't You Worry)
POLES
Nimbus 9 import
(CN Tower / Prime Time)

Here's three that get lumped together for two simple reasons: they came into my clutches on the same day and the bands all have female singers. That said, let's deal with the worst first.

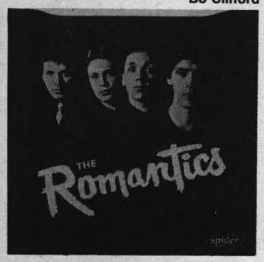
Baby Blue is awful! Plain and simple. The beauteous (?) babe (??) in this band sings so ootsy-poo that the listener has no choice but to laugh. Judging by the sleeve, she is anxiously awaiting the comeback of burlesque. Just a personal note: cut down on the perfume, it's deafening. A must to avoid.

The "Guns" side of the Needles & Pins' 45 was recorded live at the lost, lamented Masque; the local hotspot. Admittedly the muddy sound doesn't help the band, but their problem is apparent from the outset: their singer couldn't hit a note if it was standing still! The slightly better sounding B-side only points this up more. I hope this is not the only remnant of the Masque that we will hear. Decent songs, bad record. Public service announcement: please change your name to Needles & Pinsa. Thank you.

Those two are local L.A. groups but the cream of this trio comes from Toronto. The

Poles have made a very solid sounding record featuring a Pere Ubu type riff that makes a great foil for their lady's interesting and original vocals. The B-side is a little too close to boogie to be really successful, but they've got a lot of potential. Their next one should be good all the way thru . . .

Bo Clifford



THE ROMANTICS
Spider Records
(Little white lies / I can't tell you anything)

Must be some of that power pop I've been warned against. AM stuff except AM does not play that anymore and that it should play something else anyway. Result: one foot firmly stuck in our beloved childhood, the other searching for an elusive foothold in the future, The Romantics are going to do a painful split and hurt their privates in a very unromantic fashion.

Kick

CHELSEA
Step Forward Import
(High-rise living / No admission)

Ominous growling sound about modern frustrations, Gene October has a truly gripping voice, forceful and full of contained anger. Otherwise it's a bit slow for me and also rather ineffectively recorded. On "High-rise" there's too much thump thump, never quite takes off, potentially a mother of a song but not developed. "No admission" is kinda the same, goes off on tangents, defusing what should be an explosion.

Kickboy

THE MIRRORS
Lightning import
(Cure for Cancer / Nice Vice)

Everything that Lightning has released has been bad. Bad groups, bad songs, bad production, even bad sleeves! A real pseudo, cash-in kind of outfit. This one doesn't really change that, though it is a definite step in the right direction. This band has potential, given time and practice. The A-side is almost a minute too long but it's still a pretty good song. The chorus says: "White light in my eyes / White heat in my brain" and the Velvet's influence comes thru even more on "Nice Vice." Fetish rock raises its kinky head.

Bo Clifford

THE HEARTBREAKERS
Track Records
(One track mind / Can't keep my eyes on you / Do you love me)

Is the title song an ode to their beloved record company? It moves on real snappy with chorus and strong guitars and drum break that does not disturb. Somehow I've heard it all before. Very deja vu stuff. Girl talk on the other side, ever present high-pitched guitar in between the blah lyrics, it's live (sort of) and not very necessary. "Do you love me" is what I thought it was. The Heartbreakers are doing the standing still.

Kick Out the Past Motherfucker Face

MANIACS
(Chelsea 77 / Ain't No Legend)

"Chelsea 77" struck me right off as out of control and is the better side. "Ain't No Legend" has a catchy arrangement of a couple of ordinary progressions and anti-pop star lyrics that, however true, are just too cliche. The Maniacs' biggest liability is that they're shackled to a limited vision. They have a tear-down-the-wall lack of inhibition that would serve them better if they narrowed their focus. As it stands now, they're just another routine band.

Chris D.

THE DAMNED
(Don't Cry Wolf / One Sided Love)

The riffs are anything but original and the words occasionally inane. But Dave Vanian manages to achieve a pathos halfway through that is genuinely affecting. And, for the first time since their last album, the guitars go at each other's throats, generating a high strung emotional state that has forced me into repeated listenings. "One Sided Love" doesn't measure up as well, but it's far superior to the "Problem Child" disaster.

Chris D.

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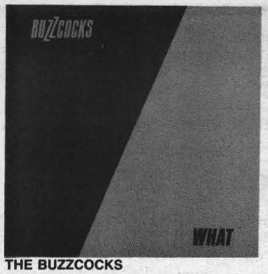

THE BUZZCOCKS
UA Import
(What Do I Get / Oh Shit)

We moaned when How-hard Devoto squirmed out of the Buzzcocks, undoubtedly our all-time faverit polemics-novo band, 'cause it sure seemed like it wuz Howard's nightmare visions of "life" (as we know it) that made the difference. Well, the band was quite good and original too, but the last 'Cocks single was a bit on the die-young side. However . . .

This new 45 by the 'Cocks cooks. Hey, what's in it fuh me, man, sneered like Howard would be proud. No qualms with the band, mon, they move me too. The flipper is the killuh tho. Sounds like he was hit but missed, got shit on but got hit. ***Admit / You're shit / Admit / You're shit*** sounds like Pete Shelley's tongue-between-cheeks appraisal of the competition (see above and below).

Quite worthwhile.

Johnny Assai

MENACE
Illegal Records 12" Import
(Screwed up / Insane Society)

Yippee, another twelve-inch single to make my LP collection look real thick and contemporary! Blow the retards' minds who don't know about all the new fads and come over to catch up on the madness they're missing. Cover real tough too, boots and pants, shadows, the street. Inside, standard punk noise, bitch bitch bitch, it's still right of course even though recorded last summer. Menace don't bother to singularize themselves from the rabid pack; they do, sing and play what hundreds of average punks want, we're you, we don't know more, we don't want more. They're not more menacing than any one of us. You or I could have written either song, they just happened to be in a studio at the time. Whether they'll be heard from again remains to be seen, but there are hundreds where they come from. Take it, boys. Just don't let the angry pounding ever stop again.

Kick Face

METAL URBAIN
(Paris Maquis / Cle de Contact)

Total destructive energy pumps through this, racing diseased blood transcending decay and corruption, purifying everything it touches with a cleansing violence. This is running through the streets, your best friends and worst enemies locked arm in arm, unstoppable under the gun, aimed at the heart of everything that's wrong with the world today. "Paris Maquis" is one of the most unifying calls to arms yet.

Chris D.

MARY MONDAY AND THE BITCHES
Malicious Productions Records
(I Gave My Punk Jacket to Rickie / Popgun)

She sings like a little girl with a lollipop at times but she looks like a big girl with other things than candy on her mind. "I Gave My Jacket . . ." is shit through and through but "Popgun" I like, much to my surprise. It cooks real modern, no fooling around, too bad for the solo that almost drives the song into oblivion, it don't really pick up as nicely after that. Too bad, could have been real good from start to finish. Bad judgment there, that guitar player should have been briefed on the wonders of economy. Five seconds would have been quite enough for him to flash and go, "Hey, mom, look, I'm recording a fucking solo!"

KickFace

THE ALLEY CATS
Dangerhouse
(Nothing means nothing anymore / Gimme a li'l pain)

I can't believe this single. It's so hot it burns right thru my turntable, leaving a neat, smoking, circular shaft right down to the spot below where my bewildered neighbor is watching with disbelief what's left of his smoldering and hissing TV set! The Alley Cats' entrance into the world of sound recordings is a triumph, it will turn heads around so fast many will suffer dislocated vertebrae. Fast, intense beat, catchy but ***lean,*** super economic zing, and Randy's voice bursts thru with a strength I never caught live. It's not a voice it's a weapon, it contracts the words, rolls them into packed fiery balls, throws them at your head; Diane joins in on the last word of the chorus, adding an extra element of split-effect, like the demented singer suddenly separating into man/woman for that last second aural punch.

Such original no-obvious-debts-to-no-one-no-bandwagon-imitations music is more than welcome right now. It is exactly what is needed to pull out of the dangerous prevailing mood of the scene. Totally universal, it leaves all the English vs. American new wave quibbles behind.

B-side is almost as good, playing just as tight and racy, no restraint, no hesitating. Halfway thru, Randy punches himself into the necessary frenzy with repeated 1, 2, 3, 4 exhortations, not to the audience for boogie relating but for himself, launching into the possessed "gimme a li'l pain" chorus when he feels it right and there's no turnin' back anyway. It stays there until the rolling drums have exhausted all the possibilities, which are very few on such a single-minded frenetic level. Total absence of self-indulgence is what I mean.

With this first single these three shy and mysterious rockers have masterfully shoved their way to the front line. Observers will undoubtedly start questioning the faltering supremacy of the old punk guard. One of the first out this year (locally) and an excellent omen.

Kickboy

THE HUMAN SWITCHBOARD
Rug Records
(Fly in / Distemper / Shake it boys / San Francisco nights)

This must come from another part of the country . . . all too intelligent and tasteful to be from around here. It's been in some stores for a while now and it's gonna be there a while longer. A bit of Stones, a bit of Velvets, many influences in fact. I might have liked it 3-4 years ago during the big void of mid-'70s nothingness; now it's just well done nostalgia stuff. Please, you clever guys and girls, you make me feel so old! Bet you don't know which year this is!!

Kick Face

THE RESIDENTS
"DUCK STAB"
Ralph Records

This EP contains 7 tunes, a veritable kaleidoscope of Residents consciousness. Then it's got lyrics you can actually sing along with (they're printed), straightforward songs (?) with a beginning, an end and no sudden astral take-off into the unknown. It's got melodies, or what will be considered melodies in the year 2000, choruses about secret matters that only the Residents know about, slow songs and fast songs (the fast ones are the ones that zoom past you like demented mechanical mice on a vital run), a normal cover with a red fiend stabbing a white duck; it's got everything you could ask for but a clue as to what is going on in these people's brains. Oh, I forgot, it's got poetry too: "Your heart is like a silken sponge that calls saliva love."

CB

P.S. Someone I know swears this stuff will be on every jukebox within 10 years. He also thinks the Residents have gone quite commercial with this. I really couldn't tell.

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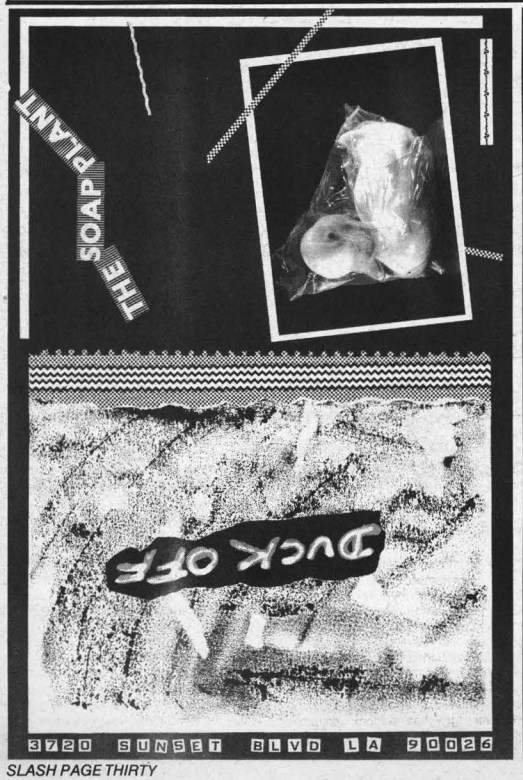

'BABY HOLD ON"
Power Pop by
STARS
IN
THE
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photo: Deborah Schow

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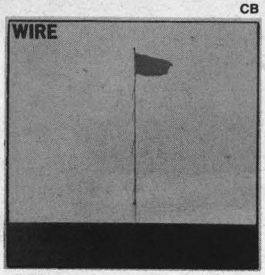
Albums

STINKY TOYS
Polydor Import

Hate to say so after the constant pleasure I derived from their single ("Driver blues") but les Stinky Toys should not have listened to record company sweet-talking and gone into the studio for an LP. They were a nice little mystery, could have released another intriguing single, and mainly worked at establishing a unique sound. Elli Medeiros is an unusual singer (and quite a striking-looking punkette), but her obscure English singing, formless grasp on melody (mostly a tenuous mess of haphazard chords, constant background soloing and pedestrian drumming) destroys her potential appeal. The songs and meaningless lyrics blend into one another, here and there it catches your attention but the hiccupy playing around and the unattractive repetition of sounds annoy and prevent any steady enjoying, dancing or finger snapping. She should leave the guys and find herself some hard no-nonsense rockers with whom she could wail and yodel without fear of the music constantly dissolving behind her. They should stop looking so serious and listen to what tight new wave can sound like.

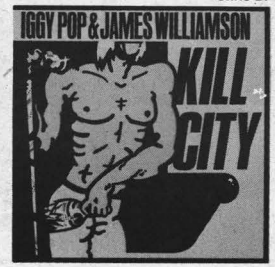
CB



WIRE
PINK FLAG
E.M.I./Harvest Import

A brutal intelligence strays all through this, which now and again slackens the necessary tension and other times jacks it up into artery-bursting abandon. When those unpleasant things in their brains come to the surface and insecurities are exposed, the obscure lyrics with the Ramones/Vibrators guitar hybrid blend into something downright nasty. Repressions explode like bombshells and everything coheres together into a caustically bleak revelation. If you're in the wrong mood, it could be dangerous to listen to this record.

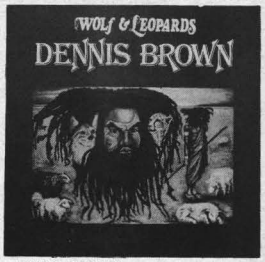
Chris D.



IGGY AND THE STOOGES(?)
"KILL CITY"
Bomp Records

After "Raw Power," Iggy and James tried real hard to make it big and there is no better testimony to it than this compilation of mainstream tracks that, for the most part, should've never been released. Some songs, like "Kill City," "Beyond the Law," and "Johanna," despite mixed-down, anemic guitar, are near classics. "I Got Nothin' " reaches out from its MOR trappings, traversing a desperate region where even Iggy has seldom ventured (i.e. "I Got a Right"). But Side 2 is a complete waste . . . uninteresting, unfinished, sans passion, inspiration, or power. Embarrassing. And James Williamson produced this? Bomp would have been better off to take the songs mentioned here and release an EP instead.

Chris D.

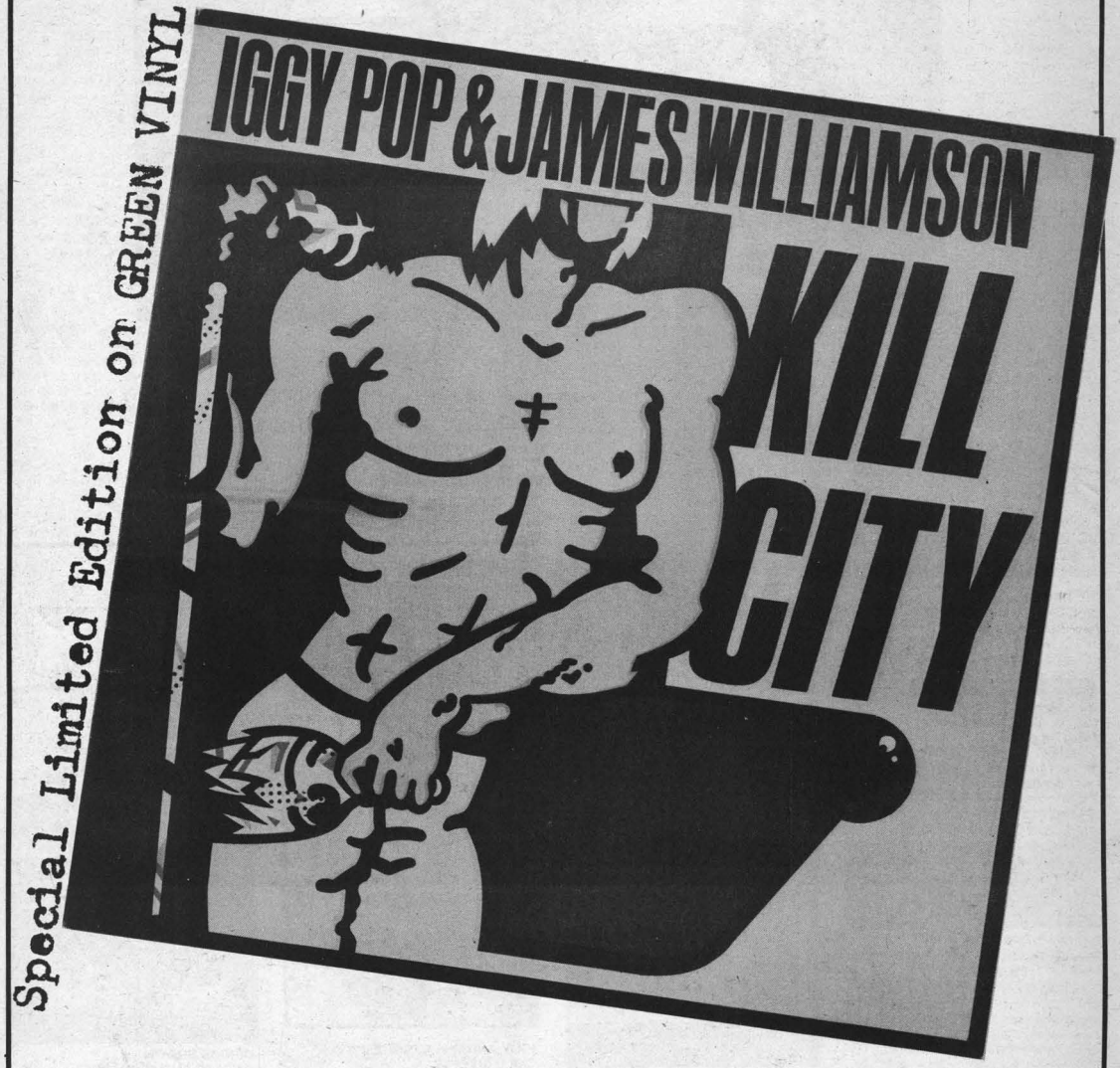


DENNIS BROWN
"WOLFS AND LEOPARDS"
D.E.B. Music Import

Dennis Brown is only twenty years old but he is one of the old-timers of Ja music. Started recording at thirteen. Played with Byron Lee and the Dragonaires (he was then known as the Boy Wonder!). Now a full-fledged Rastafarian, he continues to regularly put out some interesting sounds. Brown is a singer's singer and sometimes tends to annoy by an excess of indulgent vocalizing.

On Side 1 of his newest platter, this happens with the terribly weak "Here I

Iggy As He Was.



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come," where an almost total absence of a catchy melody is further aggravated by some gratuitous crooning and a hollow, non-energetic backing. Rest of that side is fine, tasty, cool stuff, the rhythms nicely propelled, the controlled singing complements the sound without distracting from the overall feel. "Emanuel" and "Whip Them Jah Jah" are especially outstanding.

Side 2 starts with a dubious uptempo number, "Party time," with unnecessary vocal flights, drags thru the lengthy and silly "Rolling down" (the back-up vocals being especially embarrassing), then suddenly takes off with a tune called "Boasting," a super tight rootsy obsessive song that finally gets into some serious reggaeing. Dennis wails and moans with and around the melody but the band follows him closely and there's not an ounce of power lost. Next tune gets even tighter, brief horn notes lining the super jerky rhythm, nice voice. Last tune has a too predictable riff but it's a good, thick number that ends shortly after with two or three seconds of solitary wailing. Not a must, but a quite successful album from one of Jamaica's most popular mainstream performers. (Bomp now carries this plus other famed dread releases. Let's hope it is not a passing fancy.)

Chatty Chatty Mouth

THE DRONES
"FURTHER TEMPTATIONS"
Valer Records Import

From stark black and white (the two singles) to glorious color with a Venusian-skinned she-devil staring upside down at you—quite a change of image for the working class heroes, could it be a change of direction?

You turn the record around and here are the Drones, no three-piece suits, no flash, they're outside a seedy sex shop and the Venusian queen is just a street-walker with a keen sense of advertising. That's better.

Four of the songs we already know from the two 45s and they sound better than a few weeks ago. Either they unconsciously grew on me or they have been remixed.

Corgi Crap especially gets me really going now, sure looks like I can't even trust my own snappy judgments no more. Sorry boys, I'm not ***really*** a rock writer. Bluffed my way in here, and I'm about to get caught and booted out.

Most new songs are no big surprises, top speed, muscle-packed attacks on middle class values ("No more time" is hot, hot), yet there are a couple of odd surprises, just in case The Drones get accused of living up to their name: in "The Underdog" they pull a bit of a "Diamond Dogs" number off quite well, hidden vocals, cavernous soundtrack bits of effects just to see what happens, it stops way before you tire of it, tasty and cool. Other unexpected cut convinced me these guys have got more than one bullet in their gun. To get away with the amphetamine-fueled version of such an old piece of the rocking past as "Be My Baby" and make you feel the song all over again without another glance at the official tune is a feat not many punkers or even full-time old rockers can pull off.

The intro is like their way of quoting the past, done as straight as can be—pom, pa pom—until you dread the inevitable revival show that must be coming. Then bam bam bam bam, off they go, you better hurry if you want to go along. That song leaves clouds of dust on the trails of rock history! (Stop me.) Thank you. Boys and girls, The Drones. If they don't get you one way, they'll get you the other.

Kick Face, who can't tell a good band when he hears one now and then

THE DAMNED
"MUSIC FOR PLEASURE"
Stiff Import

The Damned first album was a landmark in more ways than one. First hardcore punk LP on the market, a breakthrough in carefree, high speed, elemental rock 'n' roll, critics and sophisticos be damned. It was unequal to pogo to, scream and shout and generally totally let go. Fresh air.

The follow-up is none of these things. Most of it is better played, better recorded and better presented (the cover is incredible, so is the inner sleeve). The magic is kind of gone though, as well as the Damned's enviable iconoclastic stance. There are still some fast fine songs with Rat drumming like hell while the others swirl around his backbeat like disheveled ghouls around the fire, but there are also some slower numbers with ugly chord progressions and an impact diminishing proportionately to the length of the song.

Only eleven songs altogether, and a couple are over five minutes. Definitely regressing there. They could have become masters of the hit and run tune, everything-at-once style and they have opted for redundancy. Some cuts miss Scabies' presence sorely while the new addition, Lu, adds nothing substantial to this fan's ears. I always suspected the Damned of not really knowing where the fuck to go next but I didn't think it would become so occasionally obvious. Almost a year later, the Damned come dangerously close to being just a (cherished) part of the past. And now there are so many others around, so much to compare to . . .

Kickboy

MX-80 SOUND
"HARD ATTACK"
Island Import

The first thing that struck me about MX-80 Sound's first album was the low-budget/low-definition/low-imagination cover (though they did manage a none-too-subtle plug for their "Big Hits" EP).

But there's nothing low-budget about the production. Mark Bingham has found a real studio for the boys from Bloomington, though you hardly notice. It seems that MX-80 Sound's low-definition sound is more a result of muddled musical intentions than faulty recording techniques. The guitars and drums charge wildly in many directions at the same time, making no sense whatsoever but not sounding all that bad. The real highlight is the occasional sax, sounding at times like an electrified kazoo and played so erratically as to make X-Ray Spex' Ari seem a classical purist by comparison. And the singing is even better: their vocalist has chosen to allow his precious vocal chords to remain dormant, no doubt a wise decision for all concerned.

And now the bad news: MX-80 Sound's new songs are surprisingly low on imagination. As on their EP the "songs" are off-the-wall ramblings that are supposed to connect in blazes of inspired insanity—only here they miss more often than not. There are exceptions, of course (MX-80 Sound being such an exceptional band). "Summer 77" starts out like Jonathan Richman at his wimpiest, but then everything goes out of control and it becomes truly demented. There are other instances of inspiration ("Crushed Ice" is cute) and even education (on "Facts-Facts" I learned that "the liverwort reproduces by special umbrella-shaped organs that produce both the sperm and egg"—oh, I probably knew it already, but without an MX-80 Sound around to remind you, you tend to forget such things); the problem is that there are just too many groups these days with as obvious a lack of talent as MX-80 Sound to make this record stand out. So buy the EP instead.

Mikel Toombs

SCREWDRIVER
"ALL SKREWED UP"
Chiswick Import

I may be the only one at SLASH who likes this. But now that they've all gone out for the night to do whatever posing and socializing there's to be done and I'm here in a literary mood with a bottle of sweet vermouth by my side and this real slice of low life on the turntable, I'm gonna be heard and screw them all and their pansy sophistication!

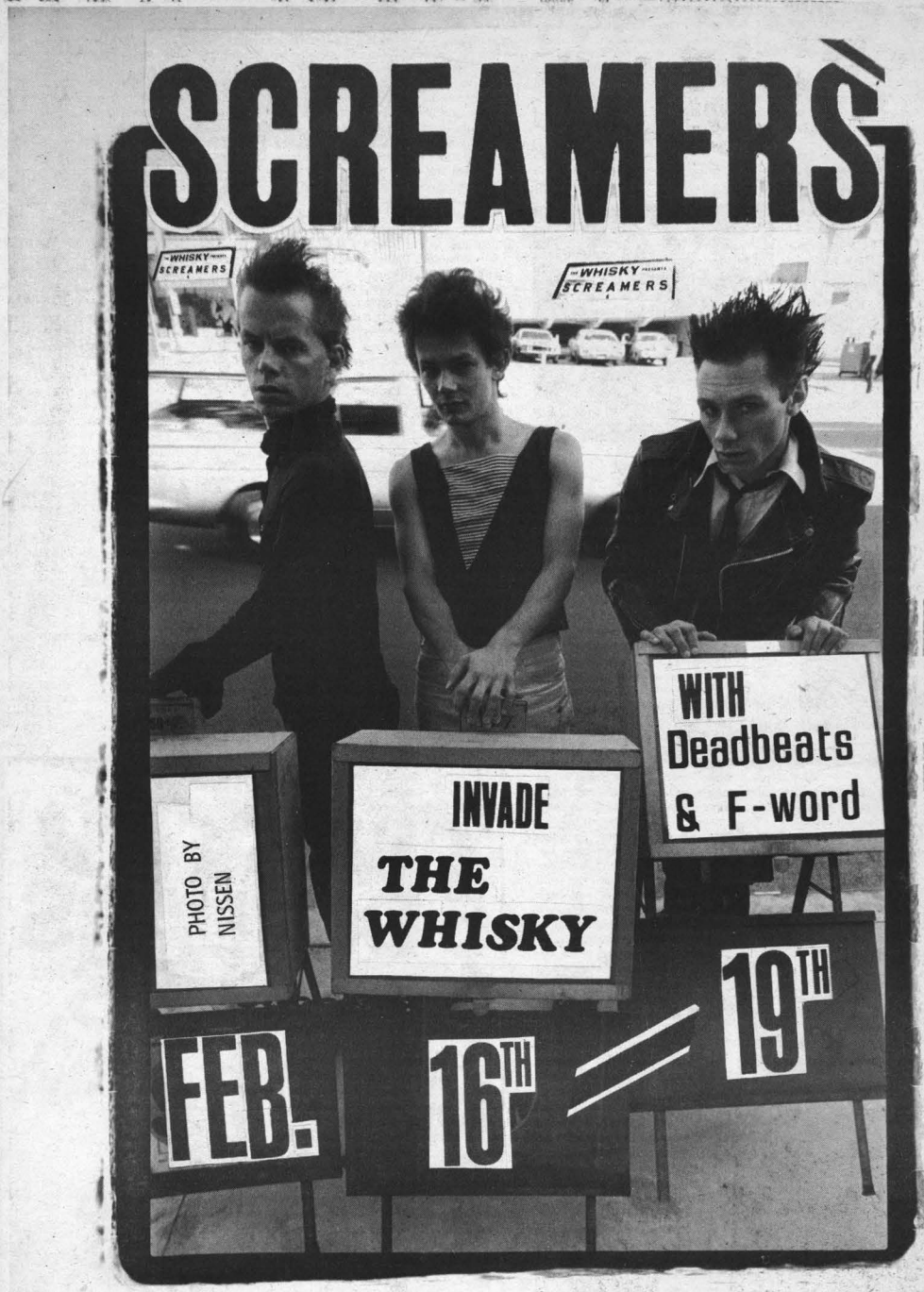
This is tough. The recording could be worked on, the playing could be cleaned up just a trace and the singing could be polished a teeny bit but it just wouldn't be the same. The "Skrew you" attitude is what counts here.

I like "Too much confusion" and I like "9 to 5"; I like "Jailbait" and I like "We don't pose." I like "I don't need your love" and "I don't like you." I also like "An-ti-so-cial" and I really like "Government action." The other songs I like too but I don't like "Won't get fooled again" 'cause it's not them; they destroy it anyway but I never liked that song 'cause I always wanted to believe in it but I couldn't.

Sometimes I may not know which song is which but that don't bother me, various musical facets I need as much as exotic cocktails. I also like the cover 'cause they look like they would send all them "tough" punks I know running for mama's skirts, and the retarded scribbles on both sides 'cause who needs that art school shit anyway? I don't care if they're skinheads or Martians, they've got this social sore as a fan. Somewhere in there they put down "wimp critics" and other scum, so if they read this I want to say that although I'm surrounded by effete walking thesauruses, I ain't one of them. I don't pose either. Yeah, give me some of that old moon stomping!

Gus "Red Death" Ano.

P.S. I liked the Pistols too but when I came to my senses a few days ago someone told me they were kaput. Nobody ever tells me anything. No wonder I've got this modest drinking problem!


SCREAMERS
THE WHISKY PRESENTS SCREAMERS
THE WHISKY PRESENTS SCREAMERS
WITH Deadbeats & F-word
INVADE THE WHISKY
PHOTO BY NISSEN
FEB. 16TH = 19TH

Jimbo
Yeh, these Gillette Trac II Twin Blade cartridges on my Schick Twin Blade balance handle really make shaving a pleasure: A Pure Joy, a GARDEN of Earthly delights... or is that something else?
& "It's your face Blah Blah Blah it!" E hmmm my Fingers still bleeding a little... hmmm te dumm.
G. PANTS 12.
well, hmmm.... what to wear for that PROM ...gotta get back in time for DONNY & MARIE though... hmmm this new blade really... ???? Is on the Bill? God they sure can
RICE Chex.
THINK.
YOW!!!!
BDRING!!!
Jimbo
my Refrigerator? uh yeah I Guess so... What?!? I don't get it... Look I can't talk now I just cut my ear off!

DUCK STAB!

Musical Wise-Quacks?

DUCK STAB is a new ep by The Residents. It contains 7 new songs–over 16 minutes of tunes to whistle, beats to snap your toes to, and quick witted cleverness that ties your little brain in square knots. Also, it has a beautiful, high-gloss, two-color cover; all the words to the tunes; and best of all, costs only pennies a month to own.

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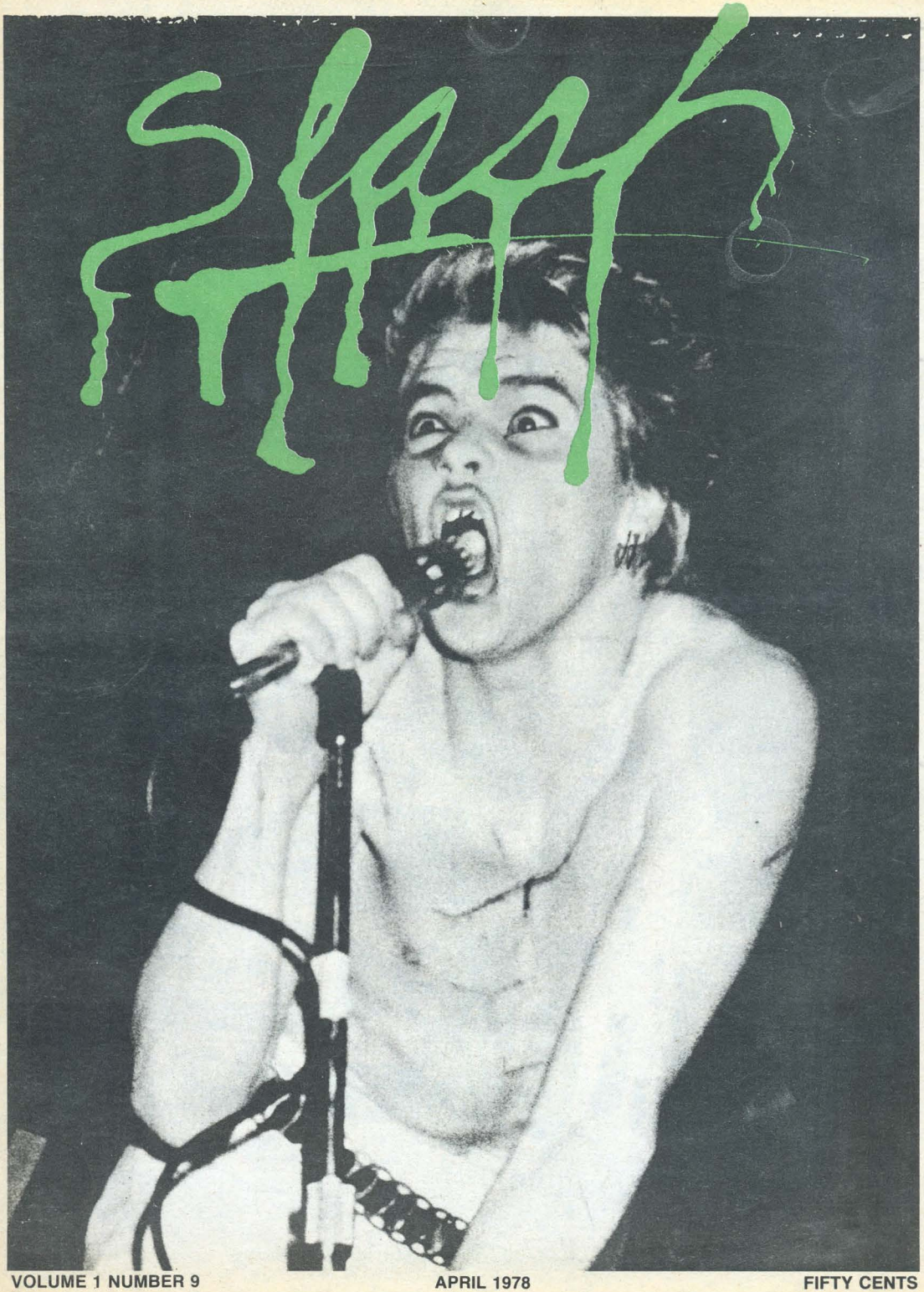
"DUCK STAB"–The new ep(7"/33rpm) from The Residents!

Slash



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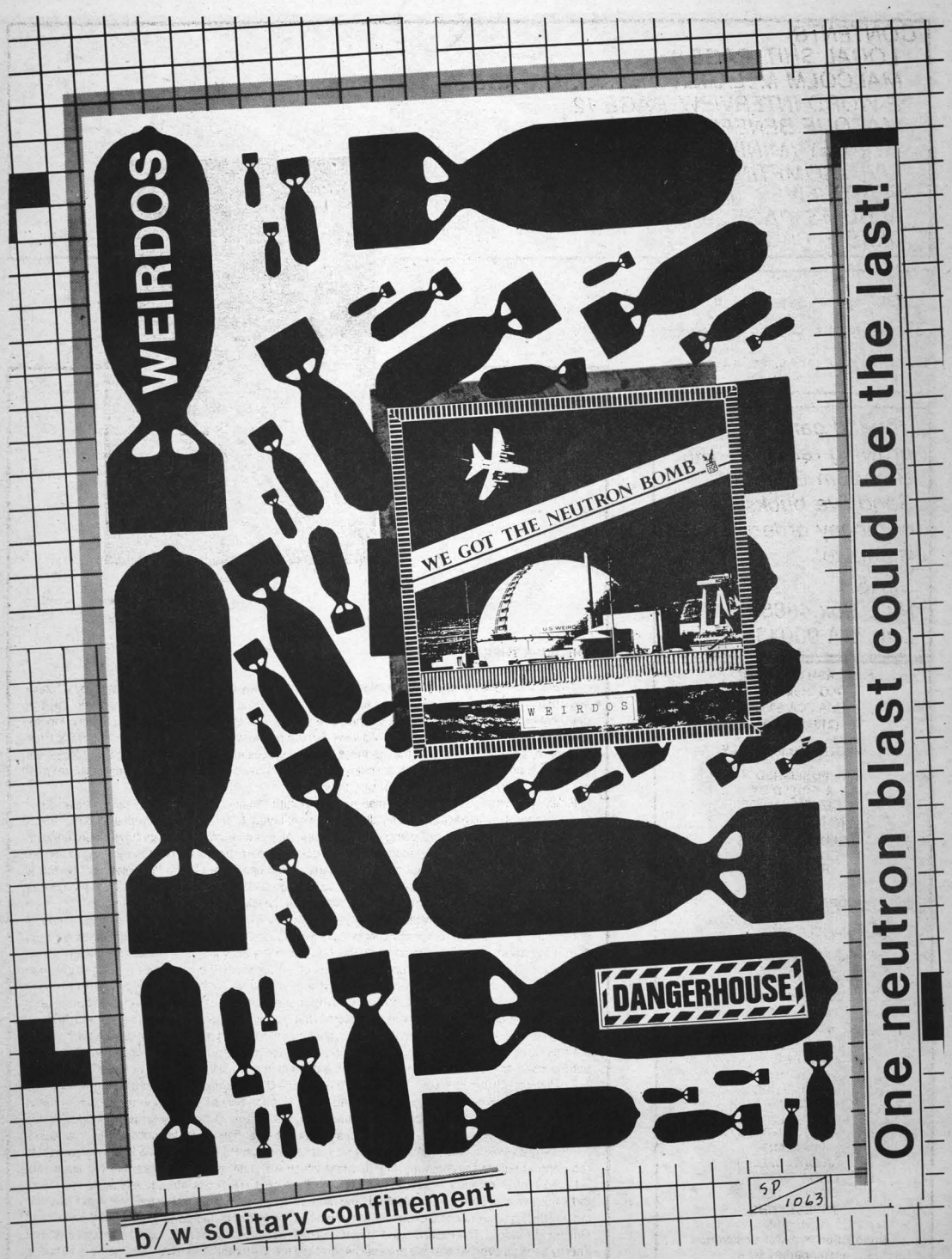

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JIMBO PAGE 31

COVER: Bobby Pyn lead singer of the GERMS (SLASH recording artists). Aren't we subtle??

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EDITORIAL

THE PUNK THREAT

These are serious times. With the release of a xeroxed copy of "The Musik Manifesto" (by a hippie spy traitor) to the general press, we are forced to re-evaluate our tactics. Gone are the days of clandestine meetings in dank cellars. The pose is over. No longer shall we have to act like lobotomized victims of the '70s when in public view. For the public was bound to discover, sooner or later, that there is organization within the madness, that there does exist a doctrine to which we pledge our allegiance, and now, free from the shackles of our self-imposed secrecy, we can openly discuss past accomplishments & goals for the coming year.

Firstly, and most immediate, the matter of Corporate Dominance. This past year we have come much further than expected. Our small, independent labels & periodicals, as well as the numerous clubs around the country are doing extremely well. All assets from said efforts have been funneled into a "survival account." This account shall be used by needy troops for necessary living expenses as well as for upgrading weaponry (i.e., guitars, drums heads, etc.). The "peoples tax" (which is outlined in article three of the Manifesto) is soon to be levied at all punk events. This, too, will be added to the "account." The reality of becoming self-sufficient is truly close at hand.

Secondly, we must deal with the problem of traitors (posers). Because of the obvious lure of excitement & adventure, our recruitments have gotten completely out of hand. At last count, nearly half of the troops had been uninitiated. This has led to the activation of the Punk Morals Enforcers (PME) unit. They have been instructed to move in on any collusion (i.e., sweet record deals) between any uninitiated troops and outside interests. There will be no "selling out" within the movement. Hopefully, the recruitment platoon (now working around the clock) will alleviate this problem, and soon. A by-product of the recruitment problem is the matter of appearance. For the moment, uniform codes have been relaxed. During the interim, the only strict code is *no* bellbottom or flare pants! Even the hair code has been relaxed, although only troops on subversive missions are allowed to retain natural color or allow hair to extend over the ears. Initiates are still requested to wear The Pin.

Finally, yet most importantly, Our Ultimate Goal: The displacement and eradication of the Enemy (The Hippie), initially from his middle-management position he has attained in the Music Industry, and finally from the face of the earth. Fortunately, the Enemy is an easy target. Although in the struggle, we are constantly confronted with a stubborn beast (fighting for his concepts of "hipness"), the Enemy's weaknesses (apathy, middle age, etc.) outweigh his strengths. The Enemy is subject to recurring states of paranoia and it's this fear which we shall use against him. He will succumb.

Using tactics outlined in Article 7, the Token Punk Unit (TPU) has already infiltrated the Music Industry and is proceeding as planned. The Media Manipulation Unit (MMU) has managed exceedingly well to get our needed exposure. We are hitting on all fronts. Mercenary haircutters have been striking at random. The Party Crash Patrol (PCP) has made itself evident at "chic" disco parties. The Enemy sees us everywhere! We are everywhere! We are the threat! And when the Enemy is forced to the point that he begins to make concessions, when he shows his weakness, when it's join-or-look-foolish, when the power is laid in our hands . . . We will show no mercy . . . April fools . . . or is it? . . .

LOCAL

The Dils have moved to San Francisco to accommodate their new-found drummer, John Silvers, who lives and works there. They are tentatively planning a show at the Whisky for the end of this month, and an upcoming West Coast tour with the Avengers which would take them from Vancouver to Phoenix . . . the "punk for the proletariat" benefit for the I.W.W. (International Workers of the World) featuring Dils, X, Condoms (F-Word) and Alley Cats postponed again, this time indefinitely. Rumors are that the UCLA biggies were not too keen on harboring such a revolutionary gathering. Obviously freedom is still an abstract concept in textbooks . . .

The Runaways have been officially "released" from Mercury and are now truly homeless. Come on, Joan, now is the time to make your move . . .

The Troubadour has slightly reopened its doors to new wave shows by letting Ripper (?) and the Rubber City Rebels play there on Sunday, the 5th. There was no noticeable removal of furniture. Speaking of the Rebels, the boys from Ohio have apparently been signed by Sire and are planning to go to England soon to record an album, tour with the Ramones and play their home town and hopefully CBGB's in the near future. Busy, busy, busy . . . Maybe L.A. bands should move to Ohio in order to get that mythical record contract!

Bomp magazine is out and Bomp records will soon put out an EP by Duke (early '70s English combo) and singles by 20/20, the Boyfriends, the Zeros and the Trolls . . .

The Controllers have lost Charlie Crash the sexy drummer and Field Marshal D.O.A., who left in solidarity with Charlie . . . Wild Cat Gerard Taylor is minus a band, which shouldn't surprise anyone who saw their last performance at the Whisky. The rapport between Gerard and his laid-back group was, to say the least, tense. Gerard remains optimistic and expects to be back on the circuit soon, which should please many girls out there . . . The Weirdos' TV taping at the Masque went as crazily as expected and should be on the tube at the end of summer . . . the Skulls have a new drummer and F-Word have changed the composition of their group. Left are Rick and Dim. The vacant spots have been filled by Hector who has very recently left the Zeros and by a Chicago drummer by the name of Dutch Schultz. Rick swears any new change will mean the break-up of the group . . .

Kim Fowley rumored to plan his own record company, appropriately named Ego Records . . . Rona Barrett proudly announced the death of punk on her show, which has all of us feeling very insecure ever since! . . . According to Stan, the Dickies have been taken in hand by Island and are due to hit England very soon . . . The Skulls will be entering the studios early this month, recording a single for Bomp . . .

Malcolm McLaren seen at the Whisky both nights of the Arthur J., X, Black Randy concerts, apparently very interested by what he saw, which proves that the man has taste. John Ingham has moved to Los Angeles and is not planning anything at the present . . .

Punk shows may become a regular occurrence at the Marquee West in Arcadia. The place is an old renovated supermarket with a decent sound system, a huge stage and old refrigeration rooms as a backstage! The shows would cost $2 and take place every Wednesday night. On March 3rd, the Zippers, Shock and Flesh Eaters played there to an enthusiastic local audience, and a March 15th gig featuring X, Flesh Eaters, Alley Cats and Screamers is being planned. Everyone needs to get out of Hollywood once in a while and Arcadia is only half an hour away on the freeway . . . the Starwood has lifted its ban on punk concerts, as the ad somewhere in here will show.

Muriel of the New York-based Teenage Jesus and the Jerks was in town visiting her sister Exene and trying to set up dates for Teenage Jesus concerts. The band may play L.A. some time in April and make a few of us change our minds about the sad state of N.Y. music, at least what little of it we have seen and heard . . .

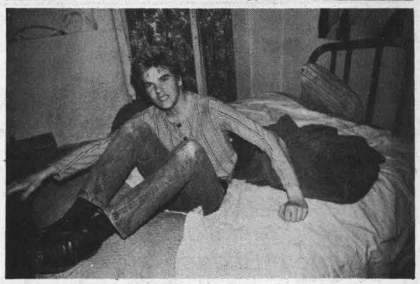
S H I T

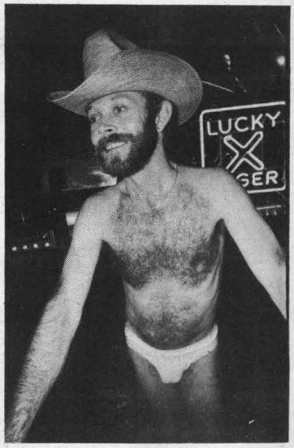
The Weirdos are planning a one-year anniversary show at the Whisky the weekend of the 1st (a full year & they still haven't grown up) . . . Rumor has it that the Kipper Kids & The Germs will join them, plus? . . . It should definitely be Weird . . .

Rather than face the usual monthly "too much loud music" evictions, a lot of the local contingent has been moving into the Canterbury Apts. on N. Cherokee. Now, instead of the usual "turn it down" game, everyone's playing "let's outdo our neighbor." Reasonable rents, close to buses, the Masque, Hollywood Blvd.'s lovely boutiques . . .

Two nights later, according to Stan, the Dickies have let go of Island and grabbed hold of A&M . . . Fickled? . . .

Last Minute: The Germs played at a KROQ party held at the Elks Hall, along with Needles & Pins and Love. The audience (well, 90% of them) was a definite Love crowd. Darby was so terrified of being strung up by his short hair that he accidentally broke a few beer bottles on the mike stand, cutting his chest & hand. The latter wound was mended at the local emergency room . . .





The Dreva/Gronk "Art Meets Punk" (meets Vatos meets Glitter meets Blacks meets Voyeurs, etc.) was, to say the least, unique. The Last & The Bags played to a huge crowd of drunken rowdies fighting & writhing in a sea of beer & wine . . . In the aftermath, Dreva was quoted: "The Art was stolen, the place completely trashed . . . A complete success!" . . .

Also, we just thought we'd mention that Johnny & Mrs. Rotten (his mum) have been in town enjoying the sunshine . . . Seems Mrs. Rotten had never been to Disneyland & John thought he'd give her the big thrill before he dives back into Anarchy, etc. . . . oh well . . .

A house like another yet inside...

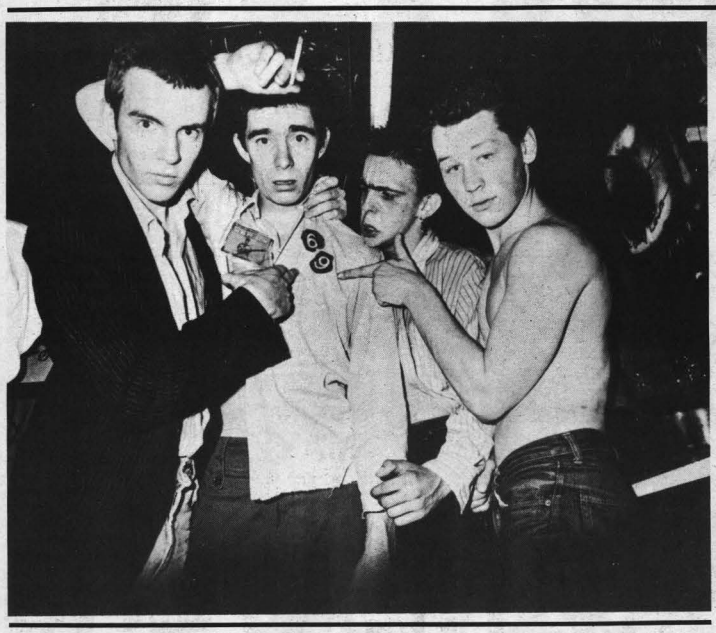
FEAR is at work!

modern boy modern y modern boy moder rn boy modern boy modern boy modern

. . . There's a lot of bullshit standards that have crept into the local punk ideology, a lot of them stemming from everyone's over-protectiveness of the purity of their sacred little scene . . . I find myself upholding some of the more superficial ones . . . I mean, I've knocked a few credibility points off a band that cut their hair ***after*** I did . . . It's not hard to get caught up in the bullshit 'cause everything's bullshit, at least there is a reason for punk bullshit, or is there? . . .

The question of the month: Is there? . . . On the surface it (the scene) is definitely the cure for boredom everyone's been waiting for . . . anybody who has ever walked away from a punk concert ***bored*** should be classified autistic . . . But there are other cures for boredom (suicide, etc.), and there are (I hope) higher reasons for punk . . . Aside from the most stated reasons (energy-back-in-rock, fun, reaction-against-authority, disgust-with-the-superstar-syndrome, and on and on), I've always assumed (you gotta assume, there ain't no written manifesto) that others involved in the scene had a certain level of integrity . . . Maybe integrity isn't the right word (maybe it's emotional involvement), but I saw people who were doing something somewhat collectively, for an undefined but common cause, rather than just being self-serving assholes (a very popular style these days) . . . It was the music that got me initially involved, but it was the betterment-of-the shit that totally absorbed me . . . So I convinced the guys at this paper to let me have a little space (an easy feat, if you're interested) and figured I'd become the fist that slugs at the face of corruption . . . I've probably gotten a few punches in and probably sounded pretty foolish at times, seeing as how I usually respond emotionally to situations . . .

What this simpering story has to do with the subject at hand is just this: I'm just trying to explain why I even bother to write this shit—it's 'cause I care, I wanna be a rebel ***with*** a cause & I'm starting to realize that a lot of involved (meaning someone who is expending energy and/or time) individuals, while wearing "well-intentioned" facades, and stylistically are perceived as the real thing, are nothing more than crudely down copies of the powers they are bent on dethroning . . . In pinhead terms: there's some guys around that you admire enough to give your favorite badge, yet these same guys might just sell you out for a security apartment & a gram of cocaine. True punks . . . there ***is*** a cause and there is a reason for punk to exist and, most importantly, there are people who care . . . I'm not saying that if you work you shouldn't get paid, I'm saying that if that's the only thing you care about, you can take a flying fuckall . . . Nobody's existence depends on you, we are all worthless as individuals, only collectively did any of this ever come about . . . And I ain't espousing some "party" doctrine, if anything I'm being overly naive about the realities of life . . . And if that's the case, I'm not even embarrassed, 'cause naivete allows for an incredible amount of freedom . . .



LIMEY NEWS

The Sham 69 album is out on Polydor and the Generation X is due out any day. Speaking of Sham 69, they have lately been attracting a strange audience of crazed skinheads, some wearing National Front earrings and chanting, "Britain for the Brits, Prison for the wogs" slogans and breaking and beating up everything and everyone in sight. One Roundhouse concert with the Adverts on the same bill was especially frightening.

Meanwhile, others are fighting this new twist of events by planning a big "Rock Against Racism" punk/reggae event on May Day.

The Clash's "Clash City Rockers/Jail Guitar Doors" single is out to very mixed reactions. The Heartbreakers are no longer with Track Records. The Police are starting to cut an LP on Illegal Records and so are the Cortinas and Alternative TV, respectively on CBS and the Deptford label. Sire was interested in ATV but the boys opted for a smaller label and bigger control. Chelsea is about to reform after another recent break-up. Bob Marley's newest LP, "Kaya," out soon. Ex-Stiff Jake Riviera has started a new label, Radar records. Artists so far include Elvis Costello and Nick Lowe. Virgin records now has a new subsidiary reggae label, The Front Line, which will present stuff by their newly signed Ja artists.

Punk rastaman Don Lett's cine-verite movie of punk clubs may find cinema release soon, even in America. "Jubilee," another punk film with Jordan, Gene October, the Ants and others has also just been released.

The Roxy is fighting closure by the Health Department and Sniffin' Glue appears to have folded, with Mark P. totally involved with his band and editor Danny Baker following Sham 69 around and getting drunk. Sid Vicious has been seen lying in puddles and being generally degenerate, the others are still on holidays in the sun. New (or fairly new) fanzines include Deviation Street, the Assassin, Look at the Time and Sunday Mirra.

London's Capital Radio has received telephone threats against their DJs who play reggae. All callers said they were speaking for the National Front. And John Peel has been playing the Avengers single on his show.

SNIPES

Eyewitness Shoes: Tomata Screamer gets his frozen-fright mug in the L.A. Times. It's the official newsprint nod to notoriety—you get to blow down the streets in the wind, have people pour cream & sugar down your coffee-stained countenance & get picked up out of the gutter, have the mud wiped off your face, then left on the floor of the Tut bus on its way to the ocean. And then the offers pour in—Marjoe calls. He wants you to read for the second male lead in his latest picture—"When you comin' back, Red Ryder?" You go into an interview for the reading and Marjoe flips for your shoes. Even if you don't get the part, which features the fictional chance to shoot the main star, your shoes will.

Pogo Pals: The Dickies were literally written into the script of the Don Rickles sitcom, "CPO Sharkey." Hopefully, the promo and the dough will outweigh the ludicrous rip-off of a script that makes everything you all think "New Wave" is about one sick, cringing, shotgunned joke. Had to laugh, though: Maitre de of a punk club called The Pits is named Slash & is described as "wearing Alice Cooper make-up, motorcycle jacket, ballet leotards and tennis shoes." After thoroughly exploiting the scene, one of Sharkey's men tramps off with "something better"—a black punkette hooker in a leather jacket.

What's Life? A Magazine?: Two students from Beverly Hills high school are starting a new wave fanzine called Basic Black. But why??? Seems they want something that will support them for the rest of their lives . . . Mumps fanclub prexy Brad Dunning & Screamers fan club organizer Brian Tristan are blending their tastes for the savage and the obscure into a magazine called Contempo Trends. First issue will feature furniture of the stars, wolf children, Nazi atrocities and—oh yes—New Wave Music.

Platter Chatter: Artist of the Sublime Agony, Chris Burden, has had himself shot, dragged himself through a room of shattered glass & been crucified on a VW. Now he's going to cut a record. Isn't this how Yoko Ono made it? . . . As a reward for featuring their product on the record sleeve of "I like to be clean," the Mumps were gifted with a case each of Head shampoo & cream rinse. All you groups on Dangerhouse & Bomp, get your shopping lists ready, this is how the Big Boys do it . . . Somebody walked into Bleeker Bob's Records in NYC and asked for the dirtiest record they had. They sold him a Black Randy.

D-U-M-B: Punk nite at Ginos, but nobody shows. Even dumber: Punk nite moves to the Odyssey.

Public Service: To half the tenants of the Centerbury Arms: You have an appointment with your doctor on the 28th. To the other half: Call your mother . . .

Gorilla

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letters

Dearest Slash,

It's back to square one for morons of your ilk. Punk is not a new fragrance, not a best-seller for young dilletantes to read reviews of, and punk in Los Angeles is unfortunately a ticket to narcissism. "Glitter" preceded "Punk," all of it merely disguises for the blank and/or affluent in search of a new and exciting identity.

The only way one can be a punk in Los Angeles is to be either a chollo or a crip. This way of life has existed a lot longer than passing fads. One becomes a punk when his social class or ethnic group are turned into expendable commodities, and the frustrated individual seeks a way out of the grind of wage slavery. Go to the Midlands, go to Stoke, to Wolverhampton, or to Bolton. Is it all "neat-o" in Northern England like the way it is in L.A.? Can you actually grasp their trip? Take a good look at yourself. It's people like the well-to-do of L.A. who push the buttons which control the factories who makes niggers out of others. Punk as a way of life will live on, but one may very well find today's "punks" occupying desk space in Century City in a matter of years.

Yours truly,
Alek J. Hidell

Alek, you fuckin' misinformed snob!

The last adjectives I would ever apply to most of the punks I know are "affluent" and "well-to-do." Don't you know who the fuck you've been hanging out with, but your crowd ain't our crowd. And anyway, frustrations exist on every bloody level of society, and although it is true that most rich kids playing at nihilistic posing will get back in line as soon as a serious choice has to be made, there are always the few that will choose the company and the life of their new friends, class origins be fucked. Don't tell us about the "real" punks from Northern England. How many of those do you think will bow their heads and head for the coal mine or the chain assembly as soon as the pressure intensifies? Most, maybe? And how many crips will become gas station attendants or garbage collectors in the next few years? How many will carry their rebellion into adulthood? Unless things change, not a whole bunch.

And don't you fuckin' dare lay on us your snotty bit about "the grind of wage slavery." WE ARE PROBABLY MORE FAMILIAR WITH THAT NIGHTMARE THAN YOU WILL EVER BE and just because we don't moan and bitch about it at every occasion doesn't mean it is foreign territory to us. Let the kids look for that "new and exciting identity," let things change, goddamit, even if for many it is only temporary. Something will come of it, somehow.

Finally, if the "take a good look . . . niggers out of others" part means us at Slash, I would like to punch your bigoted, confused brain 'til you start crying blood for misunderstanding who and what we are so thoroughly. You're right, punk as a way of life will live on, and along with the more obvious enemies it will free itself of all the narrow-minded, dogmatic crap that is hindering its progress.

Kickboy

Slash,

Man, you dudes are really fuckin' up! I remember when (I'm not sure about ***you***) you started up on this you were strictly no fucking bullshit of any goddam manner—clear, uncut, prof view of all the newer music coming out, right, and now with this Slash second month of 1978, numero ocho, and after rambling through fucking 8 pages of nothing but commercial bullshitting, crap to give some kind of image to all the big timers in the rest of the media world (yes, you!) I finally get to the "contents," but that's matterless. But you guys blew it with that X-Ray Spex (your pukey shit gross cover of Poly Styrene was beautiful—musta solda million, guys). That Pistols thing was great, but too much of . . .? way it was told (great pictures—outrageous—the Pistols blew it by being so fucking snobby and not playing L.A.).

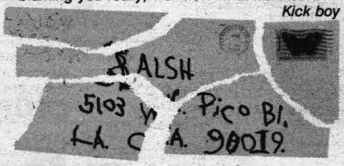
Come on, face it. You guys are losing your touch. Getting to the head a little or somethin'?

All I want is less bullshit and more pics & relative wordings crammed with root-of-the-problem truth. The future is now.

Your first 3 issues, the best! They were the best, and then came number 4, and you guys just went right down the fuckin hole. Your last issue in 77 was a good cover, looking up from way under. But you can get some good letters every now and then, though. Your printing job is really cool, too. But you're blowing it.

With this kind of sharp and precise criticism we're not bound to improve either! Next time you want to do some constructive (or destructive) evaluation of what we're doing, lay off whatever it is that makes you blurry in the brain. Not blaming you really, we know what it's like.

Kick boy



Dear Slashers,

Could you do an interview with Candy of Waxx? She makes me ***cream.***

Sexo Freako

What's this?? All over this page are letters going on and on about the serious aspects of music, the future, the past, integrity, viable alternatives, and you JUST WANT US TO MAKE YOU CREAM? Have you no shame?? Wrong mag, kid. This is a relevant, educated paper.

Kickboy

Slash,

The next time Brendan has a benefit for the Masque, how about spending a few extra bucks to hire an interpreter for what he's saying at the microphone?

The slasher

I'm afraid it would cost more than "a few bucks" to find the right expert able to translate Brendan's brand of English. And don't ever suggest it to him or the fucker might do it just for image's sake!

Kickboy

Dear Editor,

I'd like to respond to the comments made by a couple of readers in the last issue regarding "power pop" and my own position. As you pointed out, my interview was meant as a comparison of the scene here and in England, and the fact that the trend in British punk is toward pop naturally came up. It disturbs me that some of your readers seem to fear change, although I'm sure that those who do are either too young to remember much of what things were like before punk, or if older, that they were not rock fans in the '60s. I'm not that old myself (I'm 28) but I've loved good rock & roll all my life. I was buying records by Elvis and Chuck Berry when I was 6, I was disgusted when the music died in the early '60s, I lived through the years of pop mania in the '60s and at all times my life was dedicated to finding or helping create more of the highest quality rock & roll music. After all that, I had to live thru the years of James Taylor and John Denver, and I don't think there would be any punk scene today if people like me, during those years, hadn't invented fanzines, underground records, etc., and promoted awareness of the '60s punk groups that were the direct inspiration of all of today's SLASH idols.

It would bother me to see myself described as an exploiter of punk by anyone who knew what they were talking about. Every penny I've earned in my 12 years in the music business has been spent on promoting fandom and underground music, and since the inception of the new wave I've put everything I've got on the line to support this scene. This scene IS being exploited, but it sure ain't by people like me. Wise up, if you're realy concerned about protecting what you value.

As for this business of power pop, it's funny that I should be blamed merely for pointing out and trying to explain a phenomenon that's happening for logical, valid reasons. The whole idea of a term like "power pop" is to distinguish this from the mindless, vapid music that has passed for pop in recent years. Were the Beatles, Who, Kinks, Stones, Beach Boys mindless? Sure, most pop is worthless—most ***anything*** is worthless. Most of the punk 45s coming out of England these days are about as mindless and vapid as could be. In 1966, people who were hip knew the difference between the Yardbirds and Dino, Desi & Billy . . . today, we should be equally capable of distinguishing between, say, Generation X and the Pleasers. Or the Sex Pistols and Some Chicken . . .

Power pop will not replace punk. It will, rather, ensure the survival of punk as an underground music—which I agree with another of your letter writers should remain underground, if it's to remain pure—by relieving the pressure placed on it by the music industry to "either be commercial or go away." The New Wave as a mass phenomenon will never happen without the support of the industry, which is going to be withdrawn in the very near future if they don't see some hits . . .

I happen to think that punk, in all its intensity and fury, could survive indefinitely, as the conscience of rock & roll and an experimental medium that should be an integral part of the overall pop culture. But, face it, you'll never hear the Pork Dukes or X-Ray Spex on the radio. I'm sick of turning on the radio and hearing the Eagles. Aren't you? So what's the matter with having great pop music again? Why even cloud the issue by mentioning acts like Shaun Cassidy and Abba? I happen to like them, their music gives me more pleasure to hear than the rest of what's on the air, and a lot of mediocre punk for that matter, but by no stretch of the imagination do they have anything to do with the new wave.

Anyone who is against "powerpop" is against Generation X, the Ramones, the Jam, the Rich Kids, and probably the whole spirit of youth culture. There are valid reasons for art to represent what is ugly, negative and violent, but who really thinks a lasting youth culture and a musical genre that will reach and change the lives of millions can be built on that? Anyone who says he does is nothing but a poseur or a fool . . . things just don't work that way.

Personally, I don't think any great "powerpop" records have been made yet. Don't throw up your dislike of the Fast and the Quick (or any other group) as a legitimate criticism of the whole idea of pop. You may as well judge the potential of the LA punk scene by Kim Fowley's "new wave whisky weekend" last year. It's early days yet. Have an open mind, for God's sake. I'm not "obsessed" with forcing any dumb trend down anybody's throat (as if I had that kind of power . . .) for "commercial reasons." I ***am*** obsessed—as I've always been—with great music, and there's never enough to satisfy me. I want to see the entire world obsessed with rock & roll mania and all its cultural byproducts, and the medium for mania is pop. Just ask your heroes back in England, instead of defending values that aren't in danger from menaces your imagination has conjured up. It's hard to pull off a "hipper than thou" attitude when you're that unhip in the first place . . .

Enough already with posing and posturing and rhetoric and fucking dialectical dogma. We all just wanna have some fun, and we're in this together to make this scene happen. As long as the music is coming from the people and relates honestly to its audience, it's New Wave, and that's all I'm interested in promoting or protecting.

"A few la-la-la's won't kill you . . ."

Greg Shaw

MALCOLM McLAREN TALKS TO SLASH

This is the longest interview we've ever done (maybe the longest we'll ever do). Starting this month we will publish it in three parts. Instead of selecting some information and rejecting some we decided to give you the whole thing. There's bound to be something of interest in there for everyone and that way it is easier to grasp and understand how the mind of one of the most misinterpreted men on the scene works, why he made the decisions he did, and what he has in mind for the future. Evidently what Malcolm has to say will offend and shock some and be misinterpreted by others. Original unconventional thinking always does, and is. And while we do agree with many of his conclusions, Malcolm's words are, of course, his very own.

. . .The interview begins rather haphazardly as a Slash person returns from a liquor run & realizes he's bought vodka and not the agreed-upon brandy.

Slash: Well, it's charcoal filtered . . . listen, I'll run to Dukes & get a large orange juice & we'll have a STRONG screwdriver . . . Do the Pistols drink a lot?

Malcolm: Yea . . .

Slash: So as for you personally, what are your plans for the future?

Malcolm: My plans? It's very difficult to have plans. You're never really that conscious . . . Things just kind of come to you, and you seize the opportunity or you don't . . . I didn't go to the Sex Pistols, they just came to my shop. I think my shop was a conscious effort, & right now I suppose I've some ridiculous credibility in the business of this rock 'n' roll scene, but I don't think it is that worthwhile . . . I think you do something once with a maximum effort & terrific intensity, and then it's time to do something else. I hate to be considered a rock 'n' roll manager. I don't want to go on and manage more bands, I think it's daft . . . I didn't ever consider I was managing a rock 'n' roll band, I considered myself more a person ultimately concerned in driving as many people wild as possible, with the hope of creating some kind of a different social outlook on kids' lives . . . to give them the potential for some sort of adventure & the potential for them to realize they are important & give them a critique in which they can then direct their energies . . . It'd be terrible if I sounded like some fuckin' priest, I s'pose, 'cause if that's what I am, it'd be crazy, 'cause I'd feel like I'm some kinda guy in love with child prostitutes.

Slash: Then it's just a way of changing things?

Malcolm: Yea, 'cause I hate music y'know, 'cause I listen to . . . I'm in love with Donna Summer, which isn't music, it's just something that tends to soften the blow & makes you a bit wimpish, and I'm as sensitive to that as anybody else . . . I've never considered what I do, in respect to rock 'n' roll with the Sex Pistols, to soften any blow . . . Y'know, people say damn, fine, rock 'n' roll, & god, if that's what it is, I'm wasting my time . . . I think of it much more as something that stands as a means of destroying that element in a media that's not become a culture, but more of a weapon to fuckin' kill the lot of you cunts . . . There's no difference between Donna Summer and the best washing powder, or some fine fabric from the east . . . It's all just to soften blows . . . Y'know, to soften the fact that you are able to crawl out of it.

Slash: Do you think life is essentially a painful experience? . . . And that your type of rock should make it even more painful?

Malcolm: Well, I don't know if I've ever thought about life being painful, (laughter) but when you go down to Warner Bros., you certainly realize it (more laughter) . . . I don't really think I've ever had the time to think it's painful really . . .

Slash: Have you ever done anything other than the Sex Pistols, with such intensity?

Malcolm: I hope everything I do is like that, really . . .

Slash: But what about before?

Malcolm: Before? Well, before, I had a shop called Sex, and I was mad about a girl called Valerie Solanas who wrote a book called "Scum," who killed [sic] Andy Warhol, and I thought she was great, I thought she wrote one of the most intense manifestos I've ever read. She seemed really crazy & I thought she was fantastic actually, and I was inspired by her, and I was inspired by voyeuristic novel writing and the whole incestuous nature of English culture which ultimately rests upon, y'know, the image of the closet case, and therefore, the idea of clothes being treated purely in a sexual manner, because ultimately that's really all that anybody wants to do, y'know, they design clothes to make people pretty. So if you can take that and show it for what it is, in it's most rogue-ish and upfront manner, it can be a lot more intriguing. It just intrigued me from a fashion point of view which is what I was involved in. The idea of selling a rubber skirt to a girl who would then go walk into her office amused me, okay? . . . I thought it was a good idea so I went forward & exploited other things, like printing voyeuristic writing on T-shirts . . . I also turned the Cambridge Rapist into a Pop Star, I thought that was good . . .

He was a guy who terrorized this town in England, raping all these women, & he wore this leather mask, it was a leather mask that I sold in my store so I always had the police down there, thinking he was one of my clients . . . I often thought he was 'cause I always had guys that came in from Cambridge, and my employees, like Jordan, would say, "There's the Cambridge Rapist," & there'd be this guy trying on a rubber jumpsuit, & I thought, hmmm, that's wonderful, I've really gotta protect this man . . . Then I thought when they catch this guy, they'd put it on the front pages & proclaim him a terror to our society & make him a scapegoat . . . So I thought, great, why don't I associate him with Brian Epstein & the Beatles . . . So I took this mask that he wore & put it on a T-shirt & put "Cambridge Rapist" over it in Pop Star letters & at the bottom, put a small picture of Brian Epstein & then wrote a few words about him and how the man had not committed suicide but how he died of S&M through loneliness, just to provoke . . .

So suddenly Cambridge Rapist T-shirts were being bought by all these kids, 15-year-old kids saying, "this is a smart T-shirt," I thought it was fucking great, all these kids buying the shirts & going down to their local disco wearing 'em and I think those ideas really invigorated kids, y'know, they saw them as slightly shocking and that's all that was important, to be shocking, to annoy a few people, because they felt so lethargic . . . Music then was a wallpaper, y'know, discos were a great means of using music as a wallpaper for their own social environment, they just danced & the music was in the background . . . The Pistols were the group that, on the other side of the road, eventually came out, that were the kids from the disco, suddenly making something else . . .

But anyway, that's what I did early on, and prior to that I suppose the other intense thing was Teddy Boys & Let It Rock, a shop I created shortly after I left college . . . That was pretty intense 'cause Kings Road then was all these fuckin' '60s dandies, y'know, there was all this velvet, and they were all very sorted looking with their long chiffon scarves & big boots that made them look like cripples and I just thought it would be great to have something very hard & heavy, like rock 'n' roll, and I was always inspired by rock 'n' roll . . . I left music when the Beatles came, I quit, I didn't listen anymore . . . The last people I probably listened to was the Rolling Stones, when I was 13 . . .

Slash: When you were doin the T-shirts, did you consider yourself an artist?

Malcolm: Yea, 'cause I've always been a bit arty . . . I been to art school.

Slash: Do you still consider yourself an artist?

Malcolm: Yea, I suppose I do.

Slash: In the punk scene, art is kind of looked down upon.

Malcolm: I don't see why, I think all those kids are artists . . . They write anarchy on their shirts & tear them up & parade around taking their old man's shirt or their school blazer & changing it . . .

The greatest thing, the most amazing inspiration, that I was conscious of and certainly party to and certainly helped to create, was this do-it-yourself thing . . . See the greatest thing about my clothes were the fact that anybody could imitate them; it was the ideas that counted, not the manufacturing of them, and I s'pose they all became artists, that's what made them so great . . . That's what gave them the inspiration so's they could get up on stage and perform music, or they could suddenly produce magazines, or they could suddenly draw cartoons . . . I don't think that they considered they could do any of that before, they always felt inferior . . . Then suddenly they thought, god, we have it! We can fucking do it . . . I think the whole punk thing is extremely artistic, probably the most artistic thing that's come about for years, really. It's more artistic in a way than anything else that preceded it. I don't know about the hippies, I was always down on that, I always thought that was a bit . . . it didn't really mean very much in England because it was . . . it always seemed a bit of a con. I just found it too lethargic. I didn't like the idea of everybody lying about smoking pot, it really depressed me, it was a state of lethargy, "let everything happen, man, peace and love." There's no peace in England, it was a horrible place, bollocks, you have to hate people and to destroy things, it's much more exciting. That's very creative, that's like a little kid when he's born, you give him a toy, the most creative kid is the kid that smashes the fucking shit out of it, to find what it's about.

Slash: Or opens it up to find what's inside . . .

Malcolm: Yeah. That sounds a bit trite . . . but it's a good analogy. You know what I think is fuckin' great about punk rock? All these kids suddenly, at the age of 13, decided they were fuckin' born, they were alive and they didn't have to necessarily follow the rules that all these cunts were telling them, they suddenly realized that they were themselves and suddenly they weren't sitting next to their mum watching TV, they were up the fuckin' street whistlin' "Anarchy in the UK" and tore their blazers to shit, or went into school in a neat blazer and when they went out to play in the morning, take their blazer off and underneath they're wearing an arm band that says "Chaos." I think things like that are great.

Slash: What I'm curious about it, you're advocating tearing things apart and despising people and destroying. On a superficial level, when I first met you . . . (you're outspoken right now) . . . but you're real soft-spoken and real quiet and you seem really mannerly and everything, I'm wondering are you an actual activist or are you an insider? Are you the guy in the front lines or are you the guy in the back lines plotting everyone's course?

Malcolm: I feel a bit old to be in the front line really. I suspect, y'know, like Rotten says, we were doing it for him really, because he couldn't do it himself. In some ways that was great of him to say that and I felt really moved by it. No, I couldn't do it myself, I'm fuckin' old. I'm fascinated by youth, so I s'pose I'm a bit voyeuristic in that sense.

Slash: So you would've likd to've done that in your youth?

Malcolm: I did do it, but I didn't do it enough. I did it and I suspect I'm still a kid. I always love to treat myself as being as much an arsehole as every other young kid. I really like that. Sometimes I feel I can't but I love that, and that's the one thing I suspect that anybody young that I've met appreciates, ultimately. I think of all these bands like the Slits that drive me fuckin' mad at the moment and all these other kids that are doing things in London, I kind of think, well, there must be other fuckin' guys willing to manage bands, do the whole thing. Perhaps it's because I'm the only guy of my age, or

"be reasonable, demand the impossible"

there aren't many of us that really see my generation as being a real nasty, narcissistic and now ultimately regressive and fascistic people who are in command and who are fuckin' far worse than their fathers. They're the worst generation that ever happened. They think they're fuckin' shit hot. They really do, you know, the fuckin' Who, they think they're God's gift to mankind. You know, Led Zeppelin, the fuckin' aristocracy. They're just a bunch of fascist cunts, really.

Slash: And they're hateful of the kids . . .

Malcolm: Hateful? Absolutely! Disgusting people, go 'round kicking the shit out of people, just because they're bored and they'll kick the shit out of some young kid. They're a bunch of cunts. My generation is very narcissistic, awfully so. You wouldn't have magazines like High Times if not. Only my generation could create shit like that. That's what I think anyway. I've always had a loathing for it and I've always stood out a little and I think maybe I've always consciously kept arrogant and silly. I love being stupid. Warner Bros. can't tolerate that but they ain't worth shit because I think that's a marvelous way of not taking yourself as being so fuckin' significant and getting into the role of . . . Jesus, you know, we're the guys and we can deliver to you kids, the scene. I always want the scene to be delivered out of those kids' frustrations and hatred for my generation and I personally worked to sponsor that in every damn manner I could and be as big a schemer as I could and that's what I did and that's why my generation hates me, in a way. A lot of the people, you know, the Richard Bransons, the owners of Virgin records . . .

Slash: You're talking about England. Do you think it's the same here?

Malcolm: I don't know, luv, you go out down to Warner Bros., there are people that wear T-shirts that say "I survived the Sex Pistols tour." What a cunt, you know. Anybody that'd wear a T-shirt like that and actually bother to manufacture it, what a cunt! And that's a guy my age and he had the cheek to offer me one! . . . As if one should wear such a thing, and who wants to survive it?? I don't know.

It's that mentality that's really fuckin' over the top, they're out to lunch. They're gone. They just want it straight, they want it so straight, you just couldn't believe it. And also, they're the only generation, and I s'pose you only know other generations by your father and history, they're the only generation that is absolutely scared to feel that they're old. I'm not scared, I know I'm old. I also know I fuckin' love to be stupid and I think that they're terrified of ever realizing that they're old. The Who and the Rolling Stones, before the Sex Pistols were on, were considered by the industry and by the whole media as young, rebellious rock 'n' roll bands. They were CABARET. DEAN MARTIN!

Slash: Aren't they the first generation since the war (everybody's too young to remember before) which actually proclaimed they were different, and the first generation to prove that they were not? (Another Slasher) . . . It happened in the '50s, too.

Malcolm: The '50s were wonderful. I think the '50s had a certain energy there that really went wild, and was soon put under control. You only have to look at Eddie Cochran singing ballads, become the real good boy, and Elvis when he came out of the army, they changed the scene then because te industry got involved and the media did, they thought it was gettin' out of control.

Slash: What I was saying is don't you think that . . . (How old are you?)

Malcolm: I'm 30.

Slash: Don't you think that in every generation there are 30-year-olds that view their peers as narcissistic and self-serving? Maybe . . . (another Slasher) You're saying that in every generation there was somewhere a Malcolm McLaren? So the only way to go is with the younger generation.

Malcolm: Well, I think it's great that Steve Jones went to meet a 50-year-old guy in Brazil and he's a Great Train Robber and set about going in the studio and recording songs, I think that's fuckin' great. It's the biggest robbery of all time, you know. Three million pounds.

Slash: How did they meet?

Malcolm: We used the newspapers to track him down before. When I was originally wanting to get out of here I thought it'd be great to go to Brazil and link with the Great Train Robber and somehow the association excited me. I didn't know what Ronald Biggs was like but his deeds and the idea of a kid back home, in Blackpool or any other town, who picks up the newspapers and reads, "the Sex Pistols go to Brazil to play with Ronald Biggs down the Amazon" or he reads "the Sex Pistols have a wonderful, successful show in S.F." What's more exciting? What's going to make his imagination think, gee, how fuckin' marvelous? That's gonna make his imagination trigger off something terrific. And I thought, that's invigorating, and also it does cross the generation thing.

Slash: Isn't the Pistols meeting the Great Train Robber the most romantic thing the punk movement has produced?

Malcolm: It is romantic but I hope to turn it into a reality by producing a record with Biggs . . . now the new single of the Sex Pistols. So now everybody can be a Sex Pistol . . .

Slash: And everybody can be a Great Train Robber . . .

Malcolm: Absolutely. I think it's a terrific idea.

Slash: I thought it was the greatest connection the movement had made . . .

Malcolm: Tell it to Warner!

Slash: Were they shocked?

Malcolm: Oh, I dunno. I think they were shocked from the day they signed the band.

Slash: Do they feel they've been done in?

Malcolm: I dunno. Maybe not if they feel they can make Johnny Rotten a Rod Stewart.

Slash: Any chance?

Malcolm: I hope not. I'd rather see him be a hairdresser.

Slash: In S.F. I saw him for a second as a big rock star. He said, "this is fun" . . .

Malcolm: I bet. I've always thought that it was a bit sad that you have to keep saying this is good fun because I never think it's fun at all, I think it's a drag and totally boring to be on that stage, really.

Slash: You have a certain notoriety, "Malcolm this, Malcolm that . . ." Does it ever go to your head? I mean, how human are you?

Malcolm: But everybody slags me off.

Slash: Being the anti-hero of the syndrome, does that appeal to you?

Malcolm: Well, I think it's more interesting to be hated than to be liked. It's a more invigorating idea. Sometimes it can depress you but I work best in those things. I remember reading about a painter called Andre Daumier, he's a 19th century French caricaturist who drew a lot of court scenes, he was run out of town and hunted and then the third republic was proclaimed, he was honored and became useless. As soon as he was loved he was hopeless. Once you're acknowledged, it's over really, you have to forget it, go and do other things. I think that anyway. The Pistols may not agree with that. I think whilst you're being hated you have a certain momentum to continue to push things to the limit, keep on working. I don't think being loved is important, I don't think anything's changing that much by being loved. I don't know what kids think of me. I know Rotten probably hates me, he's often said he hates me; I know Sid sometimes does, and a lot of other kids also, probably from reading the press, got very worried about what a terrible manipulator I was, but Jesus, if you didn't manipulate, you'd be shit upon by these cunts all day long. The Sex Pistols wouldn't recorded "God Save the Queen" if I hadn't manipulated. Maybe they would have on Zonko Zonko records but what the fuck would that mean?

Slash: After your tactics get known, what's the next step?

Malcolm: I think if it could be known, if all the kids in your town understand that to be a successful rock 'n' roll band is to steal as much money as quickly as possible off the record companies of their choice, I think ultimately that's exciting and I think making what they think is hit records is pretty dopey. I really mean that. I think if they have that idea, then ultimately they will perform in a way that is really different from the media, and probably personify a lot of what the origins of rock 'n' roll are all about. 'Cos they have to be as hard and as tough as that. I believe that.

Slash: Rock 'n' roll as an official teenage robbery of society?

Malcolm: I think they have to treat it like that, 'cos if they don't . . . I mean, there's no point in becoming another Shaun Cassidy or another handsome, pretty rock 'n' roll band, I don't think that's exciting and I don't think that any kid on the street thinks that's exciting. What he really thinks is exciting is if he ever went to a rock 'n' roll show and he was as important as the kid on the stage and he took it over, joined in, that would be the ultimate con trick.

It's a shame that these kids can't share in the loot that the Sex Pistols have conned, that's too bad. Maybe they will, maybe at least they'll seize upon the idea and followtum.But if they are all to become just silly little successful rock 'n' roll bands with a few hits, Jesus, that would just be like perpetuating soap powder, shoe boxes, perpetuating nonsense, perpetuating this awful myth of rock 'n' roll being a wonderful cultural art form bullshit, which is a rip-off from the record companies, like when they do these wonderful, glossy album covers with wonderful figures in the grass or in the sunset, y'know, here's the four interesting characters, look at their faces, this is Robbie, this is Dicky, all these bollocks. That's why I never had the band's faces on the covers of any single or album, I thought it was a ridiculous idea. I have always ultimately been concerned with what effect the Sex Pistols had on the kids. What's the kid who was at the same school as Rotten doing now, that's what's important. Not J. Rotten—oh he's got a handsome hair cut, I like his face, I wonder if I could look like him tonight . . .

Slash: Did "Never Mind the Bollocks" mean never mind all the stuff . . .

Malcolm: When you placed it in the record windows with all the other records and you'd have . . . I don't know, who's the new guy on the scene . . . Van Halen or some other dick, all these fuckin' croonies on the walls and this thing would say never mind the bollocks (giggles), it was like never mind all this crap, all this facade nonsense, all this rock 'n' roll idiocy.

Slash: We talked before about using disruptive tactics with the record companies and there's been rumors and articles about the influence of the situationist movement on your thinking . . .

Malcolm: Certainly I was very inspired 'cos I was around at the time (May, '68, in France) and involved in certain political activities that could be adjoined to that, and I know some of the people that were involved in that movement, certainly, definitely, and if you like the politics of boredom, and why is boredom political, this reflects situationist thinking, and their great slogans, like "under the paving stones likes the beach" or "be reasonable, demand the impossible," or . . .

Slash: "It is forbidden to forbid" . . .

Malcolm: Right, and you take those ideas and think, god, if you could only say that to some stupid record company, if you could only use some of those ideas as a signal for kids who never lived thru that part of a certain era . . . they're wonderfully inspiring because they don't get involved with being in a party, they can be recognized as just war cries, they individualize rebellion, without having to go thru a manifesto, it's a triggering point and I think it was inspiring, and to a certain extent when you mentioned those buses on the back of the "Anarchy in the U.K." magazine with the destirtation written "boredom," that was very situationist.

Slash: It seemed the only political movement which achieved some degree of chaos, which united all sorts of layers, the hoodlums on the outskirts of Paris, the students, the factory workers, and there was no party line, what they were saying was all from the heart . . .

Malcolm: That's very true. And it's like us playing to the Mexican kids (San Antonio) instead of the hipsters of the Manhattan uptown set, it's like going down the Amazon with Ronnie Biggs instead of playing in Madison Square Garden. You know you're not going to sell any records down the Amazon playing to Ronnie Biggs. That's what's great. But I suppose your selling point is to invigorate the conglomerates to believe, to manufacture the idea that it REALLY is more exciting, to try to prove that in a way you could be right in going down the Amazon instead of playing Madison Square Garden because every capitalistic record company is looking for a new gimmick with which to sell rock 'n' roll, and that's being a smart manager, and I s'pose that's what I did . . . Anyway, get to the meat!

Slash: Okay . . . How far do you think you can go in selling to record companies the very stuff that eventually, idealistically, is supposed to destroy them?

Malcolm: Depends how good a shoe salesman you are. Gotta be the best shoe salesman in town and you have to have a great rap and you have to have a little understanding of exactly who they are and what they want and you can act naive and you can act serious and you can be, like you mentioned, very mannered sometimes. It just depends, you have to have a lot of different faces to create intrigue for them.

Slash: You have to be an incredible con man, right?

Malcolm: I think so, yes, like the guy who sold the Eiffel Tower (laughs).

Slash: When you sold the Pistols to Warner, did you do the Eiffel Tower number to them again?

Malcolm: Half and half, a little, yeah . . .

Slash: 'Cos they turned out to be something they didn't own after all?

Malcolm: Well, we don't know that. I hope not but we don't know. The future will determine that.

Slash (another): I hate to break the train of thought here, but I have a question for all the naive readers, and for myself . . . I understand what an anarchist believes in, and supposedly you're a self-proclaimed anarchist . . .

Malcolm: What do you mean, self-proclaimed?

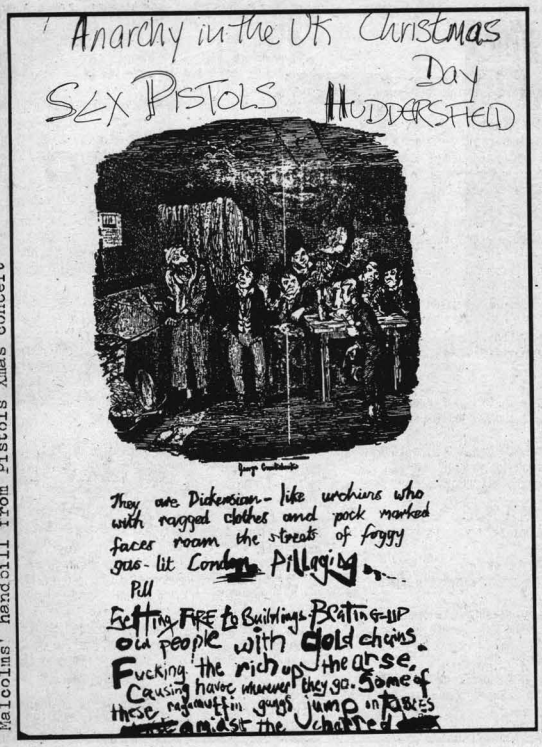
Slash: I dunno where I've read it . . . (laughs) . . . would you classify yourself as an anarchist?

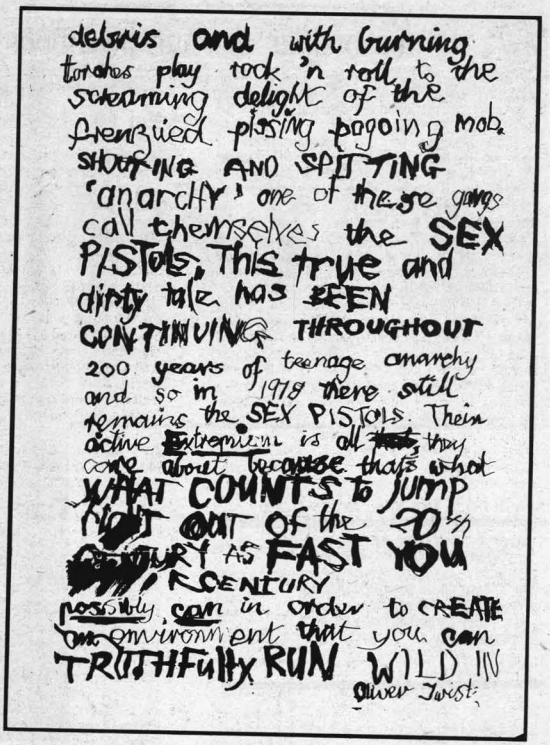
Malcolm: I suspect I dream of being one . . . I just hope I'm good at doing my job . . .

Slash: Do you project beyond creating chaos and destroying the machine? Is your ultimate desire to have a society that's constantly in chaos?

Malcolm: I think it's very difficult to talk about that right now and I don't think you necessarily have to have . . . I've always been criticized of never being constructive. Why do you have

Malcolms' handbill from Pistols Xmas concert





to be constructive in this scene? This is my vocation for the time being; all you have to do is tell every kid, and why should he have to tell everybody else what to construct? Why shouldn't he just go around and destroy everything, just because he probably never had the opportunity to destroy his toys or to tear up his school books or to say "fuck off" to the guy who's employing him or to punch his old man in the mouth for annoying him? Why shouldn't he just decide to live out 16 years of boredom in the next 2 years of his existence?

I've never thought that anybody involved in the scene as I know it had to bother to answer those kinds of questions. It's unnecessary. I think as soon as you have to do that you become like a group like the Clash and you get bogged down in an academic viewpoint where you have to lecture. It's ONLY necessary to invigorate as dramatic a response in people to understand that they are alive and they have their own life and they should project as much energy out of that in order to discover what they hate, and there's a hell of a lot they hate and if they can announce that in as vigorous and as creative a manner as possible, tremendous. That's the ultimate thing. I don't think I have or should have any solutions at this stage. I'm not a priest and I'm not a lecturer in any shape or form, I'm only concerned with making things wild.

Slash: Do you think that by pushing your point you'll eventually be considered an "official" troublemaker and get to be an undesirable not only in certain circles but in certain countries or systems?

Malcolm: I hope so, and I hope all these other kids are considered troublemakers. If you can create enough troublemakers maybe then there will be a real confrontation and it will suddenly announce what is necessary to destroy and what is necessary to keep. It's like the old anarchist in the Spanish Civil War who was interviewed by an American radio company when he kept blowing up all these buildings and leaving a black glove at the bottom of the building, they said to this man, who was called Buenoventura Deruti, "Why, Mr. Deruti, do you keep blowing up these buildings of terrific architecture, these wonderful cultural monuments?" and he said, "Who cares? We built them once with our sweat and we can build them again tomorrow, and this time much better."

Slash: By pushing a lot of unprepared kids, naive kids into very radical trains of thought, don't you risk bringing down on them a repression they are not ready for?

Malcolm: All I can say is, working class kids, even middle class kids who are just as great, working class kids in England have lived a violent life from day one, their fathers' fight every Friday night in the pub, violence has been inflicted on them, they have to fight the fuckin' war when it comes down to it by some goddamn asshole who tells them to, so they are used to violence, the violence of a society that tells them, "you can only get 15 pounds a week and today my son you can't work here now so you have to go and find your bread somewhere else . . ." That is violent.

It's violent for a kid to walk up and down his street and not have any other method than to be able to buy a car to get from A to B because it's so fuckin' far, it's violent, the whole fuckin' structure of this town is violent, it's violent that there's nowhere for this kid to go and train his thoughts with others. So I'm making sure that they understand, and make it totally articulate, so they know what the fight is, so when the repression comes they should be equipped to know exactly how to fight back and if they don't know, that's sad, but I'm sure there's a way of making them find out. I'm sure that was the case in Europe during the student revolts.

The only problem is people did go back to a cozy way of life, they had to and they left those who couldn't, but I think that was because there was still a belief (and that's why I come back to that '60s generation) of themselves as being great. What's wonderful about this whole generation that's been brought up to punk rock, you don't think you're great and you don't look great, they look nasty and they look fucked-up, and that's a reality, that's powerful and astringent and real and it's not a pretension, all the little things they adopt, the tearing of the T-shirt, it's a wonderful destruction, the fact that we ain't great, this shit we have to wear, the way we have to be. To me the nihilism within it is very constructive because it does prepare whoever they meet or however they associate themselves with each other, it does prepare for an understanding of the fact that what's coming for us is not great at all, it's a total load of shit. So I don't feel I'm pressuring them or manipulating them into a scene where they gonna be smashed to pieces, I think I'm making them very aware of what's going down.

Slash: Almost a humanitarian?

Malcolm: I don't know whether it's humanitarian, but I think it's an awakening, at last. The culture that's foisted on them has nothing to do with them, they know it's a con, that their brother is sitting in the next room with earphones listening to Led Zeppelin with a joint in his mouth, out, supposedly in nirvana, they know they can't do that. And their brother says, "you're listening to shit, your music is shit . . . this is people who really know how to play, been doing it for years . . ." and the kid says, "who gives a fuck, I can play as good, I think so." That's an awareness and an acknowledgment hopefully that the kids won't buy records any more.

WHAT FOR?? Who wats to sit in one's room to play some dopey rock 'n' roll record? It's boring. Maybe you did it when "Rock Around the Clock" was out or "See You Later, Alligator" to learn how to dance and not look like a schmuck at the local ball, but there ain't no local balls any more, you have to pay £5 and stand like a schmuck and look at a band the size of a quarter on the stage, pfffew, heavy trip, man, and drink some bit of booze and go out and where's the bus home? I think if you can prevent them from buying records, tremendous.

You know the greatest thing about the Pistols fans in England? Half of them? Fuckin' meet them in a pub, they used to come up to me and say, "Hey, Johnny Rotten really is a bit of a fuckin' wanker isn't he?" and I'd say, "Well, maybe, but you better ask him yourself." And they'd say, "Sid is a bit thick . . ." and I'd say, "Maybe, but you better ask him yourself."

"Have you bought the records?" I'd say. He says no. And here he is, with Sex Pistols written all over his fuckin' shirt, and he says, "Where are they playin' next?" and I suddenly realized he was one of many fans who NEVER bought the Sex Pistols records. Didn't have to. It wasn't the point. It was much more important to walk down the street with "Anarchy" on your back, "who gives a fuck?" or whatever and have the money to be at the scene, at the local bar, whether it'd be Sex Pistols or Jojo and the clowns. And that's what is important. And that's why he saves the money.

Slash: Don't you think records are a viable form of communication?

Malcolm: I don't know, really. At Warner Brothers when they go, "Oooh, the record dropped out of the top 100, it's dead," and I think: I hope it's dead 'cos the kids didn't want to buy the fuckin' record anyway. That wasn't the point . . .

Slash: What about the 16-year-old in his room with nowhere to go who wants to feel part of the movement . . .?

Malcolm: That's sad, that's really sad. I would prefer him to play nothing. Kick the TV in maybe, smash his mother . . . fuck his mother . . .

(Next month, Malcolm talks about the Russ Meyer/Pistols movie, the film industry, Glen Matlock, Sue Catwoman, swindling . . .)

F—word

SLASH DOES THE NIHIL WITH F-WORD

Come on, come on, let's get together
and start some trouble right now
the time is right and the blood is boiling
for to start some trouble right now
We can do what we wanna do
and if they try to stop us well
just say fuck you
DO THE NIHIL
DO THE NIHIL.

Well, the time wasn't right. F-Word was in the midst of radical personnel changes, and they all had caught the flu at the Plunger house and nobody was in a very talkative mood. Rick (singer) was all wrapped up in his sweater and more gloomy than usual; Dim Wanker (guitar) was fidgety and obviously wanted to be somewhere else, anywhere else; and Steve Effete (guitar) was about to leave the band, although he didn't know it yet.

Slash asked why the drummer was missing.

Rick: He's always missing!

Slash: What's happening with the band?

Rick: Well, we're f-wording it, you know.

Slash: You just played the Whisky with the Screamers . . .

Rick: Yeah. Most of the sets were pretty average. Slow. Late show Saturday was real good.

Dim: Watch him light his cigarette.

(We watched. Rick lights his cigarette.)

Dim: He didn't do it.

(F-Word is even more of a cult band than your average L.A. cult band. We asked about their dedicated following.)

Rick: We're getting everybody else's following!

Slash: Whose?

All: The Dickies!

Slash: Have you played a lot?

Rick: Seven times at the Masque, two weekends at the Whisky. Then the benefit soon . . . And we may open for the Avengers at the Mabuhays . . .

Slash: Been playing together long?

Rick: Us three have been together for about 6 months. By the time this interview comes out we'll be having our third drummer.

(We asked why drummers are such a problem with local punk bands. They have no answer.)

Slash: Why did you fire your first drummer?

Dim: We got into a fight.

Rick: After our gig with Shock we were driving back and he said, "After this punk rock thing wears off I want my hair to be like Shock's guitar player . . ."

Slash: Good enough. Will the punk rock thing wear off?

Rick: No. Too many people are heavily involved with it. They won't let it stop and die.

Slash: What if you got in a position where you had nowhere to play . . . would you give up?

Dim: We didn't before.

Rick: We played a high school dance once . . .

Slash: Where do you live?

All: Covina.

Rick: It might get like there might not be any place to play, now that the Masque is gone. There are some clubs opening in Orange County, we'll see what happens there.

Slash: What about that proletariat punk benefit at UCLA?

Rick: You've heard about that? We'll have to talk more to Peter Urban . . . (the show has since been cancelled)

Slash: How is it to have a manager?

Rick: It looks better for a band to have somebody representing them, to go to people and talk business. You don't have to put up with as much bullshit.

Slash: Have you run into a lot of that?

. . . . . (These guys are not exactly volunteering information. We feel like a grand jury.)

Slash: There are rumors . . . (that you got done in) . . . How much were you paid for the Whisky shows?

Rick: First time we got a hundred bucks a night, and this last time (with the Screamers) we got 25 bucks a night.

Slash: Why the difference? (Talk about an obvious question!)

Rick: We don't really care that much about the money, but it's the person that . . . (trails off . . . talk about an evasive answer!)

Slash (always at the defense of the weak, the widow, the orphan . . .): Doesn't it seem wrong that you got so little?

Rick: It's their own bad trip if they want to keep it all. I'd much rather be in our position than in the position of the person who kept the money.

Slash: Who was responsible for that decision? (Come on, lay off, cop.)

Rick: Don't know. It's a mystery. (One more word and he is about to take the First Amendment.)

Slash: Will having a manager help to deal with such matters?

Rick: Might. (These guys are the masters of the brief answer.)

(We talk about Robbie, their manager. Rick does a great Robbie imitation. Later, he also does an even greater Brendan Mullen imitation. It's better than the real thing. And Rick enjoys that much better than answering lame questions. But it's lame questions time again.)

Slash: Who writes the songs?

Rick: I write the lyrics.

Slash: And Dick writes the music? (Dim is counting the teeth of his leather jacket zipper and totally ignoring us.)

Rick: No, Dim does. Dick Wanker would be obscene.

Slash: Speaking of obscenity, was F-Word the original name for the band?

Dim (God, he is still with us!!): We went thru many. Red Scare, Plague . . .

(To be original, we talk of the Masque.)

Rick: Maybe it's better if it doesn't reopen. It was getting too popular.

(Does that mean you're not part of the let's-expand-take-over-the-airwaves school of punk philosophy, guys?)

Rick: Fuck the airwaves. Let's take over the brainwaves. People are too comfortable here. (Not with this interview I'm not.)

Slash: When did you leave school?

Rick: About 3 weeks ago.

Slash: How was it? (It's been so long.)

Rick: We got bored a lot. Missed a lot of classes, wrote a lot of notes.

(Rick goes on to talk about people in school who just smoked pot all day. He himself was watching too much tv. He used to listen to Bowie, Black Sabbath, but never did buy a Led Zeppelin album. We talk of other L.A. bands.)

Rick: I like the Dils. L.A. is the only place where it's happening anymore. In London it's the same stuff over and over again, and getting worse. New York totally sucks, always did.
Slash: Even in the Velvet Underground days?
Rick: We were 7 years old then! (Rick is 17, the others 18.)
Slash: You said you were gonna play outside Licorice Pizza in Covina with the Skulls. Are you worried about new audiences' reactions?
Rick: We played to a Quick audience, we're not worried. You get the people right in front that like you and the people further back, they're the ones you point to and tell them what assholes they are. At the Masque, it wasn't risky, but when your targets are right here, it's a nice change.

Slash: What's the common message of your songs? (Well, how would ***you*** put it?)
Rick: Just don't be afraid to break things, if they piss you off. Do the nihil . . .
Slash: Politics?

Rick: There's no set political philosophy with the punks now. The only thing unifying them is quaaludes. We're political in the sense that we ain't afraid to want to change the way the world is set up. And if we can change the lives of the punks that come and see us, it's not bad for a start. We're in a band 'cos that's the only exciting alternative we have.

Slash: Dim, why are you in a band?
Dim (still counting the teeth of his zipper. Looks up.): You made me lose count.
Slash: Sorry.

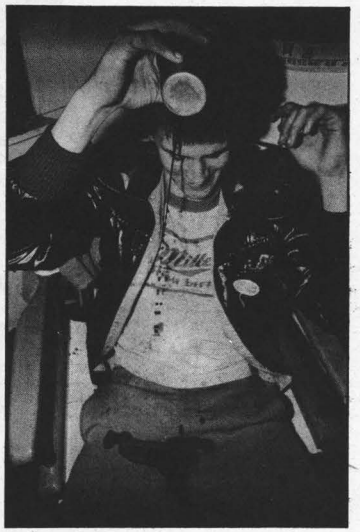
Dim: It's my first interview, you know.
Slash: You'll get used to it.
Dim: Will I get more bored as it goes on?
(I don't think he means to hurt our feelings. Just a nice, honest guy.)
(A few words about recording, which they might do for the punk conglomerate Dangerhouse, and songwriting, which Rick treats like everything else, rather casually.)

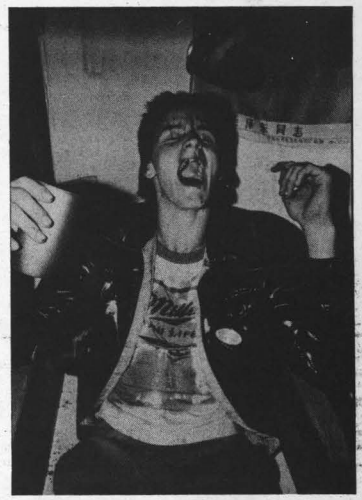
Rick: Lately, I've been getting lazy. I don't bother to write all the words. I use whatever words I can remember on stage. Sunday I was real sick, so I just breathed hard into the mike.
Slash: Do your parents like your music?
Rick: They've never seen us.
Steve: My dad likes the Pistols. He said he'd go and see them but if they spit on him he'll kill them.
Rick: My mum thought "God Save the Queen" wasn't as good as "Anarchy." She always wants to know what our "Hillside Strangler" lyrics are.
Slash: Do you have jobs.
Rick: Dim does.
Dim: It's embarrassing. (Come on, don't be shy. We wait. Finally . . .) I'm a mechanic in my dad's garage.
Rick: His dad made him quit high school. And his older brother is a hippie.
Dim: He is a horse's ass.

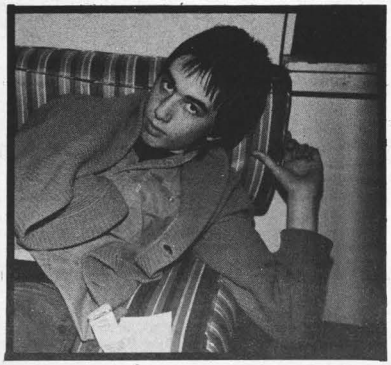
Rick: He's going to the California Jam.
(He and 250,000 others. Nothing like a few pokes at the overwhelming majority that surrounds us to put back some life even in the most introverted, broody punkers. If hippies didn't exist they would have to be invented, just for punks to have something to hate.)

Slash: Are hippies punk's natural enemy? (Here we go, spreading conflict.)
Rick: Hippies and surfers. What's Blondie and the Ramones going to do if there's a war between surfers and punks?? (Highly theoretical but interesting—except the answer is obvious.)

Dim: One hundred and fifty. (What??? Oh, he's finished counting the teeth.)
Slash (surrendering): What do you want to talk about?
Rick: . . . . . .
Slash: You're sure?
Rick: It's getting kind of stale in here, isn't it?
(It could be a hint, so we decide to stop. Rick does another fantastic Brendan imitation.)



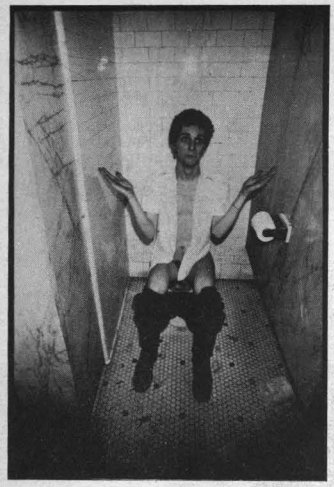




THE WEIRDOS

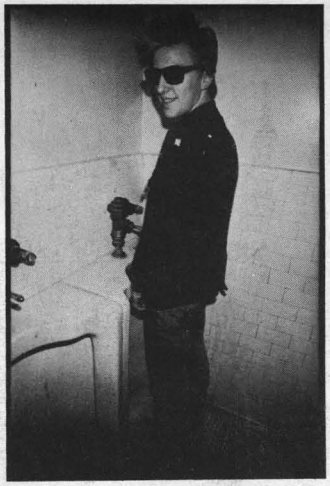
At The Whisky

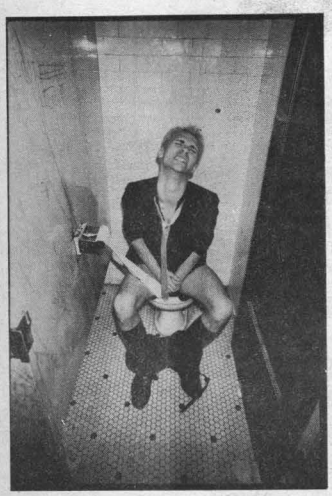
Mar 30, 31 & Apr 1

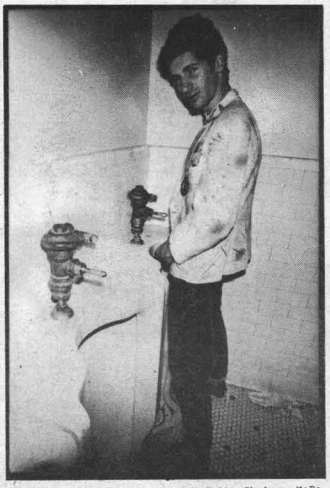


masque benefit..

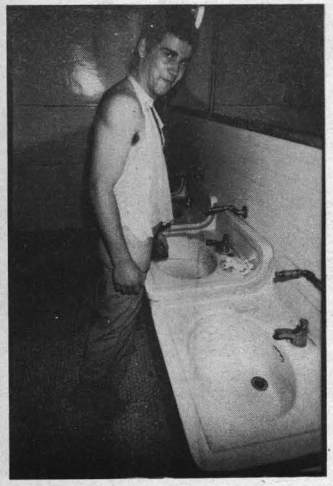
with official statement, pix, potty & passion.

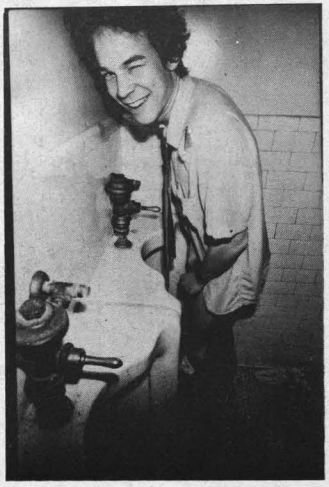






Punk Potty Photos: MoBo





OK. The benefit made a halfway decent amount. In spite of damage not necessarily caused by "punkers." • Musically, it was a gas. It had good soul, even though the paper made me look like I'm running around the whole time with head bitten off in tears. They made it look like a triumph of neurosis over tragedy. Poor Mullen nearly had another heart attack, they said. • They put the load right on me. • I told them I was only at a dance with revelers just biding time. It was a good dance. One of the best I've been to. Ballrooms were meant for dancing. • They said I said some people would "grow up and get married." I did say that, but that's not all I said. • I said the best part for me was the insistence that sticking together would eventually create something ***musically*** different. • Pogo is only a tribal celebration. More primal and more therapeutic than the homosexual dance of the disco. • Whether or not "record companies" are signing our favorite bands is irrelevant at this stage. • Punk makes record companies irrelevant. • A record company is only a CPA, a copy of Billboard and a pocket calculator. It doesn't have anything to do with the direction of contemporary dance music. It has nothing to do with anything at Elks. Some people work in record companies for a living. Some of them are secretaries. Very often these secretaries munch sunflower seeds and scratch their fannies all day long. • Sometimes during lunch breaks they eat low fat cottage cheese with low calorie crackers and an apple for dessert. • Sometimes they wash it down with sugar-free diet Tab. Then they smoke Benson and Hedges 100s afterwards. • That's OK. Hardworking people do this. Sometimes hardworking record company girls go to parties in the Robertson Bl./Burton Way area. • It was a Thursday night. She ate Quaaludes. Then she took off all of her clothes. After she'd done that, she ran naked 'round the party. • Then she started chewing some guy's dick. • Certainly people do this kind of a thing on a November Thursday. Sometimes they do it on other nights, too. Somehow, somebody has to pay for the 'ludes, the crackers, the wine, the Tabs and the B&H. • A record company is stale semen. Semen comes out of some people. It gets deposited within others.

If people go out to dances, they'll spend money at them. If they don't go to dances, they won't have anything to do. • They'll twist their hair into pony tails. They'll go to Osko's. They'll do all kinds of things. They'll even go to parties as far east as Fairfax. Some will spend their money on $3.99 flagons of cheapshit Mayfair wine, lids of moldy $15.00 a bag spliff with enough leftover to buy their cheesey little Boz Scaggs albums. • Is it a YES? Is it a NO? Is it a MAYBE in the weekly Hilburn derby? • IF THEY HAVE THE DANCE THEY WON'T BUY AS MUCH VINYL. • It'll be back to audio tactile tribes (see Mukloo). • WHEREFROM WILL COME THE MONEY FOR THE SUNFLOWER SEEDS???

*****

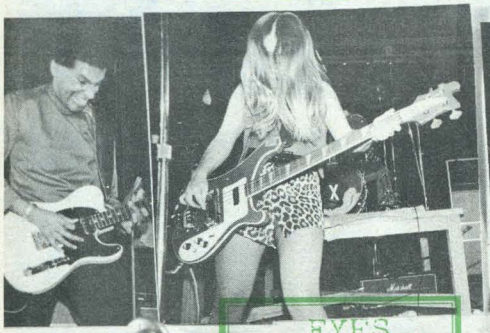
Folks, you gave about $4,300 to the fund. It could've been more if we'd wanted. We could have sold T-shirts, candied apples. We could have staged a ***fashion show.*** We could have got in ***Playboy.*** We just wanted to get on with the dance. • Our position is . . . we're only unruly tenants, not owning the building which contains the Masque. We are able to get started on the construction work except the ***owner*** (Walnut Properties) is against us. • SO FAR THE CITY IS COOL. You know . . . just good solid bureaucrats trying to do their American good job. They can't give us back the Masque until this damned exit is created. • HOW MUCH DO YOU REALLY WANT THE MASQUE BACK? • Write to the City. Write to the Times. Picket Walnut Properties : . . • There will be a lot of dances this summer. Then we'll sweep the dance floors of the city and the nation. • Go to dances. Don't buy records. Waste your money on liquor instead. Spend the money on a guitar. Start a band. Try to get good as quickly as possible. It's the birth of regional rock. Play the drums . . . attend the ***Nickey Beat Drum Seminar*** ($4.00 per hour) for punk theory and composition. Inquiries, 462-0258. • Support your local musician. Take them in. Feed them. Clothe and bathe them . . . • Practice, practice on musical instruments, don't play records at home. • Don't buy Rolling Stone magazine. Don't let anybody tell you it's over, 'cos it will be if you listen.

Love and Hate,
Brendan Mullen

ZEROS

BLACK RANDY

WEIR



EYES

SCREAMERS

DEA

F-WORD

DICKIES

ALLEYCAT

It is obvious if you're looking at this page that there is NO punk scene in L.A.

EIRDOS

SHOCK

CONTROLLERS

DEADBEATS

X

FLESHEATERS

GERMS

CATS

BAGS

BAGELS

THE MASQUE BENEFIT
(notes from a punk convention)

First night (Friday) is fun but sloppy. Most bands play an average set. Screamers and Zeros play above average, the Dils don't play. Controllers with new line-up, which certainly does not slow them down. Punks and tourists in and out of the main room, checking out every corner of the Elks fortress. Traffic jam at the bar (some people probably didn't even make it up to the main room—too busy sipping and socializing). Posing on the grand stairway. Many new faces, the legions are growing (on weekends anyway). Healthy high school girlies very self-consciously safety-pinned from head to toe. In the back of the main room there is hair everywhere on the floor. Someone got clipped right on the spot. A case of instant conversion, I guess. Like a Bill Graham crusade? Easy-going black women in charge of security. Highly preferable to their male counterparts (black or white). No macho swagger and all that aggravating shit. Brendan in ten places at once, organizing the unorganizable. Malcolm McLaren talking to whoever approaches him. Show ends with a pointless but fun jam session.

Many parties afterwards, no point in going to sleep in the middle of a marathon.

Round two: Late afternoon next day, same place. Should have gone to sleep after all. Extremely low energy level among the faithful already present. The show is delayed for one hour, which gives us the opportunity to collapse discreetly and gather our strength for the next 8 hours. Everyone seems to feel the same. Gonna take some strong music to get us to pogo. There are film/video/tv crews in every corner, and as many spotlights as on an MGM stage.

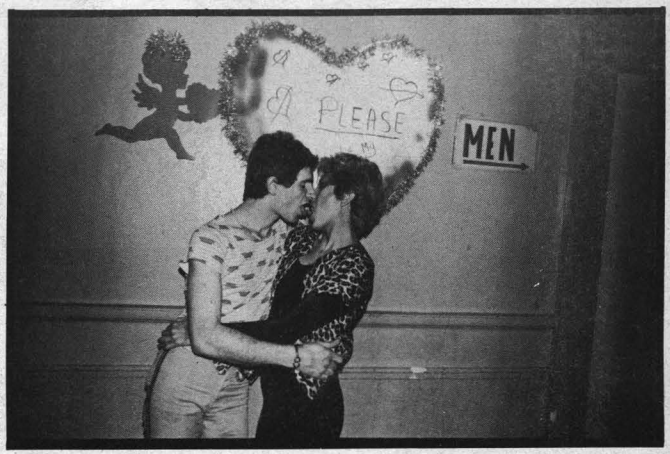
Plugs open. A bit of a revelation. Tito and the rest are all wire and tension, and more than enough to wake us up. Terrible spot they ended with, but they give it all they got. Last song is a punked-out cover of "La Bamba," and they get away with it. Good audience response and the place hasn't even started to fill up.

Then it's a continuous parade of bands, most of them good and a few excellent. Alleycats are way up there, rocking and kicking, they do "Jailhouse Rock" and they do both songs of the single and they do other songs that really grab you, they're like no one else (quite a claim these days) and they deserve recognition right now.

X is the other band that in one night went from cult status to front-line contender. Maybe one of the most hardcore bands of the area, they offer the most straightforward no bullshit punk noise I've heard in a while. It's also nice to see a band as thoroughly enjoying its own music as they do. Exene reels and shakes and staggers, a girl with true convictions and a refreshing fuck-off attitude (an attitude too rarely ***meant***); John and Billy on each side, hitting their guitars and their new drummer whose name I have forgotten laying it on real thick up there on the platform. X are uncompromising and uneasy listening, routine they are not. The punks know. Too bad for the others.

Other good sets that night included the Weirdos (masters of pogomania and sweaty fun, the one band that will get the most casual observers off their asses), the Dickies (good time punk music—a contradiction in terms?), the Skulls (real good new drummer) and F-Word. F-Word lead singer Rick showed how mean he can be by shoving a cameraman off the stage. Cameraman fell back in the hopping crowd, camera and all. That's what happens when you do a wild life documentary and you get too close to the beasts.

Last "act" on was the Black Randy Revue, complete with dancing girls, musicians that appeared and disappeared on whim, two drummers, cupcake-throwing contests, stripping and audience abusing. Black Randy's anarchistic message was totally lost in the "choreography," the music too easily switched to big beat riffing and fillin' in the void but the confusion and sloppiness delighted the frenzied fanatics below the stage. By then it was dangerously close to terminal exhaustion time, and nothing really mattered. The Randoms did not play, which was a shame. Neither did Arthur J. It was time to leave the great mausoleum and go home to make a quick count of our remaining brain cells. The Masque had certainly proven beyond a doubt that the liveliness and intensity of the Los Angeles new music was not something that would be easy to ever dismiss again. The music and the people are there, begging for an outlet. Isn't that more than enough??



Punk Passion Photos: Melanie

WEIRDOS — We Got the Neutron Bomb/Solitary Confinement (SP-1063)

ALLEY CATS — Nothing Means Nothing Anymore/Give Me a Little Pain (LOM-22)

DILS — Class War/Mr. Big (SLA-268)

BLACK RANDY & METROSQUAD — Trouble at the Cup/Loner with a Boner/Sperm Bank Baby (MO-721)

RANDOMS —A B C D / Let's Get Rid of New York (PT-1)

AVENGERS — We are the One/I Believe in Me/Car Crash (SFD-400)
(Please add $0.25 for this selection — it is an EP)

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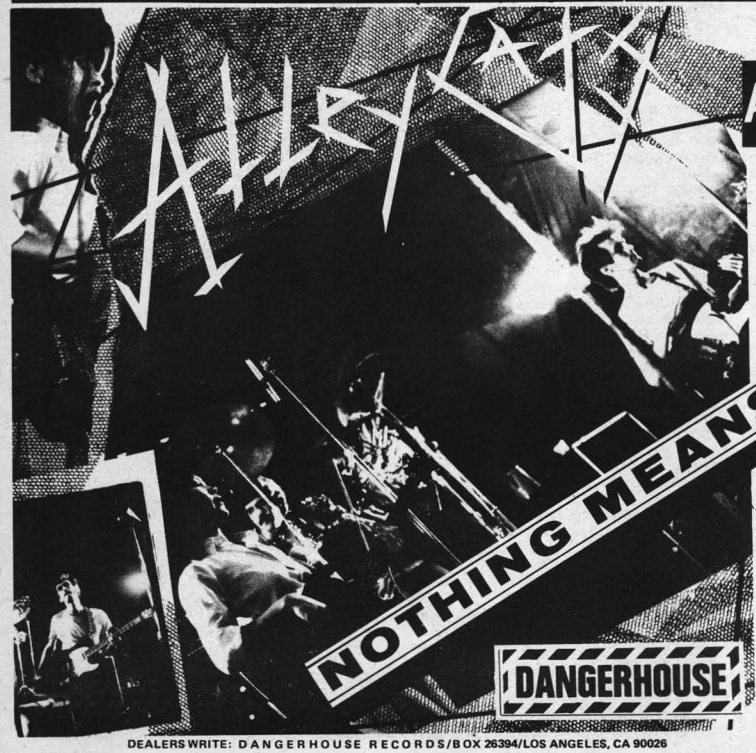

ALLEY CATS

FOR HUMAN BEINGS

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RODNEY

Slash: This is "Rodney Strikes Back." What's pissing you off, Rodney? How do you feel about people telling you we don't need this shit and all that?

Rodney: I sort of started this scene 'cos who was doing this a year and a half ago? Nobody else was. I was on the radio. When this happened there was only a few of the L.A. bands, the Dogs, the Motels and Pop. I started playing the Ramones and the Sex Pistols way back then.

Slash: How long has your show been going on?

Rodney: It'll be two years August 16th.

Slash: Originally did they give you a lot of trouble about the music you wanted to play on your show?

Rodney: When I first started they said I had to have a guest each week, Led Zeppelin, all those boring people. I go, "no way!" I wanted to play Sex Pistols, Ramones . . .

Slash: How do the other DJs in the business react?

Rodney: Jean Shapay, she's the coolest, she's on at 2:00 'til '6:00.

Slash: What do you think their real reasons are for not playing the new music (the other stations)?

Rodney: They think that nobody likes it, 'cos there are 2 million people in L.A. But it's fun to turn those people on to new things, eventually they're gonna like it.

Slash: I think the most common attack is because they think you're cleaning up on the scene, making a lot of money or something.

Rodney: That's not it.

Slash: How do you explain this penthouse apartment here, Rodney?

Rodney (laughs): I'd like to know who's making money on this.

Slash: How did you get that show originally? Did you know people at KROQ?

Rodney: Yeah, for a long time they'd been promising me to do a show.

Slash: And it's been going on steadily since?

Rodney: It was off that one time . . . if all those kids hate me, why did they call and ask me to come back?

Slash: Some kids accuse you of playing good music and mixing in a lot of stuff they don't like.

Rodney: There are so many people out there . . . I play everybody as much as I can.

Slash: Would you like to see other stations playing the music?

Rodney: Yeah, because we could trade records.

Slash: Do you know of any other radio stations who're interested?

Rodney: K-West approached me about doing a thing, but it would've had to have been with real legit labels like Elvis Costello, who's on Columbia, and The Ramones on Sire. It couldn't be like the home-made labels. They offered to pay me too at K-West.

Slash: You don't get paid for what you do at KROQ?

Rodney: No. I get paid for the Whisky. I do a lot of work for the Whisky, booking in bands . . . just to promote the Whisky a lot.

Slash: So what about the two other clubs in town? You used to work at the Starwood . . . why is the Starwood suddenly totally shut as far as punk is concerned?

Rodney: I don't know. Whatever makes clubs money. Apparently there's a lot of beach kids who go out for the heavy metal type groups—Van Halen, Quiet Riot. When they had the Dead Boys, they said, "This is the last time we're ever gonna book them!" Now they're coming back.

Slash: Tell us about this TV show.

Rodney: It's "Talkabout." It's gonna be me, Stan from the Dickies, Doug Weston, John Montgom-

Rodney: It's "Talkabout." It's gonna be me, Stan from the Dickies, Doug Weston, John Montgom-ery from Sire and Bob Miles from Warner Brothers and Kim Fowley.

Slash: And it's gonna be about punk rock?

Rodney: Punk rock, clubs, radio and all that. They're going to show a Generation X film, a little bit of the Pistols . . .

Slash: What channel is it going to be on?

Rodney: 17th of March, Channel 2 at 1:10 in the morning . . . So, what do these kids want from me? I'm doing the best I can do, it's only two hours. They say I should play L.A. bands—they don't have records, how do you play invisible records? The L.A. bands that do have records, they should turn 'em up or something in the studio.

Slash: It's true they do need a bit of boosting up.

Rodney: The Dangerhouse records sound like real records, you can play 'em, real plastic and everything.

Slash: So, actually, the more L.A. bands come up with records, the more you'll feature them on your show, right?

Rodney: Yeah.

Slash: Do you think your show is gonna stay the exception?

Rodney: I heard that Phast Phreddie was going to have a show. I even heard that Kim Fowley may have a radio show . . . There was no money to be made off that concert (Civic) because the hall was expensive, bands on big labels want a lot of money and I was blamed for putting the Quick on that show. The Ramones picked the Quick.

Slash: I heard that the Ramones didn't want to play with punk bands.

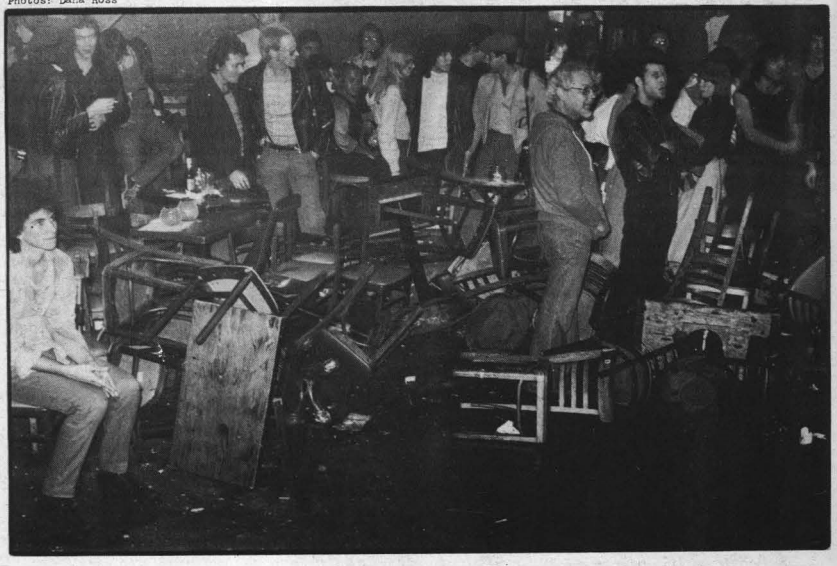
Rodney: That's Blondie.

Slash: Is it the band or the management?

Rodney: It's always the management.

THE TRASHING OF THE TROUBADOUR

Photos: Dana Ross



First punk show at Doug Weston's Troubadour. It's Sunday night and we are late. Walk in as the Plugs are finishing their set. There is a strange atmosphere inside. Something is wrong . . . I know: no dance floor. The tables with the cute "2 drinks per show minimum" cards go all the way to the stage. 'Spose it's all right for watching someone crooning at the piano or a folk song trio getting it on. It's absurd when you're booking a punk band. I mean, by now everyone must know that a lot of uncontrollable and messy activity is an integral part of punk fun. The show is as much on the dance floor as on the stage. That's why lighting and all that dramatic jazz is virtually non-existent in the new music. It is the whole event that counts, and it would be uncool to make one facet of it appear more important than any other. Fuck show biz, let's have a riot. Which does not necessarily mean destruction. But, as you all know, destruction did take place that night.

The Bags came on and within 30 seconds all the nicely arranged tables with the romantic candles in the middle were speedily removed from what should have been the dance floor and not too carefully piled up further away. Chairs too. Maybe a few broke but everyone knows how fragile wooden furniture is. There was no time to indulge in neat stacking, the Bags were already screeching into high gear and the body wanted its daily ration of pogo/grapple/friendly punch-out. And waitresses suddenly found themselves with nothing to do: "My whole section is gone!" Which they should have thought of as liberating, but didn't. Go try to free the proletariat!

The Bags did their usual crazed numbers with an extra touch of aggressiveness, no doubt due to the prop-removing incident. There were still a few tables standing and a few disapproving nightclubbers sitting at them. The Bags' music seemed to have the opposite effect on these poor souls. They were riveted to their seats and even a jam session between the Ramones and the Pistols could not have dislodged them. As if taking a stand here and now against the growing madness. Sitters of the world, unite! Unity for the Fat Asses of the World!

Inevitably now and then some of the more inebriated pogoers lost their balance and landed on the occupied tables. There was shoving and threatening. The tension grew (at the opening of the set, part-time Bag drummer Nicky Beat had subtly insulted bar-counter poet Tom Waits and challenged him to a fight to the death or something equally mild—seems the two underworld personalities had clashed earlier backstage) as more of Tom Waits' entourage kept being bumped into and, god forbid, having their drinks spilled. By the end of the Bags' speed race it was clear that there would not be fraternizing and back-slapping between the two cultures.

The usual Troubadour crowd was not happy at this invasion of their territory, the waitresses were not happy at the possibility of facing on other nights this army of non-tipping, non-date-asking customers and the punks were not happy because the atmosphere was not exactly friendly and easy-going. As people started to leave there were minor skirmishes erupting in every corner. Brendan of the Masque was being verbally abused by a creep, Tom Waits and a Slasher provoked each other to a show-down while their respective cliques flexed their muscles, a girl was hysterically explaining to a punk what a worthless creature he was, and others just stared at each other with impressive hatred. Later the culture clash reached melodramatic proportions when some punks already out on the sidewalk had to force their way back in and rally to the defense of two of their kind who had got themselves cornered by the hairy meanies. Five or six sheriff cars came screeching and everyone disappeared into their respective little time zones.

Subsequently, the owner of the place was presented with a petition from his employees demanding that the punk nights cease immediately or they would all quit in disgust. "Vermins" and "anti-artists" are two of the funniest terms the petition had for describing the punks. Weston gave in and the Flesh Eaters/X/Zeros show was cancelled. The young mature adults got to keep their little private club to themselves, the punks were once more on the street, Culture was saved from the barbarians and life resumed its dull pace.

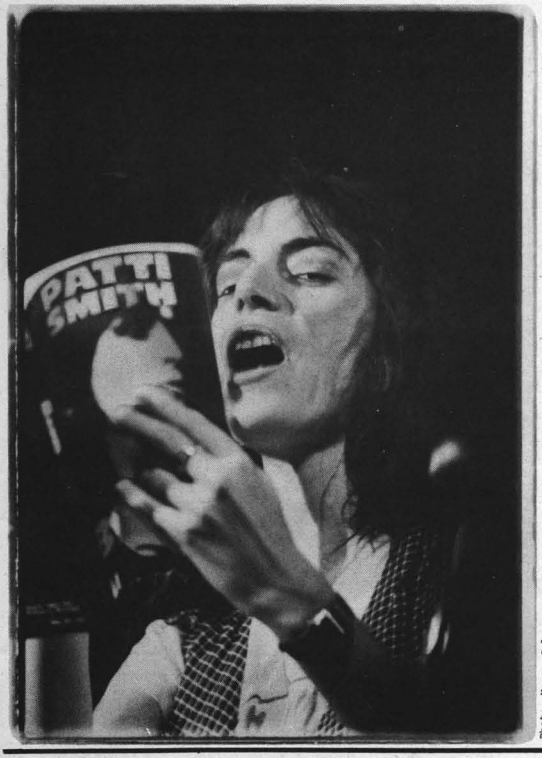


Photo: Kerry Colonna

PATTI SMITH in Redondo Beach or Silly Patty Potty Putty (Poetry)

Horses, horses . . . actually, we took a car to get down there. BackDoor Man is celebrating their bicentennial with a Patti Smith poetry reading. We didn't know what to expect. A sea of possibilities . . . The thing takes up in a fucking teen disco type of place, ***which is cool.*** There are hundreds of surfing muscle-packed teenage robots around, ***which is cool.*** I mean, it takes guts to lay your mystic revelations on what would, given a chance, join in for the next dirty little war this wasp empire decides to entertain itself with. ***Courageous.***

We pay two dollars, ***which is cool*** considering we're about to see "the first lady of punk rock" (Punk Rock trash mag, April issue). We notice a decent amount of hard-core L.A. pinheads crawling about, ***which is cool*** (but strange—but remember, the Masque is ***still*** closed). After the Zippers get off (they don't seem to enjoy themselves), we wait for the voice of Radio Ethiopia to come on. G-L-O-R-I-A . . . Here she comes now . . . walking down the aisle . . . Lenny Que (more radical that way) is with her, he's got a haircut, now he looks like a theology student. And it starts.

Part two: It's not over yet, not by a long shot. By now half of the already mentioned pinheads are asleep (or pretending to be) in a big pile in the middle of the dance floor. And Patty is ***still*** reading her fucking abstract nonsense; there are moments of disjointed guitar ***shit*** provided by Lenny, there are long intervals of relating to the audience who only came here to fucking boogie, there is confusion and there is boredom. Patti does not know what the fuck she is about anymore. Rastafari, Rimbaud, Rock, Redondo—I don't know what to do with this pathetic confusion she's laying on me, I'm sure the girl has something, but it ain't here tonight. A poetess is the last thing this generation wants, but Patti has made up her mind. I'm gonna lay some culture on those kids. There is some interesting heckling.

Part three: And it became a jam session. Rock 'n' roll boogie. Which goes to show that (1) she didn't think much of her reading if this was what she decided to top it with, (2) she doesn't think much of rock 'n' roll if this is what she decided to show of it. The rock 'n' roll was tacky and cliched, but it didn't last too long. Then Miss Inspiration walked off surrounded by admirers. Someone handed her Slash which she threw on the floor. The star had bigger things on her mind. Hey, Patti, remember rebellion? ***Hey, Patti, remember anything???***

Three days later I gotta see some naked pics of Patti in leather outfit when she didn't think she was chosen by the gods to carry the ***Word.*** She's got better tits than I thought. But Rimbaud don't do the Watusi no more. He is dead. And so are a lot of others. Even if they move about on a stage and open their mouths and just carry on as if they were something special. Well, they are. ***Special bores.***

RUBBER CITY REBELS also Sunset Bombers and Skafish at the Whisky

Photo: Alain Saintillix

The funny thing is we actually went for Skafish. Like everyone else in this bored town I read Slash (along with Slush, Flip Side, Generation X, Lobotomy, Poseur, and TV Guide) and I saw the ad. The creature in the pic didn't exactly look like my dream date but I'm as liberal as the next guy, you can't judge a book by the cover or a singer by the size of his sniffer. And there were rumors that Skafish was what's happening way back in that great snowy wasteland known as the-rest-of-America.

Back to the reviewing business. The Rubber City Rebels have been in town for a while, they played the Masque before the crash pad got closed by the brain police but I wasn't there and the ones who were didn't have much to say.

The Rubber City Rebels have been rocking back in Akron, Ohio, for quite a while but what does that mean to us Angeleno big shots?!! Well, my little poseurs, that bunch came on stage dressed to take over the toughest biker bar and within seconds this wimp of a rock critic was knocked out flat, then picked up again, slapped a few times, pinched here and there and finally set straight: ***nobody's got any copyrights on what's punk or what's not,*** you got it or you don't. I don't even know any of them titles 'cept for the "Child Eater" thing but for the 30 minutes or so the set lasted I was aghast. This was high energy rock 'n' roll of the first degree, it was better than the Dead Boys and it didn't even try half as hard. That guy at the mike with the permanent gum chewing affliction is a menace to everything your elders hold sacred, and the others ain't exactly your idea of clean-cut America either. These guys don't give a shit about safety pins being still in or not or the best way to get your hair to stand up straight. Just part of the grand tradition of American hooliganism, I'll fuck you over before you do it to me. Mean streets.

Incidentally, the gum-chewing, hip-thrusting, atomic-guitar-swinging leader looks like Harvey Keitel's kid brother, if that kind of aesthetics appeal to you. They're also fucking tight musicians and great to watch, they jump in the audience (all of them 'cept the drummer, who really gets frustrated about it so he just stands on his kit, still beating) among the pogo contingent and nobody messes around with them, you just don't get too close to high voltage, even pinheads know that. The Rubber City Rebels have class, man, and if you didn't get it it's just that you've been hanging around with the same incestuous crowd for too long. Believe me, I know from experience what ***that*** can be like.

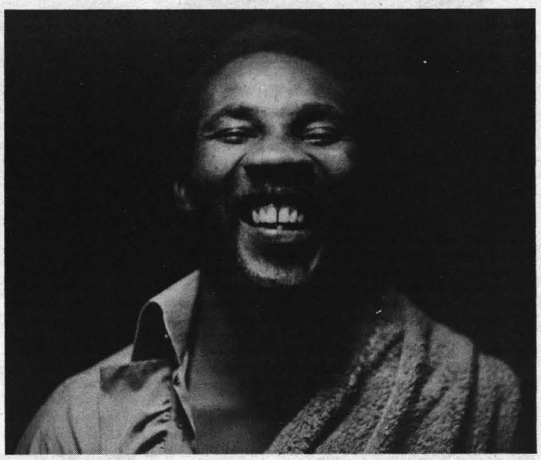
Skafish was next. I could go on for hours trying to explain what those creatures are about or I could toss out disjointed, hopelessly inadequate impressions of those puzzled, curious, eventually terribly depressing moments they dragged me thru. I'll choose the second solution 'cause there ain't no reason to get too depressed all over again.

Skafish is a freak show. Singer hermaphrodite (droopy tits, bulging waist, badly shaven, Joan Crawford hairdo) camps it up 'til you want to vomit or beat him to a pulp. Quite a good singer, by the way, mimes, minces his various childhood hang-ups (Freudian rock), his shaky position in modern society, his resentment/envy of the "normal" world. Hormones Rock. He shouldn't be doing a rock show, he should be on the Gong Show, Merv Griffin or the shady cabarets that specialize in the real "sicko entertainment." Reminiscent of the Kinks (Ray Davies' sexual vagueness such an influence on all momma's boys, isn't it??), reminiscent of Berlin in the '30s seen thru "Cabaret."

Rest of the goon pack a cross between retards in the arts and crafts room and Appalachian white trash degenerates at a Saturday night dance. Competent music for such a visual freak show 'cept there's always that tempting slip into Zappa pseudo-free-jazz crap that made student rock the fucking menace it is now. Went on and on and on and on, looked like they had imported their own dancers in the crowd. Four or five zapped kiddos who'd been waiting six months to "freak out" in style—writhe, writhe, dance with the godhead, show your legs, little girl, tomorrow ain't gonna be much fun. Mr./Ms. Skafish still went on, I guess when you look like that and feel like that you'll hang on to whatever little bit of attention you can get. If there's an audience for this bunch I'm moving out to the Caribbean tomorrow. I'll take the reggae type of headache any day. The white world is going nutzo.

Sunset Bombers: competent. Tough little singer just stepped out of a West Side Story set. Flashing his blade but not even flirting with self mutilation, which was a let-down. "I Can't Control Myself" was better than the Troggs'. But the Troggs did it first.

TOOTS AND THE MAYTALS at the Starwood



Toots and the Maytals, the legendary Jamaican performers and recording artists. Last time they were in town it was at the Roxy (another place gone yawn) and it was fabulous. Or maybe we were all younger. No, I think it ***really*** was fabulous. It wasn't fabulous at the Starwood, but it was packed. Which shows that the majority of the music audience only catches up on an act when it is almost done with. Which shows that most of the people who buy the records stand in line for the tickets and generally tell the record companies what's supposedly going on with the public are stupid jerks who have to be told a hundred times what to like before they decide to move their fucking larded asses and check it out for themselves. Joe Public, eat shit. You deserve it.

The Maytals (bless their past) did as close a version of Las Vegas reggae as they could get away with, and the honky suckers just yukked it up. Gone was the despair of the "In the Dark" album, gone was the mad exhilaration of "From the Roots," gone was everything that made this trio the leader of roots revival reggae in the early '70s. What we got was a lot of get-together jive, hand-clapping evasions and minimum effort on the part of everyone on stage. There were still some precious moments 'cause their music can't help but move everything movable inside you, but too often you just felt like crawling away somewhere and asking Jah what went wrong with those three ganja heads. If they got some smart biz conscious manager hidden behind who told them how to appeal to white audiences and forget the real thing, boys, may he rot forever in a room full of crazed rastas. If they just got there all by themselves may the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah have pity on their souls. They are lost to the brethren and also to the countless non-believers who discovered the reggae miracle thru their records. Pressure drop is okay, but not ***that*** low.

Afterwards we bullied our way backstage and tried to make some sense out of the evening. There was much security about (black but certainly not peacefully Rastafarian) but we did catch Toots.

"Hey, Toots, what do you think of the punk-reggae alliance in England?"

"Mon, I think it's very great . . ."

"Will it happen in America?"

"I want it to take hold in America but I don't know if it will."

"Toots, what's the future of reggae?"

"We gonna come together."

Then Toots said goodbye. "Rastafari, rastafari, from my heart."

And from our hearts we didn't have the heart to go any further. Like, why do you settle for this half-hearted show? Why is your music so watered-down compared to what it used to be? Why do you want to be so liked by every goon in the place? Yeah, I know. What right do a couple of white boys have to ask one of the kings of the ***music*** about his apparent shortcomings? What rights, except the right of the true fan??

Pale Natty

ROOTS OF CREATION, DELL AND THE SENSATIONS
at the Starwood, January 18, 19

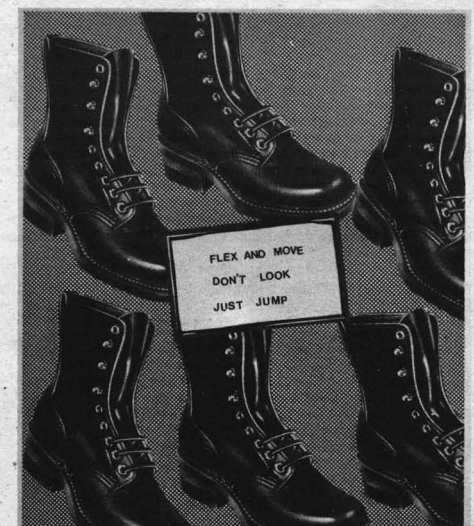
Too bad you missed it, bloodclots, because the Roots of Creation are the new wave of reggae, making Toots Hibbert look like Natty King Cole. Their set of tropical originals and Trenchtown classics from Peter Tosh to Bob Marley was a jolt from Jah, and the fans were almost swinging from the 15-foot portable plastic palm trees. In their closing number, the boys cast aside their instruments to do a Caribbean cakewalk, including dance routines that looked like digging for carrots, and a warm water version of the "Swim." Later on in Babylon, the Rude Boys hosted a splif-to-sunrise session in their mobile home in the Starwood parking lot where these latest Rastafarian tenets were tabled:

(1) Haile Selassie is living in a mountain cave guarded by 999 lions;

(2) White women have the most refined intellect of the human race.

The problem with Dell and the Sensations is they are too urban to be a true reggae band. Put Dell in Montego Bay with a bag of herbs and he'd still be too R&B to have that half-asleep-in-the-sun sound. Which proves you can take the kink out of a dreadlock but you can't take the concrete jungle out of Dell.

V.S.



BLUE LEACH

ALLEY CATS, X, FLESH EATERS
at Kahuna's, February 28

Flesh Eaters had a good appetite tonite, devouring everything in sight (police, Jesus, plutonium) including a whole bottle of hot sauce with a cover version of "Little Latin Lupe Lu."

X tore in like a tornado, with guitarist Billy Zoom on lightning, drummer Don Bonecrusher on thunder, siren Exene dancing up a storm, John Doe spitting hailstones. After hearing "Sex and Death in High Society," "Our Love Passed Out on the Couch," "Heater in Her Hand," you'll know the heater's in this band.

The Alley Cats sing hungry—Randy like a stray cat howling for tuna tins while Diane stalks the stage with her bass, tossing her jet-black rat-job, a panther on catnip. The guitar sound is as synchronized as Siamese twins.

Where was everyone? The sound at Kahuna's was the best of any punk venue. Since the tiny crowd of friends-of-the-band and surf-and-sand locals neither threw a chair nor mashed the revolving disco mirrors, Kahuna's may allow more of the new wave to lap up into the club on Tuesday nights. Form a car pool.

V.S.

AVENGERS AND CONTROLLERS
at the Whisky

We arrived when the Avengers were about to go on for their first set. They were nervous, somebody was making them pose for pictures backstage. The audience was very mixed, some kept shouting "fuck you!". It reminded me of their gig with the Pistols in San Francisco. Penelope had a long face. They played great, I always love them, for the first set I just watched. "I Believe in Me" was spat out, I couldn't understand the words, but it seemed to loosen up the band. There was a feeble stomping for an encore, the big fans (apart from us) hadn't arrived yet and they didn't come back.

There was the usual wait. I hadn't seen the Controllers since the Masque I don't know how many months ago and I was looking forward to it. They came on looking like Crisis, in army fatigues (except Charlie, of course, who wore something really sexy, I don't know what but it wasn't much and it got a lot of whistles). Kid Spike's voice was much clearer than I remembered it. They were much tighter, they must've been practicing every night 'cos they were much better altogether. They got a good reception—did they do an encore? I can't remember.

The Avengers' second set was overwhelming—I don't think I've ever heard them so good. What a drummer Danny is! Each song was better than the last. More people arrived, the Avengers lovers, we all pogoed. The end of each song brought whistles, it got to the band, Penelope's long face disappeared, she could hardly hold back her delight. The whole audience shrieked and stomped and they came skipping back for an encore. We didn't want to let them go but we had to. I had to leave in a hurry after that, I didn't want any long Whisky wait to spoil it.

Pea Brain

ARTHUR J. AND THE GOLDCUPS, X, BLACK RANDY AND THE METRO SQUAD at the Whisky

It was a Masque presentation at the Whisky, just to show that even though the place is still closed, the spirit lives on. Arthur J. and the Goldcups are one of the most underground groups in the city and one of the most entertaining. Their material is mainly old rocking tunes done in outre punk style and some originals (the most being their insane punk noise version of Cal Worthington's "Go See Cal" jingle. Watching them perform this with total seriousness and "sincerity" I decided that if more local new wave bands used all the horrendous material available around for their own crazed purposes there would be no more talk about "irrelevance" and "plasticity." What was great is that it wasn't performed with the obligatory "aren't we clever" approach. It was done as straightforward as can be, and quite disturbing because of it.).

Arthur J.'s line-up reflects their unique offbeat direction as well as the choice of their tunes does: that night there were two girls on background vocals, hip-shaking and ponying, one Deadbeat and two other fellows on horns (no, they are ***not*** the Blood, Sweat and Tears of punk!), David Brown, the remote master of keyboards on occasional key tickling, Bobby Death, Hector the Zero and Geza on guitars (Geza also sang a few songs, the most memorable being their calypsoid reggae number), Brendan Mullen, the punk entrepreneur of the month on drums and Spazz the wonder boy on vocals and acrobatics. If Johnny Rotten had eaten his soup every day when he was a kid and hadn't permanently distorted his features by sneering even in his sleep he would look like Spazz. Spazz is like a walking anthology of punk vocalists (from the immobility of the already mentioned Rotten to the electro-shock convulsions of John Denney) but he manages to make it ***his*** style, his lunacy. It is strange that such a character has remained so relatively unknown on the scene. I have a feeling it won't be for long. A spot on the Masque marathon downtown would have brought the irreverent Arthur J. and the Goldcups the attention of the media (and all its mixed blessings) but also would have saved us from at least one of the boring, desperate, "just hanging in there" groups we were subjected to.

Next was X. X have become one of the most exciting groups around in a matter of weeks, and if this show is any indication they're soon going to leave everyone else way behind. To watch John Doe screaming his song into the mike, all contorted with passion while Exene is shaking in trance behind and Billy Zoom is grinning insanely while hitting his guitar; to watch Exene and John trading vocals while the music literally sizzles and burns right thru you is something you're not about to forget. The intensity and originality of their tunes is amazing. This is light years away from your average drone-along band. This is the stuff that will carry punk into its next phase. And in this town where drummers are every band's headache, X have had the luck to find this Dan Bonebreak guy who already has made himself seem indispensable to their sound. Be sure never to miss X on stage, whenever and wherever they play. They'll do things to you you didn't know could be done. They'll make you glad you're living today, when the ***real*** excitement is still right next to you.

Black Randy and Metro Squad were last. A week before, the Black Randy set at the benefit had degenerated (what do you expect from a self-proclaimed degenerate?) into chaos that bore little resemblance to the brutal attacks the band has already put onto vinyl. Obviously wanting to get back to serious business, the whole Metro Squad team this time did a tight, controlled set, not letting the exuberant madcap improvisations of their demented leader drag them into formlessness and self-indulgent jams. Black Randy paced the stage, exhorting, supplicating, prophesying and generally carrying on the part of the spiritual master gone zonko from too many spliffs and intimate meetings with Jah, he raised his hands to the heavens, fell on his knees, shook his fists and sang, foamed and screamed as only he can do it. Black Randy's position on the scene is uncontested and will forever remain so. It is not a role anyone would want even if they could handle it, which , of course, they couldn't. The Metro Squad lent their fast, piercing sound attacks to the ceremony, watching the proceedings with a combination of patience, disbelief and admiration.

In the audience there was a stunned black music writer who had come a long way to catch and write about what he thought was the first black punk band on the scene. Black Randy and the Metro Squad haven't even started to mystify the world.

forty five's

SHAM 69
Polydor Import
(Borstal Breakout / Hey Little Rich Boy)

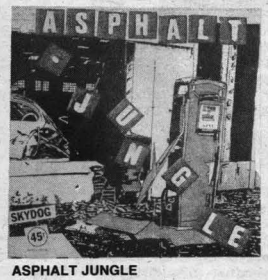
No way to tell if this is progress or not as I still haven't been able to lay my hands on their first record. People tell me the sound here is much cleaner. "Borstal Breakout" erupts with uncontrived, genuinely deranged laughter and skids abruptly to a halt with the sound of breaking glass. Everything's paced thick and hard-charging as if the band was some runaway Panzer tank rocketing through an endless series of brick walls. "Hey Little Rich Boy" zeroes in on the obvious and the attack is so raw and crude that the object of ridicule is reduced to a torn and impotent wimpering idiot before your very ears.

Chris D.

NICK LOWE
Radar Import
(They called it rock / I love the sound of breaking glass)

Side A is a satiric rocker poking fun at the rock business. It's done pretty straightforward in the "this is the rock" mold, it ain't much but it's not obnoxious and the lyrics are quite funny: "... they made another record, never was a hit, someone in a paper said it was shit, now the drummer is a bookie, the singer is a whore..." Morality tale for our age. B-side is kind of very low key, soft Bowie thing, with strong drumbeat wispy piano bits, it's kind of mildly sad, mildly hypnotic, if the older generation had taste they'd listen to it.

C.B.



ASPHALT JUNGLE
Skydog Records Import
(Plante comme un prive / Purple heart)

Less deliberately new wave than Metal Urbain, these French rockers managed to come up with a really nifty little single, even though I have no idea what the fuck they're talking about. "Plante comme un prive" (???) builds up real good, all streamlined, no frills and the singer's voice is kind of shot which makes it even better—there's a spoken segment that reminds me of the Germs' "Forming," maybe because the guy's turning his back to the mike, yeah, it's a real "cool" cut, including the sax icing at the end. Other side starts a bit like a Stranglers thing, some prehistoric riff with the voice shouting chopped sentences or slogans or something. Halfway thru the voice almost dies (this guy's vocal chords ain't gonna last), the song is all beat, hardly any guitar 'cept for a few odd distant lead lines here and there. Less immediately engaging than side A but nothing to be ashamed of. Pas mal, les mecs.

C.B.

RICH KIDS
E.M.I. Import
(Rich Kids / Empty Words)

E.M.I. got one Pistol after all 'cept this one seems full of blanks: I really did try with this single, after all Matlock did write some (most) of the best Pistols tunes and I liked his comparing the famous gruesome four to the Monkees. Played it again and again, looking for a clue to greatness. No clue. No greatness. "Rich Kids" isn't exactly bad but it does not stick. Kind of dated, it's rock like any other rock, it's gone and you don't care. No substance. Vocals on the pop side. Other side is nothing, no matter how hard you try. Empty words, and the music don't exactly sizzle either. Produced by Mick Ronson, who a long time ago was somewhat involved with rock 'n' roll, or so they tell me.

Kick Boy

ROKY ERICSON
Sponge Records Reissue
(originally on Rhino)
(Mine, Mine, Mind / Click your Fingers Applauding the Play / Two Headed Dog / I've Always Been Here Before)

Many people might like to pigeonhole Roky, put him in a category because they must (by all means, fellow poseurs!) have their labels. When something is good, it's good. And there are traces here of something very good. There are also traces of a creative genius at low energy ebb. "Two Headed Dog" is a crazed and scary piece of rock by anyone's standards. "Mine, Mine, Mind" and "Click your Fingers" are diamonds in the rough, suffering beneath an undynamic production. And on the bottom rung is "Been Here Before," an innocuous one-dimensional piece of mystical, folky pap.

Chris D.

POET AND THE ROOTS
Virgin 12-inch import
(All wi doin is defendin / Five nights of bleedin / Command Counsel Dub / Defense Dub)

Doomsday toasting. War, madness, "fighting among the rebels." Upbeat narrative tunes heavy on the backbeat, piano riffs on the edges to take a bit of the

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oppressiveness away, deep D.J. voice, the whole thing like a JA version of the Last Poets (hence the name??). Nice visions: "... bad music tearing up your flesh... and everybody was high on brew..." Not for everyone. Dub side above average with same implacable pulse, piano, melodica and the usual psychedelic tricks gone nasty in the hands of the barbarians. The sound of the Third World Revolution. Ignore it at your own risk.

Chatty Chatty Mouth

KILLER BEES
Palace Records
(Do it in Montreal / Angel on Fire / Take that)

Absolutely no information about this. The Nashville, Tennessee address of the record company may indicate that this is shit-kicking new wave, or it may not. Whatever it is, it is ugly. In a slimy, horrible sort of way. Slow get-it-on rock shittily recorded with pseudo live intro on one track, tambourine, fuzz guitar, moronic lyrics in the grand old tradition, it's got it all. Truly offensive. I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy's record collection... Next please.

Kick Face

ADVERTS
Bright Import
(No Time to be 21 / New Day Dawning)

Their fourth single, their third label (sound familiar?). Actually, this Bright record (the first) has all the markings of an Anchor spin-off. "New Day Dawning" finds T.V. Smith expanding the scope of his social critiques to include the military. "No Time to be 21" is just what you'd expect from the title, but no more. Great concept, good music, good production, decent solos, okay lyrics. The words stuck to T.V.'s jacket on the sleeve seem to sum it all up nicely: "fast, clean, cheap..." Now maybe if they'd been "inspired, exceptional, outrageous..."

Mikel Toombs

999
U.A. Import
(Emergency / My street stinks)

999 cannot be mistaken for anyone else. They certainly have a style of their own, and that goes for their picture sleeves, too. They've got stickers and a club, and they've got fans who swear they're the hottest thing. They may be good live, on vinyl they have never managed to twist my ears around. Some of their songs have been interesting enough to be played a few times, they blend okay in a punk series, but I dread the day 999 decide it is time for an LP. It wouldn't even have the fascinating monotony of the Eater monument, or its maniacal speed for speed's sake. "Emergency" is slow, and there is a melodic progression reminiscent of the Bee Gees ("oh such a holiday" or something like that). Vocals shriek a bit. "My street stinks" ("the world stinks too...") is faster but pretty much the same. Middle of the road punk, or should I say middle of the alley?

Kick

FRONT
The Label Import
(The System / Queen's Mafia)

More and more it's getting so that the only way I can gauge anything I listen to is by just how much disruption it inspires in me. How anything so coldly named as "The System" can do this is beyond me, especially with its '60s harmonies and slide guitars (nice and stinging, though), but it does. "Queen's Mafia" is slightly less potent if only because it fails to produce as sharp an ache inside, like a straight razor in the heart.

Chris D.

THE HOLLYWOOD SQUARES
Square Records
(Hillside Strangler / Hollywood Square)

Mysterioso release from mysterioso group. Some bands play for months without recording one lousy single, others record before they play anywhere. Confusing business. A-side ("Hillside Strangler") is quite good, fast enough, nice hook, the lyrics are pretty sharp ("Never know what the night can bring / express myself with a simple piece of string"—now, that's cute), it does not repeat itself exceedingly and it does not copy anyone in particular. Topical songs are in. Enough madness in the papers to record whole albums. B-side is less interesting although the lyrics once again are L.A. subject matter. They play hard enough but the format is more dated, dreaded rock 'n' roll nonsense.

Now it's time for these people to come out of their hiding place and show us what they're made of. This sure is no way to sell a single. Wise up.

C.B.

THE CORTINAS
Step Forward import
(Defiant Pose / Independence)

Don't buy the 12-inch limited edition deal 'cause the 7-inch is cheaper and the cover is fantastic. The Cortinas ain't pretending to be anything else than middle class, and the cover says more about the way they feel about their background than ten songs ever could. I have no favorite side, both are just great now music. Good chanting singing to shake you up a bit with fast, tight playing—it's aggressive without drowning you, it's clean without being wimpy, it may be the best single of the month. Some will wince when they hear "I ain't gonna take no for an answer, I

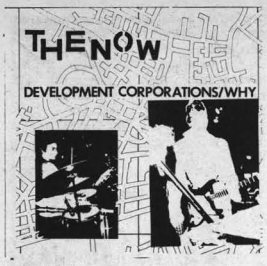
ain't gonna be no white negro." That's too bad if the Cortinas get misunderstood, 'cause they appear to be one of the most honest, genuine bands around. And I'm glad they're still on Step Forward. May they bring them a bit of money, so that others like them get a break too.

Kick Boy

CHINA STREET
Criminal Records import
(You're a ruin / I wanna be your M.P.)

China Street are from Lancaster (northwest of England). Nice to know there's more than London. Eventually some of the greatest bands are gonna come from the boondocks, and all of you big city snobs are gonna feel like stupid shits, which should be fun. China Street have a way to go though before they threaten anyone's position. A-side is dangerously close to boogie, it's got an old-fashioned structure to it that makes it hard to swallow. I want to be your M.P. (member of Parliament, ignoramus!) is all right, vocals remind me of the Alley Cats minus the power. Attractive sleeve with lyrics. I don't know how old this record is, so they may have cleaned up their act by now. They may also have gone down the drain.

C.B.



THE NOW
Ultimate Record Label Import
(Development Corporations / Why?)

Even though the sound is strictly garage production level, the songs too long, and the sleeve packaging amateurish in the most boring way, this is worth searching out. "Why?" has an intro reminiscent of an old Velvet Underground tune (you decide which one), then bursts into one of the most anguished, bewildered cries at life's futility I've ever heard. B-side is a fast-moving piece of reggae detailing the bureaucracy of "Development Corporations" that destroy any individual unwise enough to cross their path.

Chris D.

CARPETTES
Small Wonder Import
(How About You and Me / Help I'm Trapped / Radio Wunderbar / Cream of the Youth)

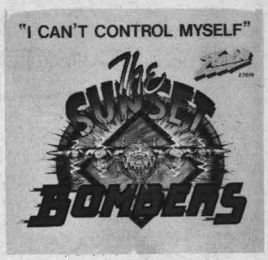
One of the most pleasant side-effects of this whole Independent Music Phenomenon is the return of the EP. Ten to fifteen minutes of music is a real bargain at an EP price! Since most developing groups just don't have enough good material to fill out an album, an EP is ideal for presenting their strongest tunes. The Carpettes have made themselves a dandy debut; one of the best this year. Their songs remind one of the Damned and the Boys (English) or the Ramones. A trio, the songs on Side 1 are by Neil Thompson; Side 2 tunes are by bassist George Thompson. Not to leave anyone out, Kevin Heard is the man on skins. "Radio Wunderbar" is the early favorite with a storyline (and sound?) close to Clash's "Capital Radio." A fine tale of mass media manipulation. "Cream . . ." is a poke at rich English kids and "Help I'm Trapped" explains itself: music from a closet. Which leaves us with the opening "How About You and Me," asking the eternal question: what's with us, huh? A great song with a hook that is there for keeps. My ears tell me it could be Generation X doing "First Time" by the Boys!!

Bo Clifford

THE ELECTRIC CHAIRS
Safari Import
(Eddie and Sheena / Rock 'n' Roll Cleopatra)

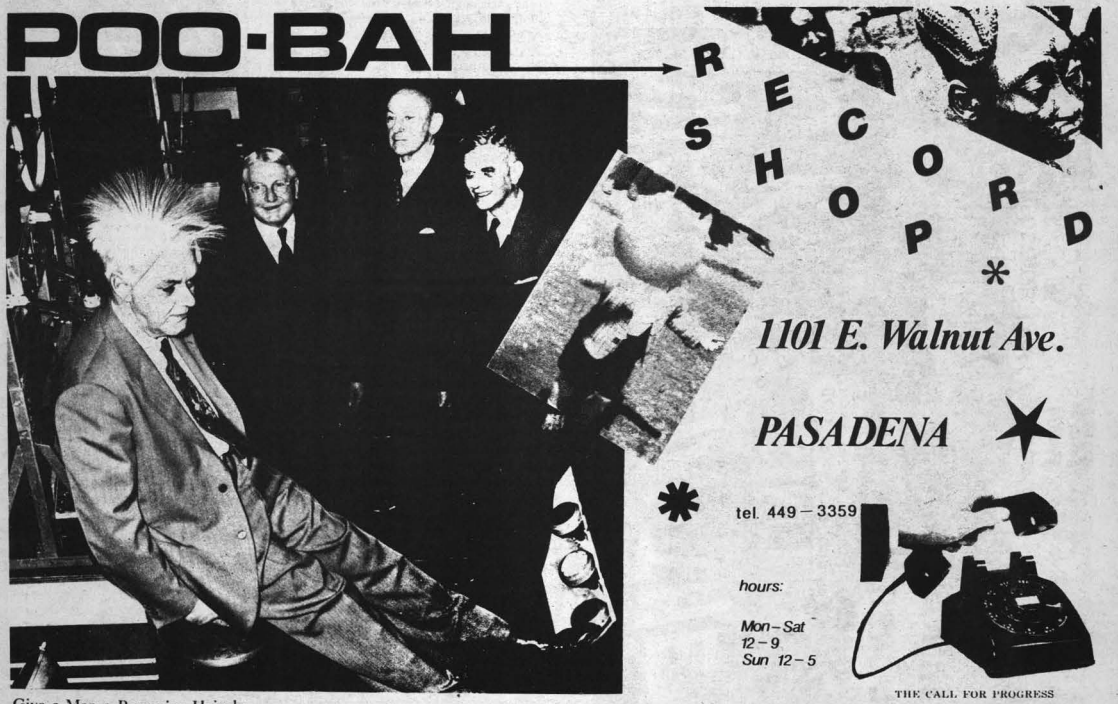
Wayne just won't quit. This time we get the touching story of Eddie and Sheena ("Eddie was a teddy boy and Sheena was a punk . . .") who, in spite of peer pressure, get married and name their brat Elvis Rotten. I'm not making it up. And if you guess that half of the song is done in '50s wah-do-wap style and the other half in "punk" fashion, you're right. That's the message side of the disc. B-side is a rock 'n' roll "ode" (I figured that out 'cause rock 'n' roll is mentioned at least 35 times). All of you into hand-clapping will love it. Maybe Wayne will stop his novelty records business after he makes enough for that costly sex change.

Kickboy

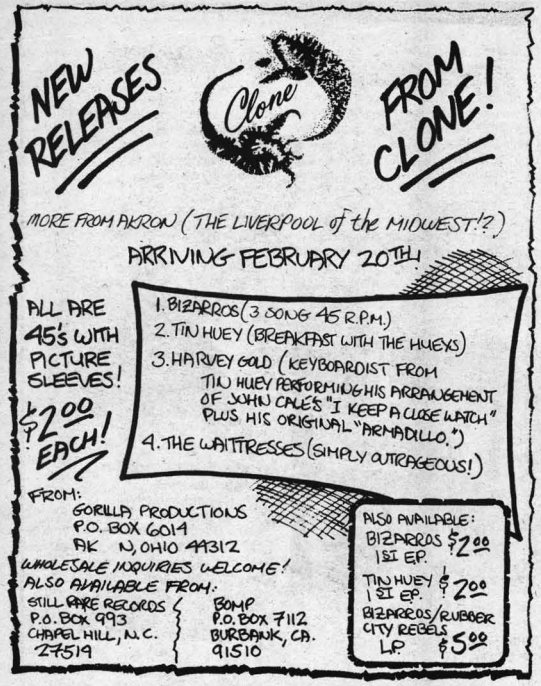


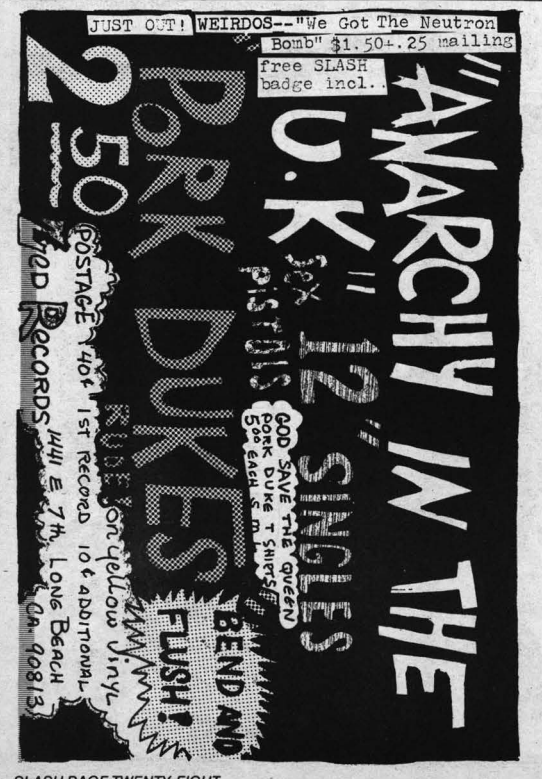
THE SUNSET BOMBERS
Zombie Records
(I can't help myself)

The Bombers got their hands on a classic, and give it to you pretty straightforward, and probably pretty much the way you remember the song (if you were born then!) except not quite. Even though they are certainly better musicians than the Troggs ever were (no big deal), they tend to stylize the song a bit, but not enough to make it work again (as Bryan Ferry in his flamboyant heydays could have made a monster out of that tune). I don't care if they skip the introductory "Oh no . . ." and I don't care if they add instrumentation, but I do miss the abysmal



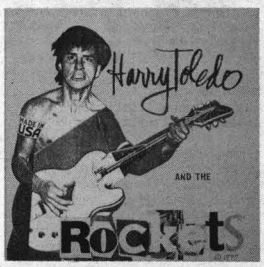
Give a Man a Porcupine Hair-do





prehistoric acid break ("... with you at night, and we love, and we love")... That part made the song, gave it a dark, secretive (all relative, of course—this is teenage heaviness) aspect which isn't present in the catchy, moronic front section. Anyway, it's an odd idea to do a cover version for your first release. Unless it uses a totally unique approach, which this doesn't.

C.B.



HARRY TOLEDO AND THE ROCKETS
Spy Records import
(Busted Chevrolet / Yo-Ho / Who is that saving me / John Glenn)

Another proof of the odd lucidity of the truly insane. Mr. Toledo may not be a loony himself but his music totally belongs to the "padded cell rock" category. The various elements are rather innocent when taken separately (minimal music with simple repetitive sounds—not in the new wave fiery brutal way—more like marching band fooling around) and the lyrics are very clear and everyday (although scary in their meaninglessness) but when everything meets it simply becomes deranged. Eno (early period) can sometimes do it, making you sing along with the most absurd lyrics with conviction, and Syd Barrett had his moments too, Neil Innes came close and Toledo seems quite intent on joining the club. A truly fine ambition, as long as it does not lead him to the music-for-happy-retards private quarters of Jonathan Richman. Such a fine line between inspiring nonsense and boring gibberish.

Two of the songs are sort of rock 'n' roll but it won't have you dancing to it unless you're a mongoloid; "Yo-Ho" will go over your head 'cause it's its only function and "John Glenn" will move you to tears if your favorite moment in life is coming down from a two-day trip on acid that was heavily cut with methedrine while watching the cockroaches hold secret meetings at the bottom of your dirty coffee cup. Haunting melody, unforgettable lyrics, just don'g count on anyone spending the night at your place if that's what you play to them to break the ice. You see, people usually want to ***understand.*** Just ain't that type of song.

Last warning: I ain't saying that even one or two persons might go for this EP and I don't want no complaints afterwards about my lack of taste or whatever. If you wanna be safe, buy the collected works of 999. Me, I don't care, I got brain cells to spare. I'll try anything once. "I'm a rocket looking for a mission."

Kick Boy Face

(John Cale produced, if anyone cares.)

SWELL MAPS
Rather Records Import
(Read About Seymour / Ripped and Torn / Black Velvet)

These three tunes' total time is less than yer average FM track. That should tell you something about Swell Maps: they ain't fancy and they don't waste time. The A-side is about good old Seymour who keeps popping up; I'm almost sure it's ***not*** about Sire.Turn it over and you find "Ripped and Torn" which is not about the magazine, but, rather, concerns itself with casting one's fate to the wind when that big love affair doesn't work out. Reality, Jack! "Black Velvet" is not about the whiskey of the same name, but it still goes down easy. Swell...

Bo Clifford

ALTHIA AND DONNA
Lightning Import
(Uptown Top Ranking)

Ronnettes reggae. Two girls team up for one of the catchiest singles of the year. No deep messages, no pretensions, just a good sing-along dance record. Something you can drink to, dance to and have a good time with. Rastas like it, punks like it, my mom likes it, it's one of those songs you just can't deny. The music has an up/down back and forth sway to it, the bass holds it together while the horns provide the motion. Put this on some night when you're preparing to go out, it will put you in the perfect state for a night of fun.

Debbie Dub

P.S. Just to broaden your horizons, here are the lyrics of "Uptown Top Ranking":

See me in mi heels and thing/
Them check say we hip and thing/
True them no know and thing/
We have them going and thing/
Nah pop no style, a strictly roots/
Nah pop no style, a strictly roots/
See me pon the road and yu no call out to me/
Thru you see me in mi pants and thing/
See me in mi halter back/
Say me give you heart attack/
Gimme little bass mek me wind out mi waist/
Up town top ranking.

MAGAZINE
Virgin import
(Shot by both sides / My mind ain't so open)

"Shot by both sides" is incredible. The song is a long, long way from Spiral Scratch, and many who worshipped that single's elemental manic drive will be confused and will feel cheated, which would be stupid, as it simply is another music, more structured, less skin surface, but certainly as intense and grabbing. Devoto doesn't even sound like the same man, his voice is deeper, older, nastier. The band behind plays exceptionally well, the guitar and drums melting into each other, taking off (with restraint), coming back to the melodic line to join Howard for the final attack. Less punk in the cliche sense of the term, but infinitely rich and rewarding. Other song is too freaky-experimental for my ears. It's built to repel and make you cringe. It works. I bet the Deadbeats love it. "My mind ain't so open that anything can crawl in." Very true. But A-side alone is well worth getting this record. If Mr. Devoto does not go funny in the head and retire to a very private world of his own (Virgin already informed us that he had chosen to avoid all interviews and other distasteful procedures from now on), he may become one of the most important creators on the new scene. If he does (go funny), he has already achieved a minor key position in the punk mythology.

Kick boy

albums

"STIFFS LIVE"
Stiff distributed by Arista

What a month! Either sampler LPs or useless first shots by various oddballs. This one is a live record of the Stiff artists on tour, with Ian Dury and the Blockheads, Nick Lowe's Last Chicken in the Shop, Elvis Costello and the Attractions, Wreckless Eric and the New Rockets and Larry Wallis' Psychedelic Rowdies. This may be Stiff's last attempt at cashing in on Costello and Lowe since the two are no longer on the label. If you like these various groups this album will thrill you forever as it thrilled the enthusiastic audiences they played to; if not, skip it, pal, it won't make you change your mind.

A couple of mild highlights on first side: "Semaphore Signals" by Wreckless Eric (who follows it with a horrendous country western turd of a tune) is a bit John Cale-like in intensity and sound, and "Police Car" by Larry Wallis is kind of good but slow and predictable. Side 2 has Elvis Costello doing below average stuff (not much of it) and Ian Dury doing limey disco and music hall. Everyone joins in for the "Sex drug rock n roll and chaos" grande finale. The chaos bit is not a concession to punk ideals. It's a description of the overall effect of the song on your ears. More good time music having just the opposite effect on the listener.

C.B.

"RAW DEAL"
(Featuring the G.T.'s, the Psycho's, Acme Sewage Co., The Sick Things, The Killjoys, The Bloodclots, The Users and Zhain)
Raw Records import

Another sampler, this time from Raw Records. Except for the Users' "I'm in love with today," none have been released before, some for obvious reasons. Let's start with the worst. Zhain (who the fuck are they?) do a total Stones rip-off, the fact that it's faster does not hide their immense lack of originality. Useless. Another band called Acme Sewage Co. (barf) does one bearable song and one obnoxious cut with instrumental freak-out that goes on well beyond anyone's endurance. Definitely should have been left molding in the vault. The inevitable speeded-up "Louie Louie" is performed live by The Bloodclots. You may have a hard time recognizing the song (which is just as well—who needs "Louie Louie," at any speed?), you won't have a hard time forgetting it. That's for the trash and near-trash.

Psycho's leave me cold with "Soul train" but "Young, British and white" is good. The Sick Things bore me on "Bondage boy" but get exciting with "Kids on the street." The girl singer (maybe they're all girls—the cover should have pics of the bands instead of that third rate artsy fartsy thing they did) has a nice high voice and the band really pushes along. Simple but real effective. "At night" by the Killjoys is almost as good as their "Johnny won't get to Heaven" single. The band is a bit blurry and the voice badly recorded but it works.

Finally there is the already known cut by the Users. It's a fantastic song and its inclusion raises the worth of the LP by a few points. If you don't have it and you'd like to check out what Raw Records got their hands on last year you could do worse than buy this. Not exactly groundbreaking, but there are some decent moments here and there. And it's dedicated to "all small labels who are in it for the fun and glory—not just for the money." Nice if they mean it.

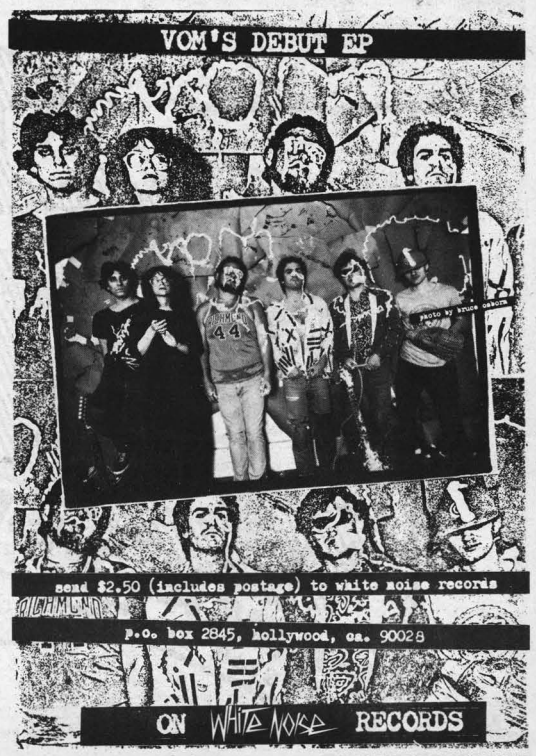
Kickboy

JOE GIBBS AND THE PROFESSIONALS
"AFRICAN DUB ALL-MIGHTY CHAPTER THREE"
Joe Gibbs label import

Definitely one of the most bizarre albums ever made. Dub is always weird and spacey but this stands out even among the strangest. Constantly changing, surprising, upsetting, it destroys your sense of reality, changes your perception and messes with your mind. Instruments come and go without any apparent reason or purpose, doorbell and telephones ring, voices weave in and out to create a feeling of inspired chaos. Many of the same musicians are used that are on the "Two Seven Clash" album, this time stretching out and improvising. The wizards here are the producers, Joe Gibbs and Errol Thompson, they direct, edit and twiddle the knobs to achieve the uniqueness of the sound, cutting up elements and putting them back together to suit their fancy. I can put this album on feeling totally straight and within minutes my brain is scrambled on the ceiling. Who needs drugs when you've got African Dub?

African Dub is put out on the Joe Gibbs label, an independent Jamaican label you can epend on for quality. For more information you can write to: Joe Gibbs Recording Studio, c/o Erroll Thompson, 24 Retirement Cres., Kingston, Jamaica. Enclose a picture of yourself.

Debbie Dub



NEXT MONTH

MALCOLM part 2
GENERATION X
DEADBEATS
NEGATIVE TREND
SEALS & CROFTS
SHAWN CASSIDY
PLUGZ

(spot the lies & win our admiration)...

IAN DURY
"NEW BOOTS AND PANTIES"
Stiff Import

Don't know Kilburn and the High Roads or what the fuss was about. Ian looks bizarre enough to attract attention, and sometimes his music has that odd edge that made Elvis Costello the darling of the don't - mind - that - new - wave - stuff - but - please - spare - me - the - punk - shit type of critic. Side one is innocuous, couldn't tell you for the life of me what's mind blowing; intelligent lyrics are common enough these days of widespread education, expect that ain't it, stupid fool that I am, Dury comes from the lower class. His sensibility is that of the small people; okay, make him a star, I'm sure he deserves it and it will make all of you liberal bastards feel oh so close to life, the real thing, what you'll never taste 'cause you just ain't built that way, are you, you sophisticated fools?? You'll feel so hip putting on Ian Dury to impress that new date of yours instead of the old used-up copy of Tom Waits' latest alcoholo-poetico-Bukowskio ramblings, hey, that's a real cockney low-life direct from London —isn't the art of the common folk so wooonderfully appealing?! I just hope you come too soon and she despises you forever and your new Stiff import gets scratched beyond hope.

Side 2 has two good tunes, "Blockheads" and "Plaistow Patricia." "Blockheads" is about millions of people who constantly get in one's way if one lives in the cesspool commonly known as the real world: "Blockheads with food particles in their teeth . . . a mouth that never closes . . . how would you like one puffing and blowing in your ear hole . . ." He sounds angry on that one. I wish he did more often. Leave the music-hall diarrhea to your grandpa, Ian. You look like a fine threat. Be one, goddammit.

Kickboy

CHRIST CHILD
Buddah

They may not be fighting in the streets over here, but there is a Punk War going on in the American record industry—and guess who's losing? There have been victories (the Pistols, the Sire bands) but where's the Clash album? And how come most of what we're stuck with is blatantly derivative stuff—Stranglers, Boomtown Rats, Vibrators and now Christ Child? It's hard to figure the record co.'s strategy— I mean, the *real* thing hasn't even broken yet and already they're trying to market imitations.

It's not hard to figure Christ Child, though: lousy name, pseudo-punkoid layout, an old wave obsession with sex (as outdated a concept as any), "developing their expression in the hills of Malibu and Topanga Canyons" (gotta be a contradiction in there somewhere)—these guys are competent musician/songwriters with no ideas of their own, trying to cash in on the latest fad. "Trendies," "posers," you know the story pretty well by now.

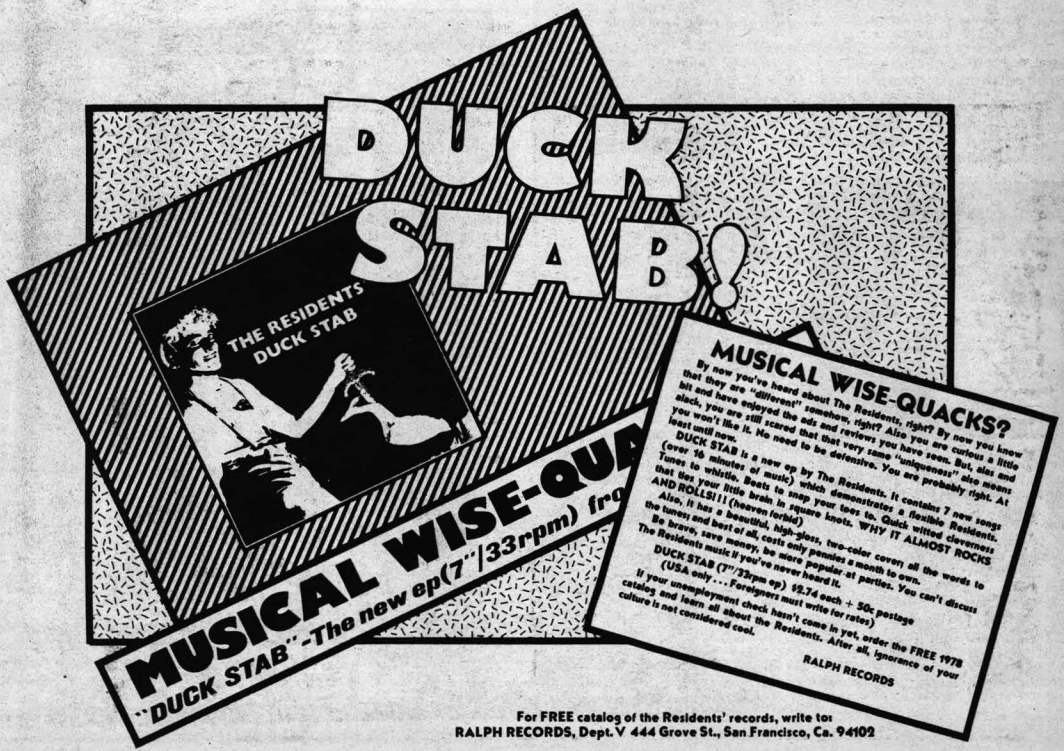
I have to admit I enjoyed a couple of the songs on first/only listen, but I'm sure it's only a mild relapse. But I really do like the back cover's "this is what punkrock is all about, folks" hype—it's quite funny, actually, and rather innocuous except for the last line—"you will not ignore it [the album]"—which is an outright lie.

Mikel Toombs

TUFF DARTS
"TUFF DARTS!"
Sire

Why is this in the Slash album reviews section? The only interesting thing about this record is that it's got one bad scratch, although brand new. Why is everything so fuckin' boring today?

Kickface



For FREE catalog of the Residents' records, write to:
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JIMBO.

JIMBO

GA! AM I TRYIN' TO KILL MYSELF OR WHAT?!?! BETTER HAVE LUNCH & THINK IT OVER.

ROZZ·TOX N·

WELL, UH.... YEAH. GOT THE SKILLET HEATING UP & IT LOOKS LIKE I GOT SPAM & UH... TUNA SO I OUGHTA MIX THAT UP HERE & ...

THANK GOD I'VE GOT AN ELECTRIC CAN OPENER.. I SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO KILL MY SELF WITH IT AT LEAST... !!!!

WHAT THE @*!!!?M! IT'S STUCK! GUESS I'LL HAVE TO PRY IT LOOSE...

TUNA

ZZZZZZZZZZ*

SQUINCH!!

WELL I GUESS I GOT THAT DONE WITH A MINIMUM OF DAMAGE... THAT'S GOT THE TUNA!!!

PUSSHH. SSHHH SSSSSSS SSSS

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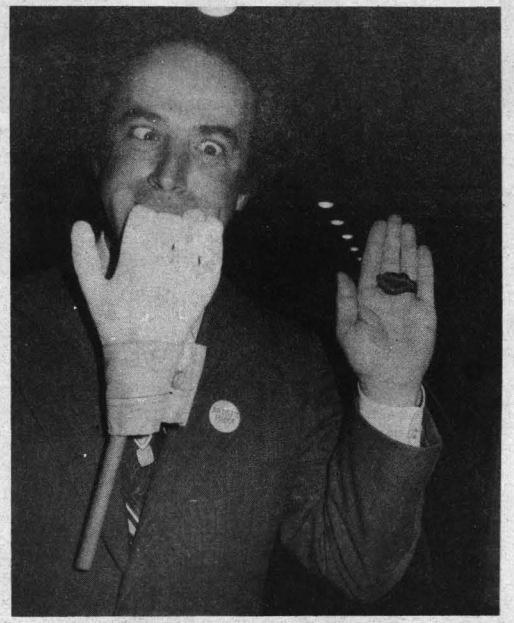

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cover: lovely Alice Bag adorns our "new look" cover (to celebrate our one year birthday).. (and also to get Ricky Beat to buy a copy)...

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EDITORIAL

This issue is dedicated to the handful of enragés (French for maniacs, fanatics, crazies) who, ten years ago (May '68), tried to change life.

(YOUTH DISTURBED TOO OFTEN BY THE FUTURE)

local »« shit

Grand Vizier McLaren gone back to the island, either to manage the Slits, do a film or simply make trouble and antagonize 98% of the rock press. Good luck, Malcolm!

Also gone is the Plungerhouse contingent (Helen Trudie Rod etc.). Latest news have them stranded in New York, unable to take the big jump over the ocean and wondering what to do . . .

Lobotomy Pleasant had a birthday party in a bungalow at the Tropicana, and permanent Tropicana resident Tom Waits showed up. No nastiness occurred. Speaking of Lobotomy, Mr. Gorilla Rose (occasional writer and Screamers' biographer) hosted the fanzine's benefit at the Whisky. Speaking of fanzines, a new one appeared in San Diego: Substitute, which can be obtained wherever you obtain all these self-destruct sheets . . .

Nicky Beat can finally rest, the Bags have found a drummer. So have the Controllers. She is black and the ones who know say she's the best. One Dickie ended up in jail for driving without a license, and one Geza (famed record producer) almost did for exposing himself (or trying to) during Lazaro's Latin Lounge punk night! But ever-popular Geza appealed to the punk crowd for support ("Have I ever hurt a fly?") and the uniformed moral defenders had to take off the handcuffs and give up their prey.

Flipside magazine recently got bigger and nastier (and better). Which, of course, shouldn't matter to all of us Slash trendies and reggae bandwagon jumpers.

Wie Got Das Neutron Bomb: Don't be surprised if while you're skiing in the Swiss Alps (you rich cunt), you hear this and other familiar tunes (1, 2, 3, 4, Let's get rid of Zurich) on one of the local stations. Someone was in town recently gathering records, pictures and interviews for some Swiss radio stations and newspapers.

Random notes: The Randoms officially broke up. But since Hector quit F-Word (was fired from F-Word —pick one), some rumors have put him in a suddenly resurrected new Randoms line-up. Let's wait and see. One last Random (rancid) note item: R. Meltzer, failed philosopher but highly successful con man, got his face (and most of the body) in that well-worn section of Crawling Stone. There was also a brief paragraph on the same old "Vom, stoopidness, bzz, bzz, bzz . . ." routine.

F-Word now once again with Steve Effete on bass. Thank you for making the Slash interview 6 weeks ahead of its time!

May Day (or International Workers' Day, as it is known in more aware parts of the world) will bring us The Dils, X, Alley Cats, Consumers, and Negative Trend at the Shiwky. Whether this fine gathering will raise the social consciousness of anyone in this land of plenty of crap remains dubious (international workers of the world, rise and pogo?).

Rubber City Rebels cancelled their live appearance at the Filmex chi-chi opening of Amos Poe's movie, "The Bank Generation." They were apparently replaced by the Zippers. No one we know was there.

Arthur J and the Gold Cups' brass section were accomplices to a bloody ritual taking place in Venice a few nights back under the rigid direction of Austrian artist and blood-spiller Hermann Nitsch . . .

Unusual level of activity for the Screamers this month with a San Diego concert, an "Artists & Lawyers Ball" at extravagant prices, a Whisky show, a performance in Camarillo and an upcoming tour taking them to Portland, Seattle, Vancouver and San Francisco: what is known as an all-out spring offensive! Now will the rest of you get off your asses and attack? . . .

Genny (of Backstage Pass) back in the spotlight to jam (that's the word, uh?) with Ian Dury on the Roxy stage for the "Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll" singalong. Ah, Broadway! . . .

The Motels are once again due to reform. Musicians contact Eddie at 876-9619 . . .

Management news: Now putting his energy where his mouth is, Phast Phreddie is officially managing the Zeros. Same Zeros out any day with new Bomp single. New bass player is 15-year-old Guy, Robert's brother . . .

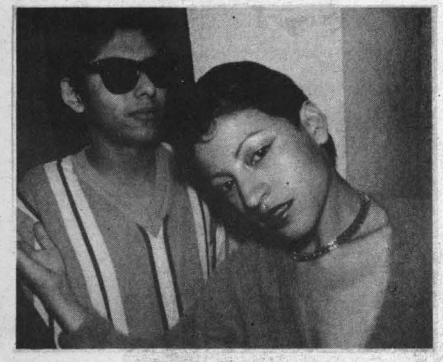
Hollywood's Burning: Ex-Londoner John Ingham now more or less in charge of the Weirdos' immediate future. A re-recording and re-issuing of growing classic "Neutron Bomb" has been announced. Record label is to remain the same . . .

X-offenders (or the high-risk world of fanzines): Generation X's Jade Zebest and friend in a cat-fight with Exene (X's chanteuse) at Lazaro's show. Hisses, slaps, scratches and punches were x-changed with no x-ceptional effects. Just another conflict of personalities.

Hollywood's Burning (again): Debbie Dub and Peter Urban's joint effort, "Startin' Fires," soon due to take up where other fanzines left off. Not just another brainless publication . . .

Punk-Jet Set News: Polydor organized a double-decker bus ride to an English pub by the beach to celebrate the Jam's one and only concert in town this season. Celebrities and nobodies mingled by the free bar, (free)loaded on fish & chips and generally behaved as if the punk "movement" and its rabidly anti-flash extravagant stance were but a vague memory of a spartan past. All lessons were forgotten, all attitudes discarded, it was back to the bad old decadence of show biz. Bruce (of the Jam) was heard muttering, "Whose bloody idea was this?" while sheepishly shaking hands of bearded heavyweight record execs by the (quaint touch) dart board and photogs snapped away, their flashbulbs popping with joy at this unexpected come-back of tinsel and glamour. How do we know all this? We were there, silly. Didn't I already mention the "free bar" part???

This section of Slash was, thanks to a recent discovery in publishing processes, ***entirely*** directly written into the typesetting machine. Ah, progress!



letters

Slash,

What an absurd bunch of cunts you are. I happened to be at the Bags at the Troubadour and at Skafish. More than likely the girl who was hysterical was the unstable person I took there. She gets ticked off at just about anything. If you knew her personally, I don't really, you would know she has about sixteen personalities. Your reviewer acts like these people who aren't punkers are to be loathed. All you have to do with them is keep a certain distance from them and watch. They are a joke, but so are you if you keep this holier-than-thou attitude.

The Skafish review was a bigger joke. The Gong Show reference was good but if you can't stand them that's no reason to put us down. Us being the "five zapped kiddos" that were freaking out. The little girl once again was my company for the night. She is getting turned off by the L.A. assholes that try kicking the shit out of somebody that doesn't fit into your boring clique of true L.A. punks. Fuck that shit, you are turning into the type of people you hate. Wise up. Also you guys are standing still in your taste of what's good, the only things you've changed are your clothes and hair.

a 9-5 record clerk

Fuck, what have we done now?? We only described what we saw in the most subjective manner possible, in the grand Slash tradition. And we're not putting down anybody who's not punk or whatever, only people who get on our nerves. And that "clique" you mention is actually 5 or 6 cliques, each one more "punk" than the other one, all of them wasting their time and energy at their silly games. You could start one yourself (all you need is 5 to 10 really bored people) and feel on top of things! As to us standing still in what's good—wrong. We just know what we like, whether it's brand new or not.

And that description wasn't much of a put-down, now, was it??

Hey Slash—

I always suspected you guys were sorely lacking a sense of humor, but it took your putdown of the Dickies' ***Sharkey*** episode to convince me. You misinterpreted one of p--k's finest moments ever (complete, stoopid exploitation of the silliest aspects of the scene by the greatest stoopid medium of all: Tee-fucking-Vee: Rickles pogoing in prime time, and bit players credited as "Punks") as a "ludicrous rip-off." Right on, Slash. As you say, "these are serious times." Uh huh. You still haven't got the Dictators' joke. Hey Slash, if you don't swing, don't ring.

Gene Sculatti
Continental City

Hey Sculatti,

If you think that was one of punk's finest moments ever you've been missing a few things, haven't you? Must lead a pretty sheltered life. I suppose the highlight of the British beat explosion was that Dave Clark Five movie, uh? So tv is stoopid, the punk scene is stupid, Slash has no humor and Gene Sculatti knows best, 'cept he don't get the joke when we write "these are serious times." Don't tell me you took THAT editorial seriously!

P.S. True, the Dictators are a joke. We laughed a bit.

Dear Slashers & Slashees,

You guys are misinformed about punk. You got this "I hate the rich" complex. Could possibly be because you're foreigners and things is different in Europe, I'm told. But just how do you think the rich got rich in America? They "took care" of business and they let nobody fuck with them and what is a punk but somebody who takes care of business and lets nobody (and I mean nobody) fuck with them. Now in Europe you got your "landed gentry" and "aristocracy" which in America we did have some hold-overs from the European money crowd but we took care of them in a little private skirmish known as the Civil War. But it can also be remembered (if blood means anything) that these "landed gentry" and "aristocrats" are all blood descendents from 10th century knights and barons who, let's face it, were definitely punks (maybe more so than anybody I've met on this planet today, except for maybe the Hells Angels or Heathens, those rowdy boys). And just what is that shit you got printed at the top of page 6 April Slash? It's intellectual garbage like

that that gives L.A. punk a bad name.

Loved the editorial although you start "people taxing" me, baby, you better give me something in return besides a lot of rhetoric.

Dagwood Jones

Oh shut up! Not only is your pseudo-historical diarrhea ludicrous, your ideas are dumb and your sympathies disgusting, but you're wrong: only a few of us are "foreigners," the rest are good, wholesome, all-American maniacs. Even more than the rich, we hate dumbshits who call social oppression "taking care of business" and an article exposing phoniness "intellectual garbage." Go back to the cave.

Kick Face

Slash,

I'd like to consider myself part of the punk movement (or however you wanna put it) but have found that bisexuality is a big part of all this. True, punk is energy, fun, revolt, etc. . . . and I support that a great deal, maybe I'm just a square, but what's with all this bisexuality business? Is this supposed to be part of punk or what? Please inform.

Straight Jackie

Yeah, we have to draw the line somewhere. Revolt is okay, but, my god, bisexuality??!! What are things coming to??!! Hey, Jackie, you didn't even tell us if you're a boy or a girl. You poor baby, of course you're not a square. Just a good old bigoted kid like millions of others. Nothing to worry about.

Open letter to Mr. Gregory S. from Brendan M.

Dear Greg:

Powerpop is all fine and dandy. It lets you have a nice shag haircut again.

"Punk rock" (that well-known, outdated misnomer) or whatever you want to call it, still happens to represent pure Caucasian soul music. It's wild rock and roll.

Powerpopping things is simply the insipid equivalent of Bee-Geeing black soul music from its most primal form, its most danceable rhythm.

"Punk rock" is an American rhythm from Detroit. There is nothing wrong with being proud of some American inventions. "Punk rock" is American before it became verve in London.

Powerpop will only serve two functions: (i) it will create a glut of lame rock and roll, (ii) it will cause an increase in the slaughter of whales.

Consider for a moment yer average whale from Eureka. Whales are musicians, too. Why should he have to die so that his death cum can be used to keep pace with the increase in the manufacture of hair conditioners to keep all those new shag cuts in place?

Should Caucasian and mammalian soul music be repressed to give record companies a simultaneous sigh of relief?

Powerpop is ***not*** the only logical progression of "punk rock" to more tonal and melodic adeptness. It's only a cop-out from a consciousness which could eventually create something different as opposed to careening around in little Bomp cycles.

Punk defies history. We should be ready and willing to usher in Powerpunk during the next few months. Powerpunk will supply rhythm to the New Music Scene when the affiliation becomes more clearly defined.

Powerpunk will assume the Law of the Retarded Lead as is the case with all Primitives because it is not necessarily dependent on the economics of the mainstream at this stage.

Sorry, Greg, a few oohs and lahs are okay, but you cannot dance to oohs and lahs that well. A few oohs and lahs hurt contemporary dance music.

America needs wild rock and roll all over again. Powerpunk will give us celebrative dance music. Wild rock and roll will always eventually be contained anyway. But while it has been given another chance to make a comeback two decades after it officially came into being, why come down on it for its limitations? Why come down on some good old simulated youth rebellion?

I was very surprised and amused to see you take all the trouble and time to piece together and chart out all those banal, second-rate, old, re-vamped Merseyside records recorded out in the Midwestern boonies just to give credence to this ludicrous Powerpop thing of Fowley's.

A bunch of old singles with a few redeeming aesthetic qualities here and there do not a case make for the ***next big thing.***

The next big thing is what queers look for in casting a sly eye at Negroes' crotches.

Powerpop is only for people who drive stick shift cars, trying to get three people in the front seat and the stick almost slips up the chick's snatch.

Powerpop will make rock and roll lame all over again in a very short period. It will increase female masturbation in lonely rooms. Whales will die. Kids will leave home and take to teenage prostitution. Teen dream will be replaced by cholesterol.

Greg, those two chords belong to ***youth.*** They belong to wild rock and roll. The spirit of wild rock and roll has not changed in two decades. Those two chords belong to the kids. They do not belong to a bunch of lonely old teenagers crawling around Capitol Records' parking lot at 3 o'clock in the bloody morning every Sunday morning . . .

"Let the kids dance . . ./it's alright . . ." . . . Bo Diddley & the Duchess . . .

Greg, let's hand over the two chords to the kids and the two of us will grow old gracefully together hand in hand . . . just the two of us . . . we'll go out driving and look at Negro crotches. We'll find the ***next big thing*** right in front of our rheumy old eyes . . .

More wild rock and roll is coming . . . To everybody who read this far . . . ***love***

Brendan

P.S. To all those who didn't read this far and to record company personnel and radio station people who have been sitting around on your lethargic behinds all these months reading Billboard, waiting to see if rock and roll will catch on but doing jackshit to help it along, I say unto you,

fuck you,
who do you think you are?

Dear Slash,

Oooh, do it to me! You're so-so-so ***dynamic!*** So ***boss,*** so ***unique!*** Why do your stupid covers all look just alike—I can hear the photographers on the assembly line now: "Okay (yawn) now look real intense—look real spontaneous—look like you're screaming a new message to the people of the world." You guys kill me—Stop now, what's that sound, everybody look what's coming down—Admit it—you're all just a bunch of silly high school cunts—and in 5-10 years, your "cover girls" will be bitching about how they were exploited—then in another 10 they'll be wanting their rightful places and former status back on the covers—Hey, who "thought" of the punk "movement" (man) anyway? Joan Baez? Jane Fonda? You fools—Oh, and what was that in Rona Barrett's "Snipes"—"Hopefully the promo & dough will outweigh the ludicrous ripoff of a script" about punks on C.P.O. Sharkey . . . Oh Slash, I hope so. I really do! Oh god, please let the people know the truth—It's so beautifully vital—it's even more important than TV itself—it's more important than the Academy awards—support Punks Lib, they're really very nice pussy types—But who was that dynamic looking hunk of man on the last cover? Oh, I wanted to know what he was singing about ***right then!*** Like society, and stuff! Could—could he be the new messiah?? Oh Slash, you're my favorite fanzine—Bbppptttttt!!!! You anal retentive repressed scumbag pussy-whipped pieces of dog doo-doo and vomit chunks.

Signed, a ***real*** man,
Jay Condom

Gosh, Jay, we're sorry. Please don't hate us. We'll try to change, we really will. We'll strive to reach your demanding standards, promise we will. If only we had known. Maybe you could advise us in the future, we'll do whatever you say. Then you can show us your big, bulging muscles and your big, he-man pee pee, you pathetic, narcissistic, youth-hating, closet fascist, lonely old fart! Jay, take your nose out of your sarcastic smug ass for a sec, I got something to whisper in your ear: DIE, BITCH!

Kick Face

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*GIMME..PAIN (ALLEYCATS)

*NEW ROSE (THE DEAD DAMNED)

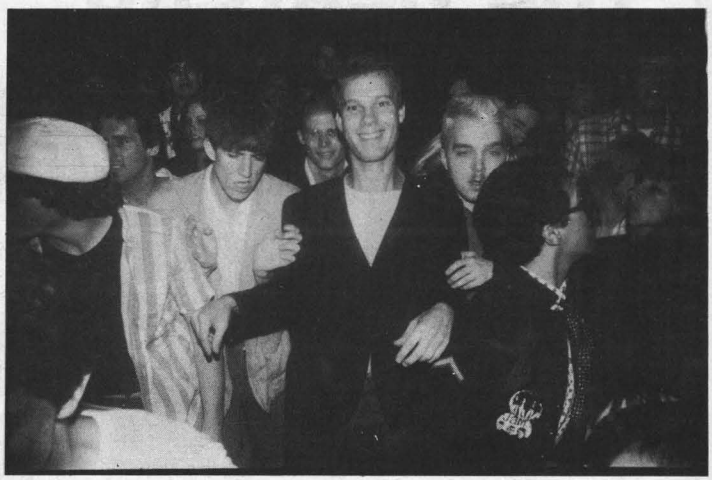
*GOLDFINGER (MAGAZINE)

modern boy modern y modern boy moder rn boy modern boy modern boy modern

. . . I was gonna die this month, just disappear . . . I musta read in at least four mags about the death of punk (and the emergence of ?) . . . Nothing ***seems*** different, but since the media created all of us, I just naturally assumed it was all over . . . (I saw it on TV, it ***must*** be true!) . . . But when I looked around (I was looking around for the next big thing) I couldn't find it . . . It's really not fair for the media to do this (I said to myself), to leave us all to our own devices (& I always thought that de vices were part of it all) . . .

So I was just sitting in front of this typewriter (a few lines ago), getting sick at the thought of a day job (probably the ***prime*** motivation behind punk), and suddenly the jeweled escapement (a red rhinestone inside the workings of a Smith-Corona) started glowing . . . I immediately discarded the thought that it might be a mystical experience (the only thing they get you is paranoid), and started typing just to get my mind off of it . . . Anyway, that's why I'm still here . . . Looking around, I see we're all still here (in fact, I see a lot of new faces), somebody musta made a mistake . . . The guy in the newsroom probably read the copy wrong (it probably was some obscure piece from England about the punk/reggae alliance, "Punk is Dread," or a political observation that "Punk is Red") . . . Well, I'd rather be red or dread or anything but dead (well, not ***anything***) . . .

I kinda feel like I've been reborn . . . Maybe this whole "death" business was a good thing . . . Maybe it'll weed out the cunts that were standing around waiting for someone to tell them what to do . . . Maybe they'll all go back to their TV deaths and sit there forever waiting for the next "thing" . . . And the rest of us can go on dreaming, while we change the world . . .



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GEN-X

GENERATION X
Billy, Tony, Derwood and Mark

Interviewed at a seedy pub in North London. Billy Idol was the most vocal.

—How's your single, "Ready, Steady, Go," selling at the moment?

—Alright. It's doing alright. That's all I know.

—When is your album due out? Is it true it's going to have one side pure dub?

—No. No dub on it at all—about the middle of March or April—it would be a mistake to do that. We might do something like that later.

—Did you see Dillinger?

—It was terrible. He looked like a banana salesman. We're mainly into rock 'n' roll. That's why it's important that our first album, right, is just the music we play on stage—rather than anything fucked around with. That's what the group's about. It ain't about reggae.

—Will your three singles be on the album?

—Only "Ready, Steady, Go."

—Did you go around to a lot of record companies or did they approach you?

—We groveled. We had a choice between taking the Jewish companies and the non-Jewish companies. Unfortunately, Stuart (their manager) is a Jew so he picked the Jewish company.

All record companies—they're the type of people all your friends laugh at; they're all a bunch of fucking idiots—the type of kids you never talk to at school. We hate 'em. A bunch of cricket and rugby players. They don't understand rock 'n' roll and their company (Chrysalis) has never been a rock 'n' roll. We're only on their label 'cos we want them to put our records out. And the record contract says we have the say in everything—we do everything except print the fucking record and put it out. They go out and sell the record. And they don't do that very well so I don't know what the fuck we're doing on it. And that's the truth. I'm being deadly serious.

—Do you get paid a retainer—a wage?

—You could call it that. It's like chewing gum money. Twenty quid. And we get that off the manager. We're totally independent of Chrysalis, that's what they hate. Record companies have tried to rule the roost for so long—they've signed all these groups up and they discover the groups are still fighting them. I'm sure all the groups have the same trouble as us. The record companies find the groups are dodgier than they thought. They thought they'd all cool out and calm down and it's not happening.

Power pop, I think, is a total creation of the media. The record people—with punk rock, right, they have to change the way they look. They've all got long hair and silly old-fashioned clothes so now they've created something that they don't have to change. It doesn't hurt them, it's un-antagonizing, it's not new, it doesn't make them feel threatened, right? They can look at it and go " '60s music!" and shake their heads like they used to when they were young and just go home and sleep tight. That's what power pop is about.

Whereas punk rock groups are coming up with new stuff, which means they have to take a whole new bunch of people—which makes them feel old. It makes people of twenty-five feel old. They hate it and now they're trying to clamp it out. And they'll probably do it because they're all so powerful.

Anyway, I don't spend my time thinking about those sort of groups. These are the sort of things I think about when I'm on the toilet. Two years ago nobody wanted to know us, right, we'll just go on because we'll always be there. We'll always be the horrible side of rock 'n' roll. That nasty side. Even tho' people think Generation X ain't a nasty group, you know, it's just the media again.

. . . I've got to say something about the States, right, this may sound very patriotic but I'm not at all. English people seem to pick up on America's eccentricities, right, like the Stooges and people like that, they're all the people who failed in the States to make it really big but in England they're quite big stars. Just as with early rock 'n' roll, right, Buddy Holly, Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent were the big bombers. In England they toured and everybody thought they were fucking kings. But in the States everybody laughed at them, thinking they were wankers. But twenty years later, America goes, "Oh, we had Eddie Cochran and Gene Vincent," but in their time they liked Bobby Rydell or somebody.

And the same thing has happened with punk rock, right, their own people are left stranded while they're digging Fleetwood Mac—which is English rubbish, I'm sorry to say. Half English rubbish, anyway. It takes English people to come back and show the Americans what should be happening in their own country. They don't understand their own music. They like things that are very safe. They loved acid-rock 'cos it never hurt nobody. All that laid back stuff. Nobody gets hurt. The English people always seemed to really like things that were a bit dodgy—all the great American rock 'n' rollers which NOW the Americans go, "Oh yeah, well, we had them," you know? When they hated them. I know for a fact. Even Buddy Holly only had one big hit, which was "Peggy Sue." Gene Vincent, they more or less kicked him out of the country. He had to come here to play. And now they worship them.

They're doing the same with the Dolls. They're saying, "Oh, if only the Dolls would come back." At least people in England do suss out what's great about rock 'n' roll. But even punk rock didn't make it really big here, so who knows?

. . . It's still harder to be a hippie here than it is to wear a suit and go and do a job, you know? Honestly. People knock the hippies too much. There's lots of people who may look a bunch of shitheads and no-nos but technically they're still trying to look different from my mum and dad. And there's loads of young people who—look at all the disco/soul, right, they all look like my mum and dad! So I've got to admire the hippies, 'cos at least they look a bit different—I'm sorry this isn't Johnny Rotten's line, right, but it's my line. It's me thinking here. I like teddy boys. I like people who are true to what they believe in. Although I do like all the new stuff. But at the same time, look who peddles the new stuff. It's the same old people. That's the trouble. It ain't new people peddling new clothes and records, it's old people peddling new records. To me, I've only worn these clothes and done this music, 'cos for me it was always what I wanted to do. This music was always MY music, I felt. These clothes were always MY clothes. Two years ago nobody else wanted to know, right, and at the minute it seems to be a big trend—which is great for me, 'cos I like it all. But I'll always be something like this, I'll always think the same, I'll always be the same person when probably others have fallen away. That's the way it always is.

I think people today look the best. That's my opinion. But it's got to come from the heart. When we do gigs up Noth, the guys in the audience—I tell you—standing in front of me when I'm jumping up and down, right, is two blokes, they've got really long hair, "Status Quo" on their backs but they're jumping around to our music. Now I don't care what they look like. What other music they like. I don't give a shit. I just like the fact that they like our music. They don't have any kind of barriers. They don't need to think, "Oh, I've got to have short hair to listen to this music," which a lot of people are saying, right? "I can't come to a gig 'cos I don't look like a punk rocker." But they weren't worried and I thought that was great. It doesn't matter what you look like. If you just like the music, that's all that's important. I look like me 'cos it was my choice.

. . . I don't think all punk rock records are good. I think most of them are rubbish. But the good ones, people should be buying them into the charts. I think there should always be choice, right? Rock 'n' roll, to me, is noisy and vibrant music that should excite people and make them feel part of something. Even if old people of fifty dug our music, right, I ain't gonna be frightened of that. 'Cos for me it was just to do music that I liked, that I believed in and whoever the people were who got into it was secondary. Obviously I love it if it was all young people—which it is at the moment—but you're making music primarily for yourself, ecause that's what you always wanted to happen.

—Generation X and Billy Idol are great names. Generation X sounds like a teenage B-movie.

—On a very serious level it's sort of saying to myself I should be my own hero. But really, at the same time, it's just that I used to get "Idle" written on my school reports, so that's partly a joke, too. We just like the sound of the group name. We saw it on the front of a book, right, and thought, what a fucking great name! Didn't care what the book was about. Found out it was all about the kids in the '60s!

—It would be great if we had a rock show on t.v. now that was as great as "Ready, Steady, Go" was back in the '60s.

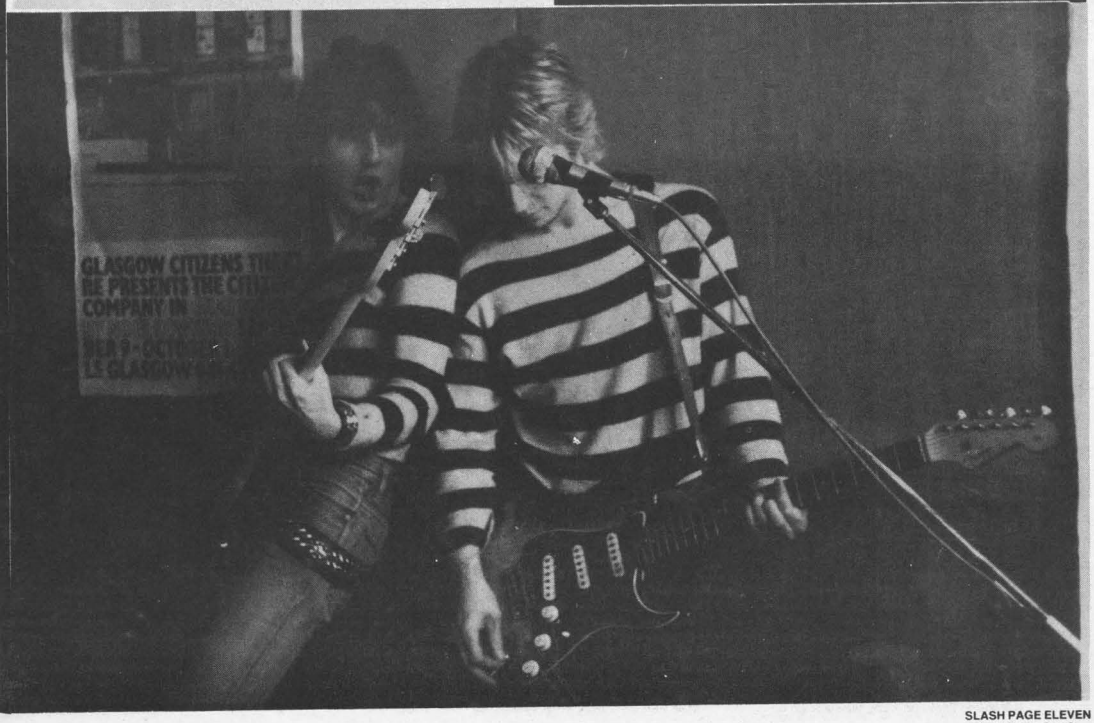
—Well, I remember when I was real young I used to watch it on Friday night. For me it was one of the first ways I ever found out about what was happening in rock 'n' roll and that. I really wish there was a program more like that. More live. I can't tell about the '60s in lots of ways because, like, for me, a lot of the '60s was when I was really young. I'd read things in papers and books and stuff which were obviously total lies and believed it all.

For me, the '60s was a bit mystical, whereas today's more real. I'm quite sure that the '60s were just the same as today, except people were slightly more naive—I don't know.

The thing about "Ready, Steady, Go" as a song, right, is that it's not particularly nostalgic but I think, for me, it was about the time I first found out about rock 'n' roll and really got to love it. So there seemed nothing wrong in singing a song which basically said you've got the same feeling as then. I still feel the same things when we play as I felt when I first heard the Beatles.

—Your song does have that same exciting feel. The Friday night feel. The weekend starts here.

—I think every day should be the weekend. So if our record makes people feel like that, that's what I always wanted. Fucking hell! That's why I'm in rock 'n' roll. I never wanted to do a job. I just wanted to get out—do something that made every day the weekend. That's what I've done. I've done jobs like that so I know what it's like. I mean, I just wanted to make people feel like part of what I was doing. Which I hope is what's happened. If people buy your record they obviously feel part of it. That's great. When I meet them I want to shake their hand and go and have a drink with them. 'Cos they're the people I really believe in. All the record company people and journalists I think can go take a walk. They've never given me anything to believe in.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MALCOLM McLAREN TALKS TO SLASH

Malcolm interview: Part 2

(Last month, Malcolm left off by communicating his desire that kids should not listen to records, but rather kick the TV, or fuck their mothers . . .)

Slash: Speaking of fucking one's mother, what happened to "Who Killed Bambi"? We've heard rumors of an incest scene.

Malcolm: Yes, there is, and I think it's the best scene . . . Well, what happened to it was Rotten couldn't get along with Russ Meyer, there was tremendous worry about the script . . . I suppose the band thought it was very trite. It was trite, but for me the wonderful thing was, you know, Russ Meyer, the epitome of American fascism & y'know, the women with the big tits . . . meets the Sex Pistols and I thought that was very funny . . . And the scene where Sid fucks his mother, in the midst of it all, was equally funny and, in a way, very moving . . . I'm very much of the opinion that England (and I only talk about England 'cos I'm not a great believer in Internationalism) is a very incestuous country and it's very much a part of its culture. I thought the greatest thing to talk about in England is fucking your mother . . . Something that would really worry a lot of people . . .

It was especially great 'cos it was written like he'd been doin' it for years, it was no big deal . . . His mother was a hippie, and she was also a heroin addict . . . She listened to Vanilla Fudge . . . I thought it was a great scene. It did upset 20th Century Fox to the extent of one investor quitting, it also worried Sid's mother (laughter).

Slash: she was afraid the truth would come out! (laughter)

Malcolm: . . . But y'know I think Sid would've gone through with it, he was pretty annoyed with it at first . . .

Slash: You mean Sid Vicious has morals!? (laughter)

Malcolm: We'd cast Marianne Faithful for the part . . . She was Mick Jagger's ex-girlfriend & a bit of a junkie, in the past anyway, and she typified that generation . . . I thought that was perfect too, the idea of the '60s meeting the '70s . . .

The rest of the film was just Russ Meyer, tits and ass with a few socially redeeming parts thrown in by me for good measure . . . So I saw the movie as a bit of an invent, and I'd have loved to have made it, and it's the one thing in my whole experience in the last few months that I regret, and it's not making that movie . . .

Slash: So the movie is not being made?

Malcolm: Not without Russ Meyer . . . It was his movie and I doubt if anyone else could make it . . . Really the movie was Russ Meyer meets the Sex Pistols.

Slash: What are your present plans and what should the world fear from McLaren in the near future?

Malcolm: Well, the idea has occurred to me to try to subvert other musical forms (if there's any point in still trying to do that) and I suppose what I mean by that is disco . . . and I do have an interest in an all-girl band called the Slits, and I am contemplating making some kind of movie that will show them as a silly rock 'n' roll band that is fucked to death and turned into a hit disco group . . .

Slash: Is it a morality tale? (laughter) Are you switching to film as a medium (rather than music) as a medium to convey your message?

Malcolm: Well, I think that it's a way to get across your ideas extremely quickly . . . in a way that will trigger as much excitement as, I hope, the Pistols did . . . I mean after all, the Pistols' music is being bought, not just for their music, but for their ideas, from what they've heard of them. I don't see why a film can't be conducive to creating a little of that, too.

That's one of my reasons for coming to Hollywood . . . I don't think it's a tremendous idea but I do think, in England, kids don't go to films 'cos films don't mean shit, films are totally boring for them and they spend all their money going to discos and dressing up and boozing. I think it would be terrific if we could have kids' movies back . . . cult movies . . . I do think you would be able to say something . . .

. . . But whether the industry, which is really heavily conservative, would let you do it, and let you cut through, I don't know . . . That's me being a bit of an old tooth, 'cos I never said that with the Sex Pistols in terms of the record companies . . . But hell, I'm ready to fight it . . . It's wonderful having these homosexuals like Robert Stigwood making "Saturday Night Fever," with that obviously gay queen, John Travolta . . . Obviously the film industry is very intrigued by rock music films, they're making a lot of money, so maybe you can get in there . . .

(Peter Urban, another punk manager, enters the room.)

Malcolm: Hi, ya want a drink, Peter? Your friends here tell me you don't drink . . .

Peter: I don't drink liquor, no . . .

Malcolm: You don't drink . . . Well, I do . . . Pass me the bottle! (laughter)

Slash: It's empty! How long do you think a pint lasts? Shall I get another?

Malcolm: I think you should, yea . . .

Slash: This one's gotta be on you, Malcolm . . . Hey, wait a minute! Listen, I see this roll of money you've got, hundreds, fifties, and all the things you advocate; telling kids to go out and destroy things, fuck their moms, and steal as much as they can from the record companies—you're sitting here with a roll and some poor kid's out and . . . He's told his employer to fuck off, he's said fuck-all to society and now he's an island . . .

Malcolm: Is he an island? It depends on the way he supports the group that he likes, if that's his trip to be in a rock 'n' roll scene . . . Obviously these kids, I hope, have got involved with these groups, 'cos these groups will give them something. Maybe the idea is for him to make sure that he can get a piece of the action from that group.

Look, when the Sex Pistols were created the one thing one was always inspired by was the fact that 300 groups were then created afterwards . . . They were all originally out of work, daft, and they all went out and got a piece of the action . . . They also, some of them, became a bit assholish too, thought they could be rock stars, and it's a bit of a drag 'cos they didn't create very interesting ideas musically, not for me anyway . . . They all made a few dollars anyway, if that's what you're getting at.

Slash: What about Sue Catwoman? . . . One of the Bromley Contingent, she supported the Pistols in the beginning, are the Pistols taking care of her now?

Malcolm: We never see her, she went into a crazy situation, I don't know what happened to her . . . She became very anti-Pistols . . . A lot of the original fans became anti. By being anti, it made them become stronger and it fostered a certain diligence amongst themselves to go out and do something . . .

You don't want fame, ultimately . . . I don't think that's a great idea, I can't tell you . . . If somebody accuses me of having the money, damn right I have the money! I'm not gonna be a cunt and not get as much money as I can doin' what I can . . . Ultimately, what I do, I'm not absolutely pleased about, y'know, I'm ultimately concerned with . . . Okay, on this rock 'n' roll manager act, to go get a record deal, and I exploit the record company in a way that I hope will preserve all the wildness I possibly can, within the group . . .

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BE THERE OR BE SQUARE

Not turn them into some bloody bunch of asshole individuals, that's all I can do . . . Also, I must lay claim, in myself, to say the swindle is what counts, don't get into the rhythm of trying to create hit singles . . . We'll create singles that people will fucking be disgusted by . . .

Slash: You're saying swindle the swindlers, but in effect, you're playing a role in swindling the kids . . .

Malcolm: Bite the hand that feeds you, my friend.

Slash: That used to be our motto! I realize that myself, but I'm saying there are lots of kids out there who aren't as smart as you or as cunning and if they adopt your philosophy . . .

Malcolm: I'm talking with the hope—and this is one of the very few interviews I've given . . .

Slash: We're gonna sell it to Playboy!

Malcolm (laughs): . . .to tell these kids, it's true, one is to a certain extent capitalistic, but only for the purpose of, look, don't dream, the record companies are only there to exploit you and they don't give a damn about you as an individual. They're not really interested in perpetuating something that you would like, in creating an environment you truthfully can run wild in. They are just there to hopefully contain you and make money from you. If you can make money from them, which you need to in the simplest, quickest possible way, do that.

Regarding the kids you want to sell the record to, the best thing you can do is say: To sell the record to you would be daft, what we're gonna do for you is show that we can at least attack the corporate situation, get out of it as much money as we can and hopefully utilize it in a way that would make your life more adventurous, and give you the idea at least, whether you take that up as a premise for your own lifestyle is up to you, I hope you do, and I feel that on the West Coast, as far as I've been here, that the bands don't have that in their minds and I think they should.

The Avengers, the Dils, you don't have to listen to them, you listen to Eddie Cochran in your room, it's the same thing, why do you want to make more? Take the whole American food thing, the size of sandwiches, what the hell, more, it's always more. I believe in being economical, in saying, look, this idea of rock 'n"roll is pretty pathetic. If we can get Donna Summer in the Whisky and you can slow her down a bit and you can fasten her up and we can get her on stage and take the piss out of her, it's just as good as seeing a punk rock group. Ultimately, you guys who come in there must create the scene and us guys that go on the stage must make sure that you guys have the last word, somehow, I don't know how.

The greatest concept would be when the kids take over that stage and knock the shit out of all the equipment and THEY are the fucking band. The rest is nonsense, the "this is the band, this is the audience, watch, kids, $5 please, the show is over, thank you very much"—it's rubbish. If you're a real punk you should think it's rubbish. But the punk that goes up to the band and says, "Gimme that fuckin' bass, GIVE IT TO ME, YOU CUNT! Pass it around!" and the manager comes up and says, "You're not the band," and he says, "Oh, yes I am. I've just become the band! I have $5 of the $150 they're getting paid" . . .

Slash: . . .and you owe me one and a half minutes of bass runs . . .?

Malcolm: Exactly.

Slash: Would you have let it happen with the Pistols?

Malcolm: Most certainly. Why would I bother to go to Brazil and have Ronald Biggs, a 55-year-old man who cannot sing and is not interested in singing, play with Steve Jones?

Slash: So what do you say to the people who did try to get close to or on the stage in San Francisco and got thrown out by Bill Graham's goons?

Malcolm: I feel ashamed, I feel ashamed of being party to that whole evening. I tried very much to get a band who wanted to play, Negative Trend, I think it was. They said, "We wanna play," and I said, "You're fuckin' right, you're fuckin' gonna play," and this cunt in charge of the stage said, "No, they can't go on, Bill Graham is professional, it's only these bands" . . . Fuck this professional crap, I said, "Find the cunt (Graham) and bring him." Eventually he came up to me and I said, "This band wants to go on, they're here, they're more important than the Pistols 'cos they're from this town, they should be taking over this shitty old joint." He said, "Okay, they can go on stage, but they'll have to go after the show." Great, they're gonna top the show! That was the whole idea. They would end it.

At the end I said, "Listen, now this band is going on," and he said, "Well, I'm sorry, but everybody's leaving, it wouldn't be any good . . ." and there's all the bullshit of all these old assholes coming on stage to clear it up, the equipment, all that crap . . . After the first two Pistols numbers, I said to my friend, "I don't wanna see the Pistols play. This is the end. The worst fuckin' experience I've ever been involved in."

The Sex Pistols were finished at that point. Jones came off the stage—he didn't go to that dopey Warner party—came up to me and said, "This show was a waste of time, man." He only needed me to say, "Yeah, I'm pissed off. Just forget it."

Slash: Who made the money?

Malcolm: We didn't get paid ever for the whole tour. Warner Bros. brought us in, paid for the hotel, organized it, hired the equipment, kept all the money.

Rory (another punk manager): Be realistic. You would never have made any money off the tour anyway.

Malcolm: . . .and you (them—Ed.) were going into clubs, little places where maybe 500 kids would go in, kept the ticket prices down to like $3, and it cost Warner more money to tour you with all their bullshit activity, their promotional fellows with the t-shirts, first class hotels, so on the bill at the end of the day there's Jojo Blog with his t-shirt factory, Charlie Brown and his press people, somebody else in charge of the film unit, the guys on the bus, the security men, they all get paid a thousand a week, and the bill is for $20,000. So they say, "This tour, McLaren, costs you $50,000, which will be taken off your royalties." That's how the tour was.

Slash: One last point: The prices being raised at the last minute in S.F.?

Malcolm: Yes. By Bill Graham, without our permission, in conspiracy, I think, with Warner Bros. . . . Playing that show was the worst move. But we never wanted to come to America, really. The idea, the very nature of coming as an international success, is a bore. Had we played only in Mississippi or Alabama, it might have been worthwhile. But it was a disaster. I would have preferred to have played just one night in Madison Square Garden, played half a song and fucked off. To say, "We don't like the arena and the sound isn't very good, we're totally disgusted with this operation and I think we're going home now. Goodbye." That would have been great. (Nasty laughter all around)

Slash: Don't you think that in spite of the compromises you made some headway in attaining your personal goals?

Malcolm: Sure, but you always suffer from not going the whole way. It could have been amazing. To get Liza Robinson to fly to Alabama and they'd be playing in some fucking tent where a hundred people could get in . . .

Slash: You're still in contact with Warner and Virgin. Are they aware of what's in your mind?

Malcolm: No, ultimately not. What I say to you is not always told to Warner. It is, in a way. The disorganization, the looseness of the operation has been spouted to Warner, but I think it falls on deaf ears. I think at first they thought it was a terrific publicity idea, now there's a growing awareness that it was a reality. So the door now has slammed in your face a little.

Slash: It was always hard to tell where reality started and ended with the Pistols.

Malcolm: That's the only way you can draw in the conglomerates and all the useless journalists to utilize and manufacture in a way that will drive your ideas home. You have to have them, the A-1 critic of the album by Rolling Stone, it works. It's kind of a contradiction of what I'm saying, and of what maybe Rotten is saying when he claims he is in rock 'n' roll to destroy the record industry—he thought it was a chirpy idea, pretty eccentric, now he kind of thinks it's a reality. Now for Warner, the dawning is coming, hummm, maybe these Sex Pistols was a bad idea to get involved in . . .

Slash: What's the legal situation?

Malcolm: We conned a quarter of a million pounds, up front, and they can't touch us. I'm sorry, Warner, but that's the name of the game.

Slash: What are you all doing with it?

Malcolm: Paul and Steve are on the beach in Rio talking to the Great Train Robber, saying, "Gee, man, we didn't do as much as you did but we did something and maybe we should do a record about it" (incredulous giggles on our part).

Slash: I believed you totally until now. Is half of what you're saying shit?

Malcolm: If you did believe that, that would help me a great deal in keeping the Warner Bros. brains from thinking the same, and not be treated as a lunatic. (What??—Ed.)

Maybe the worst aspect of me is I do appear to be a very flashy, entrepreneurial character. Just that bit too articulate, too well in tune to be real. That, in a way, is true. But I do admire the man who tried to sell the Eiffel Tower, and the Great Train Robber, and I don't admire Warner Bros., and I worked 50% for the band and 50% for myself. I never worked for record companies.

Slash: Is capitalism okay if you do it in a deceitful, hip way? Playing the hipper-than-thou? Are you saying it's fine to screw somebody who deserves to be screwed? What's the difference between a record company president screwing the kids and you screwing him? Do you care about the kids?

Malcolm: Very much. When a kid reads in a newspaper: The Sex Pistols made a few records, blah blah blah, made that much money, blah blah blah, split up and made that much . . . and the kid thinks, "What a hell of an idea!" That's more important than the rock 'n' roll significance of their music.

That isn't ultimately capitalistic. That engenders in those kids a belief that they can, if they are ever so smart, destroy a culture that has nothing to do with them. They can stop buying records. It's boring. I would prefer you to get on stage, smash whoever is in charge in the mouth, grab all his money. And then the industry will have to tell you that they ARE turning everybody into Frank Sinatras, they will realize that there IS a battle, that you don't want rock 'n' roll anymore, you had it for 25 years, that you want something else. That something else is a different social outlook on life that is gonna destroy all you cunts.

Thank fucking Christ we left in S.F., fuck this lot, let's take the money and run. I'd rather do that than lie and cheat and pretend we're some significant cultural object, telling all those punk rockers, "Keep listening to the music, man, there is a hidden meaning in there."

Slash: But 11 million people can't get up on the Whisky stage and tear down the equipment . . .

Malcolm: It's awful that they even go there in the first place. If that's all they've got to do in this shitty town, go ahead. But if they go there and admire what is basically a con then it isn't worthwhile, whether that particular band is in a small record company or a big record company doesn't make any difference. Small record companies are basically trying to be big record companies. It's all the same. Otherwise I would have signed with Shithouse Records instead of E.M.I., but I signed to E.M.I. to get the most money. If you believe there is a cultural significance in records, god help you. There isn't. Except maybe buying a BMW and a house in Beverly Hills. Then become an A&R guy. But I don't think that's what the kids want to become, I don't think they want to drive a BMW and go to the Whisky and be a proud fellow. At thirteen, I think they want to get out there and kick that particular guy in the balls 'til he hurts so much that when he gets in that bloody car he can't drive it, and they'll have to kick the car into the curb and piss and shit all over it. That's what I would like.

Slash: What were your goals when you were thirteen?

Malcolm: I used to go to the West End to the pubs. I had to be home at 9:30, and I came back at 10:00 and was told off for it. I listened to the jukebox and loved a couple of records—"Blue Moon" by the Marcells—I loved being around older people who were being smart and flirty and cool.

Slash: So why do you think 13-year-olds now are different from that?

Malcolm: Because they're a lot more fuckin' intelligent. If they've got to repeat what I've done, where are we going, for Christ's sake??!! Let's not repeat the bullshit life I led. Hopefully, we've learned a little. The kids have watched TV for whatever it was worth, saw something on the news that hopefully changed their lives, heard something in the corridor while they were pissing, hopefully got some clue that it wasn't fantastic . . .

Slash: I still think you're kind of dictating what to do to these kids.

Malcolm: Maybe. I kind of think my dictatorship is better.

Slash: You went to the Masque benefit. What were your impressions of what you saw of the local scene?

Malcolm: No danger, no real danger, no concern with being dangerous, no threat to anything. And too much involved in being interesting. But there is a general inquisitiveness, in the sense that they believe that might be wrong. But there isn't enough input from people to demonstrate that it is wrong. And your magazine, and Search and Destroy, and the others, don't necessarily bring out that kind of thinking.

Slash: Is punk dying in England?

Malcolm: Who is saying these things? The industry. They would appreciate that: it's awfully dirty, destructive, nobody wants to look like roll 'n' roll stars, and how can you make stars of people who travel on buses? So let's change this. Thank god for power pop, that's an idea. Let's get kids trying to imitate the Monkees, incorporate some of the ideas of punk, a few social redeeming qualities in the lyrics, and sell it to the kids, saying, "Extra strong melodies, acceptable on television, sells records." Make everything cool again, like before all these fucking Sex Pistols and all this shit came

about. That's what power pop is about, those are the people saying punk is dead.

Punk is an attitude which cannot die. It can lie dormant for a while. I don't think the ideas are cutting across enough in England at the moment.

There is a wonderful group called Sham 69, tremendously aggressive, they have an extremely violent following, which are more football supporters than skinheads, and the poor band is caught between two stores: do we tell them not to smash things up or do we tell them to hurry up, smash me up, and everything else? Now they're saying: enjoy yourselves, don't smash things up. That's Jimmy Pursey's problem. I hope he gets over it. His management may suck, that's why. I'd tell him to smash everything as fast as they can, but their management probably intends to make them successful, to cool out, to become a diligent group rather than an awfully lazy group.

And they've been signed in this country by this awful queen called Seymour Stein who boxed Dee Dee Ramone in the ass now and again. It's a very incestuous record company, there's Linda Stein, the whole organization. They molest young children, they're probably the most evil record company in America. When I read Seymour Stein had actually connived to sign Sham 69 I couldn't believe it. I thought, what happened there? That's sad. But I hope Jimmy is gonna punch the man in the face when he tries to butt HIM up the ass.

That's why they're into punk rock, to find the little boys who they can fuck the shit out of and then exploit them after. He is a loathsome creature. But perhaps he demonstrates in the end what all these record companies are about anyway. They're all fairly homosexual. Why do you think Elton John and Rod Stewart are the biggest stars?? That and the mafia . . .

Slash: How many times did YOU have to bend over?

Malcolm: I haven't. I was always wondering whether I would get concrete overshoes. I know they (Warner?) are associated with the Mafia, on the clean side . . .

But back to England. I haven't been there in a month and things are changing rather radically, from a press point of view. They are killing the Clash off, but the Clash deserves it, they've gotten into Beatles harmonies and that awful guitarist, Mick Jones, who considers himself a pop star. I think they decided to become conciliatory to CBS, who hates them. So they did "Clash City Rockers." What a stupid title! And it got absolutely slagged by the British press. That's the way the cookie crumbles.

But they always tended to be too much on the lecture side. When it came to real action, they weren't to be found. I do think Joe Strummer makes a pretty good effort, but I don't think he is backed up. The bass player is living with some old-fashioned ex-fuckin'-nymphomaniac (Caroline Coon), she's fucked everybody in London including Steve Jones. She loves to make him the nice bass player, sit him at Xmas and buy him a little train set, suck his cock. Anyway, she thinks she's reformed and maybe she'll get married to the Clash. But I must say she did write the first terrific article on the Pistols, which really lifted the Sex Pistols off. She wrote it aided by John Ingham. It was terrific.

The kids on the street there still have a strong critique. Otherwise the Rich Kids would be in the Top Ten, but they've faded out to 25, then down. So they're not happening and the record companies are sponsoring them like shit and all the Supersonic type magazines are sponsoring them like shit, pushing power pop, but WHO THE FUCK IS BUYING IT? So you know the kid on the street is not a cunt, he knows when he's being had, he's not going to take this powerpop crap, this diluted form of what he saw last year, which is ultimately banal, uninteresting. Before going to Rio I saw the Rich Kids at the 100 club. There wasn't a punk rocker in the audience. It was a boring, mundane audience.

Slash: And what do you think of reggae and of Rotten becoming a reggae artist?

Malcolm: I think they should take over Jamaica instead of fucking off on ganja weed and being dopey with rastafarian dialogue, haile Selassie, funny hats, and all that nonsense.

People in England get hip to reggae 'cos the beat is good and they dig the revolutionary lyrics. It's okay, but it bores me, 'cos so what? And if you're gonna tell me white people can sing as a Jamaican reggae singer, they couldn't even be in the same category! They don't have the same feel, they don't live the same life. They wouldn't even get near it.

If Rotten decides to do that I think he will suck like shit. It's an awful idea, but wonderful for the record company. They sponsored his Jamaican trip to get involved with reggae musicians, they sponsored the idea of him recording there. I know he did record "Submission" and another track, but he told my lawyer he rubbed his voice off the soundtrack'cos he didn't think it was very good. I don't know whether that's true or not. I am ashamed of him going to Jamaica, being there, sitting under a parasol in the Sheraton Hotel with all these horrible, fascist hippies, waiting for every dumbo Jamaican to come up with a little cassette to sign up, and Rotten saying maybe it's a good tape, maybe it's a bad tape, frightened to get sunburned . . . It's pretty disgusting. If he didn't want to be with Ronnie Biggs he should have started something else, like be a great hairdresser. Battle with TeeZee WeeZee or Vidal Sassoon!

Slash: Why don't YOU become a hairdresser?

Malcolm: Well, I don't have the persona that Rotten has, or the hairstyle.

Slash: Speaking of fashion, how's Seditionaries doing?

Rory: They're getting divorced!

Malcolm: Yeah, my girlfriend is getting crazy 'cos I'm out in the sticks all the time. But I think we're gonna move into Pall Mall, a very gentlemanly street where the only things there are all these homosexual clubs, and have a nice facade where we can sell a few college ties and a few t-shirts with R.A.C. on it, and then behind it do something that will get us out of that awful King's Road chic. If we're gonna continue to make clothing, which is a very tiresome business, except when you make a statement on a shirt like this idea I had of a new t-shirt with this picture everybody uses of Marilyn Monroe and the word "piss" over it, there's the kind of thing I'm into. And a few "Fuck Your Mother" t-shirts . . .

(Then the disjointed talk switches back to San Francisco, Negative Trend, and . . .)

Malcolm: . . . it's such a stupid place, that Mabuhays. It's awful. You should get some people on the inside who act as electricians and confuse the lights when the whole thing becomes dull.

But let's have a real question. LET'S GET DIRTY.

Slash: What the fuck you're feeling guilty about?

Malcolm: I don't feel guilty. I'd like to hear a real question. What do all these kids that read your magazine want to know from me?

Slash: Okay. Now that they have punk rock, it is theirs, what should they do with it?

Malcolm: It's up to them, but . . .

Slash: Hold it. First let's have $100 from your pocket, then you can say what you fucking like.

Malcolm (totally unfazed): Well, I don't know if I've got it but I don't mind. (Pulls out a $100 bill and hands it over . . . there are more.)

Rory: Don't give them $100, Malcolm, I want the fucking hundred!

Slash: Yea, that's a two-weeks pay for Rory.

Rory: They're fucking conning you, you cunt!

Malcolm: I think they should con me.

Slash: You con the record companies, but to us YOU are the powers that be.

Rory: Malcolm, I thought you were a smart cat.

Malcolm: They SHOULD have $100.

(General melee over the greenback)

Malcolm: Maybe I'll burn it.

Slash: Well, let's drink it then.

Malcolm: Yea, the vodka is out. Such an argument about money, it's incredible.

Slash: It will help to pay for our printing. You can afford it, can't you?

Malcolm: Of course. And you should have it. My contribution to Slash.

Rory: Don't you realize that's how they do all their interviews, that's how they run their paper?

Malcolm: What a great idea!

(Then Malcolm starts searching for a book he wants to show Peter)

Malcolm: Where's the fucking book? It's called "Leaving the 20th Century." My friend Jamie, who worked with me for the Pistols, got it printed. We published it.

Peter: It's just a little more than a 20th century interpretation of Marxist essays on alienated labor.

Malcolm: It's a little of that. But it is very, very strong. The good thing about it was all those slogans you can take up without being party to a movement. Being in a movement often stifles creative thinking and certainly, from the point of view of a young kid, the ability to announce yourself without. That's the greatest thing about situationist thinking, the fact that it allows you to do that. There is a certain aggression and arrogance in there that's exciting . . .

(Next month, more about situationism, swastikas, Karl Marx, social classes, Woodstock, hatred, the New York Dolls' last moments, sex, and Malcolm's last meeting with his mother.)

We have uncovered a small cache of back issues (1 thru 9) and they are available for $1 each to the address on page three . . .

'photos: david williams

deadb

The Deadbeats are: Scott Guerin, vocals, writer, percussive sculptor; Shaun Guerin, drums, percussion, long hair; Geza X, guitar, X-sanity, bean farts; Pasquale Amodeo II ('Omo Deo), bass, working, getting married; Pat Delaney, alto sax, director of tone, teddy bear; Kathy, make-up and wardrobe.

The Deadbeats were conceived early in 1977 as the Whores and eventually mutated into the Deadbeats. Their music is polyrhythmic, high percussive and entertains humorous flirtations with the Bizarre and the Avant-Garde. The line-up boasts the two-child wonder Guerins, Scott and Shaun, progeny of famed Johnny Guerin, famed jazz drummer. Shaun is the 15-year-old wunderkind of the drums and is indisputably the fastest, most musically accomplished drummer anywhere on the L.A. new music scene. Pa Guerin, you see, thrust sticks in their tiny hands since they were old enough to raise their arms in the air. The young Shaun is ***frighteningly*** good. Some theatrical costumes are thrown in to illustrate some songs and Pat Delaney is really Boots Randolph. Geza X. is the inventor of "X" power chording. 'Omo Deo cements the "X" chords to the speed drums with bass. The result has been called a variety of misnomers ranging from "progressive power punk" to "punk jazz." It fascinates some people, baffles others . . .

The interview took place at the Masque with the interviewer running around desperately trying to keep up with the band. It is impossible to keep all the Deadbeats in one place at any given time except when they perform. The reader should read everything in an exaggerated tone of voice . . .

Slash: Why are you currently the most loved, most hated band in L.A.?

Scott: The Deadbeat lovers have good rhythm, the Deadbeat haters have bad rhythm, furthermore they have bad bowels, no sense of the absurd whatsoever, even more sadly they have no feeling for adventure. They are ***tone deaf!!*** Help them, somebody, ***please!!***

Delaney: I think the haters' problem is a dietary one . . . the bowels, you know . . . I think bad diet is the root of their problem.

Geza X: Absolutely! You see, what we do takes a little bit longer to digest than other bands . . . certainly haters with constipation only bring it down on themselves . . . if they maintain a bad diet and a bad sense of rhythm and tone they ***are not*** helping themselves . . . bad shitting habits can be a problem, it's true . . .

Scott: Also . . . we are quite definitely not ***other*** bands . . .

Slash: Okay . . . let's move on. Where did Deadbeat music come from?

'Omo Deo: It came from our amps . . .

Shaun (interrupts . . . in between crushing beer cans with his foot all over the floor of the Masque office): Deadbeat music came from deep down in the heart of Burbank . . . our music is a contemporary interpretation of tradition . . . that tradition is known to all in their hearts as the ***Burbank Rhumba.***

Scott: The Burbank Rhumba is one of our rhythms.

Slash: What is Deadbeat philosophy?

Geza X: To beat to death, to be good on our instruments, to improve the excretory habits of all mankind and . . .

Shaun (interrupts . . . again throwing beer cans at the interviewer): . . . to promote the Burbank Rhumba for all the world . . . to see it . . . to hear it . . . to feel and enjoy . . .

Delaney: To help expunge hippieness from American consciousness . . .

Scott: To have complacent hippieness removed from American airwaves is really what he means . . .

'Omo Deo: . . . to promote the idea of entering the Void and actually ***enjoying*** it in there, perhaps even wanting to live in there.

Slash: What is the Void?

Scott: The Void is . . . um . . . let me see . . . The Void is The Masque . . . the Void is peril, it's a black hole . . . the Masque . . . it is the Abyss for crashed existentialists . . . it's on a train ride to anywhere . . . really it's a train crash . . .

Geza X (chimes in): It's the casualty wing for followers of the Parisian existential-agnostic ethos who collide with their exterior . . . I think they call these people situationists nowadays . . .

Interview by B. S

dbeats

view by B. Sullen

Slash: Jeez, heavy stuff . . . where do you get these wacky ideas . . . could it be that the Void is really yer Freudian Womb or something like that?
Scott: Sure . . . it's eternal . . . it is damned . . . it's one way . . . It is ***deadbeat.***
Slash: Why are you now the new darlings of Dangerhouse?

'Omo Deo: 'Cos our name begins with a "d" . . . so does Delaney's and he's a little darling, too . . .
Slash: We understand Dangerhouse has plans to do a whole album with the Deadbeats . . .
Scott: Dangerhouse is about to release our first single . . . "Kill the Hippies." We have recorded enough stuff for an album which they have said will come out after the single.

Dangerhouse understands and appreciates us because we're trying to do something new . . . as much as we understand and appreciate them for what they are trying to do . . . something ***new*** . . . it's a mutual feeling.

Slash: But why kill hippies . . . isn't there more than a little hippie damage over at Dangerhouse?
Delaney (in exaggerated tone): Well, at least they're clean shaven . . . I think they bathe quite often, too, maybe once a day or something like that . . .
Geza X: Yes, it's true . . . I've seen them grooming in the bathroom . . . they comb their hair nice and neatly . . . all in all, they're pretty couth youth . . . y'know what I mean?
Delaney: Long hair on the male specimen is a societal and psychic depressant.
Slash: Yes, they're all sweet clean boys at Dangerhouse . . . Geza X, please explain once and for all the Butt-Pliers syndrome for all to hear . . .
Geza X: The Butt-Pliers represent an ancient religious truth. In fact, they recur throughout history. Since the Dawn of Man, the Butt-Pliers have been feared, despised, misunderstood . . .
Slash: Jeez . . . this is getting ridiculous . . . Geza X, are you in fact saying the Butt-Pliers are a hemorrhoidal remedy of some sort?
Geza X: The Butt-Pliers are in fact used for emergency cases of terminal constipation and severe blockages of the colon . . .
Delaney: . . . brought about by bad ears and bad listening habits . . . bad radio . . .
Slash: Disgusting! In other words, the Butt-Pliers represent the only other cathartic alternative to Deadbeat Music?
Geza X: Correct . . .
Slash: Let's wing back to the music . . . drums obviously feature a lot in Deadbeat music . . . (long discussion ensues on drums, drums, drums and drums). Shaun, why do you play the drums?
Shaun: It gives me something to do during the day . . . I honestly haven't been able to find anything better to do . . .
Slash: Scott, why did you used to play the drums?
Scott: Because I wasn't singing for the Deadbeats.
Slash: Always the wise guys . . . Without drums would there be any Deadbeats?
Scott: Possibly not . . . I rely on drum phrasing vocally as well as in writing music . . . I rely on rhythm more than melody . . .
Slash: Would this have something to do with Pa Guerin, your famous jazz drumming pater?
Shaun: Maybe . . .
Slash: What does Johnny Guerin think of the Deadbeats?
Scott: He's afraid to come and see us . . . he's never even seen us.
Slash: But without him there would there have been any drum-crazy Guerinettes? No Deadbeats at all?
Scott: The Deadbeats would have just happened another way . . . without him fertilizing the egg cell in my mother, baby Shaun would not have been given to us, we would have had to have found another drummer . . .
Slash: Do you think the Deadbeats could exist in any other context other than the (cringe, cringe, wait for it) "punk rock" context?
Scott: Actually, we're really only a mixed media vaudeville troupe, we're a traveling Dada medicine show . . . very possibly we could exist in many other contexts, except that the New Wave movement has given us momentum, drive and direction . . . we love its celebrativeness.
Slash: What do you think punk celebrates?
Scott: Eternal youth . . .?

PLUGZ

PLUGZ

"SURRADOS CAPITALISTAS, MAS BIEN FASCISTAS, YO NO SOY FASCISTA, SOY ANARCHISTA!"
PLUGZ TALK

(Plugz are Tito, who sings, plays guitar and writes the songs; Barry, who plays bass; and Tuco, who plays drums and was not present. Also part of Plugz at the time of the interview was Jo Nanini, who also plays drums [on the coming Plugz single] but does not do interviews. Jo is the original Bags drummer.)

Slash: The obvious question first. How long can you go on sharing two band members with another local band? (The Flesh Eaters. Both Tito and Jo are part of the Flesh Eaters. Now Tito is the only one still commuting from band to band. —Ed.)

Tito: In the Plugz (either Plugz or the Plugz seem accepted. —Ed.) (shut up, Ed. —The rest.) I write my songs and I sing. It's my band. In the Flesh Eaters, Chris does that. Whichever end takes on first, we'll wing into that. The two bands started at the same time. Then the Flesh Eaters took our Mexican drummer, Tuco—he is from Tijuana, he used to play in strip joints there—then we borrowed Jo, the Flesh Eaters' drummer.

Barry: It's nice to have a community that allows musicians to go from band to band, like K.K. or Nicky Beat do.

Slash: Are you staying permanently as a trio now?

Tito: Yes.

Slash: Does it make any difference?

Barry: It didn't with Frank!

Tito: Even hearing the tapes we did when we were four and comparing to the new ones, there is no difference.

Barry: I'd play guitar if we had another bass player. I only started the bass with the band. Or if we had a keyboard player that could play the bass lines . . .

Slash: The first time I noticed you was at the Masque benefit. What other places have you played?

Tito: We played at the Masque 3 times, then Barry set up that Troubadour gig with the Bags, and right after, we did 2 nights at the Whisky with the Mechanics. It rained both nights! We also played Kahuna's with X and Black Randy. We haven't really played that much.

Slash: What are your roots? I mean, musically?

Barry: Country blues. I'm from Texas. I was raised in the suburbs of Dallas.

Tito: I'm Mexican. For a long time I was a singer in a wedding band, and I'd sing all those songs . . . (hums a Mexican wedding song). I still have to report as an alien every year. When I was nine, I played classical violin in the school symphony orchestra. I played that for 6 years. Then I sang in a choir for 4 years.

Slash: Shit, how old are you?

Tito: I'm 23.

Barry: 27.

Slash: Has age anything to do with the new music?

Barry: It shouldn't but it does.

Tito: In a song we're recording tonight there's a line that goes, "I think you're old but you're only 21 . . ."

Slash: Is the tape you're doing tonight going to Dangerhouse?

Tito: Maybe. We're doing the single either way. It's three songs: "Cut the Chord," "Mindless Contentment" and "Move."

Slash: How long will it take you to record them?

Tito: We already did 4 hours and we're finishing tonight.

Slash: You mentioned something about an album.

Tito: Once the single is released we're another single and an album in the same studio. We're doing the master and, depending how the single goes, we'll see who's interested.

Slash: An album costs a lot . . .

Tito: Jan, our manager, is financing it himself to an extent. (Later, Jan told us that if you cut corners, you can do the basic master for $2000.)

Slash: Any Mexican songs on it?

Tito: One is, which I sing in Spanish and he sings in English at the same time.

Slash: What were those lyrics (in Spanish) you added to your version of "La Bamba" at the benefit?

Tito: I do the regular two verses then I say, "Surrados capitalistas, mas bien fascistas, yo no soy fascista, soy anarchista." It means, "Shit face capitalists, better known as fascist, I am not a fascist, I am an anarchist."

Slash: You should release it in Mexico!

Tito: I have some friends there in the record business and I really want to get it out. I want to write lots of songs in Spanish.

Barry: Another important tune on the album will be "Wordless."

Tito: We just move our mouths and don't say anything. Silence.

Slash: When you did that song I thought something had gone wrong with the mikes.

Tito: Perfect!

Slash: Tito, have you ever recorded before, like when you were in Mexico doing other types of music?

Tito: Just in commercials. Radio commercials. I did an Osso Negro vodka one (sings: ". . . vodka Ossa negro, es vodka con classe . . .") and a hamburger commercial (sings a Burger Boy commercial complete with Mexican accent: "Boorger boy . . .") . . . I wasn't in the union so we had to do it at three in the morning . . .

Slash: Is your family still there?

Tito: No, they live in Texas. In El Paso.

Slash: How did you come up with your name?

Tito: Frank, our old guitar player, mentioned something one day about plugs on the radio. I thought it would be a good name but he hated it. Then he found out it also meant "tampon" in slang. Then we had another argument about the "z" . . .

Slash: Are you part of the "anti" faction of the scene or the "let's get a big record deal" faction?

Tito: I don't think a big record deal has to mean selling out . . .

Slash: Well, would you do changes in songs, personnel or whatever if it was the way to get a contract?

Tito: No. I would never change anything.

Barry: It might take us two years, but . . .

Slash: With your background, why are you in a punk band?

Tito: I was into all that bullshit, the timing, the perfection. Then one night I walked into the Masque and saw the Bags for the first time. I was in shock. I thought, "What's happening to this world?" I was so tied up in this artistic trip, you see. I went back again and the more I went back the more I realized a lot I knew was bullshit, all that being tight on stage . . . Now I just do it, I don't think about it. Before, I would never have let myself play guitar the way I do now. I used to really practice lead guitar, listen to records, copy . . . I've sold all of them!

When we were in the studio the first time, some friends of Jan were there, we said, "Now we'll overdub the lead parts"—they're about a second long—and Hal said, "That's a lead??!!"

Our music now is all emotion. Joe is a little tighter than the others, but it was as valid with them.

Slash: How do you write the songs?

Tito: I wait 'til everything is quiet, around 2 in the morning. Janet helps on some of the lyrics. Then I take it to barry and we totally rearrange it. (Janet is Tito's girlfriend.)

Slash: What's going to happen here, music-wise? The scene?

Barry: There's going to be more and more variety. Finally, West Coast bands are going to quit ripping off the British bands, they'll have a sound that appeals to West Coast audiences. But what worries me, as far as the scene goes, is, is the new wave going to be another fuckin' hippie movement or is it going to have a different attitude?

(Wish I knew, pal. Anyway, a few days later we heard the tape of the 3 songs Plugz finished recording that evening. ***It is hot.*** It is also very good, and all that. There should be a single out soon, don't know what label yet, but it must come out. This is a good band. Now go fuck yourselves.)

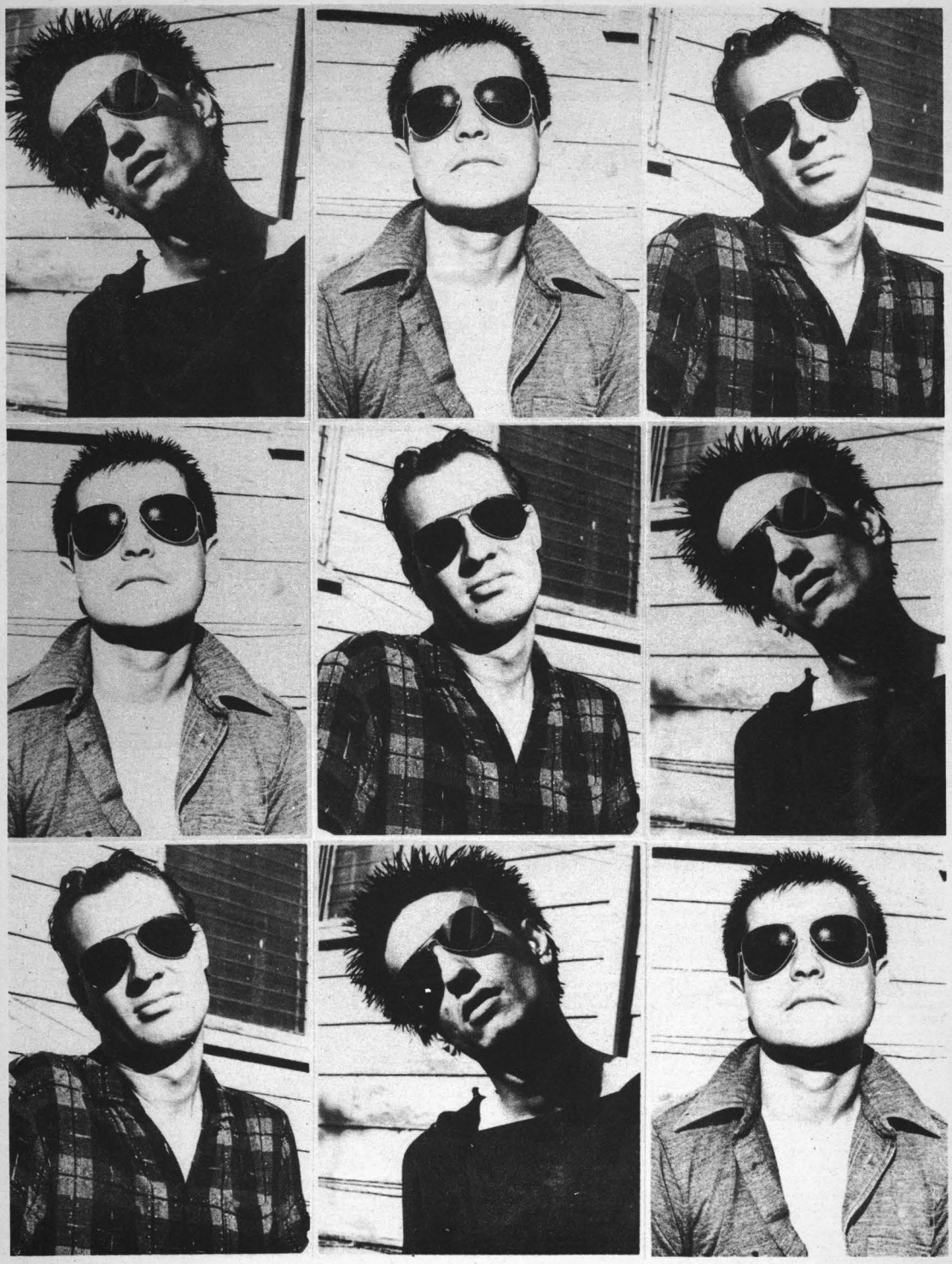


photo: michael embry

LIVE

ROADRUNNERS, PENETRATORS, PEER GROUP
at Sea Colony, March 24

A benefit for Substitute, San Diego's first contribution to the swelling ranks of the punk/new wave/no wave fanzine, held at a strange place with two virgin bands, one regrouping, and a lot to look forward to. Sea Colony is not a club or a hall but an apartment complex clubhouse with all the predictable hassles all too present—the affair was shut down once, only to bounce right back up with renewed energy (a very good sign). Many bored high-schoolers on a Friday nite out, several displays of rather tame punk attire, as well as a more fashion-conscious pair who caused a friend to wonder "what punk magazines have *they* been reading?"

Peer Group did three very long versions of three very famous '60s songs, their purpose seemingly to test the limits of the audience's tolerance (they didn't quite exceed them). The Penetrators offered some promise of modernity, covering "Pretty Vacant" and slipping some not immediately recognizable tunes (originals?) into their mostly dated set. But then the Roadrunners (a restructured Hitmakers) retreated to the safety of British Invasion '64, though they did so very impressively. If the Roadrunners keep progressng (if that's the word for it) in that direction, who knows—they could be the next Rutles.

I have a theory about all this . . . despite its proximity to (and influence from) L.A., San Diego's music "scene" somehow seems to maintain a sheltered existence, with its more worldly-aware elements moving north at first opportunity. (Latest case in point: the Dils. Exception to the rule: the Zeros.) Right now the energy is here, the talent is here, the fans are here —it's just that the music is a decade behind the times. That'll change, though —I only hope it doesn't take ten years to catch up.

SCREAMERS, POP!, ZIPPERS, GARY & THE BLIND DATES
at Straita Head Sound, La Mesa, March 25, 7-11 p.m.

They don't make 'em punch a clock in San Diego, but you know something's not quite right when the bands have to check their watches after every other song. They had to squeeze four bands into four hours for some reason, so I guess that's why. They could easily have skipped the first band (almost did, too), the totally pointless Gary & the Blind Dates. Where would you go if you got stuck on a blind date with Gary? Probably to a Frank Zappa or Tubes concert, because his group is a blatant imitation of them—on a much cheaper scale of course (only one video monitor—black & white).

I liked the Zippers, but then I have a certain admiration for people who can come up with well-crafted and energetically-performed pop (power or otherwise), and I also have a weakness for female bass players who can sing a Spector girl-group song with even less emotion than the original.

The Pop! are at least party misnamed. (Hint: it's not the "Pop" part.)

The Screamers you knew about already and now I do, too. They opened their set by proclaiming, "We'd like to thank the first groups for playing you music from the 1960s and 1970s, now we'll give you music of the 1980s," and they backed it up, with the singer playing adolescent Iggy to the keyboard player's Bowie. The Screamers didn't make the 11:00 "curfew" so they got the plug pulled on 'em, but they kept playing anyway. San Diego liked the Screamers a lot.

Mikel Toombs

CELEBRATING ONE YEAR OF WEIRDNESS: THE WEIRDOS at the Whisky

On the first night, The Last opened the show. On the last night, Black Randy and his sophisticated Metro Squad replaced them. The Bags played the three nights. I missed the Black Randy Harlem road show (complete with black-faced Master K.K. on African beat), being at the time on my way back from a cosmic experience in the Yucca Valley desert. I gathered from various sources that the Black Randy Roots special was also a cosmic experience of sorts that night. Many saw the light. The few who didn't went around muttering about blatant racism and stuff. It is nonsense, of course, as everyone knows Natty Randy is totally prejudiced against everyone, himself included. The only exception being the Flipside staff, for whom he has a strange affection.

The Last played to a dozen people or so (punx these days being fashionably, stupidly late at every concert, just like all the other Saturday night swingers all over town), and in spite of the no-feedback no-attention situation, they played an interesting, different set. I'd like to see more, for it was impossible to really judge what the band was worth under such adverse conditions.

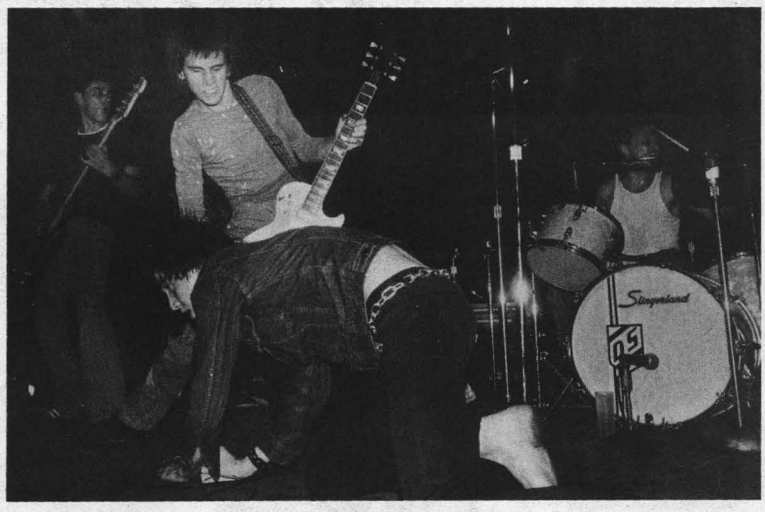
The Bags played furiously and hilariously their own brand of absurdist punk, and confirmed my growing suspicions that they just might become the American version of X-Ray Spex by doing "I'm a cliche" as an encore. Funny they should feel the same! See other live reviews in this issue for more raving reports on this band. They are certainly playing an awful lot of shows now and quickly making themselves indispensable.

The Weirdos' sets on Thursday and Saturday were superb, full of unique Weirdo delicacies (one great new song—"Happy people"—could become a major hit, were things different than they are, but of course they ain't, it's still the same shit, the same drag, the same prejudices, the same ugly farts, the same complacent punx, the same moron-oriented radio stations, the same death of punk wishful predictions, the same goddam, conforming, blindfolded, pathetic little lives, be they surfers, punx, mexicans, hoods, discotees, I don't know why the Weirdos bother to create new songs, they must know more than I do). End of the barking.

I liked the Weirdos and their wall of noise, I liked what they have to say about life and living. Dix Denney has taken to laying down with his guitar for part of the set, which might have something to do with whatever he ingested that evening or might be a symbolic gesture. During the encore, John Denney displayed the latest in space punk headgear, proving himself to be not only a hell of a shouter but quite a fashion designer. And if it does not catch on, don't worry, John, there's bound to be a planet somewhere where your style of dressing is a must. If the Weirdos are art school punk I'm enrolling in school tomorrow. It must be fun going to classes with the likes of Nicky Beat!

One last thought: Let's get this Weirdo album out now, preserve all these great tunes for the future so that the Weirdos can get on with the business of creating more crazy tunes for these lame times. Highest bidder??? (No, not you over there. You have a reputation for grabbing punk bands and hyping them as "just good old rock 'n' roll," and not you here with the fat cigar and the gold earring, you have been known to privately deny any liking of your more offbeat acts). Anyone else??

FEAR, F-WORD, (DEADBEATS and SKULLS) at the LARCHMONT (Scotch a Go Go!)



Initially the show looked like the flop of the year, everyone being home glued to the tv watching the Dickies and others on the Don Rickles thing. Newcomers Fear went on nevertheless, they played okay with a rare lack of bullshit, some liked them, others decided to wait before making any judgment. Although the scene needs new bands and new directions it has become very hard for an unknown group to grab everyone's interest, there is jadedness and indifference in the air; what was fun 6 months ago is now boring, let's watch oursevles on tv and read what Penthouse or Chic has to say about us, my hair is more orange than yours, how gauche, she's still wearing a Pistols button . . . indeed a great atmosphere for new bands to start.

After an average wait (lengthwise and posing wise), everyone's fave sullen boys, F-Word, came and took over. After weeks of uncertainty with their line-up, F-Word have apparently settled down. Hector Penalose (ex-Zero) is on bass, Dutch Schultz on drums, Dim Wanker on guitar and Rick on vocals. A winning combination, and the crowd went zonko within minutes. It wasn't even pogo anymore, it was group writhing. The stage at the Larchmont being as low as it is, the demarcation line between band and spectators was a blur. Somewhere among the dancers there was a band, but you couldn't be sure. It was perfect, it made life worthwhile.

By the end of F-Word's set the hall had somewhat filled up and the temperature had noticeably risen. In these days of California Jam and other death ceremonies there are still moments of true excitement to be found if you look hard enough.

While waiting for the Masque or its next reincarnation to reopen you could do worse than going to these badly advertised, oddly located alternative shows. For unexplainable reasons I didn't catch the Deadbeats and the Skulls. Those who did, felt sorry for me. I feel sorry for the phonies who only show up at the "big" media-covered events and ignore the less fashionable evenings. I feel sorry for a lot of you.

HERMANN NITSCH ORGIES MYSTERIES THEATRE

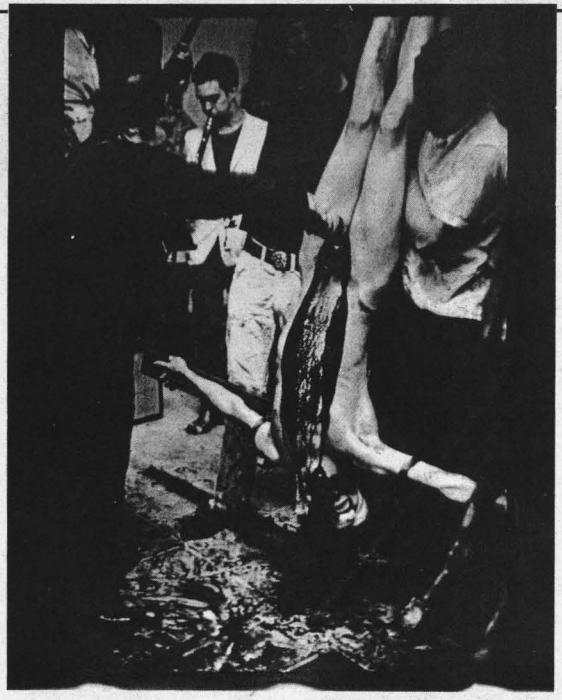


photo: colonna

I paid two bucks, walked in and was greeted to the tune of 15 or 20 noise-makers, some punks and other serious people with horns (trumpets and saxes), whistles, drums, cymbals. They played as if it was the first time they had ever laid hand or lip on their respective instruments.

In the middle of the room was a "whole" lamb, minus guts and hide, hanging upside down from two ropes attached to the rafters, one to each hind leg. Scattered around were piles of lamb guts, buckets of blood, a large metal tub of water, a steel and wooden cross and various minor props. On the back wall under a sheet was another lamb crucified to another cross.

Facing the noise-makers and halfway between the lambs stood the eccentric conductor/director, Hermann Nitsch. Herr Hermann was dressed totally in black and wore a rubber glove on his left hand (he used his left hand only to hold the police whistle which dangled from his neck and with which he occasionally directed his assistants). He is short, fat, knock-kneed, pasty and cuts his hair like all dictators.

Herr Hermann will be our guide through a trip aimed at boggling our minds by way of the primitive connection, a fantasy of blood and guts; simulated animal and human sacrifice drawing us closer to our primordial beginnings in some dark cave (preferably in Germany) where there is no theater, no art, no music, no known or unknown, only magic and survival.

The obscurities of the first two hours centered around two tedious theatrical moves: the simulated sacrifice of two naked assistants and the symbolic making whole again of the lambs. About 15 minutes into the third hour, the toll of the first part became evident: one of the sacrificial dudes began to lose his hold on reality. His guts began to convulse, starting with his lower abdomen, then the stomach muscles tightened in quick succession from his cock to his chest, the blood shot from his mouth like it must have shot from the mouth of the lamb when the slaughterhouse hammer crashed down on its skull. He began to yell and grab wildly, the only word I got was "life." There was something real going on at last, fuck the simulation. The sacrificial dude had become sacred, he had exercised his will to fuck himself over, he was the artist and his condition the art, and he had succeeded.

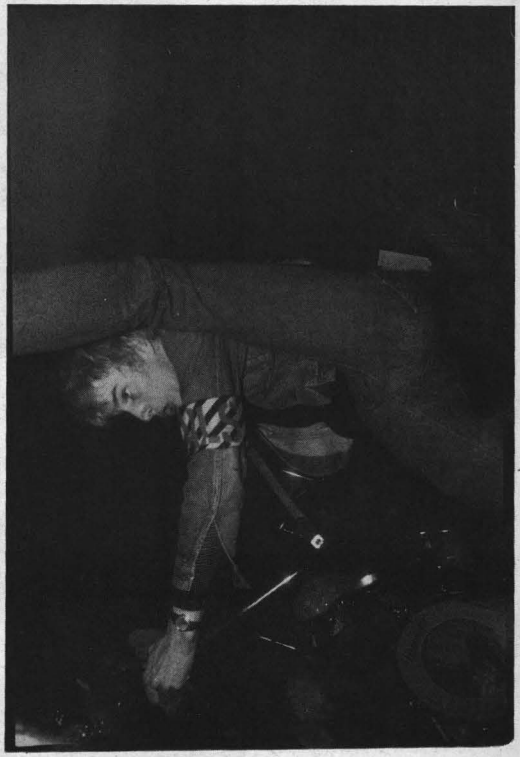
Herr Hermann called for the next move, the crucifixion of the sacred dude, but he couldn't take it, overload, he passed out. The assistants carried him to the cross and held him up. Again the convulsing, his stomach couldn't hold the blood swallowed at the beginning of the ordeal, he rejected it three times in succession.

Someone grabbed her mouth and ran for the door. The music sounded like a serious freeway accident. The place was beginning to ***look*** like a serious freeway accident: the anti-coagulant in the buckets of blood was wearing off. Cobwebs of coagulated blood were hanging from the noise-makers, the assistants, the sacrificial dudes, and the lambs which now swung around from a single rope, bashing into members of the audience.

The sacred dude was now off his cross; he carried a pile of bloody intestines and was screaming, "life is not fun, life is not easy, get out of here, get out of here!" He deposited his bloody load on the chest of a spectator, and another on the shoulder of a noise-maker. I got the message.

P.S. Some of the noise-makers were no other than Arthur J & the Gold Cups brass section, forever expanding their artistic horizons.

THE DILS/THE BAGS/X/BABY RO-RO at Lazaro's Latin Lounge
DILS/BAGS/MULETTO/FLESH EATERS at Dangerhouse Night/ Larchmont Hall



As I was burrowing through my refrigerator looking for something to wear Friday nite, I pondered past exotic locales for L.A. New Wave events. Who could have imagined Geek Weekend at the Elks, morons at Myron's, and trash bashes at the Masque? I grabbed a bottle of Mescal, looking forward to a hot pogo in the barrio. Well, maybe tomorrow, Lazaro. All the crepe paper and pink and blue neon in East L.A. can't make up for a roust at the door and slushy sound.

Baby Ro-Ro (about 2½ years old) rubbed the strings of a b-i-i-g guitar with his sucky thumb for about a minute and was later seen with his bottle at the bar awash with other defused band members. The show must go on, even with only one mike, but when the PA blew out in the middle of X's miracle set, even eXene's devout cult followers were found frozen in mid-pogo a mere 6 inches above the floor.

A dangerous Alice Bag rattled the bars of her cage. The Dils walked the plank. Mr. Lazaro flicked the light switches back and forth to spark up some action. I went home with the bartender.

Saturday nite began with the Flesh Eaters sharpening their teeth, attacking the crowd with some real rhythmic bites. Singer Chris D. shreds the air with barks, howls, and dark visions of disintegration and doom. Nothing to give you comfort here. These guys are severe.

Grab your blades, get ready to rumble, here's Alice Bag. She looks so mean, like she's got weapons concealed all over her body, and her twitching, furious song and dance routine has few rivals in sheer rage. The band sounds tough, but watch out for her. She's got soul and she's super ***mad.***

Once upon a time in Texas a mule went behind a rock with a stiletto and got a Muletto. This band is from Texas, but I confess I only heard their opening number as I was halfway out the door for an illegal intermission. Nothing really snagged my attention. I wasn't expecting Paul Simenon or anything, but visually they were basic and the song I heard was pretty run-of-the-mill mania.

Upon my return, several people arrived, covered in sheep's blood, adding to the religious fervor of the Dils' triumphal return to Larchmont Hall. Their new drummer is an Aryan dream come true and, as a perfect percussive ally to brothers Chip and Tony, they are the tightest thing since the tourniquet. They suck you in with a centrifugal force and (can I get a witness?), even a few hard-bitten skeptics were seen creeping toward the front of the stage. I've heard complaints that they ae "too political," but it is more that they are serious, a word that upsets zany punksters. The Velvet Underground is just not political, and two of the Dils' most riveting live songs are "I'm Waiting for My Man" (not a CIA agent) and "What Goes On."

Special plug for Pat Garrett and Dangerhouse for turning the knobs and winding the wires around the necks of the competition to put on a show with sound you could hear.

Missed the Flesh Eaters 'cos of some ritual on the other side of town (much flesh and blood—so it's okay, I guess), Muletto from Texas played exasperated '60s garage noise, it sounded horrendous but quite nice, they looked right, punks in the old pejorative sense of the term, a la Droogs Seeds 96 Tears. The Dangerhouse pack not afraid to show their roots. Who's next?

The return of the Dils: The prodigal sons gone North where plastic is a dirty word, commitment just another utility bill and contempt for Angeleno zombies a proof of civilized behavior. The Dils were one of the most necessary bands in Southern California, they were always the other side of the coin, the exception to the rule and the hair in the soup; they bothered everyone with their statements, their refusal to punkalize their sense of the tragic in this town of jokers. They were needed, they were not always loved and even the Dils needed love, at least a bit of understanding from this quaalude culture, so the tall Dil and the blond Dil packed up their weapons and their slogans and split to the misty province. And not to sing Scott McKenzie's ditty.

They played hard and rehearsed hard and politicized hard (a benefit for the striking coal miners—the Dil dream. Snicker, smart bondage pants, did you ever do a benefit but for a sheet that talks about you? Did you ever do anything but for yourself?) and they finally came back (only a visit). Hard.

The new third Dil on drums is amazingly completely dilicized and plays with an enthusiasm and fervor never seen before in past Dil lives. Although the Dils songs are insanely fast (faster now) musical punches, John Silver manages not only to keep up but to expand, to add bits here and there to the blurry speed race. He switches from straight thumping to offbeat embellishments, back to lethal machine-gunning in a few micro-seconds. Which, of course, pushes the two, wiry, electrified puppets on bass and guitar to greater heights of general musical mystification.

Watching the Dils' epileptic jumps, twitches and convulsions is a strong experience. And the fact that they manage to belt out one great song after another while all this pathological activity is taking place in their possessed organisms is a source of never-ending wonder. The Dils are even stronger musically than visually, but separating the two aspects is pointless and misleading. A Dil song is (under halfway decent technical conditions) one or two (or ten—read further) minutes of perfect live music, no matter which end you grab, no matter which sense you rely on.

There were old songs (but all done with more fire than ever) and there were new songs. "Spliff City," "Gimme a Break," and a long, streamlined version of the Velvets' "What Goes On." And the furious, massive pogoing didn't let up for one second during the instrumental parts. The Dils stretched everyone's physical endurance beyond limits and won. After two renditions of "You're Not Blank" (a slow one for fun and a fast one for real), they stopped the hostilities with their classic "Waiting For My Man." There was nothing to add. Total victory for the guerrilla trio.

The Bags wrapped up the highly charged evening with some spontaneous extra lunacy. X-rated she-vampire Alice the screecher maltreated serious Craig's guitar, Craig thumped Alice, Alice kicked Craig, Craig yanked Alice's mane then stormed off, the band played on (punk means never having to stop just because musicians are missing). Craig came back, someone lent a guitar and everything went back to normal, as normal as a Bags set will ever be.

The pogo had become religious abandon, girls were wrestling on the beer-soaked floor, the security man silently memorized it all for future story material to impress his pals at the bar. There was no encore, the owner having had enough, and probably harboring doubts as to the legality of such unbridled goings-on.

LOBOTOMY NIGHT the Whisky THE FLESH EATERS, X, and THE ALLEYCATS

Flesh Eaters seem forever stuck with the opening part of whatever show they participate in, but this does not seem to particularly bother them. They do their set with the same intensity as many headliners, and so what if the early comers below the stage are spending more time checking out each other's rags than listening to the music. This situation may even have some obscure advantages: why bother with the same beat if no one's dancing very much? So the Flesh Eaters take off in other directions, they experiment with this and that (early Velvets, some young Patti Smith type stuff), they explore some of the less fashionable forms and slowly discover their own sound and power, right there under everyone's nose. Once they find their final line-up (the band still does not act as a unit) and the right balance of tunes, they will get their own audience (which will undoubtedly make a point of ignoring whatever opening act the Flesh Eaters have chosen for the night!).

The Alleycats then played one of their longest sets ever to a sweating, adoring pack of fans. They looked great, sounded great, they could do no wrong and everyone knew it. Randy could not stop thanking the audience profusely between each song, like some shy high school rocker playing his first gig at the local tavern. Then he'd leap into one of their sizzling songs ("Angel Dust," "Nothing means nothing," "Licorice Cats," you know them), all skin and bones and inner fire, the sweet country boy gone high voltage in the city, an odd mixture of early rock 'n' roll innocence and late '70s twisted desperation.

On the other side of the stage, Dianne keeps up the dichotomy bit while pumping on the bass. (She looks like a little girl and a bondage mistress, she's half-dressed, half-undressed, she smiles and she's distant, she moves and she doesn't —a rock 'n' roll creature only vaguely related to these punk days.) The drummer steadily drums, good and in control but almost invisible, no one can look beyond the Randy/Dianne presence. It is hard to believe such unimposing characters contain so much frenzy. Two encores were necessary, the crowd wouldn't settle for less. Randy was worried afterwards about what he called "such self indulgence" and had to be assured that it was all right.

Evening ended with X. X is, along with the AlleyCats, one of the most exciting bands playing L.A. these days. They just keep getting better, and their songs are hard, catchy, small masterpieces. "We're desperate" (a potential monster single), "Year one," "Adult books," "Los Angeles," and many more, all perfectly constructed pieces of modern music, angry slabs of dark passion.

Although the rest of the band doesn't exactly take a step back or disappear into anonymity (John's convulsive wiredness has to be seen to be believed), it is Exene who will become the band's "figurehead." Her "mean trash" look, her oblivious shaking and gyrating, the face of contempt or anger she alternately chooses while singing, harmonizing or just standing there makes you wonder why we haven't come up in this town with an all-girl hard-core band like the Slits. Exene is perfect with X, Dianne with the AlleyCats, Alice with the Bags but we need more. There are too many followers in this scene, content to watch, not understanding that now is the time to give it a try, and fuck the rest. What happened to the Plungers?

Perhaps the unexplainable disdain the music industry (I don't pay attention to rumors any more) is showing for bands like The AlleyCats, X and others is helping in shaping them up, toughening them and making them more than ready to deal with the goodies when they come. Perhaps the temptation to leave the singles industry behind and go show biz will just be a memory of more naive days. Perhaps a true alternate music culture will exist soon, self supporting and all. You don't have to buy records to join. Come to the shows. Or go and play on the freeway, you boring nurds.

(Lobotomy's night was emceed by Gorilla, who enjoyed himself thoroughly while dodging boos and catcalls, introducing the bands, and improvising appropriate nonsense. The life-size Lobotomy dummy was dutifully destroyed, and the bigger-than-life Whisky dummy dutifully objected.)

OTHER CONCERTS
(too late in the month for extensive coverage, or some other lame excuse)

Screamers, Zeros, F-Word at the Whisky: Zeros played nice and harder than usual (new bass player doing fine in spite of understandable stage fright), F-Word took a long time to get the crowd bopping but won in the end. New/old bass player Steve Effete got a haircut. Bad boy Rick becoming one of the best shouters/kickers on the scene. These guys ***mean it.*** Screamers' set vintage, and the elaborate scaffolding behind was hardly used. Entering a subdued phase?

Jam, Dickies, Eyes at the Starwood: Since most of us here at Slash Anonymous were in no shape to focus on anything that fateful night, I'll rely on outside sources: According to pictures, everything went along real wild and jumpy. The Eyes look fast and tight, the Dickies are throwing styrofoam like Dickies sometimes do, and the Jam are twitching and leaping (with and without suit jackets) like the Jam do. According to eyewitnesses, the Jam weren't as good as at the Whisky (pissed off at something was the general impression. The styrofoam mess? The Polydor mess? Exhaustion from the tour?) and the temperature of the place was dangerously close to unbearable levels.

THE SCREAMERS at Camarillo State Hospital

It's always amusing to witness reactions The Screamers evoke from a virgin audience but to envision their effect upon Camarillo State Mental Hospital's inmates was exceptionally curious as the ideal situation. The affinity was obvious—anxiety level music played for anxiety-wrought minds. These were recipients of "Peer Pressure" to the extent of Thorazine-laced isolation.

Accompanied by a small entourage, The Screamers infiltrated Camarillo's contained community to provide entertainment for the residents' Easter dance. Mild-mannered producer with the discriminate ear drawled his discontent as a mobile recording unit sat idly outside. Last minute notice was given that a taping of the show would be an infringement on the privacy of the patients. Ironically, the very same institution was scandalized not all that long ago by a number of murders attributed to the brutal disciplinary tactics of its attendants.

Privacy intact, the patients filtered into the recreational building, introducing themselves to the Screamer-affiliated ranks with much zealous hand-shaking. An amiable bunch, they mingled and exchanged smalltalk as Screamer Fan Club applications were distributed. Many were quizzical as to how to fill out the form, particularly the spaces designated for "shoe size" and "ambition in life." After giving proper instructions to several such persons, I was handed back a blank application with four neat columns of the numbers 1 to 99 written on the reverse side.

tie-dyed tongues of hairy hippie hecklers. "What unit are you from?" was the first response, earning a smirk from Tomata. Another shouted, "Led Zeppelin," obviously committed for an acute lack of musical insight.

The audience was restless and the lull before the next song was lengthy. A young kid tugged on my sleeve and asked, "Do you really like them?"—then walked away, shaking his head. For once it seemed like The Screamers were confronted with opposition and their allies were far outnumbered.

Undaunted, they persevered, and by the infectious strains of "Vertigo," had captured the crowd's enthusiasm. This was a rather expressive lot and the dance floor was rampant with bizarre, free-form techniques. A girl in the front followed Tomata back and forth across the stage while massaging her breasts. There was the semi-horizontal pogo, an old-timer went into a soft-shoe routine,

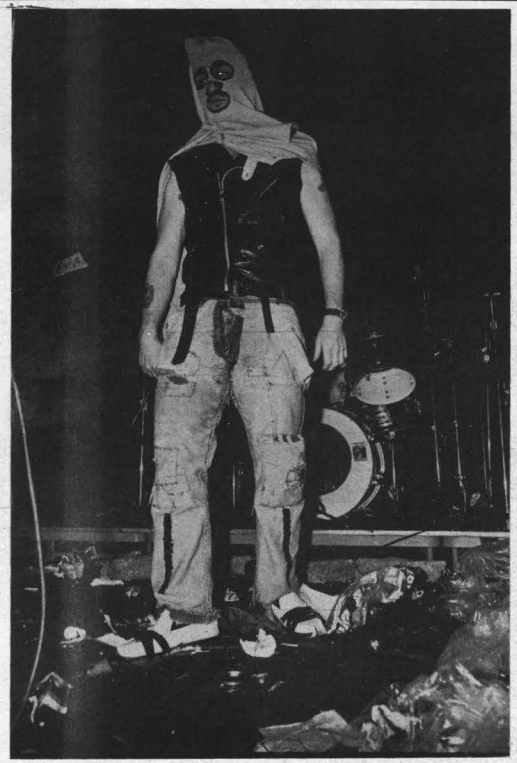


photo: phil s. teen

As the crowd thickened, the sparse Screamers party became scattered, much to the uneasiness of your devoted scribe. A noticeable influx of less congenial, brooding Camarillo customers skulked about the dance floor, mutterng

skulked about the dance floor, muttering to themselves. One rather large and moody individual studied me intently for about ten minutes when I realized that the attendants were indistinguishable from the patients.

All attention was focused on The Screamers, however, as they ascended the stage. Some were repulsed and others fascinated by Tommy and Tomata's Woody Woodpecker hairdos. Everyone thought they were strange.

Because it was a dance, The Screamers leaned primarily on their more upbeat, frenetic material. A rapid rendition of "The Beat Goes On" was met with juvenile catcalls rolling off the another couple did a sort of rounded-out box-step (all at different tempos) and, alas, the futile Siamese-twin pogo.

"Twiggy" was the well-received encore and after the set some giggling girls received Screamer autographs to clutch to their budding bosoms. Of course, how well they danced or if they stayed in synch with the music isn't significant so much as that they were caught up in the energy and enjoyed themselves.

The fact that the Screamers' charity performance was a welcome deterrent to the confined, regimented existence of those less fortunate than us (even though we have to buy our own sedatives) casts a humanitarian light on the event. Overall, the Screamers emerged triumphant in the face of adversity. Whether or not the impact of their manic delivery has caused a mass therapy setback is still pending.

Bob Taylor

DICKIES/VOM at the Whisky

I may be stoopid but I still haven't figured out what Richard Meltzer and company are trying to do. They couldn't have jumped on a bandwagon they so obviously loathe out of sheer boredom. Once past the thrill of seeing one's face all over the fucking media (L.A. Times full-page big nothing and TV Talkabout long nothing) and insulting (weekly) the audience that came to see the other band, what is there to do with punk rock ***if it's not the music you live and fight for??***

They couldn't be stoopid enough to believe their "infiltration" could discredit a movement that does not have that much credit to start with. They couldn't be naive enough to think that even on the fringe of that fringe phenomenon there is room for a bunch of would-be satirists with resentment and bitterness in their hearts, pot bellies behind their tattered stage costumes and panic at their sudden irrelevance behind the contrived aggressiveness. They couldn't be vain enough to hope that the punx might fall for it and actually (irony of irony) make them into heroes or villains. The numbest, dumbest pinhead still has certain standards and Vom does not even qualify as an average pogo band, never mind the tongue in cheek business. Come on, guys, back to more serious occupations. Some of you are very clever people, why the fuck did you choose punk as the target of your combined "wit"? The punx know how to make fun of themselves much better, so where does that leave you? Even your desperate attempt to have some kind of rapport with the crowd by throwing stuff and egging the first row on fell flat: only a little garbage was reluctantly thrown back at the stage. I'm glad two of us got thrown out before the end, it was reaching terminal boredom proportions.

Before that the Dickies had done their usual fast, fun, prop-filled set and I suppose they did it again later on. Why they chose to associate themselves with the shady characters mentioned above is anybody's guess. Mine is that they @#$!¢*#?%£+=×!.

Kick Face

forty five's

SNATCH
Lightning Import
(All I Want / When I'm Bored)

Not to be outdone in the fight for survival in the world of the 45 rack, or "shoebox jungle" as it's known in the biz, Snatch have released their latest effort clad in what must be the most extravagant picture sleeve yet.

On the bit of plastic inside, "All I Want" is a great, catchy tune. The chorus is reminiscent of the ancient "Clap Clap" but the thing has a good punk edge. Judging by what Snatch has come up with so far (including their work with Brian Eno), you'd think there'd be an album.

D. Allen

V2
Bent Records Import
(Speed Freak / Nothing to Do / That'sIt)

Last year damn near every record that hit the platter was great and they made ya feel great, too. Well, we're almost halfway thru '78 and the great ones are getting to be few and far between; instead we get records like this one. Maybe if I was a middle-aged Englishman the name V2 would strike fear deep in my heart. I know that these guys mean well and I really don't want to put them down too hard, but they are *really* ordinary. Perhaps it's the middle tune, which goes: "I'm bored, I'm bored, I got nothing to do." C'mon, we've heard all this before and, by now, too many times. Call me when you feel like getting out and *doing* something.

Bo Clifford

THE FAST
Ram Records
(It's like love / Kids just wanna dance)

Oh my god! Giving power pop a bad name (yep, it can be done). I wouldn't even think of mentioning power pop (enough is enough, uh!) but these trendsetters have printed "This is power pop" on both sides of the disc and on the back of the sleeve. Now if it had said "This is the worst bubblegum" . . . I don't care, let's all get glued to American Bandstand, eat potato chips and get zits and stuff. Peter Pan rock. The Archies. Some ideas of fun make me so sick.

Kick

THEGERMS/LEXICON/DEVIL/SLASH/ RECORDS/SCAM/101

The Germ(an)s march on through with a scorchingly produced three-way, available only through mail order from your old friends at Slash (no comment). No doubt this will become the most requested part of the Germs repertoire, Geza does it again (still waiting for already legendary Dangerhouse single of Geza X producing his very own Deadbeats) and packaging is also pretty good if only slightly derivative. Nice try, certainly worth the $1.50 these Scam-Masters are trying to squeeze out of you (you cheap bastards, loosen up on the money *today*—conflict of interest, my ass, it's a completely necessary piece of vinylite).

Speaking of loosening up, we'd like to take this opportunity to address some of the so-called "gay anarchy" crowd, you know the like, fruity European promoters, managers, etc., that vulch off the crowd like so many porcelain percies, running up their fictitious "production" co.'s bank accounts under the guise of running would-be "benefits" for the cause of punkdom, etc., etc. What have you flakes done for us lately that was so exciting and/or reasonably priced ($1.50 buys a lifetime supply) as this extremely tasty new 45 kicking off the debut of Slash records? Play this m.fuckin record on the radio.

"I'm not going to put my name on this piece of slander"

JOOK
Bomp Records
(Aggravation Place / Everything I Do / La La Girls / Watch Your Step)

When I put this one on, someone in the next room shouted, "Turn the fuckin' radio off, I can't hear myself think with this shit rock 'n' roll drivel blasting!"

Gus Ano (I'm only allowed one review this month and this is it)

KING BEES
Whizeagle records
(Hot pistol / Headache)

In Portland, Oregon, they're so tough they use tin cans 'stead of mikes. And

ZED Records

*ALL NEW *ALL IMPORTS *ALL PICTURE SLEEVES

ALTERNATIVE TV
LIFE AFTER LIFE
ADVERTIZING
STOLEN LOVE
JANE AIRE (STIFF 26)
YANKEE WHEELS
BOOMTOWN RATS
SNES SO MODERN
BOWIE
HELDON (HEROS SUNG IN FRENCH) (2.50)
CANNIBALS (BIG COCK LABEL)
GOOD GUYS
ELVIS COSTELLO
DON'T WANNA GO TO CHELSEA
DEAF SCHOOL (RED PLASTIC)
THUNDER & LIGHTNING
DEVO
SATISFACTION (DIF. ENG SLEEVE)
JOCKO HOMO (DOMESTIC)
SHOCK (DOMESTIC)
OVERSEAS +2 (RED WAX)

THE DOLL
DON'T TANGO ON MY HEART
DYAKS
GUTTER KIDS
IAN DURY (STIFF 27)
WHAT A WASTE
EDDIE & HOTRODS
LIFE ON THE LINE 12" 3.50
FRUIT EATING BEARS
CHEVY HEAVY
IGGY
I GOT A RIGHT (ENG)
IG & WILLIAMSON KILL CITY
JET BRONX
ROCK & ROLL ROMANCE
NICK LOWE
BREAKING GLASS
MAGAZINE (2ND SINGLE)
TOUCH & GO
JOHNNY MOPED
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WITHOUT A RODNEY BINGEN-HEIMER THERE WOULDN'T BE AN F-WORD! THANKS, RODNEY!

RICK, DIM, DUTCH, STEVE & ROBBIE—

they just ooze thru any old fuckin' riff from any old heavy power combo their ethylic brains can remember. And then they find a drummer who's just been dumped by Lawrence Welk for being unable to keep up with the frantic beat of the bubble master and then they pick up this Robert Plant clone who could do his stuff without any band at all (and does at home to his chick) and then they find a couple of modern sounding titles 'cos that's where it's at and then they lay the whole steaming mess on a platter. Hey man, like it's the new wave, man, that's kind of where we're at, if you can dig it. Boy, this is gonna be a fun year for the poor turds like me who're expected to review every unidentified black vinyl object flying into our laps.

Kick

EYES/CONTROLLERS/SKULLS
What Records?
(Don't Talk To Me / [the original] Neutron Bomb / Victims)

What, the underdog of the tiny tiny indies. If What Records didn't exist you probably wouldn't even notice, 'cept who had the guts (or the irresponsibility) to tackle the Germs before they became hot-shit property (whaddya mean what a cheap plug? I'm talking facts, brudda, don't you forget it!).

Anyway. What go at it again, this time they ake three local off-the-main-stream punk combos (What can't even hope to grab the big alternative names, even the ones that haven't recorded shit yet, what, me on What? You must be joking! We is holding out for Sire, man! Or Virgin. Hey, do they have an office here?) they stick them in some nameless quote studio unquote, give them three bennies apiece and say 4, 3, 2, 1, go, you got half an hour to paint your masterpiece. Results are (of course) abysmal. *if* (notice the italic trick which is supposed to make it sound like I'm *talking* to you and you get all my Lord Buckley inflections), *if*, as I said, you care (you lame, boring, perfectionist, closet philspectorite) about such things as good voice level, audible guitars and overall wasp-approved sound separation. On the other hand, if what you're after is even a vague recollection of *how fucking good and jumpy* them local nutzos ('specially Controllers/Skulls) can get live when the juice is boiling and the pinheads are hopping and the bouncers are bouncing and the guitar strings are snapping, then, spike brain, this is your vinyl circumference of the month. Just like being back in the Masque crash pad, just like falling down the stairs at Larchmont, just like all them unexplainably cherished Friday or Saturday nights we all went thru in the past year.

Strangers, keep away, you wouldn't understand. There is the birth of a legend in them grooves, but it's too complicated to explain, now that some of our ranks are talking A&M, Warner, Columbia . . . And of course it will be a collector's item, and the price tag says "on consignment" so what are you waiting for???

Kick

SKIDS
No Bad Records Import
(Reasons / Test-Tube Babies / Charles)

Never being one to resist a cheap joke (after all, I *do* write for Slash), I gotta tell ya that the Skids are alright! With that off my chest (such as it is), let's get down to business. Imagine that Buzzcocks/Generation X supersession you've been dreaming of; kinda like Billy Idol in a different kitchen. Or maybe down the hall. Anyway, "Reasons" should really be singular instead of plural. The guy lives *only* for his baby. She's the reason he breathes, eats, abuses himself, *anything*. The hilarity of "Test-Tube Babies" follows and I think you oughta hear this chorus: "Testing, testing, 1, 2, 3; test-tube babies, whose are we?" Evolution *can* be fun!

"Charles" is a rather eerie tale of your average factory rat who gains metal hands and a stainless steel face. Eventually he becomes obsolete. These guys make it because they're funny and exciting; a combo that is tough to beat. So I won't.

Bo Clifford

THE STRANGLERS
United Artists
(5 Minutes / Rok It to the Moon)

Hey, I like this a lot better than most Stranglers stuff. "5 Minutes" is vintage Stranglers but real packed, lyrics are nice, somber, paranoia, suburban fear matter; if Charles Bronson or Clint Eastwood were rockers they'd pick on this. B-side "Rok It to the Moon" is unusual and not at all unpleasant. Lyrics way above average. Even the faint Black Randy influence in the vocals don't matter. A good single. Maybe them London boys oh so afraid of being in any way connected with the Hillside sicko have found a second wind. Third album will be reviewed next month, proving me right or wrong, or proving nothing at all.

Kick(ed) Face

THE METHOD
Do-It Records Import
(Kings on the Corner / Dynamo)

Here's one I love. Echoed vocals, great sax, and even that old warhorse, the harmonica, sounding all right! Lyrically, the A-side is a bit of a mystery with the recurring refrain of "You can't talk back to me like you used to." Put it down to acting tough for fun and profit. "Dynamo" is about that energy inside all of us that just *has* to be let out. Whether yer jumping up and down or doing the horizontal mambo, you know what I'm talking about! It makes me go backward and forward at the same time and the best ones always do.

Bo Clifford

TAPPER ZUKIE
NewStar import
(NewStar / Living in the Ghetto)

Quickly following on the heels of Doc Tado's "Born for a Purpose" comes T. Zukie to give unto Johnny "Cool" Rotten further words of solace and reassurance in John's hours of self-recrimination and doubt. "Seh every day a new star born / Seh every day a new king born." The flipside reaffirms the man as *the* ace dubber.

D. Allen

THE BIZARROS
Clone Records
(A new order / It hurts Janey / Laser boys)

Mysterious band, those Bizarros. A couple of EPs, one 1/2 album, all sounding at least interesting, some of it even quite good, a certain style that has little to do with today's twisted standards but a lot with our common dark past (read: Lou Reed pre-Las Vegas, Heavy Metal pre-Metal Shit), yet absolutely no interest on anyone's part, although they certainly show as much potential as the nouveau rockers from the same part of the woods like Devo, Rubber City Rebels or Dead Boys. Maybe sticking to them parts of the woods 'stead of making the big hop to East or West Coast doesn't help. Neither does a definite refusal to be especially weird, vile or rubbery. Obviously a gimmick is needed here. Come on, fellows, find yourselves an approach. England is not going to be gaga over the Midwest forever, and plain, honest, nasty rock 'n' roll is not necessarily a ticket to recognition.

C.B.

ZEROS
Bomp Records
(Beat Your Heart Out / Wild Weekend)

Hey, remember the Zeros' fab debut of "Don't Push Me Around" and "Wimp" last year? Well, *this* one leaves *that* one in the dust! Their buzzsaw guitar mesh is even sharper this time and these tunes have hooks that'll make ya feel like a flounder!

"Beat . . ." is a variation on the old hard-to-get theme with the guy playing the part. Too bad, honey, I just don't need ya. Go on and "beat, beat, beat your heart out" 'cause I got somebody new.

Flip it over and you'll realize a teenage dream. The folks are gone and your main squeeze is coming over. The fridge is well stocked and everything is in readiness. The Zeros sum up one of life's sweeter moments in less than a minute and a half. I suppose they wanted to finish the record so they could get out there and *do* what they were singin' about for real. I can't argue with that; matter of fact, I think I'll go do it, too!

Bo Clifford

BLUNT INSTRUMENT
Diesel Records Import
(No Excuse / Interrogation)

Perhaps I have no excuse for liking this one; on first listen, it doesn't really stand out. Given time (and plays) the hook starts to sink in and pretty soon you'll be humming "no excuse" to your friends and neighbors (unless they start humming it first).

The other side is slower and meaner. The story of a tortured soul who just has to find the answer to the eternal question: who is me? You can beat me with a club, but these guys have made a much better record than anyone could've expected. Ask them no questions.

Bo Clifford

PLASTIC BERTRAND
Sire records
(Ca plane pour moi / Pogo)

Factory-made "new" music for all the continental kiddies who find the real new sound a bit hard to swallow. Studio musicians, sound gimmicks, singing puppet just like they love them on European TV variety shows. Even a bit of uncalled for Beach Boys cliches to make sure absolutely everyone gets their money's worth. They're eating it up in France. Disco punk. It had to happen. (Sire has also released "Uptown Top Ranking," which makes up for it.)

Face

SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS
Decca Import
(Quick Joey Small / Come On Back)

Forget the glitter-human plastered on the label and just relax and enjoy a timely remake of a great radio song. Some odd, very English lyric changes pop up (e.g. fruitcake instead of fudgecake) to keep it fresh. Actually, I wouldn't be hard-pressed to dislike any version of this tune. "Come On Back" is less immediate but eventually it gets there. Which is something that can be said of *every* record by these guys. A lot of people dismissed them initially, but they at least have the class not to rush into a mediocre LP. They deserve a second listen.

Bo Clifford

SHAM 69
Fanx import
(Sons of the Street)

Closer to football/riot chanting than rock 'n' roll. Pursey and the gang seem to have a way of bringing the audience to the level of mindless screaming mob (this is a very live recording—more like a rally than a concert) and not the Beatles type of screaming mob. It's all undefinable, hypnotic and a bit chilling. If they become the "political youth-leading group (in England at least) that some say they will be, I sure hope they sprinkle the *right* slogans in their songs. To be listened to after having read the info bits in this issue's Limey News. Aside from all that stuffy jazz it's one hell of a record.

Kick

SAINTA—1, 2, 3, 4
Harvest Import
(Lipstick on your Collar / One Way Street / River Deep, Mountain High / Demolition Girl)

The Saints return with cover versions of two very diverse oldies. "Lipstick on your Collar" is the old Connie Francis (!) smasheroo brought sharply into the '70s. It sounded good then; it sounds good now. Includes a neat sex-change reading of the high school hop plot line at no extra charge!! "River Deep . . ." is, of course, the Spector career-climaxer. Instead of the expected sledgehammer treatment, our boys treat it almost gently (comparatively speaking). Rockin' it up without destroying the "song." The two other tracks are from their LP, but they sound much stronger out of context and they make this one hot EP.

Bo Clifford

PUNCTURE
Small Wonder Import
(Mucky Pup / You Can't Rock & Roll)

Let's dispose of the B-side first: it's an adequate rocker about the nameless taboos of urban apartment dwelling. Ah, how, "Mucky Pup" is another horse of a different kettle of fish! The singer crawling around on the floor and letting everyone (in a five-mile radius) know that he has the honor of being a mucky pup! And just what is this beast? I'll let him tell it: " . . . I sniff people, I'm a mucky pup." All sorts of disgusting things go on with this guy; two key words being "noise" and "poink." You'll just have to take my word when I tell you the only thing these guys remind me of: an *extremely* drunken Devo! Now ya know ya just gotta hear it!

Bo Clifford

SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS
(Dame to Blame / Johnny T)

Pseudo-Yardbirds drag with a fuzzier guitar, soaring harmonies that don't offend, and a climactic psychedelic lead that almost does. Nothing spectacular but good. However, as the flip side is one of the worst Johnny B. Goode-type rock revivals ever, this should be considered a one-sided investment.

Chris D.

DESTROY ALL MONSTERS
I8BI records
(You're Gonna Die / Bored)

The girl's voice really gets on my nerves, flat, monotonous, pseudo dramatic talking/singing. There's a continuous, formless, psychedelic whirlwind behind which must be the rest of the band, a few nice bits of horns but it's hopeless; it's a mess of no interest. In one song the word "bored" is used about 40 times. The other starts with "I looked out of my window, saw a witch fly by . . ."! Another belladonna casualty.

Kick Boy

THE ZEROS
Small Wonder Records Import
(Hungry / Radio Fun)

Not the Chula Vista quartet. Only three of them, and they're English. We'll let them keep their name until the California bands start their planned invasion of Britain, at which time it will inevitably cause problems of mistaken identity and stuff so they'll have to change their name to the Viletones (until northwest bands start their invasion . . .). Of course, there may be no problem of the sort 'cause *those* Zeros don't exactly get the Oscar for uniqueness and relevance and may not be around much longer. "Hungry" is okay, not bad, not good, you'll pogo to it if there ain't nothing else to do. Standard punk product. Don't worry if you can't find it at your store there are twenty others just the same. "Radio fun" is below standard, teen shit in the bad sense. I doubt that radio can be so much fun even in England. Or did they do it just to get played on the radio? Next song about the groovy tube, eh???

Kick Face

JUST WATER
Stranded records
(Singing in the rain / Witness to the crime)

Kind of an 80-proof man myself. The stuff just makes me gag. And if this gets the award for the most facile review of the month, this record gets another one for the most useless single. There.

Kick

P.S. Not 100 percent useless. Everyone has the right to hear the Gene Kelly song done a la new wave once. *Once.*

LARRY LAZAR (THE LONE ROCKER)
Nite Club Records
(Green life / Rock 'n' roll refugee)

It won't be said that we don't mention the new local stuff as much as we can. Since lonely Larry is backed up on this lulu by the Hollywood Stars, we just killed two birds with one stone. Hopefully.

". . . and I hate all modern music, country, disco or pop. They go on and on and on, how I wish they would stop."

—Buzzcocks album

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Sex Pistols manager

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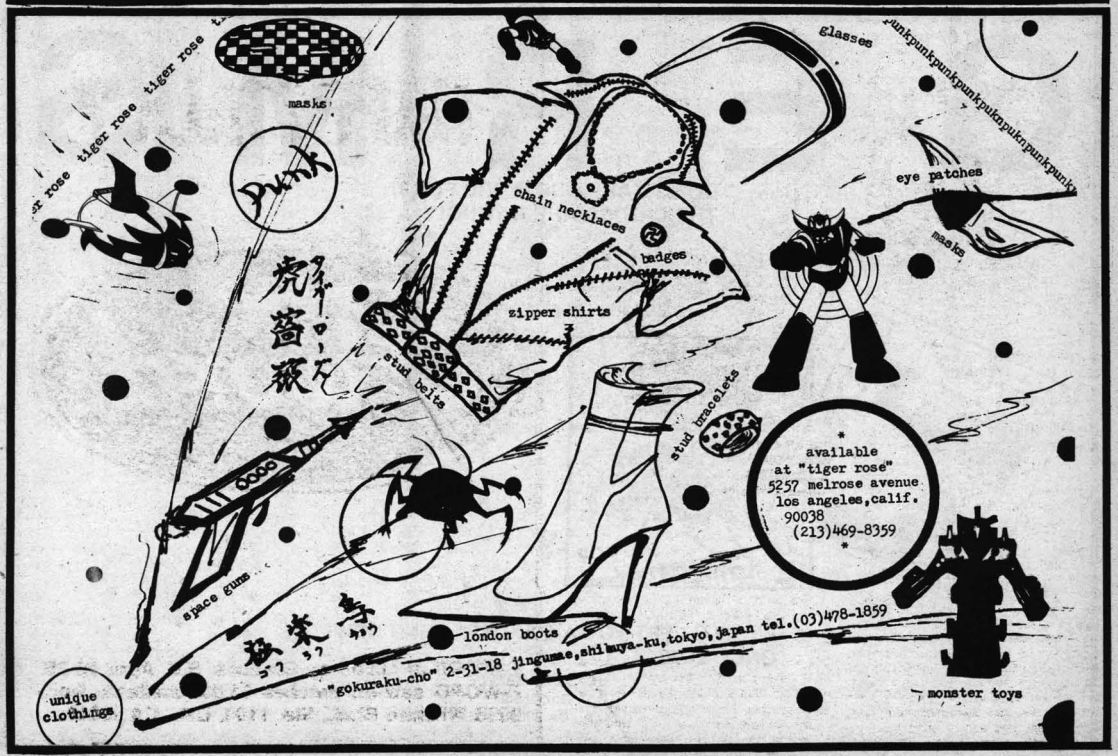
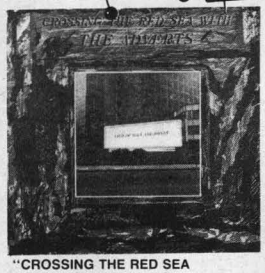
the material doesn't need a picture sleeve to sell it so don't look for one



Slim's



"CROSSING THE RED SEA WITH THE ADVERTS"
THE ADVERTS
Bright Records Import

Each side starts with two songs already released on singles. Still sound kind of good if you're into heart - on - the - sleeve - we're - not - afraid - of - showing - some - emotions punk. I don't especially thrive on that syrupy stuff meself but now and then One chord Wonders or "No time to be 21" is fine. it makes you all so melodramatic and everyone needs a bit of cheap drama. too much of fuck this and fuck that will dry you up like an old speed freak. Still, there are limits, and the Adverts blow it bad on the remainin cuts.

T.V. Smith may have something to say but the lame melodies, boring pace changes and corny singing ("On the roof" starts like some Jethro Tull pretentious turd) won't do much to get the message across. What we gonna do with the new wave. uh? Well. for a start. we gonna do away with all that predictable. indulgent mush groups have been laying on us. "Crossing the Red Sea" is a perfect title: the whole album is as economical and precise as an old Cecil B. De Mille extravaganza.

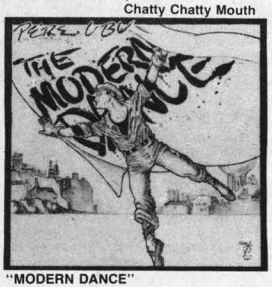
Kick Face

"LIVE"
BURNING SPEAR
Island

Following the Spear's super-successful recent English tour. Island has just released this live album of a few highlights. Seven songs. most of them already done on previous LPs. Although I prefer the original studio version on about half of them they still are strong examples of Winston Rodney's powerful (if sometimes facile) originality. A true rasta prophet and visionary. he very obviously can grab both audience and musician and submit them to his dark moody bursts of music.

The rhythm section carries him superbly thru his long. hypnotic. sinuous songs. even if at times the original slow beat is somewhat speeded up (a lot less. though. than in the live Wailers). The horns seem to play a more and more important part in the Spear's music (the first two Studio One albums being totally devoid of them) and remain tastefully controlled throughout (with the odd exception here and there where they almost bring back to mind ghastly Blood Sweat and Tears memories) and. of course. Winston's voice is magnificent all the way thru. maoning growling wailing choking and even singing. And even though the album is not quite a total masterpiece (a bit of tightness. a bit less uniformity would have put it there). it is still a very important (and necessary) release. Now we must have a batch of new songs. for between "Dry and Heavy" and this. the old Spear material has been sufficiently covered.

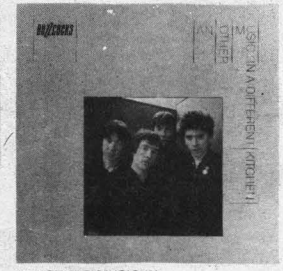
Chatty Chatty Mouth



"MODERN DANCE"
PERE UBU
Blank Records

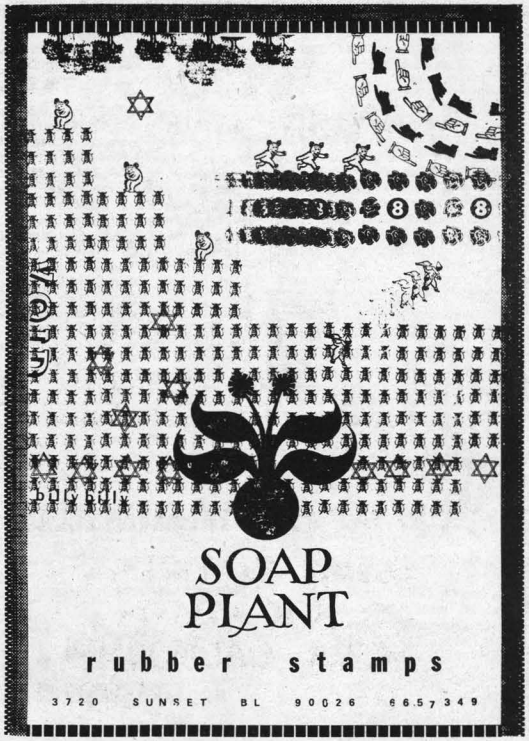
Nightmare boys disguised as hippies home from the factory and wreaking sonic vengeance in their basement. This is experimental music that occasionally strays over into something you can dance to (rock 'n' roll?). And as vocalist David Thomas insists. everything he sings is very modern pop. Mature pop. Bryan Ferry on angel dust. Industrial instrumentals and catchy phrases like "My baby said . . ." "Non-alignment pact," "and it's a joke. mon" (Rasta pronunciation) that are repeated ad infinitum. There's even a funny piece of psychosis punctuated with the sound of breaking glass. It goes on a little too long and stops being funny. Some of their singles were more threatening. more nerve-wracking in their intensity and flow. But this still isn't bad.

Chris D.



"ANOTHER MUSIC IN A DIFFERENT KITCHEN"
BUZZCOCKS
United Artists Import

One could truly go on and on and on about this. Lyrics. music. recording. cover image. you name it. there is so much to say. explain. rave. support. From the opening "Spiral Scratch" intro to he final "Spiral Scratch" quote it's all there. the most "now" effective new wave album to come out in months. Along with The Clash's first effort and the "Bollocks" gem. this is what it is all about. everyone else take a step back. swallow your pride and admit it. What's more. it's a hell of a surprise. cos the singles preceding this mammoth sure didn't warn us of what was to come. I mean they were good. like



HAPPYTALK ?

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dozens of other singles are good and attract our attention for a few spins, but this ***just demands to be played again and again,*** with no apparent end to it. Everyone's going to pick a favorite, mine today is "Sixteen." Yesterday it was "Autonomy." Or "Fast Cars." Each song is complete, perfect, a sharp, detailed, nervous little ball of fire, wit and cynicism. It will make you love solos again, and drum breaks, and obscure English manic depressive proclamations. It will rock you and puzzle you and tickle you. If a punk band can pull such a first album out of their combined heads with such obvious ease, we must all be doing something right.

Kick Face

999
UA Import

"Me and My Desire" opens up Side 1 and speaks for itself, passionate whispers veiling murderous guitar threats. It's restrained but in a way that makes you feel you'd better get indoors before the real gale force lets loose. Unfortunately, the vinyl plods through one mediocre and one just plain bad song before reaping the rewards of spine-shivering "Your Number is My Number" and the loudmouth "I'm Alive."

Side 2 is more even with Nick Cash only occasionally grating on the nerves with an ill-timed sneer. The familiar and worthy "Emergency," "No Pity" form the core of this side, and everything else, even after repeated listenings, fails to emerge from their shadow.

All in all, there are wonderful ideas here. Just too many times one gets the feeling of an undernourished, skeletal piece of something rather than the crashing, full-blooded hemorrhage of sound of which 999 is capable.

Chris D.

"EASTER"
PATTI SMITH
Arista Records

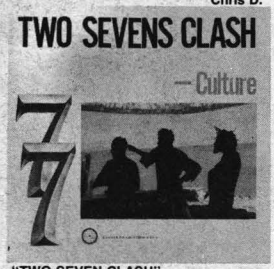
You can tell something is wrong the minute you see the sleeve: a Carly Simon-esque pose beneath flowery, vapid typeface. On the back, the band looks vaguely self-conscious (embarrassed?). Song titles that foretell doom: "Babelogue," "High on Rebellion," etc. Even worse, the inner sleeve booklet is one of the most unabashedly self-indulgent, pretentious pieces of pseudo-poesy Patti has ever printed.

What's very sad is that you can tell before even listening to a note that Patti has lost every bit of self-criticism that made her previous written work stand on its own. Where once was economy and an austere style now reigns bloated self-importance, preoccupation with the past, and tired hippie cliches about Indian tribes, getting stoned, etc.

Enough of slagging. There are four songs on this that rise ragged and triumphant out of the surrounding mire. "Till Victory" is savagely blissful in its total confidence that political/sexual/musical chaos will topple decrepit forces still in power (which she contradictorily represents on at least half of these songs), "Because the Night," proud of her animal bearing, even more so because here she doesn't flaunt it. "Rock 'n' Roll Nigger" starts off with a shouted diatribe that would be hilarious if she didn't mean it seriously' once the guitars break in, things get back on the right track. Then there is "Set Me Free," the last vestige of anything worthwhile.

What makes this all so puzzling is that Patti is wandering around in such a stupor that I'm positive she isn't even aware of the contradictions and sickening lapses that make up the remainder of the album. And the direction she's heading, she may never wake up.

Chris D.



"TWO SEVEN CLASH"
CULTURE
Joe Gibbs label

Must have been very hard for Joe Gibbs or whoever to decide which cut off this album to release as a single. The title track was a masterpiece (see review a couple of months back) but so are most of the cuts on the LP. This relatively new trio of Jamaican smooth rockers have come up with one of the most exciting, rich and elevating records I've heard in many, many months.

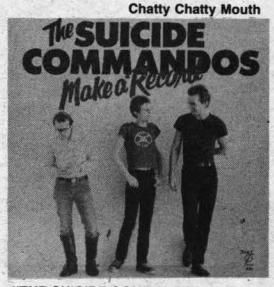
Opening track, "Get ready to ride the lion to Zion" immediately puts you in the midst of it: tight, sensuous rhythm; tasty chuck chuck guitar; a taste of distant horns riffin' in a far corner; and the singer's slightly graveled voice grabbing you by the guts, swaying you to the gentle, hypnotic melody, taking you out of your surroundings to where naivete is no sin and hope is as important as air. There's even the roar of a lion popping up here and there!

Further on in the album, "Jah Pretty Face" is closer to traditional rastafarian chanting a la Count Ossie or Ras Michael than to the hard edge of most recent JA reggae rockers. Almost sounds like an old-time religious song, just slightly revved up with the ever-present beat.

Next tune, "See them come," is faster, with a half-bouncing, half-rolling beat, a tiny delicate solo, a sprinkling of lovely chords and a breathless delivery of words.

Then there is "Natty Dread taking over" (a bit Mighty Diamonds type), the splendid, exhilarating "Calling Rasta for I" (amazing back-beat, like big bubbles of sound bursting at the surface of a cauldron), the beautifully sad "I'm alone in the wilderness" (can make you cry like a lost baby if you let the song pull you in), "Pirate Days" and its super-effective repetition of one obscure line while the lead singer narrates the story of his people, the famous "Two sevens clash" and finally "I'm not ashamed," an obsessive, heartfelt closing statement that will leave you begging for more. And all it will take is to take the record, turn it over and start again. This record will spoil you. When music comes from the heart, nothing stands in its way. Get yourself a bit of culture, friend.

Chatty Chatty Mouth



"THE SUICIDE COMMANDOS MAKE A RECORD"
SUICIDE COMMANDOS
Blank records

When was the last time you heard about Minneapolis, Minnesota? Right. Well, my friend, this is ***the*** surprize package of the month. You look at the cover and what do you see? Three very ordinary looking dudes not even trying to tackle the heavy 20th century dilemma of how to look, what to convey, what image to lay on your first album cover. And why bother when you've got fifteen songs of pure elemental music in your pocket? Posing is mostly just another way to deal with basic insecurities, and these three got nothing to feel insecure about. Yeah, 15 fucking songs, and not one is a carbon copy of another.

Before I go any further, I better warn you that this record may not be suitable for everybody. It is not punk music and some songs will not lend themselves to any sort of pogo/grapple attempt. There is even some unashamed pop stuff so all you spikey rule makers better take the legendary flying fuck, the Suicide Commandos are sure to offend you. You ***can*** call it new wave, even though half of it is already familiar to your ears, except of course you've never heard it quite so trimmed down and souped up before. What these guys have done is take just about every rock/pop cliche in the book, drag it out of its usual lame context and utilize it to create song after song of lean, tight, nervous young music. Even the worst type of '60s cheap music gets the shock treatment and comes out fresh and fun. Add to this some authentic late '70s guts and speed and you will have a vague idea of the resulting feast. You will play the record over and over again, unable to define it, unable to pin it down, classify it and forget it.

A piece of cornball like "She" (but the best cornball) is followed by the anarchist "Burn it down" ("if you don't like it, burn it down, if you really hate it, burn it down . . .") or the contemptuous, elitist "Mosquito crucifixion" ("you're gonna die 'cos you're so dumb, we don't like you 'cos you're not any fun"), and each statement lasts at most 2 minutes! Where others would stretch an idea or a riff to its obvious limit the Commandos just dump it the second you get the point (with one exception, the weak "Match/Mismatch"). It's not even economy anymore, it's almost wastefulness.

Some old pros would give a fortune for the stuff these guys throw away after ten seconds. And when the music occasionally fits the strict punk format (as in "Shock Appeal" or "Kidnapped"), it is by sheer necessity and not a concession to fashion. And so, instead of sounding like just another variation on the wham-bam-crash style, it comes out totally original, new and exciting. That particular song was ***meant*** to sound that way, its nature demanded it. The result is simply awesome (I wouldn't be surprised to see many small bands using some Commandos material to fill in their sets).

Okay, I still can't explain all the merits of this deceptively simple, low key (hypewise) album, I play it almost as much as the Buzzcocks, I hum it down the street and I pass out to it, there are a couple of tunes I could do without, but even that may change.

Oh, almost forgot: The 3 of them are great musicians, not flash but clear and sharp, at ease in every mood and every tempo. They even toy with solos and other frowned-upon practices without any trace of self indulgence. And the singer's voice is the perfect natural vehicle for their brief, compact songs. I believe it is everyone's duty to grab a copy of this album and methodically shove it down your local DJ's throat, having beforehand sharpened the edge until razor-thin so it goes in with the minimum of effort.

Kick boy

GENERATION X
Chrysalis CHR 1169

Gen X's debut album has quite a few surprises, not all of them great. It contains the British single releases at the expense of more recent recordings, so, for some, the import version may be the better buy.

It opens with Lennon's "Gimme Some Truth," the U.S. single (showing an almost total lack of imagination on the part of Chrysalis), which although done with conviction is still a rather dull song. Truth, or at least honesty, is dealt with again in "From The Heart." Some great geetar. The pace stays hot with "Ready, Steady, Go" (legendary r&r show of the '60s), and Billy sings of his love of all things rock including Cathy McGowan, the show's mod co-host. The next goodie, "Kleenex," is followed by the slower "Promises, Promises."

Side 2 opens with "Day by Day," a great British B-side which lives again here. Next cut is "100 Punks," the album's stunner. Gen X have it down when it comes to ye olde teen anthem. Every line is immortal (shit! —Ed.). This is a roots song for these guys, a song of solidarity with every one who used to punk out at the 100 Club, even before the Roxy. "Check out any wall, 100 punks rool." Your generation (which should have been the U.S. single) is next. Keep the volume high. Then everything goes quiet: "Kiss Me Deadly" is pretty different from what we've heard so far, but it works. They'll be writing Bond scores next. Then "Wild Dub" (turn this one ***up***). What I wanna do next is ignore the last cut, it really stinks. Especially the fuckin' horrible guitar solo.

Overall, this is a great album despite Chrysalis' best effort to fuck things up. Gen X is a punk band that refuses to conform to the narrow-minded concept of ***Punk*** that the media (that's us. —Ed.) and the record biz (that's them. —Ed.) have conjured up for themselves and the record-buying public. These guys' hearts are in the right place, and Gen X still rools, okay?

Dave Allen

GARS RANTER - 4-21-78 - //

BLACK AND WHITE

COMING SOON

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THE STRANGLERS

SLASH

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 11 JULY 1978 FIFTY CENTS

WILL **Toni Basil** LET SOO BAWLZ COME... THIS TIME?

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The Wrong Editorial

If you go by the months, we've now been out (of our heads?) for 13 months. Of course, if you count the issues, this is only number 11, some months are like that, entirely skippable, we didn't actually skip anything just took a bigger step and screw the deadline! Anyway, 13 months is a hell of a long time to go on predicting the impossible, watching the impossible happen and reporting on it. This mag was one big (well, medium-sized) monument to wishful thinking when it started, bluff tactics were rampant and the shrill dogmatic tone often hid gaping insecurities (never thought we'd admit it, uh?). Now the shrill dogmatic tone is more often than not aimed at the very people whose presence we prayed for in those days, the bluff is unnecessary and the wishful thinking sometimes looks more like second thoughts.

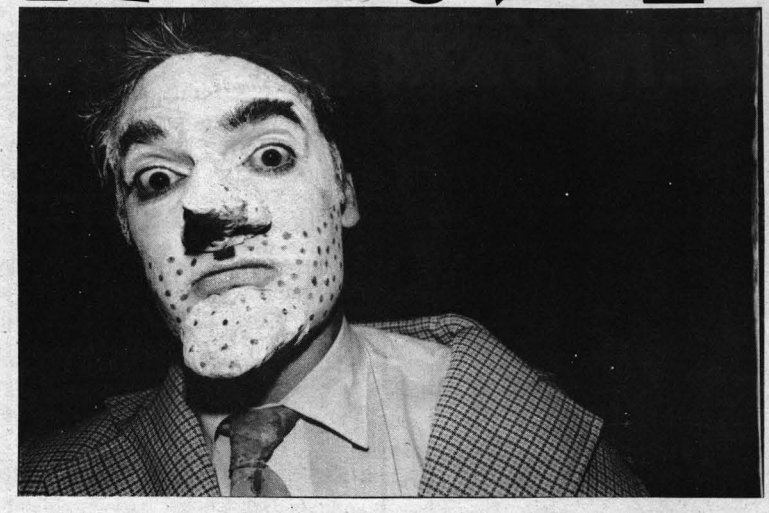
And what brought about this predictable but still surprising (naivete is a genuine punk quality, or fault) turn of punky events? Well, all of us of course. ***They*** (meaning your pet hate institution, company or individual) only remained true to themselves and never ***really*** pretended to be anything else but what they obviously were (and most of the time knew they were): the enemy, the bastards, the party-poopers, the death servants. But it is from our wobbly ranks that the bickerings came, the viciousness, the sell-outs and the give-ins. It is our bands that are fighting each other for top billing and it is our writers who are behaving like good chaps of the industry at boozy promotional parties, our independent labels screwing our artists and our artists screwing their public. Just like the big bad world out there, except everyone knows everyone on a first-name basis and they've all got strange appearances.

We're not just talking locally, they're doing each other in in every dingy London office and New York loft, from sea to shiny sea. And we're not being righteous either (we've grown up too, we know some unfortunate twists unfortunately happen, everyone makes mistakes, some repeatedly). It's just that if fate takes you down a smelly alley where you wouldn't have been caught dead six months ago and you don't turn around 'cos what else can you do, don't open your big mouth for a while, don't judge anyone and don't philosophize about ideals and purity. And that goes for us too. Thank god being more than one individual rather effectively prevents us from shoveling one particular brand of shit for too long.

Know what else we've done in this past wonderful year? We've become nice, passive consumers again. We line up real nice and proper for the shows, always picking the "fun," "in" one, if there is a choice to be made. We regularly buy our little batch of mags and 'zines although it's much more fun to put one out oneself, be it on toilet paper or on a billboard. We also buy our snazzy pink vinyl 12-inch forty-fives 'cos we have satisfactorily proved to the record cos. that we are our very own, very new market of suckers, we even buy badges when we can't steal them.

Besides that, everything is just swell, the groups are playing often and well, the scene is attracting more supporters, the death of punk has fizzled out and there were no corpses to be found, advertisers do not change sidewalks anymore when we meet them on the street, the summer is almost here, the beer will be flowing, the bands touring and the kids bopping . . . (Hey, what was this editorial about anyway? Who did what wrong? Must be a mistake . . . I got it, this was probably for another mag! We printed the wrong editorial! O well, who gives a turd?! Pass me a beer .....)

LOCAL SHIT



Dave Trout was suddenly released from his Weirdo duties a while back and Bruce Barf (ex-Masque M.C., ex-Gold Cup) became the new bass player. The parting was not amiable. Same Weirdos had a bit of a showdown with their present record company, Dangerhouse. Something to do with their re-recording of the "Neutron Bomb" single (complete with different B-side) and how and with whom to release it. It eventually got worked out (amiably) and things are back to normal, or as normal as it can get in the Dangerhouse world . . .

Michael Kowalski, leader of S.F. punk band U.X.A. died of an overdose, or, as Mabuhay owner Dirk Dirksen gracefully put it at the wake local punks had in the famous night club, of "taking too big a chunk out of life," or something to that effect. So that's what they call it in San Francisco . . . In spite of this, U.X.A. is rumored to play L.A. soon, sharing the bill with the Weirdos and the Suicide Commandos, now calling themselves the Commandos . . .

According to manager Posh Boy, Dim Wanker almost died one night after a three-day drinking marathon. Dim did not exactly confirm or deny it, so he may just have been faking just to escape Posh Boy's motherly attentions. Posh Boy (him again) has been seen a lot in radio stations and other influential places "marketing" his privately-financed, super-limited edition F-Word live LP, attempting the near impossible task of bypassing the accepted channels and break through to the apathetic consumer public without a record company machinery on his side. Slash will report on the results (and the album) in next issue, providing the project is still on its feet . . . and almost dead Dim Wanker is now a semi-official member of the about-to-emerge Brothelcreepers (see below) . . .

New fanzines: In San Diego, a sheet called Rude Situations. In L.A., an excellent first issue of The Upsetter, with a witty nasty collection of observations and interviews on the local scene. If you think we would not say so just because we know the people behind, you're · mistaken!

After some personnel changes, S.F.'s Negative Trend is due to record a single for Heavy Manners records, a new outfit run by Peter Urban and Debbie Dub. The record due out by July 20th . . .

Billy and the Kids now simply The Kids . . . A new band called Science Holiday??? . . . blond teen dream Billy Idol came all the way from England to sign autographs, be seen and drive all the little girls hysterical. In L.A., the "event" took place one afternoon in Licorice Pizza record store across from the Whisky, there were more professional photographers than fans and the atmosphere was an embarrassing mixture of tacky hype and naive groupie antics. Rodney was as nervous as the 14-year-old school girls with Rutles badges that handed Billy their brand new copies of the Gen X album (I mean, Gen X is not ***yet*** a household word in Bel Air!) and got it returned with a lovely signature and a pleasant little chat; the store staff was grateful for the break in the afternoon routine and Kick Face (that no-fun bitch) was groaning in a far corner, hidden behind a life-size Abba cut-out. Bet that hopeless dreamer was wondering what happened to anarchy and chaos! Is that what everyone meant when they were hoping for punk music to come out of its dead-end?? Later that evening, Mr. Idol was present at the Lobotomy concert but (almost) everyone was too busy pogoing and stealing each other's drinks to take much notice. A couple of days later Chrysalis had announced a reception in honor of same Idol but cancelled it shortly afterwards, Billy boy not having returned from San Francisco in time. Not the total puppet yet. There is hope. But one can't help wonder how the rest of the band (all left in England to practice their chords) feels about such favoritism . . . By the way, when you guys come to L.A. (and that goes for any other bands from over there) ***please*** play the Masque (re-opening any day now) and the Whisky, so your ***real*** fans'll be there to see you.

Bomp's "teenage nights" at the Whisky from the 11 to the 13 are reported to have been a success, as you'll be told in detail in the new Bomp magazine, due out first week of June. New Bomp singles to come your way: 20/20, Shoes, Boyfriends (ex-Poppees) and Willy Alexander . . .

Dangerhouse chief executive David Brown gets to meet the ***real*** Metro Squad on Sunday afternoon during a Black Randy rehearsal and must surrender his stash of groovy bush. L.A.'s elite force had apparently noticed his "suspicious" behavior while David was gallantly fetching refreshments for the Blackettes, pulled the young entrepreneur over and searched him.

More criminal behavior: Lorna Doom (bass and charm for the Germs) will not be put away for the not-so-recent charge of trespassing in a closed cemetery, and neither will the rest of the necrophiliac punks that were caught with her . . .

John Denney of the ever-so-busy Weirdos seen delivering promotional material to various record companies, fully dressed in one of those radiation suits they wear around nuclear reactors and after World War III. Carrying a big chest full of Weirdo goodies, John would ceremoniously unload the contents on some baffled secretary's desk and walk out . . .

Frantic activity in punkland on Memorial Day weekend: Besides the Black/Mexican Randy madness there was an almost secret (200 showed up) Weirdos rehearsal/concert at the Masque, new bass player Bruce Barf was unveiled and did not disappoint. Was it the relief from being away from the glaring sunlight outside and the depressingly festive atmosphere on the streets or was it the no hype/no photographers/free entrance/bring your own combination, we don't know, but this short, unexpected set in our favorite home away from home brought joy and excitement to the whole weekend. If my ears don't lie to me, the Weirdos are truly becoming menacingly good. The ecstatic audience seemed to agree. Immediately after, everyone hurried to Tomata Screamer's birthday party (just turned 16!) held in the private-no-trespassing-violators-will-be-taken-care-of estate of late swinger Errol Flynn. Guests frolicked in the weeds and by the empty swimming pool until the law and order men notified the assembly of ***their*** intentions (six patrol cars, an honorable success).

Watch out for the Brothel Creepers . . .

Back on the scene after a short absence is young Gerrard Taylor who is now rehearsing a completely new line-up which he says will completely put to death the "embarrassing stigma" which the Wildcats stuck on him. The new band, tentatively called Doc Martin and the Brothel Creepers, although it's not definite yet, consists of the lovely Holly Vincent, recent departee from Backstage Pass, on drums, plus Kirk from Alabama on bass. There's another guitarist whose name we didn't get plus Dim Wanker who sits in on the rehearsals but will probably not be in the permanent line-up due to F-Word commitment. Musically, the group combines British rockabilly and early R&B. It will debut very soon, probably by the time this gets in print . . .

Now that Carla "Mad Dog" is a permanent fixture in the new streamlined Controllers, the band went ahead to record a single with Siamese Records. The Controllers no longer do their famed twin rhythm guitar bit now that Stingray has switched to bass. The trio sounds incredible live. Observers are quick to point out that the group is definitely ***not getting enough gigs*** commensurate with how fucking neat they now sound.

Next artists up on the Dangerhouse agenda are an Oakland-based tribe of Jamaicans known as the Roots of Creation, also Howard Werth whom they stole from Elton John's Rocket Records and the Bags whom we all know and adore.

Dangerhouse is attempting to broaden the base of appeal and thus bring varied and increased support to the L.A. scene. Some plans include a big Punky Reggae party and an appearance by Metro Squad and the Bags at the Christopher Street West Gay Carnival. Also in the works is an east coast tour for Metro Squad, X and Alleycats. The Alleycats will have a new cover to their record and a much deserved headline spot at the Whisky, June 20 and 21.

Pat Delany (Deadbeats) claims to have a negative ion energizer but he'll need a better excuse than that for his behavior at Dix Denney's (Weirdos) extravagant birthday fete. Pat was upstaged only by the lord of couth, Geza X (Deadbeats) who did his charming variation of the Christopher Street West dog walk, and Black Randy who sprayed his regards through a commandeered garden hose. The ever charismatic Bobby Pyn (Germs) was also present and persuaded many lightheaded celebrants to form a cigarette-burn-on-wrist cult. Yellow hair is no longer all it takes. Get out those matches, you punk bunnies.

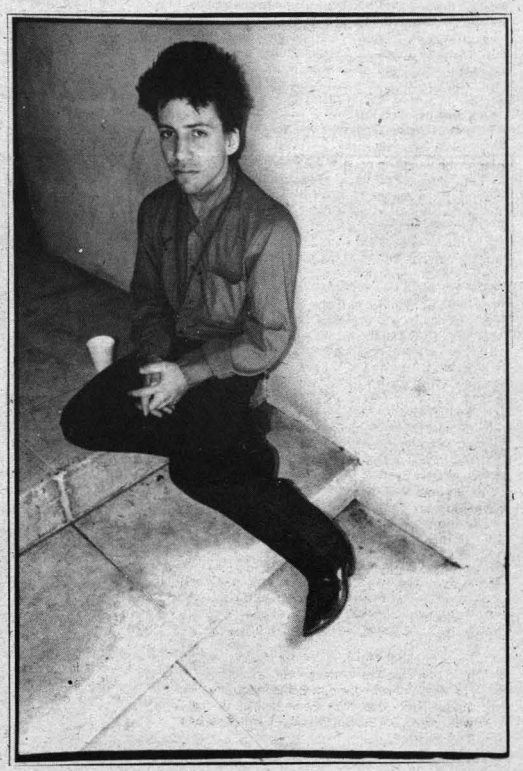
Seattle's Theatre Arts district is still sighing about Tomata's solo mime performance at the Club Macombo. A prime contender for the Go Go cages when the Whisky gets them back up.

Which "eminent" English manager-turned-California-entrepreneur recently had his green card revoked and who is the lovely local senorita up for deportation-staving-off nuptials? And when will Posh Boy get F-Word a contract so they can buy Rick L Rick some shoes?

There has been a rise of the Phoenicians as Arizona musicians flock to Hollywood's Canterbury. So far the cactus heads have popped up in the Germs and the Bags and even boast an entire band of their own, The Consumers.

The Germs refused Billy Idol an audition during his recent vacation here at the Whisky's Lobotomy Night.

The Motels, who never ever played "punk" music at any point, but who represented the "punk sensibility" during their peak moments, are now rehearsing a new line-up. Eddie Darkstar still drums and Martha still directs. The new Motels will make their debut soon. The Motels represented locally the same thing that "punk" came to represent, bands who built up huge followings ***without*** record company support and who were completely ***shined on.***



Photos: Elaine Inrer

Wild behavior in California???

In which Brendan responds to the accusing public finger: "Where's the money from the benefit and when's the Masque gonna re-open?"

It was inevitable that I should be called to task since such a long time has gone by since the Elks bash at MacArthur Park. There's still no Masque even though the need grows more desperate day by day, so some of you are beginning to chatter in your own little Canterbury Way.

To the birdbrains with nothing to do except make up what you don't know, who sit around dying your hair and putting cigarette burns in each other, I say unto you, go find a duck and fuck it . . . go open up your own place, also quit fucking off so much. I am ***not*** living off the benefit proceeds since it specifically says in the trust agreement (which I had drawn up, all ***my*** idea) that not a penny can be spent for personal use. I have other income to stay alive. Besides, the proceeds are not that big a fucking deal. If I'd wanted to split with the dough, such as it is, I could have done it weeks ago . . . and so to business . . . wot's happening with the Masque?

Everybody involved is ready to go. The City is waiting to be presented with a plan which will include a fire exit, the Fire Dept. is willing to co-operate once everything is OK'd, even the local boys on the beat want it to happen. The only thing stopping the Masque from opening is a thing called Walnut Properties whose specialty is cheap Pussycat Porn; they own the Hollywood Center Building in which the Masque is contained. Our presence is interfering with their comfortable little tax write-off scam and so they want us out. But I'm not about to, as I have said since October last year. Instead I am working on them to donate the little old building to the Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Arts, whose membership reads this paper as avidly as you do to squeeze every word for information and clues about ***what to do.*** They can feasibly dump the building on LAICA and get an even better tax shelter as well as being rid of a monstrous White Elephant...

Once the building changes ownership, there's no problem in getting permission to kick a hole in the wall up onto Hollywood Boulevard. The whole upstairs can be used for various exhibitions and parties, etc. . . .

As I write, Walnut Properties is feeling a rush of philanthropic benevolence towards LAICA which is a nice, legitimate non-profit-making organization in California who wants to expand the arts and farts all over Hollywood Boulevard. If Walnut Properties does not feel this benevolent rush towards LAICA, simply watch this space for interesting new developments.

If anybody genuinely wants to help they can do this: (1) write to Councilwoman Peggy Stevenson, complain about the lack of alternative facilities for the young, complain about the chronic waste of the Hollywood Center Building on Cherckee Street which has been going to waste for four years, which a certain party is trying to close out because some people are trying to do something good with it. Tell her you want an Arts Center with a performing arts theater in the basement . . . Walnut to make good with the Boulevard Community for perpetrating the Loner with a Boner syndrome should donate the building to a charitable cause, namely L.A. Institute of Contemporary Arts. (2) Write the same letter to Rusty Flinton, executive director of Hollywood Revitalization Committee, 6253 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 415, Hollywood, Ca. 90028. (3) Organize a petition and send it to the Hollywood Independent and L.A. Times. (4) Write to the L.A. Times asking why this building is lying in waste. (5) Send copies to the Chamber of Commerce . . .

THE SKULLS SAGA

Now that our beloved SKULLS have finally been laid to rest due in no small part to the Weirdo abduction of its bassist, the mighty BRUCE "UH-HUH" BARF, combined with the recent creative boredom of young MARC MORBID, this Skull obituary is sadly dedicated to the greatest ***might have been*** of all time . . .

However, far from suggesting Morbid has slumped into a hiatus of goofing off, this obituary is actually the harbinger of many fascinating new developments. Ears inform us the Morbid is delving even deeper depths of musical bizarreness in a dedicated quest to come up with ***something completely different*** . . .

The star of the guitar has been seen conducting outlandish experiments with every other weirdo in town in every dark corner of dingy underground basements in Hollywood. In particular, Morbid has been seen and heard cohorting with young Q. Stanard Ridgeway, founder of the former outrageously anachronistic, psychedelic bar band, the Model Citizens, who represented the early Masque's first flirtation with the "Avant-Gourde" (or the "Devant-Gourde" as it of late has so fashionably come to be known).

The pair are using guitar and keyboards in addition to a variety of other unidentified electronicisms and are currently auditioning for a lead puppet and voice projectionist as well as other unusual instrumentalists. If you fit the bill, dial 874-3197 or 462-0258.

Ears and Mouths also report young Chas Grey, original bassist, is now a well-to-do City of Los Angeles employee who flogs cosmetics on the side and urgently seeks band position as electronic keyboardist rather than bass player (464-7930).

Young Mick Wallace, who called himself Sten Gun on the Masque toilet walls and on torn T-shirts and who played drums for a while, ran away to England because, we hear, too many people were after him . . . something to do about the size of his cakehole . . .

Meanwhile, Billy Bones continues undaunted with a new line-up consisting of Bobby, the former Brat, plus an amazing ***new face*** from New York who owns eight guitars. The result so far is astounding. Bones and the New Face are presently writing a completely new repertoire of material and are seeking permanent drums (464-1602).

Finally, to complete the lengthy Skulls saga, original member Danny Death has now announced a new permanent line-up consisting of John and Margaret and completed by Chris who drummed for F-Word but was kicked out for having long hair . . .

THIS IS NOT THE IMPORT

Generation X cures the musical doldrums. And in this brand new release we've included "Wild Dub," "Your Generation," "Wild Youth" and "Gimme' Some Truth." Four red hot rockers that aren't available on the import version. Just listen. And you'll know why Generation X has knocked out the English public and press. They're going to knock you out, too. In the very best British rock tradition–they generate pure electricity.

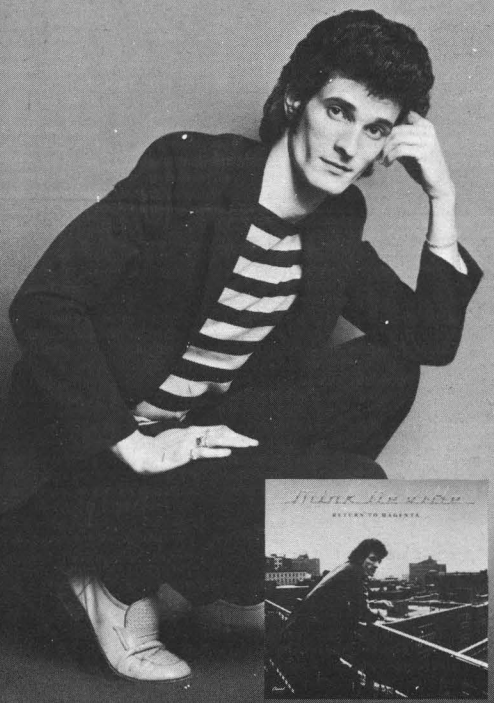
Chrysalis Records and Tapes
CHR 1169
Produced by Martin Rushent/Phil Wainman

THINK MINK.

CATCH THE ROCK 'N' ROLL SPIRIT OF

Mink DeVille

ON THE STREETS, ON THE STAGE, AND IN THE NEW ALBUM,



RETURN TO MAGENTA

ON CAPITOL RECORDS AND TAPES.

Capitol RECORDS

PRODUCED AND ARRANGED BY JACK NITZSCHE

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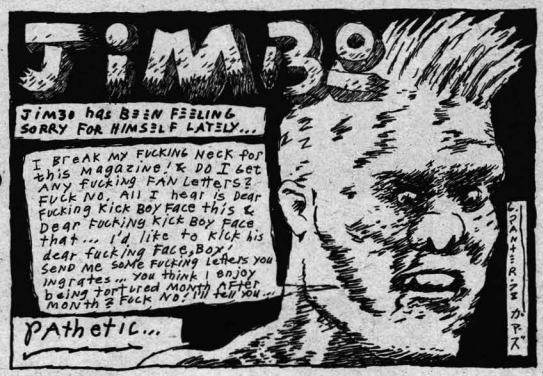
letters



Dear SLASH,

This is a short letter **of** *appreciation for your* **magazine...** your graphics *are really* **hot stuff**—my compliments to the *chefs. And your snotty tone is* perfect —good, clean, **pissed-off** *alienated humor is* something we all need **more of.**

My only criticism is that too *often your articles* **glorify** the **misogynistic attitudes of** *young male cretins, and* too often **SLASH** seems to endorse these *repugnant attitudes. Sexism* pervades our culture, and I applaud your disdain **and cynicism,** but **rapist** *humor is as* traditional and predictable **as everything** *you oppose, and* I think you should have **brains enough to** *rise above it.* Your magazine is not **particularly guilty** *of* **Nazi/rapist** bullshit, but it is *typically* guilty of it, and that kind *of* **normality** is especially disappointing.

Sincerely,
Matt **Groening**

Okay, hold on. What Nazi/rapist bullshit?? In the graphics? The text? Anyway, there are almost as many girls involved with SLASH as guys; not one of them thinks SLASH is misogynistic (how many music papers feature as many girls as boys on their covers??) and not one of them is what you'd call a young female cretin. Bet you see sexism everywhere. You're probably right, it might be everywhere. In our case, though, what you spotted as sexism or whatever was most likely a little loose chunk of a much bigger piece called contempt for ALL forms of nice proper civilities. We regard women (punks) as totally equal to men (punks) (don't know about your circles) and therefore equally subjectable to abuse, insults and other forms of communication.

Ms. KickPerson Face

never mind all these
BULLOCK's
Seventh and Hill

It was *me. I invented* **Powerpop** to curtail the growing punk **movement.** We can't have people *showing their* **emotions and** reacting to the **homicidal** *music you* write about. People **like me...** *we don't like* **people being** normal and open and **alive...** it could *ruin all our plans,* you might say. **Power***pop* will win and **you will go away. Beware,** it's creeping around, *stalking you in* the **night.** We control the **music. You** control *the suburbs.* **Ah,** a pity we couldn't **have worked together.**

Mr. Stuart Pid
Divorce Court
Toluca Lake, CAL

Now we know. And I bet you're not even part of the Bomp organization! Seriously now, this is the very last letter, threat, history treatise or philosophical analysis concerning powerpop. You had your fun, brought our typesetting bill up and kept 10 full-time Billboard observers busy night and day trying to score the ultimate scoop of the future of money-making music, but this is IT. If you still want to place YOUR bit on the worn subject, try naming it something else. You might even start something . . .

Kick

Open letter to the **Masque guy** *and the* **BOMP** persona with occasional asides to *SLASH (extracts —Ed.)*

First, to Shaw: You know as well as I whose **bloody** idea it was to do a *Powerpop* issue and so does anyone who read my editorial in **BOMP #17** . . . I dig the British mod bands from the '60s, and, seeing a lot of those qualities in *some current bands,* **I** proposed to you an issue comparing the various *"mod"* factions that have sprung up in the last **decade...** Townsend used the word *"powerpop"* in an interview a **decade** ago . . . So, before we even got the *"powerpop"* issue out, the **NME's** and **Melody Makers** jumped on the term and *voila, a* **TREND** . . "Powerpop" was never meant to **water down, replace or render** obsolete **punk.** One Rubber City Rebel, one Weirdo, one **Gen X** is still worth more to us fans than 1,000 Pleasers. The Pleasers are not power pop . . .

Now, to **Brendan:** . . . First, you blame Shaw and Fowley for this *powerpop fiasco,* and since Shaw isn't paying me to steal my ideas anymore, that's a mistake I gotta **rec**tify . . . Jesus, Brendan, I didn't invent the **horde** of faggy bands with bangs and *suits that are trying their* damnedest to conform to a **"market"** for the record cos. to understand . . . *(powerpop) is* as slick and cool as punks and pimps and **not** a device for wimps to find their place in **life...** You pander to the punk contingent (who are *God's gift* to the **Master Race**) by implying they're dumb enough to confuse the difference between the **Jam and the Pleasers... BOMP #18** started out as an issue of *observations, not predictions.* **Shaw** eventually took the whole thing and **blew it out** of proportion because he gets **excited,** like a kid, about things, just like you or I do . . . an upcoming **Bomp editorial I'm doing** called "The Marketing of *Powerpop: The Stupid Fools* Who Stand In Line." I've got all the **clippings from** teasers in *NME to Newsweek,* in which Shaun Cassidy claims what he does is **"powerpop."** *Oh yeah, Shaun?* **Sheesh!...** Hey **Slash, do you think** it's occurred to Brendan **and** Shaw that it's not a crime to champion for *quality and* **excitement in any form of music?** Pop styles don't have to play **King of the Mountain.** This ain't a game by Milton-*Bradley* called "punk**ier** than thou" that puts **God's** wrath on your side as you *stomp thru traps laid by* balding record execs and *hippie program directors* to the path of **rock 'n' roll purity.** We're supposed to be working together (my **token hippie** rhetoric salute) and not like "you gimme you *money, I kissa* **you ass."** Jesus!

Your buddy and *semi-avid* **supporter,**
Gary Sperrazza

Hey **Kickface**

I'm misinformed! *I thought that* (the cave) was **where punk was** *gonna take us.* **But I guess** punk is too *borderline bourgeoisie* to conceive of anything *so truly and* **totally primitive** (listen to the *drums,* **little boy).** Here's to the *quick and painless* demise of the **homo-sapien "Gods"** of this *planet.*

Dagwood Jones

P.S. Don't call us, we'll call you.

"borderline bourgeoisie," "homo-sapiens," huummmm, I smell a misused higher education in here. What books do to people! And what drums are you thinking of, big boy? What cave? What Gods? What's this shit? You a cult?
Kick Face (who likes nice clean insults and who's terrible at riddles)

Dear SLASH,

My girlfriend & I **came from San Francisco** *to your city the* first weekend in **May. There** we found **Slash.** *I like it for the* most part. **Graphics,** layout, **typography** much ahead of our *local counterpart,* **S&D,** much more readable, visual. As to *content, after readng* most of it **I felt these waves** of nau**sea &** *onwhee* but that com**pares with other** *punk papers,* & I'm not sure whose **fault it is. The** only article I found *truly inspiring was* the McLaren **interview**—so inspiring, in fact, *it ruined my* Saturday nite **& may continue to do so for a while.** *Anyway, we went to the* Saturday show at the **Whisky. Shit,** it seemed so fucking *tame! The* usual tourists & predictable *poseurs, the usual pogoing,* **a wimpy docile crowd.** Maybe it's just the times, *maybe everybody wants to be* safe & **secure in their** anarchic pretensions, but maybe **McLaren's right,** maybe "there *isn't enough* input from people **to demonstrate that** it is wrong" & maybe that's *partly your responsibility,* **ja?...** *I wonder,* is all the potential **of the scene just** going to fuckin *f f f fade away with a* **few smug whimpers? Are we marching into the tomb** *smilingly wearing* our leather & leopard spots? But **wait a minute,** *I can feel another* heavy wave of the **Nausea** *about* to hit—better quit **before the frothing** gets too serious. Anyway, I **hope** *I've* **disturbed** your sleep a little, as you have *mine.*

Thanks,
Larry *Mayhem*

Yea, I know, anarchy ain't what it should be. But listen, we are not going to take anyone by the hand and tell them what to destroy, what to read, who to hate. We are not a party, a cell or an underground brigade. Don't let Malcolm's shimmering rhetoric fool you too much: I'm sure that some mornings when he gets up he does not know anymore than we do what to do and which way to go next. Questions are being asked, you don't expect the answers to be right on their trail, do you? Keep thinking about it, though. It doesn't hurt. As to the nausea bit brought on by our literary efforts, barf to you too. You sure you're not a college kid??

Kick Boy

This is **Pizza Face** *talking—*

The **"Teardrops" are** dead. The *"Radiation Victims"* are burnt out. The **"Sex Pis***tols***"** committed rock 'n' *roll suicide.* **"Television"** needs new tubes. *"Devo" is* **normal. Now** check out **"Century."** It's their turn for *success (I hope they* **never make it—**I like them too much for **that.) But** I suppose greatness deserves *its recognition.* **Kickboy,** you're still *a cunt.* I remain forever **one step** *ahead of you guys.*

I'm **Pizza Face.** *Eat me!*

P.S. Jeff McGregor (distortion chorder for the *Screamers)* is **God.**

Hey, **Face,** long time *no see!*

Still don't know what or who you're talking about half the time but I guess that's due to your "one step ahead" enviable position. Did you know that "God" left the Screamers ages ago, old "step ahead"!!! And please don't sign off in such an uncouth manner. Where do you think you are?

Kick

A raunchy *memo (to* **SLASH***)*

Rock is alive again—*Robert Wyatt did not* toil in vain. Real **pens come** *alive.* Words last longer than *records. Roving* **bands** of **idiot troubadours** alarm the villages—guitars and *cymbals ringing in* the air. Frag**ments** of noise *hanging and falling, piercing* deaf ears. **You were witness**—you are witness.

Please *send me* **Alice Bag's address—**she stares at *me while I eat* **Fatburgers** and *drip all over her face.*

Keep it noisy *&* ***intelligent*** & uncompromising—**Wage war.**

Felix the Ranter
West Los Angeles

Sorry, no addresses, telephone numbers or intimate measurements. Specially with such things on your mind!

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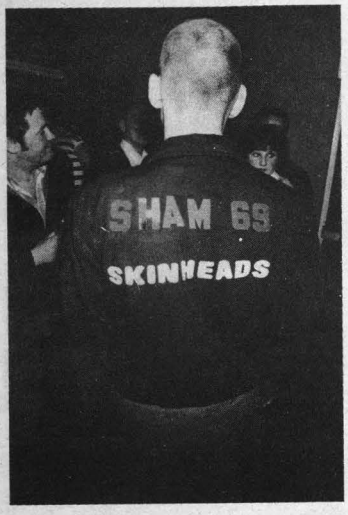
NEVER MIND THE OBITUARIES, HERE'S THE ER, UH, UM...?

Mobo goes to London, discusses politics, searches for a good pint, and comes back sick and possibly a little too open-minded for his own good (the result of a good kicking?).

The big question: Is punk really dying in England? Nah... to say that, you'd have to deny a thousand slogans. They're everywhere, on shirts, badges, build-



ings, a marking pen is an extremely popular weapon in London. So why all the obituaries? Maybe punk ain't the threat it once was (it's definitely not the "dirty" word it is here).

And power pop? No signs of any ***real*** popularity. But before you give a big narrow-minded three chord sign of relief, give a listen to the new ATV single (just for beginnings) and read a little further. The punk scene is mutating (or growing, evolving, diffusing, better leave it for the semanticists), and not just musically but ideologically, attitudinal?... across the board...

For starters, the punks have started breaking into factions (skin-heads, ted-punks, mod-punks, etc.), not just social cliques but groups with severely (sometimes violently so) different political views.

On the right you got the skinheads (angels with dirty faces, shaved heads, boots and braces) who, if they're not the total right-wing faction, they're certainly the most identifiable (and vocal: "The only good thing to come out of America is George Lincoln Rockwell."). According to one skin, the identity was dragged out of the closet in protest to the expense of looking punk ("y'know, zippered trousers an' the like"). While the skins aren't a threat in numbers, to see 30 or so bring a concert to a halt by plowing through the crowd in a flying wedge (and then proceed to riot in the streets), it would be hard to say they weren't an ***active*** part of the scene. I'm sure most of my info came from the most vocal extremists. To say every skinhead is a fascist fanatic, I'd have to say every spikehead was a socialist. There ***were*** around 3000 to 6000 identifiable punks at a Rock Against Racism/Anti-Nazi League carnival (out of an 80,000 attendance). Whether they were there for the Clash, or 'cause they were card-carriers, beats me. I didn't ask and nobody asked me.

I'm off on this tangent not 'cause I'm an activo politico but 'cause it is a part of the scene. I'm more like the skin at the carnival (that two nights earlier had questioned my genetic background suspiciously) who, when I made an offhand remark about obvious political differences, replied, "I'm 'ere for the music, that's what it's all about, innit?" Not being one to argue, I lose a few political friends (and as I shift cleverly from politics to the actual music, I ready myself to lose more...).

On the left, a few fans (80,000) at the Rock Against Racism rally at Victoria Park. Can you spot the punks?

Turning to the right, Jimmy Pursey, Tom Robinson, Nick Jones, Steel Pulse & some other rastas on stage for the big finale, a Robinson composition "Black & White Together Unite" (or something like that).

Photo: Samlof

I feel kinda boxed in. Pressure from the editorial attitude of this rag (which reflects/influences the general attitude around town). Maybe it's 'cause the bands in the U.K. have been playing longer or maybe it's 'cause there's so many punks (or maybe it's 'cause there's a strong rock press or enthusiastic record co's.) but it's a lot easier to like/see/hear more diverse styles of music while in the comfort of a punk audience. Everyone (there) is as opinionated as everyone (here). Bands have hard-core followings. Constant barrages of "so-and-so is ***really*** relevant," but if the music is defined by the general punk audience, it's much broader than just the three-chord or reggae sound. It's safe to talk about how successful reggae is in London (one night, the BBC TV station signed off with a ditty that had dub guitar, swear to god!). All the small record co's. have signed reggae groups. At the reggae gigs, all the white kids are "walk ona Babylon" dancing, it's really amazing. But mention jazz or blues or rockabilly or, worst of all, uh, pop (in L.A.) & people sneer and think you're queer.

The bitchinest thing about going to London (aside from getting a pair of brothel creepers) was seeing that there is an alternative to no future/no sell/myopic music and posturing; not an over-hyped replacement sound, just a fuckin' atmosphere where you can think and experiment (or even be a new band with a slightly different sound) and not be rejected because you don't "pose" right. The worst thing about going to London is that I really believe what I said in the last (run-on) sentence and it goes against everything I've believed for the last year. After tasting English beer, American beer tastes like piss. I probably would have felt this way anyway, sooner or later, and I'm just using the U.K. scene to justify my true feelings. It probably really isn't like I'm sayin' it is. Probably punk as it now exists in its narrowest definition will become the "next big thing" & if I would have only repressed my feelings, I'd have become a "successful punk rock journalist." I ain't a punk, I ain't a trendy, I am an individual... hahahahahahaha... (laughter diminishing)... (Mobo is now living in a tree-house in Hawaii and is a regular contributor to Readers Digest's "Life In These United States" section. —Ed.)

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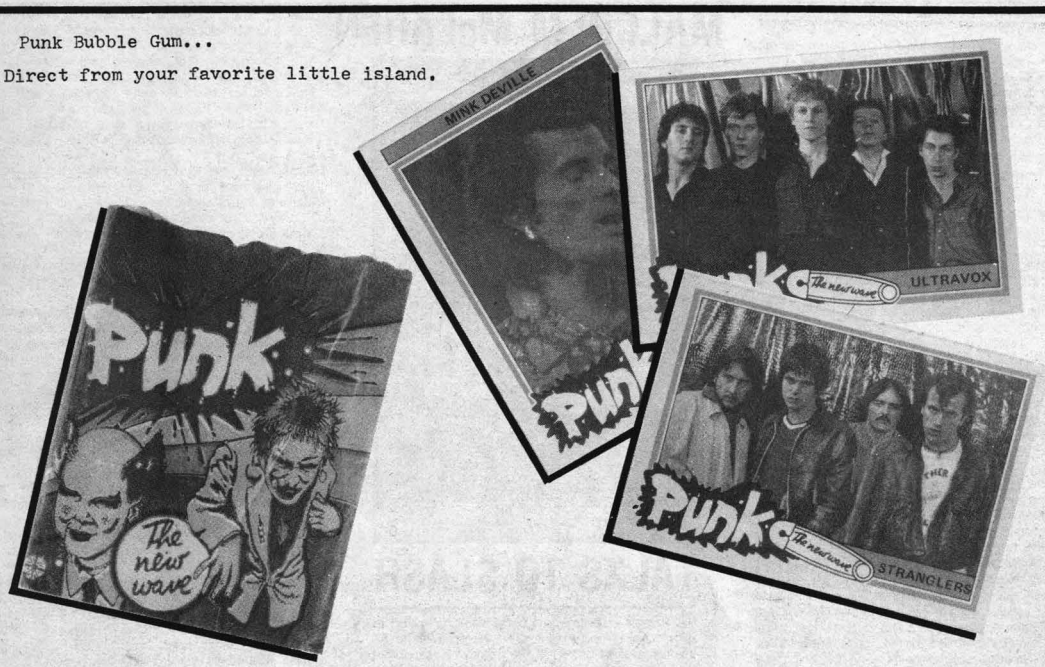

Collect all your favorites... (We'll trade you a Glen Matlock for a Joe Strummer... How 'bout two Glen Matlocks??).

"Cheap Trick is by far the best band in America right now."—Ira Robbins, *Crawdaddy*

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They have the sophistication of ELO, the wit of Nick Lowe and the voltage of Kiss."

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MALCOLM INTERVIEW (FINAL CHAPTER)

MALCOLM McLAREN

TALKS TO SLASH

. . . Much water has passed under the bridge (and much vodka down all our gullets). In the final chapter of this saga, McLaren and Urban exchange rhetoric, Slash defends hippie acts, and all will be quiet in the village after tonight . . .

Slash: Situationism is built to stay away from bureaucracy and that's what's wonderful as opposed to any other revolutionary movement.

Peter: In the field of Marxism or Communism the same thing's true.

Malcolm: So, Peter, how come you're managing a band with a name like a pickle? . . . or a dildo, what's the controversy there?

Peter: It's just basically because everybody in the band's Jewish.

Malcolm: No, that's not the reason . . .

Peter: I started managing the band because the first time I saw Chip he was wearing a hammer and sickle T-shirt.

Malcolm: Well, that's nothing new, that was back in 1918 . . . what does the hammer and sickle mean in America?

Peter: Outrage!

Slash: Outrage!

Peter: I don't know what the swastika means in Britain; apparently it means some sort of outrage . . .

Malcolm: I designed a shirt for me, where I had a portrait of Marx on the shirt and a swastika upside-down too. The idea was to demystify symbols and legends and other people used the swastika obviously because it was shocking and it stops things being swept under the carpet and announces things.

Peter: It doesn't do that here . . .

Malcolm: Well, why doesn't it?

Peter: Because the Nazis are your parents.

Malcolm: Whaddya mean, they're your parents?

Peter: It [the swastika]'s not shocking at all, it's not a threat to American society.

Malcolm: Well, I don't know, I do remember going down to Warner Brothers and they were very scared of releasing "Holidays in the Sun" because there was a quote in there about wanting to go to the new Belsen and then we had another song called "Belsen is a Gas."

Peter: They were scared of things like the JDL, they weren't scared of . . .

Malcolm: They were also scared of what it meant to their supposedly straight, good-looking organization.

Peter: I don't think fascists are half as frightening in this country as communists, so you can't shock as well with a swastika.

Malcolm: Of course they're not, because they're in power. But don't you think they're in power in England, my friend?

Peter: Oh, of course I do, it just seems that the working class in Britain has a much longer tradition of seeing themselves as a working class whereas here we have a whole myth generated around a middle class!

Malcolm: The middle class led the revolution in Russia.

Peter: I'm talking about here, a myth of the middle class where you've got workers who do not see themselves as workers, but members of a clerical middle class.

Slash: What about the kids?

Peter: The kids are a part of the society, they're not a separate thing.

Slash: They are a separate thing.

Malcolm: As a kid grows up he doesn't necessarily want to be like his father, he has a choice.

Peter: But you can't say that youth in itself is a class.

Slash: I'm saying that youth ARE a class in society.

Peter: Youth has not formulated any ideas . . .

Malcolm: If you're a manager of a rock and roll band which is concerned with youth (I would think you're not playing rock and roll to your mother, you're playing it to your younger brother), so that must be the cause for you to get involved in and hopefully utilize.

But if you're gonna treat it as a kind of movement . . . if you can divorce youth from its seniors, then surely that in itself is what you and I basically agree with as being middle-class America, certainly set up a situation in which you have a new king of class.

Peter: That will become hopefully a new kind of class.

Malcolm: Otherwise you're looking on old ideas because I'm afraid Marx doesn't really work in America in the context of when Marx wrote, because he wrote at a time when things were very different and you must treat him historically. Marxism died a little when Marx died. But you can take some of his arrogance and enthusiasm and ideas and utilize them.

Peter: Which is what youth must do.

Malcolm: If you treat America as middle-class in the eyes of the world, and I'm not talking about a supposedly black America which is a completely different area, you must be able to utilize that, as defining it as a certain sector that will ultimately become a class distinctive from its seniors.

Peter: Yeah.

Malcolm: Therefore, you, as a rock and roll manager, must see it as some kind of weapon against a class that you dislike. That class must be the people who gave birth to the kids that you're involved with, it can't be to do with the other kids, it can't be to do with the Dils are fightin' the kids, that'd be pointless, because then you'd just be fightin' yourselves and would be obviously what everybody would love you to be doing, I mean the establishment, the status quo. Therefore you do have some kind of class thing, rock and roll always had a definite class nature to it. It was got rid of in the '50s 'cos they saw that it could dangerously change youth into becoming a continuous rebellion, so they decided to feed them with something that was much more to do with what I said about Donna Summer, just softens things and makes you feel alright.

Peter: . . . the problem that happened with the hippies wherein they became what they abhorred.

Malcolm: Now I don't think that those particular people ever were any different from what they abhorred.

Peter: But they were youth and therefore they were nothing separate at the time.

Malcolm: One thing they didn't understand was that youth must hate and not love. Nobody in terms of young kids should ever wanna bring their fathers together with them. The idea of Woodstock where their fathers could come if they wished was awful. I would much rather have a fence where, if their fathers came, I would shoot them.

Slash: You guys are saying that the hippies were ineffectual. I'm not talking to you, Malcolm, because you've got a different set of values, but I'm talking to you, Peter. In some respects the hippies WERE effectual because they brought us closer to equal rights and women's liberation, and they brought the total society closer to that.

Malcolm: No they didn't.

Slash: Yes they did . . . the hippies took a positive attitude and failed. What are you s'posed to do, take a negative attitude and succeed?

Peter: Malcolm says you have to learn how to hate, a negative attitude is what you need, all you need to know is how to destroy, the building comes of itself.

Slash: Malcolm is also a r&r manager who says his ultimate goal is not to sell any records! (laughs) . . . so there's a definite negative attitude there . . .

(To Peter) Why do you bother managing the Dils? Just go out and destroy what you want destroyed.

Peter: No. Individual destruction means nothing, that's the fault of the anarchist.

Malcolm: It doesn't really accomplish anything . . .

Rory: It accomplishes a bigger pile of shit.

Malcolm: I'm much more concerned with the practicality of what you can do, not what you might be able to do. That just gets into hypotheses. What you can do is maybe change people's social outlook on their lives. Managing the Dils is all right, I don't really know who they are and what they perform, I can only say their aim must be to destroy the myth that the Dils are anything other than a cheap r&r band. The most exciting about r&r is when you realize that the experience is in the hands of the kids, not in the hands of the stage or the performers, and if you don't sell any record, then . . . Ultimately when it comes to a party, somebody wants to play some music . . .

Peter: The whole point is to just get rid of music . . .

Rory: No fun.

Malcolm: I think that's the most fun. You make people within a situation find their own means.

Slash: Create viable alternatives to music . . .

Rory: I happen to like music.

Malcolm: If music has any force in terms of young kids willing to do something exciting and adventurous, then it should engineer a situation in which these kids can come together for the purpose of creating as much havoc as possible and change their lives. If it can't do anything other than being purely a softening blow for the headaches that occur to you during the course of a fuckin' day living in a concrete jungle like Los Angeles or London, I don't wanna know about it. You can just as easily listen to Donna Summer as you can to anybody else and don't fuckin' sell me the idea that one kind of music is that much different from another in that respect.

Rory: Then why do these kids listen to the Pistols in preference to D. Summer?

Slash: It defines their youthfulness, an identity for their movement. Without that music they would have nothing.

Malcolm: That's a very tragic viewpoint. If that's true, you wouldn't have Rolling Stone writing such ridiculous articles . . .

Slash: They're concerned that maybe this is a trend . . . you can't use that as an indicator, you can't use NBC . . .

Rory: When the kids first left the disco across the street to listen to the Sex Pistols the Sex Pistols meant more to them than the disco music.

Malcolm: Their reason for being there was that they became more important . . . Where most music happens, is what you hear on the radio or what you play in your room on your own. The other type of music is a performance. The only people who are saying punk is dying is because punk isn't selling as many records as other kinds of music. What is the best music? The music that sells the most records. What is the most entertaining kind of music? The music that sells the most records.

Slash: There are 10 million teenagers in America and you set out to destroy music and say "this is worthless, don't buy records." What do you create in the interim?

Malcolm: I understand what the virtues of punk rock are—you jump up and dance, smash a table, bash a tin can—it's something to get involved in for a time and it's over. I don't think you should hold yourself down to the fact that it's going to be THE way to communicate to everybody. It's a means of seizing a culture that is dull, that has been taken over by an awful capitalist situation, and is perpetuated by the idea that it means a lot to young people. All the Pistols did was to demonstrate that music could be legitimate for other purposes outside the music industry, like destroy a medium that had been taken away from the kids and sold to them again as something they should enjoy.

Slash: What did you try to do with the New York Dolls?

Malcolm: I tried to turn them from being a bunch of idiotic, sissy nonsense that was definitely loved by the middle class in America, especially the rock critics, and turn them into something that would be a little more dangerous.

The Vietnam war was just about to end. I said to them once that red was the color, let's use that, let's use Chairman Mao and let's use the hammer and sickle and let's use all the things that America right now is arrogant about and let's make it an event. Let's do it in N.Y. in the glare of Lisa Robinson, etc. Let's not try to assimilate and become part of some silly rock art form. That's the only way that you can get out of a situation that's lethargic and boring.

So they did that and I designed a load of clothes that would be totally red, made sure that when they played I would have this huge fuckin' backdrop with this star, hammer and sickle on it, and I was cast off by Lisa Robinson as some mad eccentric from England because other people from England had told her so, and I was made a little impotent. I was sent home and that was the end of it.

David Johanssen, who was pretty stupid, made the worst statement to the press he possibly could by saying, "Listen, Lenny (or Lisa), it's just fun, you know, we're just having a good time," and of course that took all the edge and ideas off it and rendered me impotent and that's when I left N.Y.

Slash: What do you think of the various directions they have gone?

Malcolm: I think Thunders, who's a half-junkie, came to N.Y. and had a great band called the Heartbreakers. They made good r&r songs in terms of r&r. They muffed it up through their homosexual manager and they became less significant within six months and eventually petered out. And David Johanssen is still running around thinking he's the wonderboy from N.Y. with silly ideas about being a blues singer and ultimately he is a bore. Sylvain Sylvain had this idea about playing with a band called the Criminals, which he did, wearing masks over his face but not producing any criminal acts, so to me he was a bit of a joke too. Killer Kane, Arthur Kane was a wonderful guy, I liked him very much and he eventually produced a record called "Mr. Cool" which was pretty trite and I'm very sorry they didn't make it, that it wasn't anything other than that. I think that happens to most bands and what one always tries to fight. The industry is always wrong. They always make you end up an asshole.

Slash: Did drugs have anything to do with the downfall of the Dolls?

Malcolm: They didn't have any ideas, their ideas were over. "Personality Crisis" was great, but what next? Can't start re-hashing "Stranded in the Jungle" and pretend you're monkeys! Drugs can be a drag. I'm not totally against it, it's an idea very much based in the '60s. It doesn't really work, it makes everybody dull and boring and it's become a cliche. I don't think that was the ultimate reason for the Dolls' collapse.

They lost the concept of what their original intentions were through being given all these accolades by the press and being the darlings of the establishment. I think it went to Johanssen's head, really thought he was a genius. Now maybe he's woken up and realized he's a bit of an asshole. Apparently before the Dolls he was preaching anarchistic ideas on the street corners. Perhaps that's what he should go back to.

Photo: Fayette

Slash: Isn't it still better to be with an r&r band, even with that shit to dea with, than being in a factory?

Malcolm: No, it's not very much different. It's very dull. I'd much rather be in the audience. Johnny Rotten and everybody else would too. They always loved being considered a band that was a total load of crap. The best concert was San Antonio—the guys threw a can and went crazy, Jones rose to the occasion and loved it, Rotten got hot dogs and cream cakes and lemon cake thrown on his face and at his jacket . . .

Slash (rudely interrupting the fond memories): You paid 100 bucks for all this shit, the least you can do is say something relevant to all the kids out there.

Malcolm (sleepy voice): I'd say have as sexy a life as possible . . . lead a really sexy life.

Slash: Get fucked, get fucked up . . .

Malcolm: I don't know if they want to get fucked up . . . What do you want them to do, Peter?

Peter: Wear more clothes, take less drugs . . .

Malcolm: I think sex is great. It's better than listening to records.

Slash: What are your sexual interests?

Malcolm: I came to Hollywood and this director figured that the scene I should play in the history of the Pistols movie was to be in Hollywood, surrounded by child prostitutes, and then I would give this rap about my fascination with youth, how it's important to make youth run wild in an exciting environment. And he thought I should deliver some form of lechery, which I'm very able to do, beside a coal fire in a typical decadent room, with these 13-year-old child prostitutes in my lap . . . I haven't done it yet.

Slash: You're avoiding the question. What are your own personal sexual fantasies?

Malcolm: Well, I kinda like seeing the 13-year-old boys, I suppose . . . sitting on my lap sounds kind of weird . . .

Slash: Maybe on your face?

Malcolm: I dunno, it depends if they've washed their knickers . . . (unintelligible section) . . . she was in love with a really wealthy entrepreneur called Charles Claw. She became his mistress.

Slash: Is this your mother?

Malcolm: Yea, this was my mother. My father was a bit of a jerk-off, he couldn't read or write, some typical Ukrainian Jewish idiot, that was my stepfather. My mother was very good-looking, she's only just 45 now. I was just intrigued, a young kid, you know, completely obsessed with who was the next man in her life . . . Eventually I left home because I realized that I didn't fuck my mother and obviously had to interest other parties. I found it difficult and I think I must've had about eight fucks in my whole life.

I met my mother after I left home, about four years later on the tube train. I sat next to her and we never spoke to each other, you know how you see a reflection in the window opposite? Suddenly I thought, fuck, that's my mother sitting next to me, and my mother must've looked at me and neither of us said anything for about ten stops and we both got out at the same stop. I was at art school at that time, going to some poxy art gallery, my mother was going to the factory. We never said anything to each other and that's the last time I saw her.

Do you think that's a pretty interesting story or do you think it's full of shit?

Slash: It's very symbolic.

Malcolm: Yeah. And I thought, "What a great fuck she might have been five years ago!"

Slash: Did you ever try her bras on?

Malcolm: Yes, of course, and put rouge on my cheeks and then I'd go to the local disco, without the bra but I'd have the rouge on, and these guys would say, "Say, what the hell you got all that shit on your face for??" and I'd say, "Well, I dunno, it looks pretty good to me."

the end

THE
WHISKY
652-4202

JUNE 15
GARY VALENTINE
& THE KNOW
FURYS

•

JUNE 16-17
DAVID JOHANSEN GROUP
GARY VALENTINE
& THE KNOW

•

JUNE 18-19
BROTHEL CREEPERS
CONTROLLERS
PLUGZ

•

JUNE 20-21
ALLEYCATS
FLESHEATERS
CONSUMERS

•

JUNE 22-24
Direct from Mabuhay Gardens:
NUNS
NEGATIVE TREND
SLEEPERS
OFFS
Special Guest Compere:
Dirk Dirksen!

•

JUNE 25-26
School's Out!
THE BAGS
DYAN DIAMOND
FURYS

•

JUNE 27-28
ZIPPERS
JOHNNY NOVOTNY
BATES MOTEL

•

JUNE 29
WEASELS

•

JUNE 30-JULY 2
WEIRDOS
SUICIDE COMMANDOS
UXA

•

JULY 20-22
THE SCREAMERS

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE

Slash: Why did you name yourselves Negative Trend?
Will: We wanted a name having something to do with negation. We kinda got the idea from Upshot.
Slash: What's Upshot?
Will: It's a loose collection of writers who kind of chronicle the breakdown of society. They're good friends, they've had a lot of influence on us—me in particular. They have two criteria for friendship: You have to like punk music and you have to like getting really drunk.
Slash: What happened to you guys at Winterland with the Pistols?
Will: We were supposed to play because Malcolm McLaren wanted a band to cause trouble, he wanted a riot, a surprise thing. We were willing to play but Bill Graham's people said if we went on stage they'd throw us off.
Slash: You have quite a reputation for total destruction.
Will: It's something we try and cultivate . . . not the reputation—total destruction!
Slash: You guys always look really angry when you play.
Will: When I first started it was like a super battle between me and my guitar, so I'd get real pissed off just trying to get the notes out. Now I'm playing better but there's still a lot of anger. I really resent the audience treating us as a spectacle. Dirk's always saying to us that this isn't reality, that it's a theatre of illusion. Like he'll tell us, "You put out too much for that show, you should have held back and teased the people." He treats it like pure theatre but we don't approach it that way. We go through this shit all week to get on stage so we can do as much as we can to bring chaos and disorder for our little half hour.
Slash: Who comes to your shows?
Will: Greasy hippies, kids from the suburbs who are just insane, that are into getting fucked out, running around and breaking things and trashing Dad's car.
Slash: Do they contribute to the destruction of your shows?
Will: Not enough. This one guy used to pick up chairs and tables and pound them to the music—he's gone to Washington and invented a new dance where he writhes on the floor and goes into spasms attacking people and breaking furniture.
Slash: Does the audience always get on stage during your shows?
Will: If they want to. People have to be encouraged, they're not spontaneous enough. People still have too much of a sense of division between the audience and the band; we try to break that down. One time we played, I was in the audience and almost everyone else was on stage—that was great. The most important thing is to play for kids that aren't into anything, hate school, hate their parents, hate working, hate everything, those kids have a lot of energy. We wanta get out of the city and play places like Santa Cruz and the Central Valley where kids have heard about it but haven't seen it.

Slash: Did you play music at all when you lived in England?

Will: No, I couldn't play music then.
Slash: Why did you all of a sudden come here and decide to form a band?

Will: 'Cos there weren't any bands to see here.
Slash: What do you think of people just picking up instruments and playing in bands?

Will: It's really easy to play on stage, I've told the audience not to clap because they could do it themselves . . . I had this guitar book and I was trying to learn to play but it was teaching me things like "White Christmas" and "Jingle Bells."

Slash: So do you consider yourself a musician by trade?

Will: I'm not gonna do this forever. After it gets too easy it won't be very interesting. I'll have to save up my money and buy a gun and become a terrorist.

Slash: Join the Baader-Meinhof . . . commit suicide . . . something romantic along those lines.
Will: I have these romantic ideas about that sort of thing but I wouldn't want to join the Baader-Meinhof gang.

Slash: Why not?
Will: 'Cos they're all dead!
Slash: So many people have accepted the term "anarchist" as part and parcel of the punk scene, but you've considered yourself an anarchist for a long time.

Will: It's become very fashionable. I'm not sure a lot of people understand that anarchism isn't just something out of the blue that's gonna fall from the sky.

Slash: How come you say you're so anti-art but make such conscious attempts at dress and the graphics on your posters?

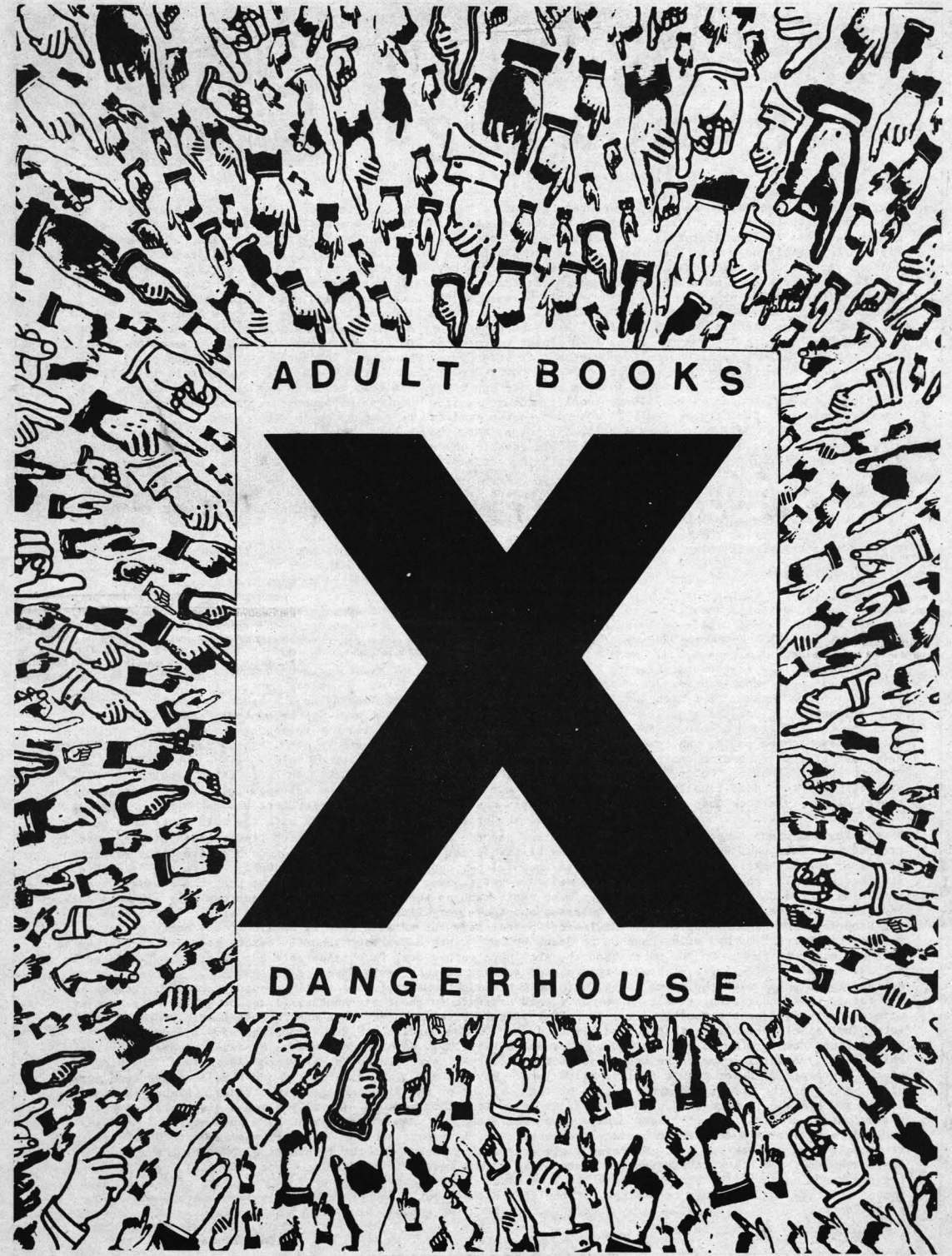
Will: When I think of art I think of sterile environments like museums and galleries. All that stuff's for rich people, it's removed from day to day life. The Artist is creative by proxy for all the people who do shit jobs all their lives, people that scrape just to survive, they rely on the artist to be creative and intelligent for them.

Slash: Do you think the San Francisco art scene is slumming in the punk scene?

Will: One of the reasons I hate art so much is 'cos you get all these people who think they're so clever, they tape themselves up and put in a safety pin . . .
Slash: Then they're conceptual.
Will: These bands come along like Tuxedo Moon and the Readymades and sing clever little songs that are meaningless, that don't touch anyone on any level, the only reason they're doing it is 'cos it's the cool thing to do.
Slash: What's your song "NWLF" about?
Will: I wrote it when they were doing all the bombings in San Francisco. I'm not into doing it now, but it really excites me . . .
Slash: Vicarious thrills.
Will: It's exciting when things like that are happening and they're blowing up the Opry, it's like a pat on the back to that, and we sing "We are the poor, we ain't got a thing, oppressors gonna pay, you can't treat people this way, they're gonna blow you up, blow you up . . ." It's about how people get so angry about the way they're treated that they react in super-violent ways.
Slash: Do you think the bombings really do any good?
Will: Blowing up a building isn't gonna change the world but it can make you feel a lot better for a day or two.
Slash: It threatens, makes a situation more precarious.
Will: In Paris there's these people called the Breakers who hide in the middle of a demonstration and break out of it and start vandalizing shops and turning cars over; that's exciting and threatening, probably more so than the NWLF 'cos you know if they had their way they'd be just another power elite . . .

(Later) When we went to Santa Cruz we were very visible as punks, people'd come up to us and say, "Hey, are you punks, man? Gonna spit in my hand?" We met this one guy who said he was the Cosmic Negro, "My spaceship's around the corner, I really like you punks, you've got a lot to say," but San Francisco is probably the only place in the world where you can walk down the street looking weird and you won't be noticed very much 'cos there's so many freaks and cripples. At first people thought that we were just bizarre mutants, weird leather fags, now people drive by yelling "punk rock!"
Slash: Why do you like Kim Fowley stuff?
Will: 'Cos he's so perverse, he's such a user.
Slash: Does that mean you like power pop?
Will: It means I have a sense of humor . . . who else could put out Venus and the Razorblades, a complete piece of shit, and announce the break-up of the band on the other side? That's great . . . I like speed, let's talk about Methedrine . . . too bad you don't have a camera and you could watch me drool.

Interview by Jean Caffeine

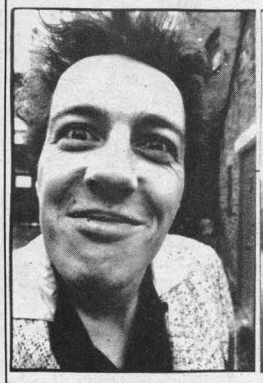

ADULT BOOKS
X
DANGERHOUSE

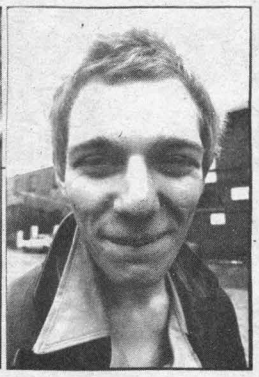
Metropolitan Mumblings

from London, by Tony D.

Okay right, first of all news about everyone's favourite band - The Sex Pistols. Johnny Rotten has got his band together: Keith Levine on guitar (check out "What's my name" on the Clash album), Jah Wobble on bass (his previous credentials include assisting Sid Vicious in his notorious Nick Kent bashing incident back in 76. In true Pistols/Punk style he's only been playing bass for about a month) and a canadian 23 year old drummer named Jim Walker. As could be expected, Rotten disowns the name "Johnny Rotten" and has reverted to his natural "John Lydon" for a moniker. One of his main concerns is that the Jones/Cook/Biggs tapes made in Rio might be released under the Pistols name, so he should be well pleased by the ever increasing rumors that a 12-inch single of Ronald Biggs singing "God Save the Sex Pistols", backed with Vicious singing "My Way", is coming out with the name "The Sex Pistols" on the label. These same rumor mongers also claim the other three Pistols have got back together and are looking for a new lead singer to carry on under the original name, Steve Jones and Paul Cook both having left their short-lived partnership with Johnny Thunders. Thunder's single, "Dead or Alive", is reputed to have featured the duo but now we'll never know. Glenn Matlock was last seen on television latest rock show, Revolver, still valiantly pushing mediocre pop songs. Malcolm MacLaren was last seen relaxing in a small park in West London with a blonde female, hiding his face when my informant came close in a classic "No Comment" pose..... Dead Fingers Talk have announced the imminent release of their debut album. After hearing their debut single "Hold on to Rock n Roll" I'm not so sure though this group have got as much to offer as I first thought. Also out and disappointing is Slaughter & The Dogs "Do it Dog Style". Some would say The Dogs did punk one of its greatest disservices by bringing out a single called "Where have all the Boot Boys gone?" which contributed to the return of the skinheads. Skinheads are now the danger at punk gigs, any punk gig, with their disturbing habits of picking on unsuspecting innocents and beating them to a pulp just for a laugh. Just as teds, punks and all the other rock n roll factions were just starting to get together under the banner of "rock n roll" the skins have come along fighting teds under the name of punks and fighting punks under the name of skins, starting the teds off with a vengeance to stomp out punks again.... Just recently the National Chart System drastically overhauled their sales-figure getting methods, in theory stopping chart-rigging and corruption. Is it coincidence that there's now 12 punk-related singles in the top 40, including long overdue success for Patti Smith and Blondie ? Reggae lovers will no doubt be pleased to know that commercialised reggae is topping the charts just now in the form of "Rivers of Babylon" as sung and performed by disco group Boney-M (previously most well-known through their undescribably crass attempt at political consciousness in a song called "Belfast"). Meanwhile on the streets the kids with the suss are bopping around to "The Day the World turned Day Glo" by X Ray Spex, "Suspect Device" by Stiff Little Fingers and the Nipple Erectors' punkabilly "King of the Bop". Also amazingly popular is the "Plastic Surgery" track by the Ants off the soundtrack album of "Jubilee" - it's fast becoming as de rigueur on the walls of punk squats (dis-used houses or flats re-opened by homeless punks, mostly under-age runaways) as "Anarchy in the UK" and "Complete Control is all we ask".
In their uptown shelters the rich punk hip-set are currently snorting cocaine to the sound of "Satisfaction" by the Residents (the Devo version is now in the charts and therefore no longer worthy of consideration) and "T.V. O.D." by the Normals - according to my sources.... New Clash single coming out following the non-event of "Clash City Rockers" three months ago, this one's called "White Man in Hammersmith Palais". Still on the Clash, they've only just started recording their second album (or is it their third? Malicious talk says they attempted to record an entire album of "Police and Thieves" reggae songs with reggae producer Lee Perry which resulted in dismal failure - the ideas finally pooled together and "Complete Control" was the salvaged result, with more conventional Clash-style rock than was intended). Feelings that the Ramones popularity here has taken seven-league boot strides downwards since they last played here at Christmas have intensified with the twin facts that their single "Do you wanna dance" sunk without a mention, and the potentially blockbusting line-up change news is being treated with less than ecstatic hysteria by the british press and audience. News of double live album set impending from the blitzkrieg boppers can only lose them further respect in the eyes of punks. We're not Peter Frampton/Barry Manilow consumers after all, are we? Are we? (answer me someone)...The news that the Runaways are returning to the UK in July raised about as much excitement as the news that the new Boomtown Rats album is called "Tonic for the Troops" and is to be released soonish - very little. No, the fervour around just now is for the Siouzie & The Banshees bootlegs. At least two are ready for release (one is an album, the other a single : "The Lord's Prayer" backed with "Make Up to Break Up" or "Captain Scarlett")shortly before it's announced they've joined a major company. On the other hand the Ants have turned down "a considerable amount of money" offered by Polydor for a one-off single, "because they wanted to turn me into David Essex" says Adam Ant. Instead they've decided to go ahead with their own label (with only the mighty Meglovision, a film company taking an interest in all things punk, to finance them) and we can expect a single in about six months. I reckon we'll see a bootleg before then. Also on the bootleg scene is a "Sex Pistols live in Tulsa" tape that's just itching to be turned into vinyl - only trouble is that Record Plants that have done previous Pistols bootlegs have a funny habit of being closed down pretty soon afterwards. Very anarchistic.....Fashion news are as confused as ever. Everything from 1976 still seems to be around apart from safety-pins and Tracy (a Sex Pistols/Sex "face" who died of cancer last week). Newer trends include kilts (pref. Royal Stuart Tartan - the red one that's always been popular) worn over the top of bondage trousers or tight silver or imitation animal skin strides. Almost an institution now are the leopard-skin print drainpipes in various combinations - usually black spots on red/pink/green yellow/white material, but I've seen pink dots on white etc. I was most impressed by a punk at the X Ray Spex Ants concert wearing a red tartan bondage trousers, kilt, intricate bondage jacket (I was later told he'd made it himself) and a black top hat. Outrageous elegance at its best. For the less daring however, the mode of dress seems to be a black Harrington (a bomber like jacket made with plain cloth-type material), part of the skinheads uniform, and slightly baggy jeans or plain drainpipe type trousers. A main part of fashion also concerns badges, and the most recurring just now if you check out a concert audience's lapels are Sham 69,Complete Control, Ants , R.A.F. (Red Army Faction - the terrorist group), Blondie and Buzzcocks.

Prince of Darkness





Photos: Dankof (except Souxie by Jen Gibbs)

THE WEIRDOS are manipulated by PLANIT ENTERPRISES, 1260 N.Harper Ave., Hollywood 90046 213-656-4216. Photo: Jules Bates. Made in Hollywood. 1978.

"A different backdrop every night!"

THE ULTIMATE FINAL CONTRADICTORY HIGHLY MEANINGFUL TOTALLY IRRELEVANT ARTHUR J. AND THE GOLD CUPS SCIENTIFIC PROBE.

ARTHUR J. AND THE GOLD CUPS

(is it GOLDCUPS or GOLD CUPS anyway?)

Kellie: musical director, keyboards, vocals
Geza X.: musical arranger, guitar, vocals
Spaz Attack: vocals, acrobatics, spaz attacks

Pat Delaney: alto sax, shyness
Andy Gervay: tenor sax
Hal Negro: trumpet, bass, vocals

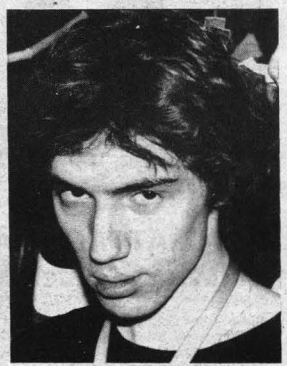
Chris & Kathy (Cupcakes): dancing, back-up vocals
Hector Penalose: bass
Brendan: fake drums, embarrassment

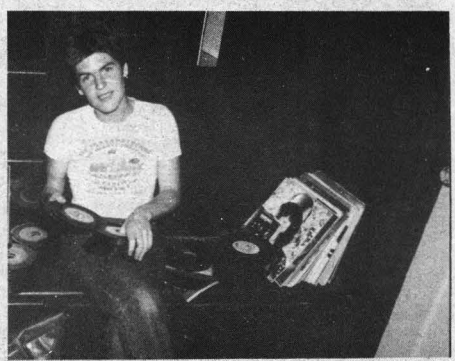
Honorary-Life-Members-Even-If-They-Never-Play-With-Us-Again-Although-We-Hope-and-Pray-to-God-They-Will-Some-Day

David Braun: organ, embarrassment
Mark Morbid: guitar
Bruce Barf: bass, organ

Photos: David Goldberg

Photos: Eileen





First, we tried to ignore them. We sensed trouble right away and knew any allusion to a possible brief interview would be the start of a maddening odyssey, full of frustrations and dead-ends. But band members kept leaving the Goldcups' nucleus to do wonders with other bands, and therefore pointint at this group of crazies as ***the*** source of most of L.A. punk creativity, their shows kept splitting our usually unified audience right down the middle, with some loathing the very stage they had occupied forever after and others raving and screaming "genius," and the gand members themselves were heard incessantly contradicting each other, announcing imminent break-ups, mutiny in the ranks, 360-degree changes of direction . . . The subject had to tackled or Slash's journalistic reputation (what kind of reputation? —Ed.) would suffer severely.

Of course it was impossible to gather all the band members at the same time, so Macarel (well known for paying no mind to any kind of absurdity facing him) tracked down Spaz Attack, the singer and acrobat seen in action on this issue's cover, while the rest of us cornered a sizable section of the elusive Goldcups. At that time they were under the impression that their name was The Satin Tones and had even vaguely performed under that guise. Attempts to force them to some kind of explanation never really went anywhere, their ever-so-shifty spokesman and leader even managed to cause a split of factions in the Slash ranks and to completely confuse everything and everyone.

Meanwhile, one of our reviewers shrugged his shoulders and wrote an indicting account of a couple of their concerts, knowing it wuld take lots more to bring them all to their senses. We even added the official history of the Goldcups and their "declaration of intentions," or whatever that thing is, to make sure you will be as muddled as we are. Good luck!

Arthur J. was originally conceived by Bruce Barf as a rather macabre meeting of James Brown with the Soft Machine during its early St. Tropez incarnation, an unlikely Caribbean moon in June surfing fantasy involving a gang bang ritual with Hayley Mills, Lesley Gore and Annette Funicello committed over a broken surfboard by a bunch of leather-jacketed, psychotically repressed, continental homosexuals.

It quickly degenerated into a free-for-all orgy of plagiarism without shame.

In its second period it represented something less complex, simply a surf party for pink people who enjoy beaches and full moons but detest sunlight . . .

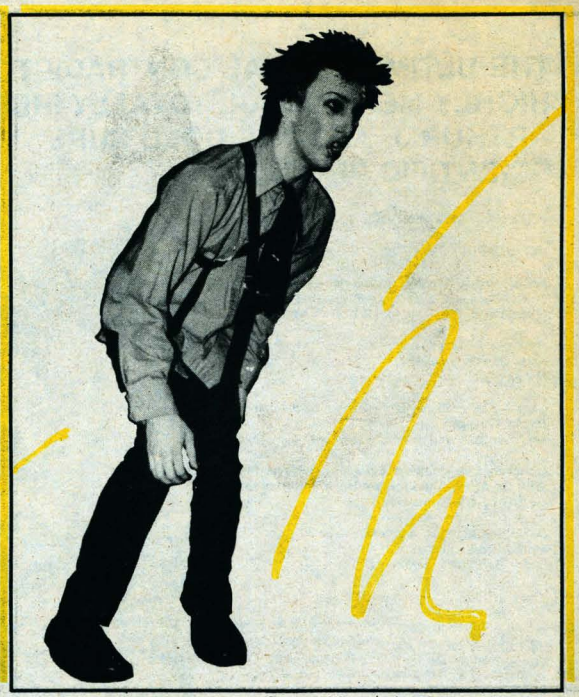
I still maintain Arthur J. is a surf band, more Riviera Coast than Californian since it smacks very heavily of French cabaret psychedelia—in particular on the one occasion young David Brown played with us—"Psychedelic Cabaret" is the darkest cabaret of all . . . maybe it will be ***the next big thing!!***

Our ambition is to be commissioned to do the soundtrack to one of those low budget Italian pop movies where there's a party and we're the beat group in the back belting out that cheesey organ sound . . . We'd drive those Italian teenagers wild!

"We did it again" is supposed to be an updated punk mantra dedicated to the Masque and to the punk rock enigma which lives on in this city despite efforts by the media to kill off the three-chord oracle which brought us together and gave us so much.

Our next project with the wonderful, newly appointed musical director will be to create hope for happiness, not blissful happiness, but minimal simple-minded euphoria . . . Inexplicable simple-minded euphoria is the soul of Arthur J.

Brendan Mullen



Photos: Herb Wrede / Painstaking White-out: Philomena

SPAZ ATTACK TALKS FOR A DIME

A. Macarel Interview

Slash: Is the Gold Cups your band?
Spaz: Actually, the Gold Cups aren't even a band, the Gold Cups are a joke.
Slash: What's so funny about it?
Spaz: What's so funny about it? Well, on the Masque walls all the groups who thought they were hot wrote gossip about other groups so Bruce Barf and I wrote fake names on the wall so people would laugh at them. We wrote Arthur J. and the Gold Cups real big and people kept saying, "Hey, when are these guys gonna play?" We all got together one day and said, "Hey, why don't we just be Arthur J. and the Gold Cups?" Our idea was to get booed off the stage but it didn't happen. That's the joke. It still exists.
Slash: Do you write the lyrics?
Spaz: That's another thing about Arthur J. It's all plagiarism. We get words from Hayley Mills, James Brown, Soft Machine, Little Richard, anybody. Cal Worthington. When I first did Cal Worthington I thought, "This is the most stupid thing I ever did in my whole life in front of a large audience." When I saw how much people liked it, I thought, "Well, I'm going to add on to this."
Slash: Was your first performance premeditated?
Spaz: No, it was thrown upon me. I'd been preparing for a long time but I wasn't ready for my debut. I was forced on stage, someone threw me a microphone. The band's playing. Everyone's saying, "come on, sing," and what could I do?
Slash: How did the Gold Cups break up?
Spaz: It's not that we don't like Brendan, it's just that he was a little too bossy. We couldn't do what we wanted to do so we all just decided we were going to quit.
Slash: What is it you wanted to do?
Spaz: It's not so much what we wanted to do, it's like, when we were rehearsing, if he didn't like something he'd just stop playing the drums and stare at all of us and go, "What'd you do that for?"
Slash: Do you plan on reforming?
Spaz: Possibly. If not, probably we won't reform. We'll be in other bands.
Slash: Were the Gold Cups ever formed?
Spaz: In the beginning it was. It was Mark Morbid and Geza on guitars and Bruce Barf on bass, Brendan on drums, Hal Negro played the trumpet and Pat from the Deadbeats played saxophone and Scott, the singer of the Deadbeats, played saxophone and I played the fool.
Slash: How do you practice?
Spaz: In the bathroom with the door locked.
Slash: What do you do in there?
Spaz: I was joking. I don't really practice at all. I just do what fits at the right second.
Slash: What's some of the better things you've done?
Spaz: As far as physical accomplishments, I think the flip is what everyone likes. I think the most I've accomplished without the singing is to put everyone on edge. So they think I'm crazy and wonder why I'm not dead. That's given me some personality.
Slash: What did you think of your voice the first time you heard it?
Spaz: I thought there was something wrong with my ear. I thought, "If I get it on the loudspeaker, it's going to sound even worse." But it sounds OK.
Slash: Have you ever had a job?
Spaz: I've had two jobs. The first job, I was a commercial artist in Ohio. I quit there to move out here and work at Pic and Save. Then I stayed at the Plungers' house for about two weeks and I was really motivated. I was motivated to do something but I wasn't motivated to go to work because none of them did. Sleep all day, wake up at seven, hey, let's go to the Whisky, let's go to the Masque. That changed my life style. Then I built from there. My name's Spaz, I'm dumber than shit, I don't know a goddamn thing.
Slash: How did you get that name?
Spaz: Trudie gave it to me because at the Plungers' I did as many asinine things as I could think of consecutively on purpose and she said, "You're such a spaz, we'll call you Spaz."
Slash: Are you destined for fame, fortune and wealth?
Spaz: Especially the wealth. I don't care about being famous or well known or anything, I just want the money. Call me a capitalist but once I get straightened out then I'll worry about everything else. Right now everyone is too concerned with making me a big star. I don't care about being a star, I'm like Cal Worthington. C'mon down, I want your car, I'll do anything to get your car, I'll steal your car if I have to.
Slash: What's the most desperate thing you ever did for cash?
Spaz: Cash?

ARTHUR J AND THE GOLDCUPS

(in their last configuration, THE SATINTONES)

Kelly Quinn, Brendan Mullen and Hal Negro

Slash: How did you first get involved as Arthur J and the Goldcups?
Hal: The band was originally Bruce's idea.
Slash: But Bruce Barf has gone on to bigger and better things, huh?
Hal: Bruce Barf is now in the Weirdos . . . but they're not weird anymore. It was a cold, calculated move designed only to attract record company interest.
Slash: Bruce Barf was a cold, calculated move?
Hal: No, no, the Weirdos were the cold cats. Bruce Barf never showed up to any rehearsals or any performances . . .
Slash: Brief intermission . . . who's missing?
Hal: Vanilla and Chocolate Cupcake are missing, the Cupcake sisters, Pat Delaney . . .
Slash: Who are the permanent members of the gang and who are the temporary members?
Brendan: You can't really be a member of a concept.
Slash: Will you ever develop it into an idea?
Brendan: No, because as soon as we do that it negates itself, that's why we can't play, without cancelling ourselves out.
Slash: Do you think this is the best approach to

please record companies that might be interested in signing you?
Brendan: No, because we're as disposable as a sheet of toilet paper, the way rock 'n' roll should be—disposable.
Slash: Do your young friends agree with you or are they going to starve along for the rest of their lives with your crazy conflict?
Hal: I wanna make a lot of money.
Slash: Who is ready right now to join the Weirdos if there's a chance? . . . (No reply) . . . and what will you do, Brendan, when you're old and rheumy-eyed? . . . How about starting some punk club?
Brendan: That might be a good idea . . .
Slash: How do you young people feel about being involved with such a creature?
Kelly: Well, his ideas sure seem awfully fucked up at times, but then he plays the drums and he's OK.
Slash: Is Brendan just basically a good drummer gone wrong?
Kelly: He's a bad drummer gone wrong.
Brendan: I'm not a bad drummer, I'm a fake drummer.
Kelly: More like a rhythm machine.
Slash: How do you come to decisions in the Goldcups, do you vote?
Hal: We do whatever Geza says, pretty much.
Slash: Where does Geza stand in the band right now?
Hal: He doesn't, he says he can't do it 'cos he's committed to the Deadbeats. He's on tour with the Screamers right now, that's how committed to the Deadbeats he is.
Slash: What was the reason for the little outburst of schlock music at the last concert?
Hal: It wasn't schlock music, it was great . . . new direction, we feel really confident. The next big thing is anti-power-pop which is pop that has no power. It's pure pop. We had fun.
slash: Oh, we had fun too.
Brendan: There would have been added instruments except for the embarrassment of the other members of the band. They would not come within a mile of the band.
Slash: Did they come around once they saw . . .
Brendan: Very much so.
Hal: They jumped up on stage and did a Goldcups number.
Slash: Do you think you might have given the puritan punk movement a bad name by performing that stuff in front of the artsy fartsy crowd?
Hal: We did it *for* the artsy fartsy crowd.
Slash: Where did you find the costumes?
Hal: Brendan borrowed them from a friend, a very nice faggot with short hair and a tight beard.
Slash: Brendan, are you a fan of the Tom Robinson band?
Hal: I am, even though I'm not gay.
Brendan: I'm a secret fan of Barry Manilow.
Slash: It's not a secret any more . . . What's this whole deal about musical arrangers, isn't it a bit odd?
Hal: If you have ten people in a band, you've got to have someone who does it.
Slash: Who's in charge of discipline in the band?
Hal: Brendan. Then everyone gets mad at him . . . I think for now the Goldcups are dormant.
Slash: What is your relationship with the other local bands?
Hal: X was real mad at us because the other night they said we took up too much space . . .
Brendan: 'Cos we're not a real band and we've got nothing to say.
Slash: Do you think there's too much art damage in this crowd?
Kelly: Brendan wants the serious stuff to come off as not serious . . .
Brendan: It's not punk rock, it's just punk music . . . we are the only authentic punk band . . .
Slash: Do you think Spaz Attack has been using your band as a springing board for . . .
Hal: That was the idea behind the origination of the band.
Slash: Are you willing to go ahead and give Spaz the necessary push to stardom?
Hal: Yeah, I would.
Brendan: He used to do the Spaz around the audience and I felt there had to be some excuse or some way to do it on stage.
Slash: It's very nice, what happened, because it proves the old belief that anybody can do it . . .
What is the relationship between David Brown and the Goldcups?

Brendan: David Brown is our (even though he will deny it and is probably unaware of it and would not have the faintest or remotest idea why) spiritual and musical guru.

Slash: Would you say Arthur J and the Goldcups belong to the same school of punk rock as the Dils?
Goldcups: No!
Hal: The Dils are not for fun . . . we're not revolutionary anarchists, we're musical anarchists.
Slash: Don't you think that saying we'll be anarchists on one level and not on the other cuts what you want to say in half?
Kelly: You don't have to make a full commitment to anything.
Slash: But anarchy's a full commitment.
Kelly: Why do you have to be so pure? You can play around with anarchy.
Slash: If you have that definite taste for chaos in your music why do you keep it out of the rest of your life? I smell decadence in Arthur J and the Goldcups.
Goldcups: Alright!
Slash: You mean you're not going to defend yourselves?
Brendan: No, we're going to admit it.
Slash: I find the Dils fun and the Clash fun because they talk about fun things, like blowing up things . . . Maybe you're a bunch of cynics, which, if there's no hope, we'll be listening forever to Frank Sinatra and . . .
Brendan: We are . . .
Slash: Would you like to change your life?
Hal: I do every day . . .
Slash: Obviously what makes the Goldcups tick is not music and it's not the record contract—it's a way of coping with what? Loneliness? Boredom?
Goldcups: Loneliness! Boredom! Boredom! Loneliness! . . . Let's get together, yeah yeah yeah.
Hal: The world is going to change by itself.
Brendan: The world will not be changed by the Dils, the world will not be changed by a bunch of people bleaching their hair at the Canterbury . . .
Hal: What it will be changed by is the physical fact that the earth is now running on petro-chemical economy and it requires a great amount of this natural energy which is in a finite supply which has got to run out whether it's in 100 years or 200 years and by that time everything somewhere is going to have to come to a grinding halt, and everybody's going to have to go out to the fields or . . . everything's going to have to be switched over to nuclear power or some other source of power and everything's going to have to change that way, but they're not going to be able to run it like this for very much longer.
Slash: I've got it, Arthur J and the Goldcups are celebrating the end of the world.
Brendan (sings): "When there are clouds . . ."
Slash: How do the Cupcakes relate to this awfully world-weary philosophy of yours?
Hal: Well, we told them all about it . . . I tried to get in their pants . . .

KU KLUX KLAN (STEEL PULSE)

•

DON'T SPLIT IT (SUBWAY SECT)

•

LESS OF ME (TEENAGE JESUS)

•

PRETTY VACANT (PAUL JONES)

•

CAIRO (JOYELLA BLADE)

•

THIN WHITE LINE (AVENGERS)

•

LIFE AFTER LIFE
(ALTERNATIVE TV)

•

WE'RE DESPERATE (X)

•

JET BOY JET GIRL
(ELTON MOTELLO)

•

IS THIS LOVE (WAILERS)

•

EARLY MORNING COLT 45

•

CHALICE IN THE PALACE—LIVE
(U-ROY)

•

CLASH CITY ROCKERS
(THE CLASH)

•

ORPHAN (TEENAGE JESUS)

•

JAILHOUSE ROCK
(THE ALLEYCATS)

•

POCKET MONEY
(THE GLADIATORS)

•

(This chart only reflects under what influences the gang has been during the past month. Some of it has been recorded, some not. Each one added a bit to life.)

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Photo: Suzan Carson

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1. Elvis Costello - Pump it Up
2. The Normal - TV OD
3. Johnny Thunders - Dead or Alive
4. Nick Lowe - Little Hitler
5. Rammnes - Do you wanna dance
   Germany/Cretin Hop (UK different sleeve)
6. X Ray Spex - Day World Turned DayGlo
   (orange wax)
7. Germs - Lexicon Devil (US)
8. Gary Valentine - 1st one (US)
9. Dickies - You drive me ape + 2
   (US 10" white wax $2.50)
10. Residents - Satisfaction (yellow wax)
    (US)
11. Rich Kids - Marching Men
12. XTC - This is Pop
13. The Flys - Fun City
14. Lurkers - Ain't Got a Clue (free gold flexi)
15. Art Attacks - I'm a Dalek
16. Stranglers - Nice n sleazy
17. Wilko Johnson - Walkin' on the Edge
18. Ernie Graham - Romeo (Stiff)
19. V2 - Speed Freak
20. Vibrators - Automatic Lover
21. Jolt - Watcha Gonna do about it
22. Cuban Heels - Downtown
23. Klark Kent - Don't Care + 2 (green wax)
24. Radiators - Million Dollar Hero
25. Only Ones - Another girl, another planet
26. Willie Alexander - You've lost... loving feeling (green wax)
27. Modern Lovers - Astral Plane
28. Satan's Rats - You're gonna make me sick
29. 999 - Me and my Desire
30. Penetration - Firing Squad

OTHER 45's PLEASE LIST AITERNATE AITERNATES

Magazine - Shot by Both Sides
SMatch - All I want (foil sleeve)
Buzzcocks - I Don't Mind
Magazine - Touch and Go
X Ray Spex - Oh Bondage
Ultravox - Rokin Rok
Devo - Satisfaction (UK Stiff/Diff sleeve)
Yobs - Run Rudolph Run
Blitzkrieg Bop - Let's Go
Nick Lowe Bowi EP
Devo - Jocko Homo
Leila and the Snakes - Rock n roll Weirdos (US)
Vom - Live at Surf City EP

IMPORT 12" singles/ $3.50
Pere Ubu - DataPanik in the Year Zero / Sham 69 - I don't wanna / Police - Roxanne / Only Ones - Lovers of Today / Patti Smith - My Generation, Gloria / Pork Dukes - Makin' Bacon (yellow wax, $2) / Sex Pistols - Anarchy in the UK ($2)

IMPORT LP's / $6.50
Boys - Alternative Chartbusters / Johnny Koped - Cycledelic / Stranglers - Black & White (special $5.50) (includes free white EP) / Gorillas - Message to the World / Squeez - Same (US $4.99) / Tom Robinson Band - Power (US $5.99)

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We have uncovered a small cache of back issues and they are available for $1 each to the address on page three . .

LIVE

THE CONTROLLERS, SHOCK, AND THE BAGS
At The Whisky

Hey, here we are again on the Sunset Strip, where parking lots are becoming ***the*** in place to be seen at in between sets (I'll trade you a sip of vodka for a gulp of Southern Comfort, and how did you fucking get your hair ***that*** color?) where the fat slobs on their way to an all-nude all-dancing cabaret stare and snicker at the bizarrely slapped together kids who slouch along graffitied walls and whisper obscure judgments that make no sense in the morning, but what does???

Tonight, ladies and gentlemen from healthier corners of the country, you will witness three symptoms of malaise (that means when something's fucked but you can't pin it, sir) in today's youth. First you will see (and my god, ***hear!***) the Controllers, two white boys who could be your sons and a black girl who could not be your daughter. They will perform sweet songs that deal in the eternal topics dear to simple folks: love ("Doggie Style"), exoticism ("Do the Uganda"), compassion ("Hot Stumps").

Photo: Philomena

After a suitable rest for your ears, a group of youngsters that call themselves Shock will attempt to win your hearts with teenage stories and delightful melodies.

Finally, as a special treat for the gentlemen with a weakness for Girl Scouts (with and without uniforms), we will (again, after a proper intermission designed to let you pull out the Instamatic and collect future fond memories of those darling children of the night) unleash the Bags, all of them once law-abiding, parents-loving youngsters and now innocent victims of the aforementioned malaise. No doubt you will leave the club dreamily humming their touching tunes of bright-eyed hope, like "Survive," or the angelic "TV Killer." Ladies and gents, the mysterious phenomenon your church gazette told you about—the punk generation! .....

...I saw the Controllers looming over me (I like to be real close to some bands) for over 20 minutes, going thru songs at breakneck speed and discarding them before the end (actually, sometimes it was the songs that discarded ***them***). I saw them scream in the mike while hitting those chords and I saw Mad Dog Carla keeping the furious race on its white hot track while rolling her big white eyes like blacks are not supposed to do anymore if they've got dignity but Carla's dignity is her humor and her drumsticks not her facial expressions. She does not have to be cool, she's hot. I saw them fuck up and I saw them succeed, not especially worried about perfection but very intent on giving us a hard, blistering performance. They gained dozens of new fans while I was seeing all that, they will gain many more in the future 'cos they're for real and I bet this is what will only count in the end.

Shock has some problems. Problems relating to the audience, problems relating to who and what they are. They started as definite outsiders on the tiny purist scene, long hair, pop-tinged songs, very Starwood-rock type. They ignored the adversity and kept playing to doubtful or openly hostile spikey crowds. They changed their line-up, their material (don't mutter bandwagon—there are also such things as influences, evolution, admiration, no? When did ***you*** get your new hair-style?!) and repeatedly worked on breaking thru to the new crowd. Judging by that night, they may make it. Especially since brand new "punks" are joining every day, not aware of the strict set of qualifications we've been living under in new-waveland. There's still lots of hesitation in their approach, no feel of letting go and no spontaneous wildness; there's some unnecessary "hard" posing from the blond B. Idol type singer, but there's some good music, and guts. If only they were not so goddam serious about it.

The Bags were the Bags, zoom zoom crash wham tack a tack zip zip. (That means they were great, but you all know that, no point in fruitlessly searching for groovy new adjectives. It was like a blinding peek at future planet-wide chaos and the end of normality and that's that.) Alice was an orange-haired Girl Scout or den mother (how should I know these things?) and the bass player with the eyes like pits wore her hair like a voodoo jungle.

Me, I wore my Pic 'n' Save tennis shoes and a grin. Some nights, it's like that.

LOBOTOMY NIGHT NUMBER TWO WITH THE SNOT PUPPIES, THE REPTILES, MIDDLE CLASS AND THE GERMS
At (where else??) The Whisky

The brainless magazine we all love or hate (cross one), attracted some unusual sorts that evening. Older folks, jocks, hippies—my, my, is the music becoming acceptable, has it received the seal of approval of the Decent American Type of Entertainment Association or were things ***really*** dull that Tuesday in El Pueblo de Los Anrrreles? No matter, the more the merrier and all that rot.

Sorry, Snot Puppies, but I was late, having had to change from my factory overalls into my so-hip bondage underwear, imitation vinyl leather jacket and the rest of my highly personalized fab gear, then inhale a double cheeseburger with everything on it, even the cook's dandruff, wash it down with synthetic wine, ***then*** quickly check out the record store's new wave bin with all the Fink De Ville Television Iggy Pap Modern Lovers stuff and not much else—so I missed you. Did you miss me? Well then, we missed each other, isn't love wonderful? don't ever leave me again.

But I will say one thing (if only you'd keep it to that. —Ed.), the stage was terribly clean after your show.

Since I had time on my hands, I moodily made my way to the toilets to read the latest writings of my witty contemporaries and watch the hippies comb their hair and clog up the sink. I greeted my pals with the usual choice insults. They all looked almost as menacing as I, dark, sullen and already cross-eyed. The sound system was playing cute nostalgic shit but we don't even care anymore, that's how cynical we are. The floor was full of people and others.

A Bag announced the Reptiles as the Next Big Thing. They looked ¾ familiar 'cos they are ex-Controllers Charlie, the minimum dressing on drums, and Field Marshal what's-his-initials on bass, a young skinny ex-Cars ex-Bags on guitar and a new somebody who looks like a hoodlum and is probably one on vocals. They did stuff that went way over my purist tastes; I thought of early Bowie, I thought of Dolls. The singer really acted like a singer, gettin' it on and stuff, the skinny guitar was concentrating and watching his hands, comin' up with nice licks while Marshal clowned around the Charlie drummed hard and the wind blew her hair. Ice cubes kept a-flyin' and at the end the singing hoodlum leaped after someone below who'd done him wrong. It was a very nice efficient leap, right on target. Field Marshal tried to prove his bass also happened to be a club, Charlie forgot about her drums and came to join the action, the set was over.

After I had performed the routine backstage scene check-out and found it lacking in uniqueness and sordidness, I nonchalantly propped myself at the bar and waited for another vacant brotherly soul to buy me a refreshment.

I was still sitting on the same stool, staring at a pile of napkins and no refreshment in front of me, when Middle Class started. The sound hit me in the back like a semi-truck that's lost its brakes in a downhill curve. I turned around after the obligatory delay that shows the tourists you are a jaded, weary connoisseur and almost swallowed my Siouxie and the Banshees badge: Where were the safety pins? the electro shock hair? At least the ten pounds of chains around the scrawny neck? These guys looked normal. Like high school normal. Like chemistry class normal. Like writing a paper in the library normal. How come they sounded like twisted metal air raids and dynamite fumes? I was shocked. If you look like that, you're not supposed to sound like that. Yet it was obvious: the mob was pogoing with genuine furor, the aggression meter was in the red zone, this was certified punk fever grade triple-A beware of imitations. I've seen fast bands but these unknowns run with the best. And that curly-haired singer should, according to the basic laws of physics, end up with his vocal chords tied in a knot after 5 minutes.

And here I was, a fan of a band I had never seen before. A serious blow to my vital prejudices, that was. I felt so uncool, so uncliquey. I wanted to hide.

Even the Germs failed to restore my self-confidence. They still did chopped versions of their great tunes with the same disrespect for the original shape of the song; Darby still spent most of his time on the floor, crawling in or out of the clutching audience and collapsing on the amps like a corpse when the leaping bores him, but I sensed a new feel of efficiency and tightness in their music, almost a no-nonsense (for the Germs) direction toward a bigger future. As if one day they might actually appeal to others besides the few of us that know everything. And one of us (that knows everything) had told me the Germs were breaking up. Instead, they played better than ever. Something's wrong with my scene.

Photo: Colonna

THE OTHERS/THE FLESH EATERS
at the Driftwood in Redondo Beach

In a crowd of harmless surfers and hippies a band called The Others had their baptism of fire. This is a newly formed band (bass player had joined the night before) and they have a bit to go before creating a cult following. Their lead singer, a flaming red-headed wench from Georgia dressed in shredded synthetic leopard skin, enthusiastically belted out such songs as "Scrawny Piece of Meat," "Assassins of Youth," and "Mass Murders."

After the club owner insisted the bands turn their amps down so they could hear the drink orders at the bar, The Flesh Eaters pretended they were at a big rehearsal. Guitarist Stannard ran frenziedly back and forth into the audience, and singer Chris D. did some spontaneous new dirty verses to "Louie Louie" which aroused some tittering from the beer-brained crowd. Once the band had snagged some attention they performed their usual volcanic set. The folks really began to kick up their heels and the club owner even broke out onto the dance floor doing the Frug.

The only other familiar faces were the Alley Cats (who were doing the P.A.) but, according to the Driftwood audience meter, this music may have a wider appeal than we all imagined.

THE FLESH EATERS/THE AVENGERS
at Sokol Hall
SATIN TONES/ARTHUR J AND THE GOLD CUPS/X
Larchmont Hall Benefit for Lowell Darling for Governor

Dear Mom:

Sorry I didn't come over on Mother's Day for grasshoppers and rack of lamb to meet my newest "Dad." The menu sounded great but so did the Flesh Eaters.

The bass player introduced them as the "martyrs" of punk rock, probably because they always play at the bottom of the bill or in some "over 21" beer bar in disco limbo. Hippies call it paying your dues, Kim Fowley calls it playing for dog piss. Anyhow, the Flesh Eaters have had enough practice and are ready for the front line.

The rhythm boys (Jehovah Robot, drums; John Rechy, bas) are machine gunners and with new guitarist Stannard, they pace their set from full frontal assault to a "quasi-reggae" song, "I, I and I" when lead singer Chris D. calls to Jah with several long range screams with the low note starting in Hell and the high note somewhere in Purgatory. The wallflowers left their corners, the bartenders were taking photos, even the ticket-takers were doing the pogo. The Flesh Eaters can storm the gates of Heaven if they can get themselves on top of the bill.

Then to Larchmont Hall for another of those "art meets punk" catastrophes. An artist announces an event, rents a hall, sets the stage, and the punks are supposed to compose the picture. The passive L.A. artists wait for "art" to walk in, "art" to sing and dance, "art" to get drunk, and try to take "art" home to suck up some of its warm juices.

I arrived in time to see the "Satin Tones" (Arthur J and the Gold Cups disguised in tuxedos with zebra-skin lapels) performing some mellow cocktail-bar music while drinking cheap champagne and gnawing cigarette holders. This "easy listening" music got as boring as quickly as it does in the dentist's office, but the Satin Tones kept it up for a good half hour until it was as dead and flat as the 2 dollar sparkly they were drowning in.

Then the "real" AJ and the Gold Cups performed their usual set of cover versions of "Go See Cal," "Green Acres," and the Hayley Mills hit, "Let's Get Together." If you haven't seen them, this may seem like a pretty funny concept, but the band was so sloppy it was hard to tell what they were doing. The "conceptual artists" seemed blithely amused by this "concept punk" but obviously Lowell Darling's darlings seem content to cling to endless, tired jokes.

The worst thing was that this was a new audience who may have mistaken this for "New Wave" music. After all, they *looked* like punks. Spaz Attack has true potential, Geza plays around with his new "X" chords, and there's Brendan, the Dick Clark of punk, right there on the drums. It seems authentic, but what really lies behind those chain and spikeys are limp nostalgia and silly vaudeville schtick.

By the time X was set up, the bar closed and the owners were trying to clear the place out. The band launched into lightning versions of "Los Angeles," and "Adult Books" that blazed with rage while an old guy stood on stage by John Doe shaking his fists and doing a frustrating duet with him at the microphone. Someone hit the lights and someone hit the old man.

That "someone" was "Art-Martyr" Chris Burden who is famous for being crucified on a VW, crawling naked through broken glass, and being shot in the name of "art." He's also notorious for being a troublemaker at art events and, true to form, he created another "piece" through the medium of the fist, leaving an old man flattened onto another plane.

X pulled the plugs and police rumors started floating. I shouldn't have left so fast because that's the last time any of us will see the inside of Larchmont Hall.

Back at Sokol Hall, the Avengers delivered the goods as usual. This is another band (like other SF'ers Dils) who seem such a unit they must be blood related or all tattooed with A's. They hook each song together so tightly you can't find a gap in the set. It's wild and it's punk, but I wish they'd axe "Paint It Black" (they do it okay but I don't want to be reminded of the guys who did it first), and I wish they'd throw some kinks into the show and come up with some new-sounding songs.

V.

LOS AVENGEROS/LOS ZEROS/ ARTHUR J Y LOS GOLD CUPS

Cinco de Mayo a-Go-Go, the Whisky's contribution to the celebration of Mexican independence, with Art J & the Cups providing the celebrities, the Zeros the ethnic authenticity, the Avengers one of the best independence anthems ever, "I Believe in Me." (Mexican Randy did not attend.)

Arthur J & the Gold Cups are a group possessed, as evidenced by seemingly involuntary lapses into a three-chord trance with repeated phrase, "We're having an attack" (or something like or unlike that), and a group above all possessed by TV. They now do a fantastic cover of the theme from "Green Acres," supplementing the classic "Secret Agent Man" and the seminal "Go See Cal." The group's focus continues to be singer/dancer/leaper Spaz Attack, who looks like he knows exactly what he's doing up there, even if no one else does.

The Zeros continue to get better musically and more active physically, Robert and Javier developing an exciting, unforced choreography between them, Baba ("I'm the brains behind this band") maintaining the indispensable beat, Guy ("I'm Robert's little brother") proving he's learned his Sedentary Bassplaying lessons well from the Hector Penalosa School for Cool. A national/international breakout is imminent.

The Avengers are, in a word, perfect (as always). So perfect that you begin to wonder if they have any faults at all. One thought: There's no more experimentation, no deviation from implicitly stated purpose. The Avengers are the most academically precise new wave band, archetypical (the right word—you can look it up) politipunks (don't expect to find that one) with the correct stance ("We Are the One"), attitude ("I Believe in Me"), imagery ("White Nigger"), respect for punk "roots" ("Paint It Black"). The Avengers are so dedicated to the cause that they feel compelled to bury much of Greg's guitar prowess in what they dismiss as "our disco song" and they've reduced their aberrational occurrences of messageless melody to a single song, "Car Crash," which also happens to be their greatest to date.

Mikel Toombs

THE AVENGERS, ARTHUR J & THE GOLD CUPS, X
at the Whisky

The inevitable question that comes to mind after seeing X is: When are ***they*** going to headline three nights at the Whisky? I could go on with cliches about power, charisma, dynamics, seeing is believing and you'd get the general idea.

John Doe was in his most crazed form this night, rocking back from one foot to another, unleashing voice lines of a terrible/beautiful brutality, thrashing his bass with murder in mind. Exene in cowboy boots served as the other half of the focus, staring above the heads of the audience, delivering everything with the tightly controlled voice of contempt, her sneers and casual asides making her the dangerous counterpoint to the applecart of emotions John Doe kept upsetting. And what's left in the shadows playing guitar and drums is every bit as explosive. Billy Zoom plays with such fluidity and ease, the most complex progressions seem as effortless as the smile on his face. Don Bonebrake is the never-tiring engine that spurs this machine farther and farther into previously unexplored territory.

Next came the lull of the evening courtesy of Arthur J and the Gold Cups. What is intended as surreal comedy comes off as an unfunny inside joke. While some marveled at the daring and startling originality of doing the Cal Worthington theme ad nauseam, *I* found myself asking the question: why does the band keep segueing into "We did it again"? Bored over half their audience again? Yeah, right, and altogether worthless.

As usual the Avengers' set was at feverpitch straight through, Penelope forever on the verge of a near-orgasmic hysteria. It's hard to tell just what is what as far as the individuality of each Avengers song, they all sound so identical. Everything blurs together into one extended wall of noise, one long song. But what a song! Things never come to rest, guitar and bass just keep bouncing off of each other, Penelope crying out for a release that can never come. And all the time there is a resigned sadness there that comes through with such joy . . . fingers scrambling, desperately clawing to keep hold of the skyscraper ledge, one minute to keep from falling and the next minute to let go and see just where the headlong rush will take you.

Half-Cooked

THE LAST, THE CLONES, JOHNNY NOVATNY, THE ZEROS
At Larchmont Hall, May 26

First of all, the poster was wrong. But then, this was another of those Bomp-style nights—so what could I expect?

Johnny Novatny wasn't on first, the Last were, and I missed them. I'll get real judgmental and say that they were the only other band besides the Zeros worthy of being on stage.

The Clones had struggled through half of their set by the time I made it inside. I immediately returned to the outside world so I wouldn't have to struggle through the remainder of their set with them. They aren't punk, New Wave, or even simple rock 'n' roll. Sometimes they sound like an anemic power pop trio, other times a saccharine heavy metal band sans energy.

Following was the Novatny case, replete with hype and slick, pseudo-punk frills. The hippie band played nice and soft just as the Larchmont octogenarians wanted. Johnny wasn't too offensive himself; the songs moved along nicely, but failed to generate much excitement as they came out of a slightly Costello-ish mold. Boring.

Finally, after half of the very chi-chi, poseur crowd had departed, the Zeros began their set. It was as if someone had thrown dynamite on stage. Audience ranks closed and the empty space right in front disappeared. But sometime during the second song, just as regular as clockwork, the house lights flickered on. Larchmont wanted to shut up shop, go home to a glass of warm milk and bed. To make matters worse, Javier's guitar shorted out just before their third song. It was quickly replaced and the explosion recommenced. A decrepit security guard waved his hands, trying to get Javier and Robert to calm down. They wouldn't.

Suddenly the power went out. People screamed and wouldn't stop. Baba kept drumming while everyone clapped in rhythm. Tribal rites time and the darkness was lit up by a whole squad of Bics. After 20 stubborn minutes, the juice went back into the wires and the Zeros back into action. These guys were playing as if their lives depended on it.

Four more songs were stabbed out before the real anti-climax of the evening (morning) set in: 12 very annoyed policemen machoed their way in. But the Zeros machine refused to come to rest. The officer in charge had to get up onstage and, skin whitening at the knuckles, shake his fist at Javier. At last, resigned to their fate, the Zeros stopped. No one but the music was arrested and the L.A.P.D. went home to tell their children.

Half-Cocked

SLASH PAGE TWENTY-SIX

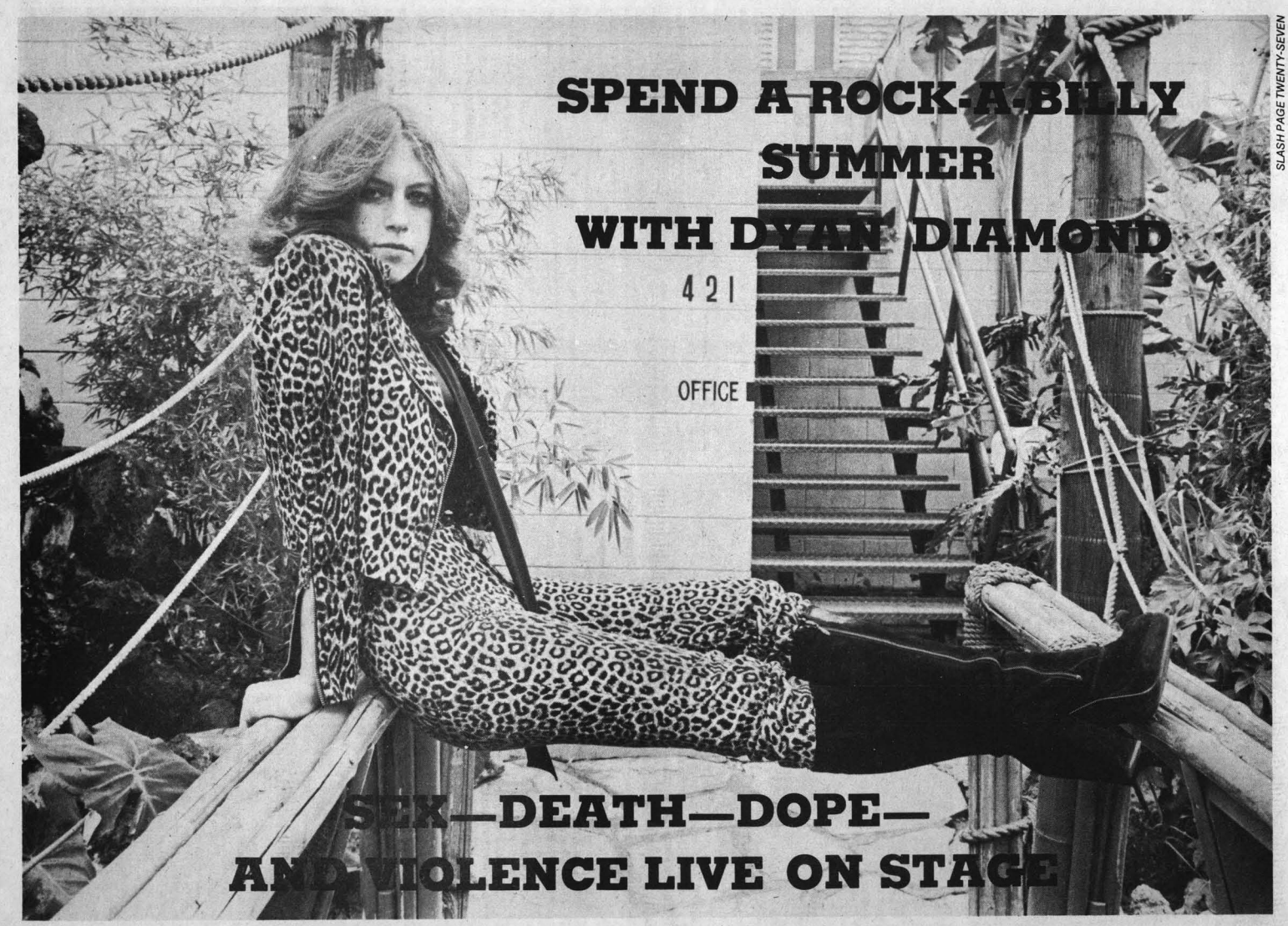

SPEND A ROCK-A-BILLY
SUMMER
WITH DYAN DIAMOND
421
OFFICE
SEX—DEATH—DOPE—
AND VIOLENCE LIVE ON STAGE

Photo: Pat Rabbe

THE PLUGZ, THE DEADBEATS, AND BLACK RANDY AND HIS ELEGANT METROPOLITAN SQUAD
At The Whisky

The Plugz have a fringe position on the local scene . . . but this all may change soon due to the fact that the cliques are breaking down and the demand for other sounds is rapidly increasing. Anyone with half an open ear and mind will admit that the Plugz offer some of the most un-trendy, un-bloated, un-gimmicky new music to be heard on the Whisky stage. There is no studied look and there are no studied effects in their songs. 1, 2, 3, 4, off they go, one song after another of tight modern youth music. It's catchy without being cute, pogo-able without being riff-oriented. The new long-haired kid behind the drums has already integrated himself and comes across as if he'd been with them since the beginning. The Plugz have everything it takes to attract to the new music all the kids who so far have found it hard to relate to the one-dimensional excesses of other punk bands. It is this type of band that may help with the major breakthrough we're all hoping for this summer.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Deadbeats are certain to remain an exotic speciality on the menu, something that only the more adventurous (or twisted) of the crowd will savor. Their sound is stubbornly enervating and experimental (elements of free jazz horn playing, undanceable complex rhythms are not part of your usual new wave standards), their theatrics are silly and distracting and their looks are . . . well . . . not teenage heartthrob material, to say the least. But there is something admirable in their determination to remain out there and do what pleases them, and their music is, if not immediately catchy and pleasing, incredibly well played. They are probably more ready than many to do an album's worth of material, and to do it as well as that kind of stuff could be done. (The Dangerhouse single is excellent although a bit misleading.) And I would buy the album even though I might not stand in line to see them live.

Looming above the stage before Black Randy and his bla bla bla bla . . . came on (and throughout the set) was a gigantic map of frica sewn on green velvet, with parts of the map done in the familiar Dangerhouse stripes logo, presumably indicating the sections of the African continent conquered or about to be conquered by the new Messiah of Soul, the inimitable Black Randy, Emperor of the Put-On.

The Squad came on, all shades, white suits and pimp shirts, caps and funk hats, a motley crew of white punks playing at being "bad." Everyone knew *this* was going to be the show Black Randy has been promising all along but never quite delivering, the bad cats riffed some soul stuff while waiting for the Master, and I have never seen such a nervous, anticipating crowd before for a local act.

Randy came (in his typical, modest manner, making his entrance from the top of the stairs at balcony level, followed all the way down with one lone spotlight), he looked like a dressed-up shady car salesman who deals on the side (although he was outdone in the wardrobe department by M.C. Dick Brain who wore ***the*** ultimate sleaze suit). He greeted the adoring fans with sarcasm and venom, raced thru his famous originals and his outrageous versions of soul classics, brought on the wigged-out legged-out Blackettes, let them do a couple of Motown dance routines then contemptuously dismissed them, disappeared and came back in his Shaft outfit, obscenely wiggling his unfit bod to the Shaft soundtrack (the Squad are one versatile combo!), brought the Blackettes back for more hip-shaking and camp posing, got left on stage by the whole band demanding his own encore, got his band back and destroyed trendies with a nasty version of "Ready Steady Go," San Francisco bands with a clenched fist in the air version of the Avengers' "We Are the Ones" retitled "We Are the Nuns," insulted the Dickies' record company, swore a lot, shook hands and squeezed little fingers, drenched the pogoers with chunks of watermelon and had the same chunks thrown back at his face and the rest of his revolting self (hard to miss!), spat and growled and brought back obnoxiousness to our music. Indeed an overwhelming success. Black Randy might soon find himself faced with the very real possibility of general acceptance, and god knows what heights (or what lows) this would push him to.

A BLACK PERSON'S REACTION TO BLACK RANDY

Being drunk as a pig has its advantages, just ask yours truly, Mumbo Jumbo, chief propagator of The New Negro Journal, a soon-to-be syndicated and already essential cultural digest for the metropolitan new age Afro-American. This quasi-eminent publication of mine was conceived, created and is constructed by and in a state of pig drunkishness. I've done some outlandish research for a story in my illicit life but I've never gone as squalid as when I saw Black Randy and his Elegant Metro Squad. I stumbled upon this heavily pigmented combo by sheer drunken chance.

One drunk day I was lounging innocently on my leopard skin sofa in my George of the Jungle bathrobe when suddenly the tipsy sofa dumped me head first onto my booty on the floor, smack dab on top of my funky butt fan mail. I shot the fan mail six times before I realized the teeming pile of well wishes and cash donations wasn't alive. Fluttering amidst the greenbacks in the wake of my bullets was a night club flyer top-billing Black Randy and his Metro Squad. "Your Kind of Negro" according to the enclosed note.

By pure wide chance this nigger, I had the evening free. I got on down the Whisky Go Go, flashed the press card and pimped right on up to the bar where I coolly checked out the habituation. The place was full of bleached-out white kids, all white as your mammy's teeth, bouncing around and knocking upside each other like a sideshow full of pale boobs. I being modern black and beautiful I attempted to drop my necessarily imposed barriers and make like the natives. The stairway jumped and I tumbled 18 beats down into the midst of a half-civilized savage mob. There I witnessed every form of primitivity up to and including a bone through the nose. Expecting cannibalism, I got Black Randy.

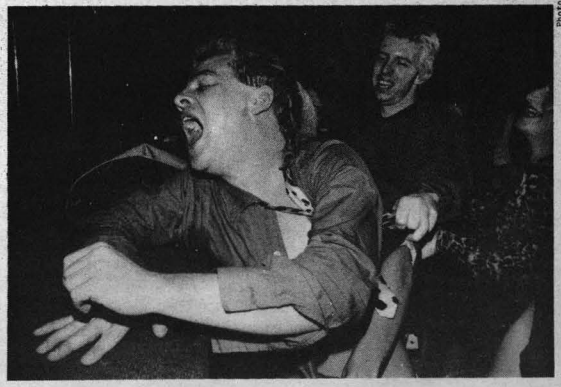
The man behind the legend appeared on stage and I was ready to abdicate my bad nigger crown. This man and his band have powers. His band's music tamed and captured the beastly mob's attention while Black Randy performed miracles with it. They forgot about being punky and started getting funky and acting like real human beings. I do believe the big city sounds of the Metro Squad saved my life, delivering me from the jaws of ignorant racial violence. Some of you high-nosed niggers out there may wonder what a coon like Black Randy is doing performing to all those whitey. Well, that right on righteous rude boy is doing the good work spreading the modern black and beautiful word. Black Randy, you are my man, I am your bad nigger fan.

Mumbo Jumbo

THE "HEY, YOU MEAN THEY GOT PUNKS IN THOSE PLACES??" DEPT.

THE CONSUMERS played at the Whisky May Day concert along with F-Word (back with Steve Effete), X, the Alley Cats, and the Dils. The Consumers are from Arizona but may move to L.A. They played hard and fast, and managed to grab the attention of the local cynics. Some said that it wasn't one of their best sets but for the rest of us who had never seen them it was exciting to see and hear what kind of punk mutations the rest of the country is breeding.

MIDDLE CLASS are from Orange County (where else?!) and played at the Larchmont at the end of April with Controllers, Germs and Bags. They're very young, they kind of sound like the Saints (at times, anyway), they wear suits and sneakers and when they opened up everybody stood around the stage in a loose half-circle checking them out (sometimes them scene-making punx are worse than the fuckin' Spanish Inquisition!). Halfway thru the set there was actually some pogoing and appreciative nods in the crowd. What's more, they're not mimicking the more obvious punk traits and cliches. Will the new New Wave come from the great Wasteland? (See other review of Middle Class in Lobotomy Night.)



Photos: 'Iseen

What television can't show... What the PTA doesn't condone... What society won't tolerate... is approved by The Motors.

The Motors bring with them from their native England the belief that whatever makes for a good time is worthy of their endorsement.

On their new album, they endorse relentless rock rhythms and lawless lyrics. It is worthy of your approval.

"Approved by The Motors." The Motors' new album accepts rock without morals. On Virgin Records and Tapes.

Distributed by CBS Records. © 1978 CBS Inc.

Photo: Samlof

forty five's

TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS
Migraine records
(Orphans/Less of Me)

Famed New York fringies make it to the recording studio. Result: a unique, aggressively uncompromising, nerve-wracking musical horror show. More like a disheveled tantrum than music. Makes the X Ray Spex first single sound like the Carpenters. Makes the Germs' first sound like TopTen material. Takes regular music and rips its flesh off its bones, leaving great open gashes where there once was melody, exposing the brittle skeleton where there was once a rich rhythm.

Teenage Jesus and the Jerks are a very cruel bunch: they literally tear rock music to shreds and hysterically roll in the resulting mess. Not for the squeamish. But for those of you who dream of mass annihilation or just the final death of rock 'n' roll, this is the masterpiece others have only hinted at. A stupendous record, and today I know what I'm talking about.

Kick Face

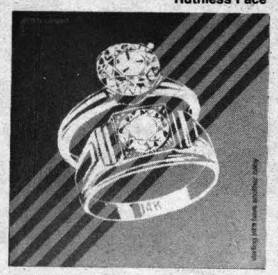
THE INVADERS
Sea West records
(Could You Would You/Long Time Comin')

This single came in thru the mail and out with the trash.

BRYAN FERRY
Polydor import
(What Goes On/Casanova)

This is in here just to say that the Dils' version of The Velvets' tune is a zillion times more interesting. Talk about an unfair practice! Using someone else's review space to plug your pals! Have we no shame?

Ruthless Face



JOHNNY MOPED
Chiswick import
(Darling, let's have another baby/ Something else/It really digs)

Mental regression rock. Moped is genuinely off his rockin' rocker. The Cochran tune is straightforward blah, "Let's have another . . ." is a strange joke except he's probably dead serious, and the last one is incomprehensible mellow nonsens with organic backing. I am baffled but I won't lose sleep over it.

Kick

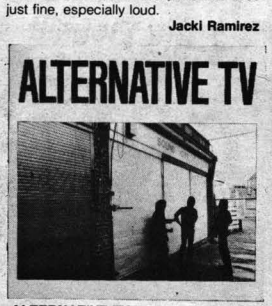
THE CRAMPS
Vengeance Records
(Surfin Bird/The Way I Walk)

Maybe we don't need another version of "Surfin Bird," but this is the best one I've heard so far. Scrawled on the grooves near the label it says, "The hit that just won't quit," and they're right. Wildly screaming guitar, steady, throbbing drums, no bass, maniac vocals. Lux Interior, Ivy Rorshach, Nick Knox, Bryan Gregory: The Cramps. The creeps. Creepy music? ***But not to be overlooked.***

"The Way I Walk" is done in the same kind of panic, but slowed down and almost eerie. Screams in the background, and Lux Interior's tough guy vocals make this one an outstanding effort from what looks like one of New York's most interesting bands. They sound like the way they look. For example, the photo on the sleeve shows the band standing in fog, their features darkened so you really can't tell what they look like. The lettering on their name looks like the kind on "The Munsters" TV show or something. Dripping blood? Interesting.

With their excellent covers of these two songs, they leave me curious as to what their original stuff is like. Hopefully, the next one will tell. For now, this one does just fine, especially loud.

Jacki Ramirez



ALTERNATIVE TV
Deptford Fun City Records import
(Life after Life/Life after Dub)

This little platter should have every fuckin' labeling expert writhing in agony over his typewriter. Punk jazz, punk blues, experimental new wave, progressive but rooted in tradition new music, forget it, you can't pin it down, and what's more you can't get it out of your head after a couple of spins. Mark Perry and his cohorts have not recorded two songs that sound even vaguely similar so far, and the upcoming album promises to be full of odd surprises. Even if you can't swallow it you should not dismiss them. These loonies are taking chances.

B-side is the dub version of A-side, fine but a bit predictable.

SST
(Close Encounters of the Third Kind/ Clutch on the Ward/Empty)

Terminal something Damage. Even if I hadn't seen these creeps live (read about that painful experience somewhere in this issue), I would puke after ten seconds. In "Close Encounters," the spaceship is called an upside-down chandelier, which is funny. In "Empty" there is a hilariously atrocious solo. That's it for the good points. Everything else is boring, self-conscious garbage. I bet they think they're outrageous. Farts!

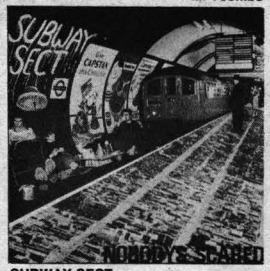
Kick Boy

RESIDENTS
Ralph Records
(Satisfaction/Loser"s Weed)

Records coming out in so many different colors (this one's yellow) these daze, soon there won't be any in basic/ classic black. I for one can't see much purpose in it—maybe it enhances the visual aesthetics of record spinning (if that's what you're into) but there's gonna be a lotta people buying a lotta bad records for a single cheap thrill, though that's not the case here.

This record makes no sense to me, so that means it's great, right? (Right??) The Residents—in particular the android Wolfman Jack who passes for their singer—couldn't seem to find no "Satisfaction" in 1976, when this was first released, and they still can't get none, hence the re-issue. Post-prepsychedelia, "acid punk," beautiful noise, boring shit . . . I can't figure it out, but I suppose it makes sense after all: If my mind were as warped as the Residents' music, I'm sure I couldn't get me no satisfaction neither.

M. Toombs



SUBWAY SECT
Braik Records import
(Nobody's scared/Dontsplitit)

A real fucker on your eardrums, guts and heart (you know, that mushy pump somewhere inside where your higher emotions hide while you go around being cool and remote). "Nobody's scared" is great fire, classy metal chords that hit you below the belt and two voices (same Goddard guy??) replaying each other in a brief but incisive analysis of modern apathy. The song slides into a pulsating white noise interlude and almost immediately re-emerges with the gripping chorus, leaving you feeling like you took a shower of melted metal.

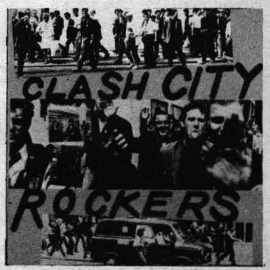
But it's the B-side that gets the killer of the month award. Shivering, possessed vocals on top of a monstrous garage riff, an excursion into exasperated electrical dimensions, a screwy little harmonica that makes your eardrums bleed—it almost dissolves into panting chaos but comes back for the kill. The recording is pretty much below average punk standard but the intensity of the performance makes everything else superfluous. As they say in the L.A. Times at the end of their weekly reviews: ***fuck, yes!!*** I'll join this sect any day.

Kick

THE HEAT
Takeaway Records Import
(If You Don't Do the Business/Rock 'n' Roll Doctor/I'm Hooked/ Marionette)

A great EP that becomes better each time you hear it! A really spare, driving sound (*real* chunka-chunka) that's kind of like wire, but with a less menacing feel. For us local L.A.-ites, it'll bring to mind the always above average Alleycats, especially on "I'm Hooked." Since there's no personnel listing I can only guess that the Heat is a trio. Just bass, drums, and guitar holding 3 (out of 4) great songs together with "R&R Dr." the only letdown. "If You Don't . . ." is the hottest tune on the EP with an instant hook and the two singers battling for the mike. "I'm Hooked" is, simply, well-named, and "Marionette" comes with no strings attached. With lyrics about drugs, sex, rocknroll, showbiz, and life's other good things, the Heat (on record, anyway) seem worthy of whatever attention they can get.

Bo Clifford



CLASH
CBS Import
(Clash City Rockers/Jail Guitar Doors)

Various local/international "New Wave personalities" have trashed this up and down for a variety of reasons, none of them too substantial. The main objection seems to be the song titles which supposedly indicate some self-conscious art pose on the part of the Clash as being punk rockers. What the songs are called, I'm glad to say, is largely immaterial. These two surpass anything on the Clash album and at least match the gut-wrenching totality of "Complete Control." It's been mentioned that Smokey Joe plagiarized the chorus of "Jail Guitar Doors" from an old hit by our friend Charlie Manson. But since it's been eight or nine years since I've heard Charlie's tapes I'll reserve judgment. What makes up these two songs is so uncompromisingly hardcore yet so pretty/melodic, it's difficult to describe the resulting contradictory tension. This is the only record of late that comes to mind as being worth considerably more than you'll have to pay for it.

Chris D.

RAPED
"Pretty Paedophiles"
Parole Records import
(Moving target/Raped/Escalator Hater/Normal)

There was quite a fuss a while ago about this. Looks like the name of the band and the title of the EP managed to shock and offend the English press, who, one would think, should be shock-proof by now. I had to look up the title in the dictionary (you just do the same, lazy fuck) and the band's name is about as shocking as a small item in a daily paper.

Not that rape is groovy, idiot, it's just that it's foolish to deny the incredible levels of indifference this cute society takes us to. If these kids want to call themselves Dachau or Disembowelment I ain't gonna raise an eyebrow. Words don't mean shit. They're things to play with.

And the music of these little nasties is almost great, so I say go ahead, shock them, wake them up, disgust them. Best songs are "Escalator Hater" (good riff, great voice, obscure lyrics) and "Moving Target" (catchy chorus, nice Rotten inflections here and there). The two others are not bad at all, just more standardized. Since this is not a very recent release, look out for number 2.

Kick

MAGAZINE
Virgin Records Import
(Touch 'n Go/Goldfinger)

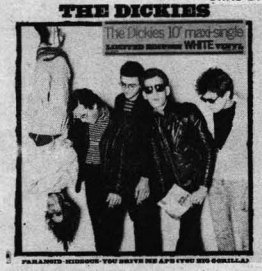
No way as strong as their first single. "Touch 'n Go" is likable but cluttered with unfinished musical ideas and occasional boring excesses that made bloated groups like Yes and Boston instantly unnecessary. "Goldfinger" is harder to pin down. Why did they do it? It sounds wonderful, they perform it with a sinister power and depth of feeling that make it more than just a novelty cover. But too often the instruments get top-heavy and leaden. Howard Devoto's mangled, back-from-the-dead voice is the only thing that can stand up to the original Shirley Bassey interpretation which, in itself, was an accidental miracle. Howard's subtly sarcastic delivery equals in every way Bassey's jaded inflection that had just the hint of patois.

Chris D.

THE CRIMINALS
(The Kids Are Back/The Cops Are Coming)

Sylvain Sylvain co-wrote some of the most devastating New York Dolls' tunes. But this is lightweight shit on all counts. Power pop without the power. The Criminals aren't dangerous and they aren't criminals. These boys would have trouble getting arrested even after committing mass murder.

Chris D.



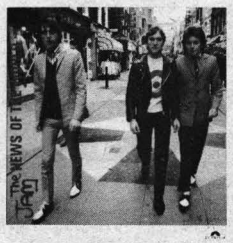
THE DICKIES
A&M Records
(Hideous/You Drive Me Ape
(You Big Gorilla)/Paranoid)

The Dickies are more fun than a barrel of bananas. If records like this grew on trees a lot of us monkeys would still be swinging through the leaves. But there's no monkey business with "Hideous" opening this debut Dickies A&M hot banana. "Hideous" gets you out of your vines and ready for the monkeyshines of "You Drive Me Ape (You Big Gorilla)" which finishes off the A-side only mere seconds before you flip to side 2, a wild ape version of Black Sabbath's "Paranoid."

A high level of proficiency is maintained throughout these three songs as is the superior standard of fidelity in relaying these proficiencies to vinyl. In English that means the production consistently makes the Dickies sound like the Dickies playing under the best possible circumstances, right there in your own living room, where you are free to thank the Dickies, their management and A&M even for making sure the first major label L.A. release will bring L.A. major attention which will lead to major recognition and just about wrap up the world.

To top off the package, they toss you great packaging. There's an old favorite picture on front and a new fave pic on back alongside the lyrics. Inside is a hunk of ten-inch white vinyl, the bulk of which makes it harder to steal but all the more rewarding when you get it home.

A. Macarel



THE JAM
Polydor import
(News of the World/Aunties and Uncles/Innocent Man)

In spite of growing suspicions that the Jam may soon move to an undistinguished position in the arid desert of "good old rock 'n' roll," "News of the world" did appeal to me with its racy, tight immediacy, its nervous, tense rhythm guitar and its unarguable although naive message, "Don't believe all you read, find out for yourself." Also a couple of nice phasing effects and you've got a good highly playable side of a single. The two songs on B-side have been unable to hold my interest until they end. It's formula type pop, slow and predictable and completely lacking in any substance.

C.B.

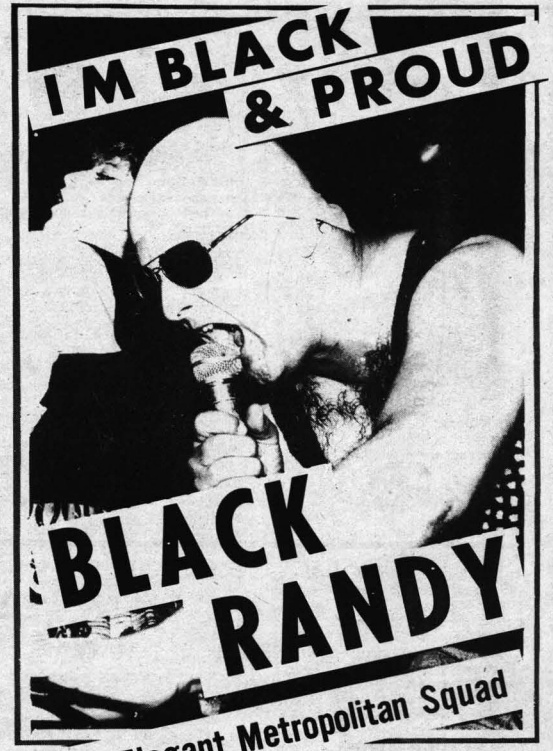
ELTON MOTELLO (??)
Lightning import
(Jet boy Jet girl/Pogo pogo)

Satirical cover versions are *in*. Of course the possibilities are endless. Here we have a take-off on the two lame Plastic Bertrand tunes discarded in last issue. But there is a twist: the English lyrics are naughty. Teenage homosexual material. "He gives me head" is the catch line, it's not exactly horror show material but if you hear it on the radio one day you will know things are moving along nicely in the world-wide conspiracy to turn everything upside-down. Support your local trouble-maker.

Kick Boy

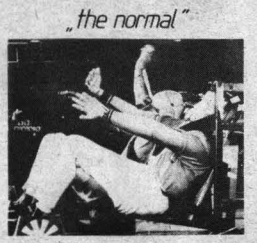
GARY VALENTINE
Beat Records
(The First One/Tomorrow Belongs to You)

Three Mumps and an ex-Blondie made



this but there's only one name on it, and that's the one that matters. Gary is searching for the perfect AM song c. 1966 and "The First One" is a very nice try. Right now it stands out as an inspired anachronism (better than AM today), although back then it would've been just one of the crowd.

M. Toombs



THE NORMAL
Mute records import
(Warm leatherette/T.V.O.D.)

Another possible "next big thing"? Techno-pop for tomorrow's teenaged robots? Both songs are 80% rhythm machines, 10% dull and purposely emotionless spoken delivery and 10% modern society word evocations. "I don't need a tv screen/I just take the aerial/and stick it in my skin." Does that mean every loony and would-be artist that the punk thing left behind is going to rush into his studio and singlehandedly produce his own bleak little single, just me and my machines, man, I don't need nothing else??

Kick

THE DEADBEATS
Dangerhouse Records
(Kill The Hippies/Brainless/Deadbeat/Final Ride)

The Deadbeats are not something I initially enjoyed or could even tolerate. I was put off, offended, and aggravated by their precisely executed display of choreographed chaos. Their show and music are minutely detailed extravaganzas in sensory bombardment. The first time I heard them play I didn't know what to listen to so I took the easy way out and got a headache. I kept seeing the band perform by accident and couldn't help but notice musical and visual components congealing until the show became a cohesive presentation that was palatable to all but the most purist of simpletons while never losing its threat of sheer, artless aggression.

Please remember artless is not a bad word, also keep in mind there is nothing wrong with the artistry the Deadbeats do employ. They are a conscious parody of everything they do say and play and they do say and play very well. Even back when I hated them I couldn't deny the outstanding level of musicianship boasted by the band. They are a pleasure to hear on stage and this record nicely conveys that pleasure.

Their music is funny like the lyrics, probing like the lyrics, pointed and poignant like the lyrics. It can make you put down the beer, flush the 'ludes and wonder if perhaps you aren't exactly what you despise: An alcoholic dogmatic hippie. When you come to grips with that question then you can come to grips with the Deadbeats, but only until the next time you play the record. Unsettling in a very provocative and sophisticated fashion the Deadbeats are a sure remedy for peace of mind.

A. Macarel

XTC
Virgin Import
(Statue of Liberty/Hang On To the Night)
XTC
Virgin UK
(This is Pop?/Heatwave)

Using that much maligned commodity, "cleverness" in making pop rock is much akin to drinking. Too much and you really don't feel good; too little and you kind of wonder what's missing. The right amount can make anything better.

XTC generally know their collective limit, but sometimes overindulge just a bit. After the fine LP-cut-turned-45 "Statue of Liberty," the flip suggests that a round of black coffee is in order. The other B-side ("Heatwave") continues in this direction, but "This is Pop?" (remixed from the LP) establishes that the boys are in complete control of their faculties. This is their best and has all the elements to make it popular with the 7" set.

Bo Clifford

THE VIBRATORS
Epic import
(Automatic Lover/Destroy)

Real feeble. I still listen to the first LP, but this makes me fear the worst for number 2.

KickBoy

1984
Skydog import
(Salted City/Section)

Must be French: it vaguely sounds English but turns out to be painfully pronounced gibberish. Berlitz school of punk rock. Both sides pretty bad (I'm kind) but "Salted City" gets the prize as the perfect example of a song that should have been erased after one listening. The singer gets a cramp in the tongue after some especially hard to pronounce "English" sentences, the band vaguely fucks around in search of a tune and a beat, the guitars disagree on what song they're doing and the drummer decides that an appropriate beat is good enough. But that too disappears, we're left with some half-assed hand clapping until the singer wraps things up with more formless garbage at higher speed without warning the other bozos of this change of plan. After seconds of panique, they catch up. Congratulations to all involved, I know it was hard but you made it to the end of the song.

Kick Boy

THE DYAKS
Bonaparte Records import
(Gutter Kids/It's a Game)

This is okay. Good singer with rough backstreet voice, nice tune. B-side a bit so-so. "Gutter Kids" can be heard repeatedly with no adverse effects.

Kick Face

JANE AIRE & THE BELVEDERES
Stiff import
(Yankee Wheels/Nasty Nice)

The Akron band that does not really exist. The record does, though, and has been making big waves in English critics' small ponds. For once I agree with the limeys. There certainly is a lot to grab one's jaded attention in this vinyl thing. Mutations of Spector's girlie records, a certain cold prettiness that hides a definite madness (said madness more apparent on B-side), a pulsating pull of attraction/repulsion (come down, Kick! —Ed.), a pop record for the thinking man, many things in there. I like it a lot, sometimes.

Kick

GLORIA MUNDI
RCA import
(Fight Back/Do It)

This single tries very hard to separate itself from the pack. Whatever they could think of that would make it special and unusual they put in. Like: one girl singing one song, one guy the other. Nifty sax lines. Siren at the end. Sham-style football chanting. Break of pace for dramatic effect. Real hard-core punk lyrics. I'll stop the list of ingredients, but there are more.

SEE F-WORD BEFORE THE BREAK-UP!

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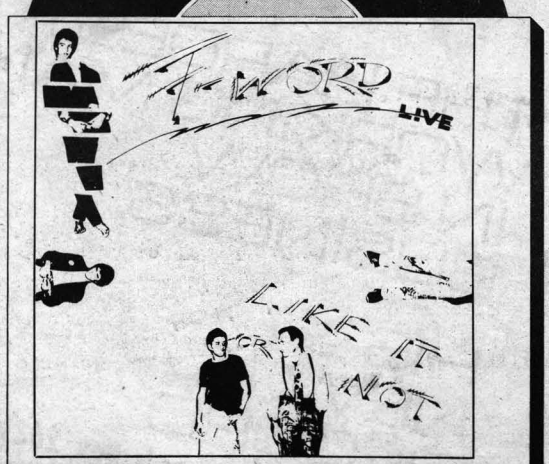

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So, with all these winning assets, how come I don't believe in their music, their sincerity or their future??

Kick not-easily-fooled Face

X-RAY SPEX
X-Ray Spex Records
(The Day the World Turned Day-Glo/ Iama Poseur)

Phase Two. This one's on bright orange plastic, part of a brilliant packaging concept. And plastic (Poly's favorite subject) is what "Day-Glo" is all about, an aggressive attack on synthetics—those singled out include nylon, acrylic, polypropylene and (of course) polystyrene. Once again Ms. Poly has taken a vital part of our everyday existence and twisted it around, forcing us to look at it in a different light. And once again she's made it a two-sided assault, "Iama Poseur (and I don't care)" hitting hard while extending the irony of "I am a Cliche": "Yes we're very entertaining/Overtones can be betraying." Truly music to make you think (huh?).

M. Toombs

PAUL JONES
RSO Import
(Pretty Vacant/Sheena Is a Punk Rocker)

Humorless punks, abstain. This is the greatest take-off of one of your favorite "anthems," done in the truly ultimate vacant style by one of yesterday's wonder boys, pop-singer-occasional-movie-star Paul Jones. The cynical, nihilistic Pistols' tune faithfully adapted for young adults with slow beat, strings intro, "real" singer voice and la-la choruses, not forgetting the L.A. Express sax break. And it fuckin' works! Well, something does. Is it because the song is such a perfect classic that no amount of desecration can bury its message, or is it because the enormous gap between the feelings expressed by the extremely clearly enunciated lyrics and the bland, affected delivery turn it into a monstrous surrealistic oddity? I'd vote for the second possibility although it doesn't really matter. It is extremely funny, it will have you waltzing around the room, delighted at the absurdity of a world which may take this very seriously. Brilliant idea to have "Pretty Vacant" done in a style that would appeal to the real vacant section of music listeners! The joke's on all of us.

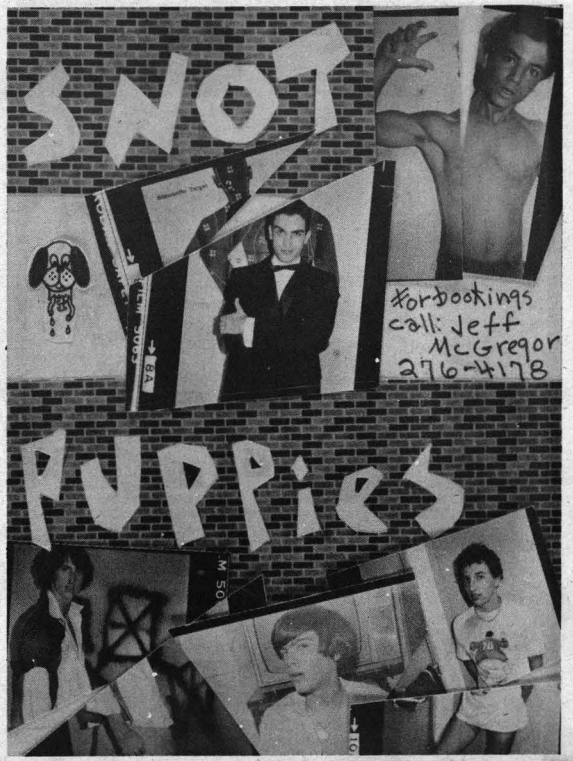
B-side "Sheena" is more obvious since the surf roots of the original are rather apparent to start with. It is still well executed (in both senses of the term) and will have you giggling maliciously. Now I wait for Sammy Davis Jr.'s version of "Blank Generation." ***It could happen.***

Kick

THE BOOMTOWN RATS
Ensign Import
(She's So Modern/Lying Again)

Oddly reminiscent of Steve Harley with Cockney Rebel. Super-commercial but "Lying Again" has nice moments.

Kick



"YOU'RE GONNA DIE 'CAUSE YOU ARE SO DUMB"

THE SUICIDE COMMANDOS

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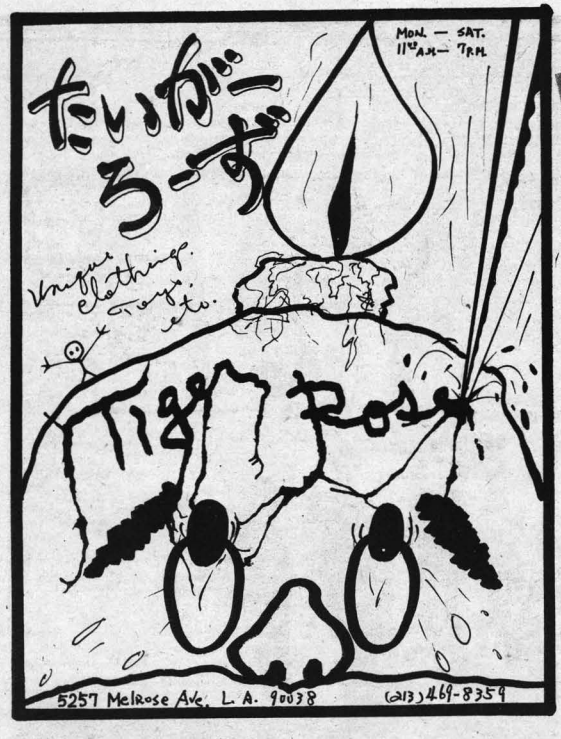


ITAL INA BABYLON:
REGGAE UPDATE

The abundance of new reggae releases forced us to treat it as a separate section, which almost made Chatty, Chatty Mouth too big for his boots! Those minorities are all the same: give them an inch, they take a mile!

THE 45s: DELROY WASHINGTON (Give all the praise to Jah/Stand up and be happy) Virgin import • BUNNY WAILER (Love fire/Love's version) Island limited edition • DAMBALA (Zimbawe /Visions of war) Music Hive records import • THE GLADIATORS (Pocket money/Evil doers) Virgin import • SLY DUNBAR (A Who Say/Cocaine cocaine) Virgin import • U-ROY "Live at the Lyceum" (Runaway girl/Babylon burning/Chalice in the palace/Wear you to the ball) Virgin import • SHEILA HYLTON (Don't ask my neighbour/Jam down rocker) Island import • STEEL PULSE (Ku Klux Klan/Ku Klux Klan dub) Island import • JOYELLA BLADE (Cairo/Cairo dub) Virgin Front Line import •

Holy ganja, where do I start?? Let's immediately dismiss the Sheila Hylton single as the vacuous, inconsequential little chunk of nothing that it is. Bunny Wailer's "Love fire" is impressive for a few seconds, then starts annoying. It is overproduced and too slick. All gloss and no soul. Should be a hit in certain honkie circles. Delroy Washington (a London reggaeman) performs a nice melancholic tune ("Give all the praise to Jah") on one side of his single and an upbeat number on the other that comes dangerously close to MOR reggae. The recording quality of both tunes is extra super clean (as most Virgin products), which in this case does more harm than good. The playing is standard reggae tchuk-a-tchuk mechanics.

I have never heard of Dambala before (don't mean nothing of course, this is California!) but this Zimbawe platter (soon we'll need a whole glossary to find our way thru all these esoteric Jamaican allusions) makes me curious. A-side starts like an instant classic, slow and moody with a tinny organ intro, just the way I like them, then real nice soulful voice and deep supporting voices and when the marvelous "crucify Smith . . ." chorus arrives I'm totally hooked. You hear it once and it's instant registering in the heart, needle way up on the dial, Jah rastafari, knock me back on the track with a double attack, natty sure kicks like lightning. And yet, ***yet,*** the bloody song does not make it on my private top ten 'cos halfway thru their masterpiece the red-eyed bruddas fuck it up real good by speeding up the majestic procession, funking it up, jazzing it up, soloing it up until it becomes an instantly forgettable plastic monster. Ooh the pain! For all you punksters with the very few reference points, it's like finishing "Garageland" with a Van Halen freak-out. You grasp the disaster?

Side 2 is a bastardized mess that at times could be a reggae "Wipe Out," or a movie theme. There are solos, a few useless phrases chanted over and over again, and also it goes on and on, way past bearable limits. Could go on forever, I'm sure. Bring ten big spliffs, a rhythm track, a stoned-out indulgent soloist and this is what happens. Still, half of A-side is stuck in me for good. Worth it.

Sly Dunbar is a very busy studio musician in JA, he's been drumming for many of the big names. And a good beat is about all this single of his has. "A who say" is silly drivel and the B-side's message goes something like this: "cocaine, cocaine, sniff, sniff, cocaine, cocaine . . ." for 5 minutes, no variation, no nothing 'cept some cool horns at the end. Big deal. Disco reggae.

U-Brown sounds like your run-of-the-mill toaster fresh out of the Kingston Superior School of Toasting, not an honor student, just a graduate. "Black Star Liner" is a long way from being exciting. Only competent. And the routine a-bit-of-reverb - two - zingy - riffs - per - minute - a-zest-of-echo soundtrack does not especially add any passion or personality to the cut. "River John Mountain" has a bit more life and go but it tends to run out of breath somewhere past the two-minute mark. A rather faceless disc. Get it if you must have ***everything.***

The Gladiators are one of my favorite groups on the strength of one album alone ("Trenchtown Mix Up"). Number two is apparently out over there, but until it makes its way to these barbaric parts we'll have to content ourselves with this E.P. Which is not at all unpleasant if a bit light and unfilling. "Pocket money" is the hit. You know it's the hit after 4 seconds, so you can just relax, close your eyes, sway your hips and go along with it. Not exceptional in the "O Carol" way but these three could do "You Light Up My Life" and make it pleasing (which is scary: imagine they find themselves with the wrong ruthless record company, imagine the resulting mess). Same side also has the dub version, which won't hurt you at all. The song on side 2 is kind of formless and annoyingly naive lyric-wise but I tell you these voices would save anything. Harmonies so sweet you'd almost believe in Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny and Peace On Earth. The dub version or "disco mix" of the same tune follows, good echoes and tasty use of the vocal snips. This record may have a little less roots abrasive power than "Trenchtown" but there is really nothing to worry about as long as the studio gimmickry remains under control.

This month it is Linval Thompson who brings us the unavoidable ganja hymn. Smokers will identify ("I love to smoke it, I love to grow it, I love it to my heart and soul . . .") and nod their fuzzy heads in unison even though the tune is strictly routine. The spelling of the title "Mari Guina" must be a half-hearted attempt at sneaking past censorship. Not very devious.

And now, a ***big, imposing*** slice of archetypal goodies: the "Live at the Lyceum" U-Roy EP is one of the best live reggae records I have ever heard. The four songs are old classics that have already appeared everywhere, but the thickness, the gumminess they took on in concert cannot be described. Your speakers may never be the same after, your walls may show faint cracks and your cacti may bloom instantly but you will instantly be inside the enormous throb, all cravings appeased, all worries shattered. Moments of bliss, in spite of the songs ending somewhat at random, the backing singers having a hard time keeping in front of the mikes and the rhythm section crashing most other instruments under its elephantine path. U-Roy is not a young man anymore, backstage is full of woolly hat kids with dreams of leadership in the toasting kingdom but if this is his usual performance level the man is not about to lose our respect.

According to various reports, the England-based Jamaican combo Steel Pulse is one of the fastest rising reggae bands on the scene. Every time you pick up a paper they are touring somewhere, being interviewed, putting energy and talent into militant causes and generally not playing the part of the nice harmless minority at all. And now we have their first single, the Ku Klux Klan number they perform on stage in Klan robes, and thank Jah the song lives up to their reputation (thinking of Tom Robinson here). It is a no bullshit urban reggae tune (meaning a fuller, more rock-oriented sound) with a message as clear and precise as a machete. "Black man do unto the Klan/As they would do to you/In this case hate they neighbour/Those cowards only kill who they fear . . ." As I was saying, ***basic and to the point.*** Jah has other things to do anyway so let's take care of this ourselves. A very timely, very necessary record, and maybe a hint to new, more realistic concepts on the part of the brethren.

I'll end with the one single in the batch that for undefinable reasons has been literally haunting me for days. "Cairo," by a young lady named Joyella Blade, is one of those records that just won't quit making you go all soft and dreamy every time it hits you. The story is near indecipherable, the tune is simple and repetitive in a resigned sort of way, the voice is sweet and sad, and the whole package comes on like absolutely nothing else around. I and I and I have felt something strong.

"PEACE IN THE GHETTO"
TAPPER ZUKIE
Front Line Virgin import
"KAYA"
BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS
Island
"PLANET EARTH"
THE DIAMONDS
Virgin import
"MAN AH WARRIOR"
TAPPER ZUKIE
MER Records

Let's look first at the most easily available one of the bunch, the new Wailers (except the emphasis seems to be more and more on Marley, no?) release. "Kaya" was apparently recorded during the same sessions that gave us the highly forgettable "Exodus," and it bears little resemblance to that discoid record. Here we have a more introspective, moodier music than Marley has given us in a long time. Actually, one has to go back to the never-released-here "African Herbsman" album (see Slash #7) to find such low-key atmosphere.

Three of the songs on "Kaya" are reworkings of tunes on the "Herbsman" album. They are the title tune plus "Sun Is Shining" and "Satisfy My Soul." Except for the last one, the new versions are in every way as grabbing and moving as the originals, and that's saying a lot. The rest of the tunes are first-rate melodies, Marley's singing is incredibly soulful and poignant (listen to his semi-delirious delivery in "Running Away"), the playing is as close to perfection as reggae will ever get —what it loses in "roots" feel it gains in sheer strength—and the backing vocals of the I-Threes complement most of the tunes without intruding.

Yet, in spite of all this, disappointment is what this album means to me. The angry natty dread has given up the fight. His thirst for social justice has been replaced by an increasing desire to flee reality ("Kaya" is just another name for ganja, and the whole album is indeed totally dope-oriented). Marley would rather forget about Trenchtown and sing about less threatening matters, which of course will bring him the attention of a wider public ("Is This Love" is very high on the English charts) but will take away a lot of his originality and significance. The vision has faded, Haile Selassie was only a dwarf and a dictator who is now rotting 6 feet under the ground (notice the conspicuous absence of Jah subject matter in the collection of songs), it is safer to live comfortably in England than amongst one's brethren (remember the shooting), it is safer to include old tunes from the past in one's album than creating entirely new ones that may not have the power and the originality of one's past work, it is safer to dream than to act. "Excuse me while I light my spliff" (on the opening track, "Easy Skanking"). Sure, Bob, you're excused. Nobody will deny your right to rest and tiptoe away from the front line. You've done your bit and now you might even be rewarded with mass acceptance, which you surely deserve. But excuse ***me*** while I look somewhere else for another wild-eyed avenger.

Another album apparently aimed at the general public who "does not usually like that reggae stuff but this is alright" is the Diamonds' "Planet Earth." The Diamonds have dropped the "Mighty" part from their name, which at least shows they're aware of where they stand. Mighty is definitely not what you would call their music. After their incredible first album, "Right Time" is their abysmal second experiment with Allen Toussaint and the New Orleans Symphony orchestra. They have come back to reggae, but an easy-listening, watered down type of reggae that will go in one ear and out of the other without disturbing anything in between.

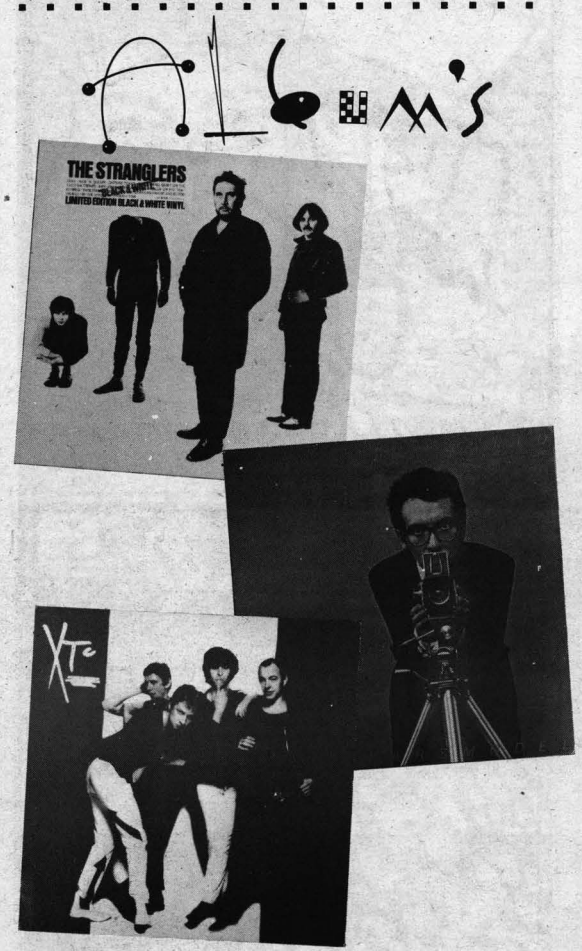
A couple of tracks still retain the original Diamonds' combination of crafty vocals and driving tune "Where Is Garvey," cleverly placed at the beginning of the album) but the rest collapses into nightclub entertainment for rich tourists.

Check the symbolic change of clothing the Diamonds have gone for on the cover: from the militant battle fatigues of the first cover to white people's Bahamas holiday outfits. There is nothing to add.

Two whole Tapper Zukie albums have joined my collection recently, which is more than one could expect from five Christmases in a row! Both will add long hours of pleasure to your life and make most other records superfluous and useless, but if you must pick one, the older collection on the Mer label is the uncontestable winner. While everything on the Front Line recent release, "Peace in the Ghetto," is super-cool, well recorded and professionally backed, it lacks the unbelievable roots and wealth of invention of "Man Ah Warrior." There, Zukie's possessed toasting is only one of the ingredients of the incredible sound. There are haunting horns that pop up at unexpected moments, a big muddy rhythm line and a bass deep enough to drown in, great singing intros that are discarded after a few seconds to make room for the master raver, elemental little organ riffs that drift in and out of the fog, even a vocal chorus ("Message to Pork Eaters") to swing things up a bit.

On "Peace in the Ghetto," Zukie is pretty much on his own with a now-standard studio dub section providing the rhythm but adding little soul or life to the talking tunes. It works because he is the best of the new ones and he could give power to a list of telephone numbers read over a tambourine soundtrack. But listen to "I Ra Lion" with its very minimal backing or "Simpleton Badness" and its off-the-wall electronic gimmicks; listen to the bopping "Archie the Rednose Reindeer" and discover what heights Tapper Zukie can reach in "Man Ah Warrior" when the creativity and inventiveness of the other elements match his. Some have called it the greatest reggae album ever made, and it just might be true.

Chatty Chatty Mouth



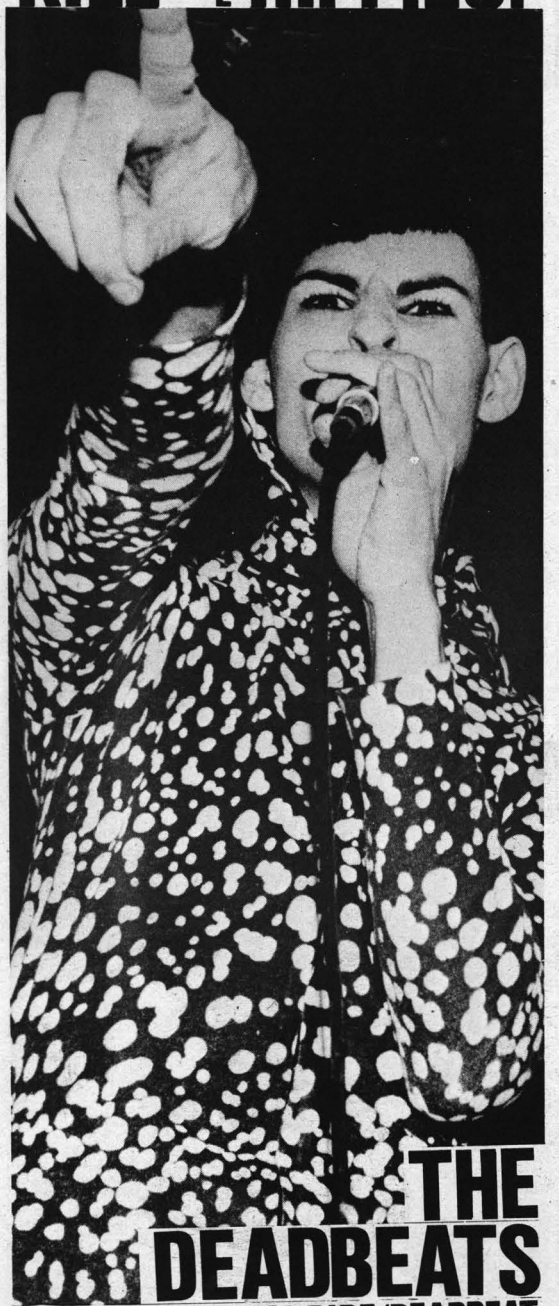
"THIS YEAR'S MODEL"
ELVIS COSTELLO
Columbia

Costello's first album suffered from having a few good songs immersed in a production too indifferent and thin to convey the energy the songs were performed with. This time Costello has come thru with a remarkably consistent pop record with a couple of gems in its midst for which he still deserves some attention.

With "This Year's Model," he has gained a distinctive sound that had only been hinted at in the previous album, along with a considerable increase in the intensity of his singing. It opens with the very pop "No Action," which quickly moves into the atmospheric "This Year's Girl," heavily framed by the organ and drums. With Cliff Richard's immortal lines, Elvis moves into "The Beat," the sort of song the guy made his reputation with in the first place. More throbbing drums on the next song, but it's not until the keyboards get moving you realize that Elvis is shifting gear again. "Pump It Up" is an energetic stomper that even has a great bit in the middle sounding straight out of Gary Glitter. Then it's down fast with the waltz number, "Little Triggers." This one isn't over soon enough. Side 1 ends with another pop tune only redeemed by the organ sound.

The second side continues with the same r&b punctuated pop until the needle hits the grooves of "Lipstick Vogue." Cos-

KILL THE HIPPIES!



THE DEADBEATS
+BRAINLESS/FINAL RIDE/DEADBEAT
an extended player DANGERHOUSE

tello's voice is dry and accusing as he spits out this excellent rocker. One song and the man redeems himself. "Radio Radio" ends the record, the same one performed in a display of frustration on Saturday Night Live. It is interesting to note that this song isn't on the English release and so makes it a rather pointed accusation of the state of U.S. radio. Even given the more obvious virtues of other songs, this is the one that deserves airplay.

Costello has greatly improved, but of all the new wave artists to emerge he still lurks the closest to the MOR side of the tracks.

K.F.

THE DEPRESSIONS
Barn Records import

Archetypal punk product. Not devoid of strength or relevance but quite lacking in originality. Each song blends into the next with very little to differentiate them by, same bad boy vocals a la Stranglers (some cuts are, in fact, like unknown Stranglers stuff, the mean bass, the spat-out throaty vocals, the super aggressive stand), same average riffs, same sulfate leads. The lyrics are often intelligent and pointed but too easily ignored, lost in the undistinguished musical stew. Every time a song offers the possibility of separating itself from the rest, they bring it back in line, perhaps afraid of the directions a bit of imagination might take them in. Only once or twice, some background vocals suddenly give a tune a bit of depth and appeal. It's still quite a playable album but it won't impose itself on your life or stick to your brain.

K.F.

"BLACK AND WHITE"
THE STRANGLERS
A&M

Phase 3 in the Stranglers' plan to take over the millions that have shied away from punk but who are waiting for the great crossover new group that they all can identify with, get fucked up to, play on their cars' cassette player all summer long and worship from a safe distance. A&M knows that it can happen and accordingly are helping the somber foursome break thru with more determination than all the other companies with their token English new wave group, the Stranglers, old timers with certainly a strong desire to make it or bust, know it too and are refining their sound, adding a little appeal here and there when dryness and one-dimensionality threaten to overcome, dropping the offensive lyrics that may frighten some segments of the public, throwing in a couple of songs that are sure to intrigue progressive DJs who remember the Doors' "Alabama Song" or other experiments with tears in their eyes ("Nice and Sleazy," "Outside Tokyo"). There's still enough of the by-now typical Stranglers' sound to keep early hard-core fans in ample supply of bad vibes barbarian rock and all that "death and night and blood" stuff the boys have always dealt in.

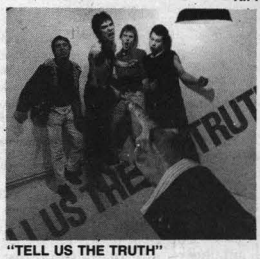
The Stranglers cannot fail to gain millions of dissatisfied radio listeners as fans if all those K-something hotbeds of conformity and blandness can be persuaded to give them a chance—one song here, one there, a couple in a row, then some early stuff—the usual initial radio break-in. Music for the masses, with enough simple messages to wake up the dumbest kids in suburbia: "Do you wanna blow your mind/Do you wanna blow your hymen/Do you wanna blow exams/Do you wanna fix my muffler/it's got a hole in it." Don't tell me surfers can't get behind this one!

K.F.

"WHITE MUSIC"
XTC
Virgin import

England's favorite "smart" group so far manages to leave this dumkopf of a reviewer in the dark as to what their impressive success is ***really*** based on. Maybe everything gels together live, maybe England's need for harmless wackiness is greater than ours (see Devo's triumphal tour). Whatever it is, I can't quite bring myself to swing with the rest and happily bop to the mechanical ditties thrown left and right by XTC. Yea, mechanical. It's the only word I can think of to describe this eclectic amalgam of styles, parodies, perfect hooks and stylized pop singing. Some songs are perfect radio material, others are too offbeat or too clever, but they all have the same machine-made feel. Feed a computer with everything ever put on vinyl in the pop/rock field, push a few buttons and I wouldn't be surprised if some very XTC-like songs came out at the other end. Maybe that's the point. Maybe they just want to ridicule our day and age and our superficial tastes. They certainly do a first rate job of nasty destruction on their version of Dylan's "All Along the Watch Tower." Simly unlistenable, which is fine with me, but so what?

K.F.



"TELL US THE TRUTH"
SHAM 69
Polydor import

Some people are in punk rock 'cos it's the cool thing to do. Some are in it 'cos they think it's the best way to attract attention. Jimmy Pursey and the boys don't have a choice. It's either that or the bloody factory. Either grab a mike or a guitar or work for the bosses the rest of your grey life. No matter if the sound you come up with ain't exactly sophistico, you make up for it by sheer conviction and honesty. And the lads will be with you all the way, even though your noble moments ("What about the lonely") will go right over their little brutes' heads.

So while the live side may make some wince with its simplistic thump thump feel and its barbaric chants between songs, it is obviously the most representative aspect of Sham's music. Loud, basic rock 'n' roll with an emphasis on lower class feelings, something all the angry kids in the filthy city can sing along with and beat the shit out of others to. There isn't much point in separating the songs, it's one long explosion of frustration. Listen to the audience shouting itself hoarse and singing the choruses: when all hell breaks loose in the industrial world, this is what the mob will sound like. Goodbye the swimming pool!

On the studio side we get more of the same window-smashing rock, solid riff, straight beat, aggressive singing, with here and there a fe tricky touches (the talking voice in "I'm a man, I'm a boy," the nagging mother before "Family life"). Whose generation even dabbles with elect jimmickry, it's not exactly a success but it goes down all right.

All in all, not a bad album for a band who probably relies mainly on its live appearances to convert new fans.

C.B.

U.K.SQUEEZE, the group with a grip on Great Britain, says:

DON'T BE HALF A ROCKER!

GIVE US SKINNY, PEPLESS, second-rate brains—and we'll give them a Squeeze. It'll cram your ears so full of bulging new music, your friends will be amazed at your new found power.

BE BETTER THAN THE BEST

U.K.Squeeze is just what you need to pack on that extra brain tissue f-a-s-t! If you aim to be a champion and win every time with the guys or gals...or make it big on the posing platform... listen hard to U.K.Squeeze.

Let us show you how we can make you a WHOLE PERSON from ear to ear—with just ONE SQUEEZE!

Take a good honest look at yourself. Are you proud of your state of mind?... Your record collection? Or are you satisfied to go through life being just "half the rocker" you could be? No matter how ashamed you are of your present condition, the "sleeping" muscles already present in your head can turn you into a real rocker and roller.

BE GREAT · BE SOMEBODY SPECIAL

What Is "Dynamic Listening?" How Does It Work?

You wouldn't believe it, but Robert Cneziewiczer used to be a lightweight rocker. Fellows called him "wimpy." Girls snickered and made fun of him behind his back whenever he wore earphones. He was a flop! Then he discovered our new music-muscle building system—"DYNAMIC LISTENING."

THE INSULT THAT MADE A ROCKER OUT OF ROBERT

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When you look in a mirror while listening to the U.K.Squeeze album, and see a healthy, husky, strapping fellow smiling back at you with real eye contact—then you'll be astounded at how short a time it takes one good SQUEEZE to GET RESULTS!

U.K.SQUEEZE ON A&M RECORDS & TAPES

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Robert Cneziewiczer

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Extra Added Feature If You Act... The SMASH British Single, "Take Me I'm Yours"

RESULTS INSTANTLY!

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DO YOU WANT...

A BIG NEOCORTEX?
Before long you'll actually begin to feel that your grey matter matters!
PROFESSIONAL EARDRUMS?
You'll immediately hear things you never heard before.
MAGNETIC PERSONALITY?
You'll feel alive with vitality the kind men respect and women admire.

Produced by John Cale and U.K.Squeeze

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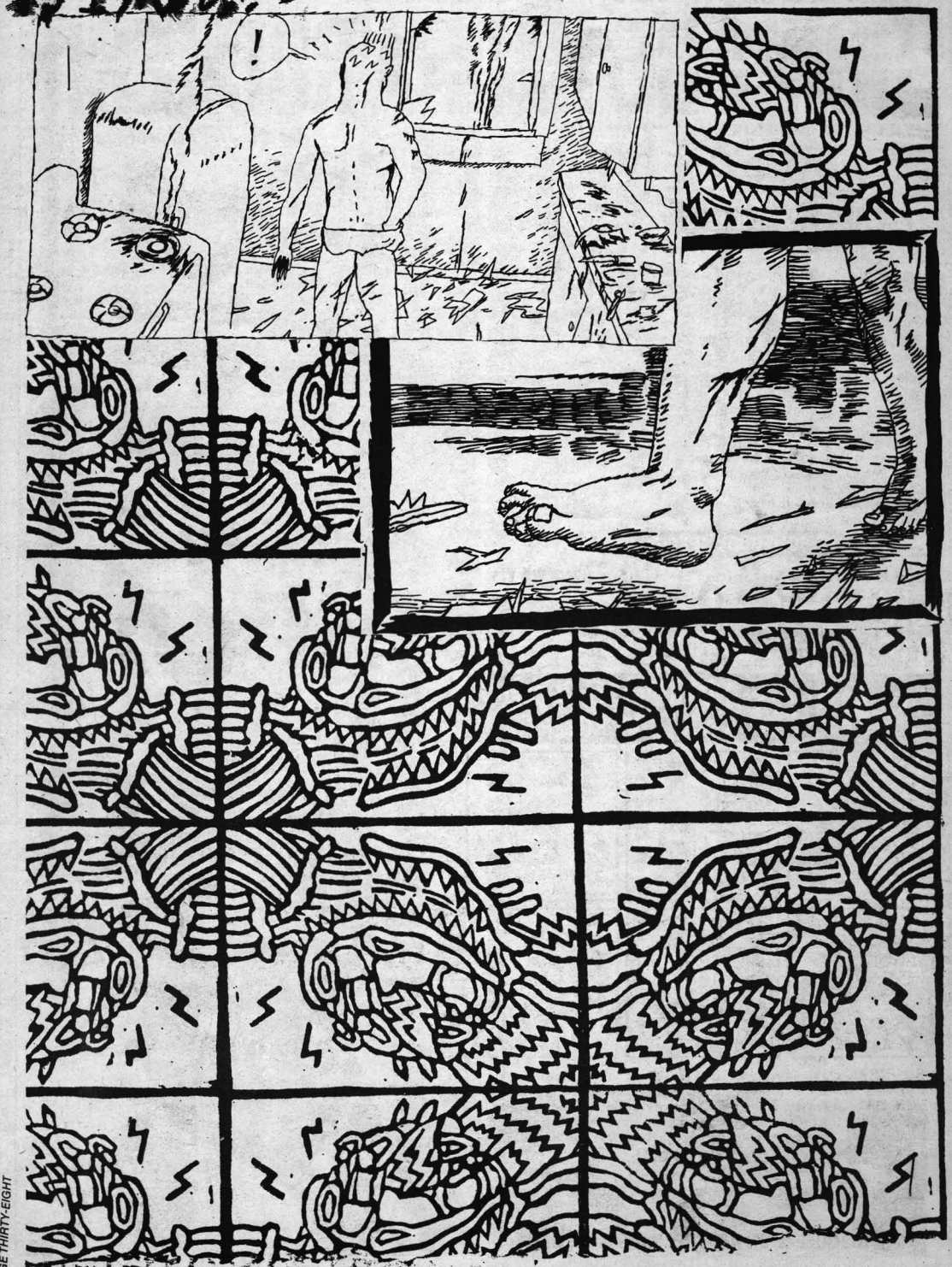
TIMES!
!
LARS PANTER -1978-

i'm no arrogant upper classer. ultra-irrelivent polyester. i'm not hesitant i move faster. call m me americas worst disaster. i'm just setting the detinator. call me the system degenerator.

BILLY S. STAR

PUNK, RADICAL POET, DEDICATED TO THE NEW MUSIC SINGER SONG WRITER, FED UP WITH FLAKEY NON-REVOLUTIONARY BEACH BUNNYS IN PUNK GARB SPEWING NOTHING MEANINGFUL AND CONSTANTLY SPEWING BULLSHIT. BULLSHIT, BULLSHIT, BULLSHIT! BULL FUCKING SHIT. ALL I'M LOOKING FOR IS A FEW DEDICATED MUSICIANS WHO WILL PLAY AROUND TOWN AND OCCASIONALLY A ONE NIGHTER IN NEW YORK, SAN FRANCISCO, OR WHEREEVER. (213) 931-8958

i love the stars but i hate thesstripes. no i ain't one of your prototypes. americian sophisticates the patriots of ignorance. refuse to fight unless its right. refuse to live your lives in fright. refuse to kiss the masters fist. refuse to work for that fucking jerk. i'm just constantly on my own my way forget you man. i'm just constantly I'm Just Constantly Gone.

the sex pistols are singing it in england. the sex pistols singing down with the queen. your rich rulers don't care about the people. let the bells of anarachy ring ring ring ring ring ring

©℗'78 BILLY S. STAR

are you too YELLOW?

to get SATISFACTION!

The residents released their SATISFACTION in 1976. It was immediately acclaimed as the most extreme and intense record ever recorded, a pre-punk masterpiece. The demand has since grown for this record to the point where people can no longer be denied the painful pleasure of hearing and owning this startling record, which Andy Gill of NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS called, "... probably my favorite 45 of all time.", and Jim Green of TROUSER PRESS flatly stated, "... the most determinedly repellent music I've ever heard ...".

Obviously not a record for the faint hearted. So the question remains, Are you too yellow today for a record that was recorded two years ago? Hmmm?

For free catalog of The Residents records write: RALPH RECO

Dept. V, 444 Grove Street., San Francisco, CA 94102

SLASH

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 12 AUGUST 1978 FIFTY CENTS

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6p.m.–4a.m. tuesday–sunday

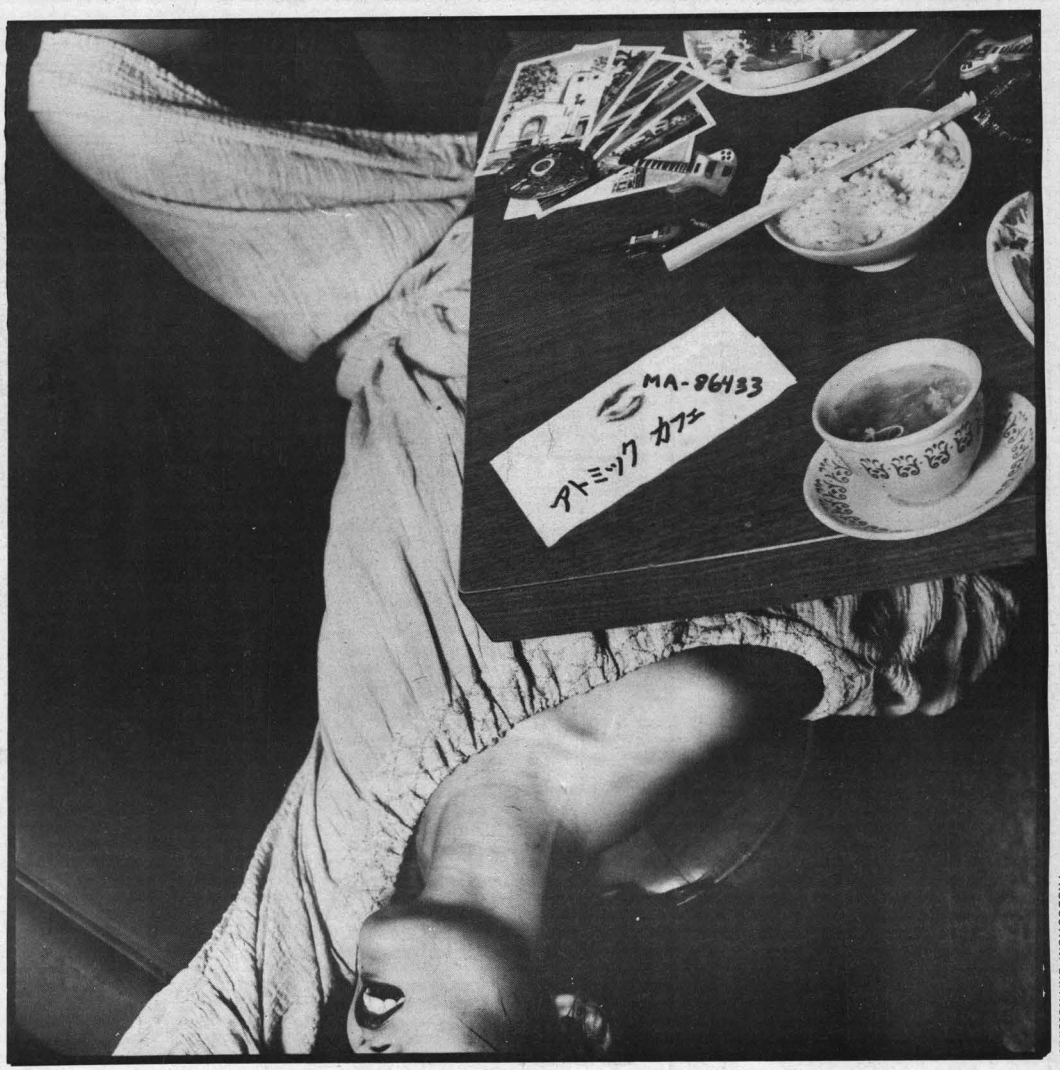

PHOTO: BRUCE OSBORN

PRODUCTION: EWA WOJCIAK

no punk intended...

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COVER: THE SCREAMERS (finally!)

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EDITORIAL

ANOTHER

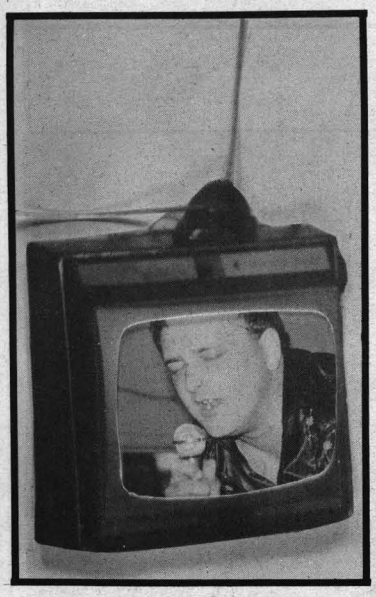
TWO FACED

BULLSHIT

ETC.

photo: A. Kratochvil

LOCAL SHIT



Local Depravity

(Official depravation: Contact Melissa, apt. #2, 1159 N. Genesee, L.A., Ca. 90046 for information on the official Germs Fan Club.)

Always the stickler for what is right and just, Brendan proposed a law suit to Pleasant for comments she made about him in Lobotomy, the fanzine Kim Fowley also threatened with legal action.

Prior to the Screamers' cancelled show at the Gay Carnival here in Hollywood, a special screening was held of Black Randy's 1974 video tapes. Shown were the Ramones' sixth performance ("I Don't Care"/"California Sun"/"I Don't Wanna Walk Around With You"/"I Don't Wanna Go Down To The Basement") and a special Halloween dress-up cabaret song and dance featuring Gorilla Rose and Tomata. Tomata brought the house down with his stacked heel version of "96 Tears." Also shown were some experimental skits of Tomata as a mad doctor performing a two-headed transplant and several Black Randy water retention stunts in which he spewed his regards. The climax was a feature length film called "Sex Me," which is probably illegal to even talk about.

And finally, who did what to who how many times with who else and at what different locations?

Local Recording News

The Weirdos are making a demo (possibly for England's Radar records) of five or six songs including "Plastic," "Like a Drone," and "Teenage." They are going to make a lot of money off it and buy Nicky Beat some pants that fit. Rank and File (three Nuns and a Dil) recorded a single in S.F. and The Sleepers are putting one out on their own label. The Bags and Howard Werth should be coming out on Dangerhouse along with the Consumers now that the Deadbeats, Black Randy, and X are in the stores.

Local Missing Persons

Trixie is in New York waiting for the Dickies to get back before she comes back, but she might not come back then either. Mary the Rat left for England lately, perhaps to set up a business relationship with Helen Killer who is reportedly doing very well there, stealing autos on commission. Charlotte (ex of the Eyes) got back from England where she'd been jetsetting with the Dickies. She says they should be back as you read this, so get ready to walk like an egg some more.

Local Casualties

The Controllers seem to havae lost a bit of their control. First the tall guitar player fell down the Masque steps, grabbing at 15-year-old girls, and broke his arm. He would have played anyhow until Carla the Mad Dog drummer ended up in hospital with a broken crown when she fell off the car she was riding.

Also in the realm of violence, John Doe and Dona Bonebreak of X beat up a guy at the Screamers/Weirdos/Crime $5 thing because he accused them of throwing a firecracker in his face. Actually, they only threw it in his ear.

Speaking of fire, they had a unique wienie roast at the Masque the other week with Marc Plummer playing the part of the wienie. He woke up in hospital with his lungs on ice but is now doing fine.

Gerrard (Brothel Creeper) got mono but he let his lung collapse before it slowed him down.

There was a near-riot at the Whisky when the Consumers and New York's Cramps (best thing from New York since the Ramones) were billed with Dyan Diamond. Dyann Diamond started it by refusing to be booed off the stage. Two Consumers, Kickboy, some Bags and an innocent bystander received trained fisticuffs for supposedly heaving ice at Dyan and band. There was speculation that a certain offended person's bodyguards did all the beating.

Well, everyone calmed down enough the next night to enjoy the infectious Cramps and go to a party in their honor at the Chateau Marmont. En route home from the party, Claude (Kickboy) and Phil(omena) had a little accident that necessitated their getting a new car. The new car soon had a taste of what it had gotten itself in for when Phil ran it into the nearest building because the brakes went out and she wanted it to stop. The car has been behaving better since receiving the no-nonsense treatment.

Local New Bands

The Spies recently debuted at the Whisky with their infamous line-up including Rock Bottom on vocals, Blank Frank, ex of the Plugz, and Ygaar of Zolar X on guitar. They sport a no-nonsense approach and are looking for a synthesizer player. Only those with a taste for danger need apply.

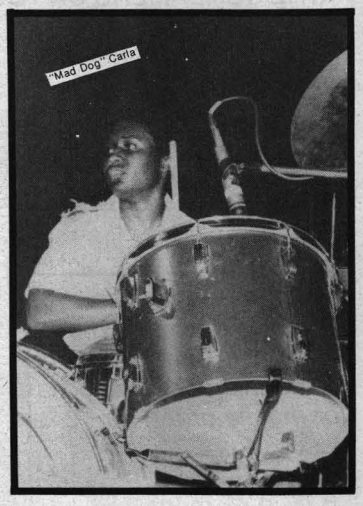
Also new are The Minors, an all-girl band native to Hollywood, age 15 on the average. They have songs about 14-year-old stuff and are readying to debut. Brendan told them they were good but then, they are 15-year-old girls.

Rick Wilder, who once sang for the Berlin Brats, is out to start a new band, with perhaps the lovely Rod Donahue on bass.

Rhino 39 are young, promising, and from Long Beach.

The Go Gos are all girls with a band ready to pick up where the Plungers left off. Watch for them at that all-new, swank, and still secret Punk Club to open any weekend now.

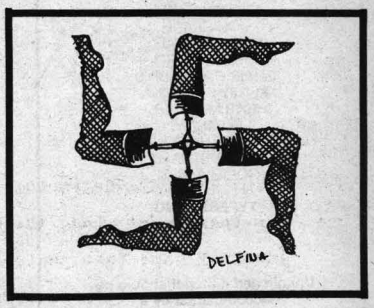
And finally, the Flesheaters are gonna try it again with an all-new band behind the singer.



Four San Francisco bands came down as planned and supplied much new and altered blood around town for a few days. Notably refreshing were Negative Trend, Sleepers and The Offs (fronted by bed-breaker Don Vynil). Also along were the Nuns who looked much more confident than when last seen opening for the Pistols. A few of the S.F. bands got here a day early and caught the Alley Cats headlining the Whisky. Randy Stodalla's microphone shocked him ten times during the set and everyone got electrified. Also playing that night were the Consumers, who beat up and bloodied their singer on stage, tying him up with electrical cords. He quit after the show but soon kissed and made up. The hijinks were planned but got out of hand. The next weekend the Alley Cats and the lascivious Bags tore the house down at Mabuhay's and have been invited back.

The Rock Corporation, a bar in the Valley, is dabbling in punk shows. The first night was the Deadbeats, X, and the Screamers—all for only $2. The Weirdos tried it out and Rhino 39 may play there soon, too. Find out how to get there, it's worth the short drive from Hollywood.

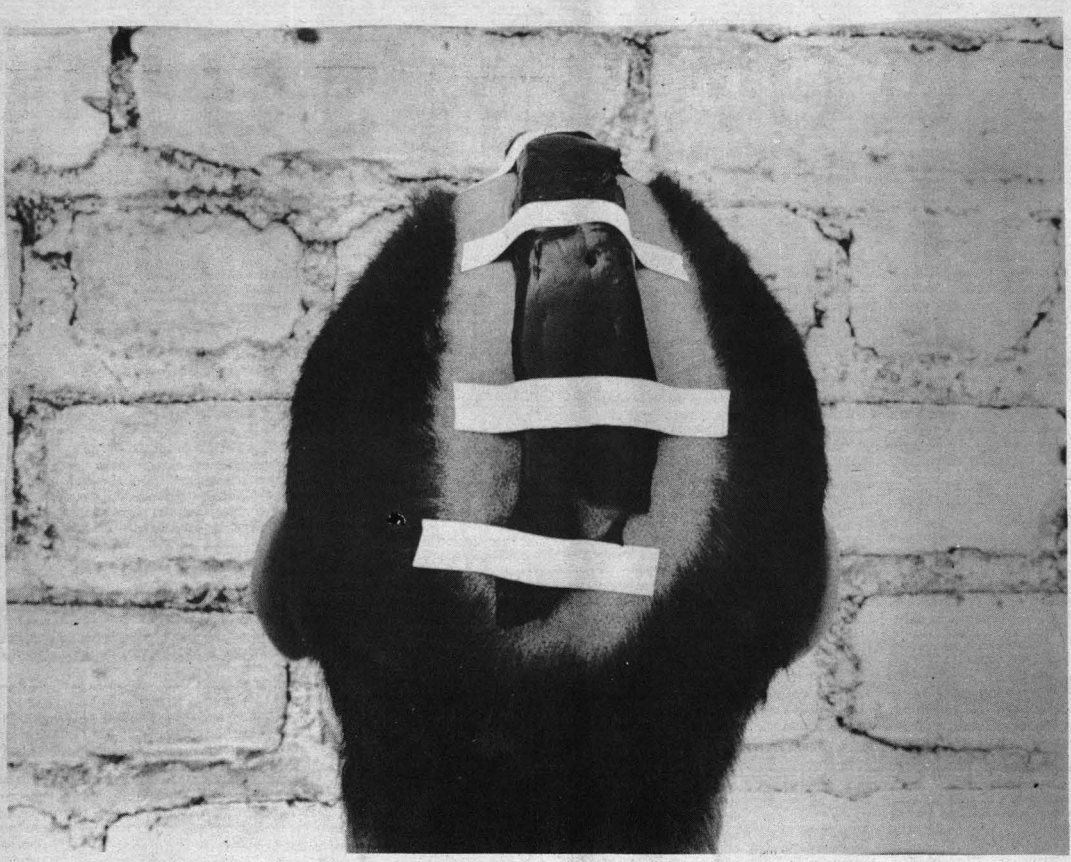
Brendan threw a free Sunday afternoon gathering at the Masque in retribution for the $5 thing. Prior to their set, the Snot Puppies showed Bugs Bunny cartoons, much amusing an LAPD couple who strolled in out of the sun. After the Snot Puppies (an ex-Screamer on keyboards), a Mystery Figure with a Vox Jaguar organ ripped the place up with the Eyes, who'd played at an exclusive rich Negro party in Baldwin Hills the night before.



Local Events

The Miss Bitchin' California Beauty Contest at the $5 thing reminded more than one person of a cheap version of the Palladium Punk Fashion Show.

SLASH PAGE FOUR



LIVER HAIRCUT—Beginning with a basic skinhead 'look' place a 1" wide, long strip of raw beef liver along the axis of the cranium, crossed and secured periodically by surgical tape (see photos); a 3" wide bald strip should be shaved across the head before application of liver. Further inquiries write: PO Box 57041, Los Angeles CA 90057

letters

Dear Slash,

Rolling Stone grew fat on the verbatim adulation of messianic nonentities. What is this Maclaren swill going to do for you (or me?)

P. Winstanley—London

Dear Slash;

Last issue I read Brendon's letter about the Masque money situation. In it Brendan defended the manner in which funds from the Masque benefit have been dispersed. A number of questions remain unanswered, at least for me. First of all, how about letting us know how much was made and second of all, ***in dollars and cents*** what was it spent on?

The original intent of the bands and the community was to preserve the Masque. Failing that, the goal was to provide a capital base for staging concerts (plural) to replace the Masque. Since the benefit, how many concerts have been staged? And the one event that we have seen at last was a "big concert" $5 a head number. Is this replacing the Masque?

While Brendan dickers with the Clash and Kim Fowley where is our "alternative cabaret"? And how about telling us the details of that clown-headed poop-butt scheme to get the Mafia Real Estate Entrepreneurs to ***give*** the Masque building to the arts council!!! In an area with literally hundreds of empty halls and auditoriums why can't the Masque management find someplace where we can hear our music? I am also curious whether our community funds are being used to finance petty nuisance lawsuits against the local fanzines.

I believe that the Masque management has lost sight of some simple goals like affordable entertainment staged in a professional manner.

Curious Boy

Somewhere in here there is a part 2 of Brendan's reply to the concerned world, which may (or may not) satisfy your curiosity.

DEAR SLASH:

Flipside are fakes, they scream 'artsy fartsy' but I went to art school with that 'artsy fartsy' (to say the least) X-8.

This picture is proof. ha haaaa

FREON

Dear Slash;

I've had it with your sick incestuous scene. Everyone fucks each other but no one gets off. It's like everyone's getting fat without eating any of the right foods. I respect a scheming swindling back biter as much as the next pigeon but please if you're about to phase out a charter member of your new wave trip be sure you get something out of it.

It's the L.A. trip, our newest in crowd craze, one step forward two steps backward. If you wanna steal please do, but don't look at me when you burn your own ass in the process.

Signed,

One Law Suit Proof Person

Or: Don't look now, but the paranoids are after me.

Dear Jimbo,

Altho we really don't know each other, I hope you don't mind my telling you that you are possibly the most disgusting "thing" I have ever known. Do you get your rocks off fighting and winning the other sleezes who populate your world? Do you burn your buns every night in a hot skillet? I bet you have cosmic-galctic ***fat*** love handles, and would ***die*** to be a father.

Your guns and all that technology, but what about your wiener? I mean, what is it you really would like to do all day long? What about being born yesterday? Did that person in your xerox book take your twinkies and eat them right in front of our unbelievably ugly face? Is that why you're always mean?

You want us to write you, but what have you ever done for us? I like what you wear, ***can I have it?*** Are you willing to give up your pen and ink? Give it up. You'll never make $$$. You're an idealist, you will survive every cosmic disaster: chance, sex, fantasy, success in love, success in money, mr. fat buns contest, muscle for no reason contest, nonsense, autistic writing, hollywood park, crosswords. All those sorts of games which challenge the mind to rebel.

You're nothing but some kind of weird anarchist trying to provoke us. Well, we would never fall into your dumb ***piege*** (trap). You would love us to hate you. Well, we don't. We like you, we think you are ***really*** nice. I mean, it would really hurt me if you didn't care that I cared enough to write you. You know what I mean? I'm a sincere person like you I live in Venice, and it's dense here you know. And even tho' I'm older and stuff, your people are ***my*** kind of people.

Those guys who stole your lunch, they're shits. Don't they know how hard it is to be a proteliariat clone/robot/thing which exists in the future?? I have so many questions, I hope that you respond sincerely, I mean, from the heart.

My greatest dream is to be two-dimensional like you. You are my hero, even tho I resent your success. One last thing: The REVENGE OF THE SAND = GLASS. Get it?

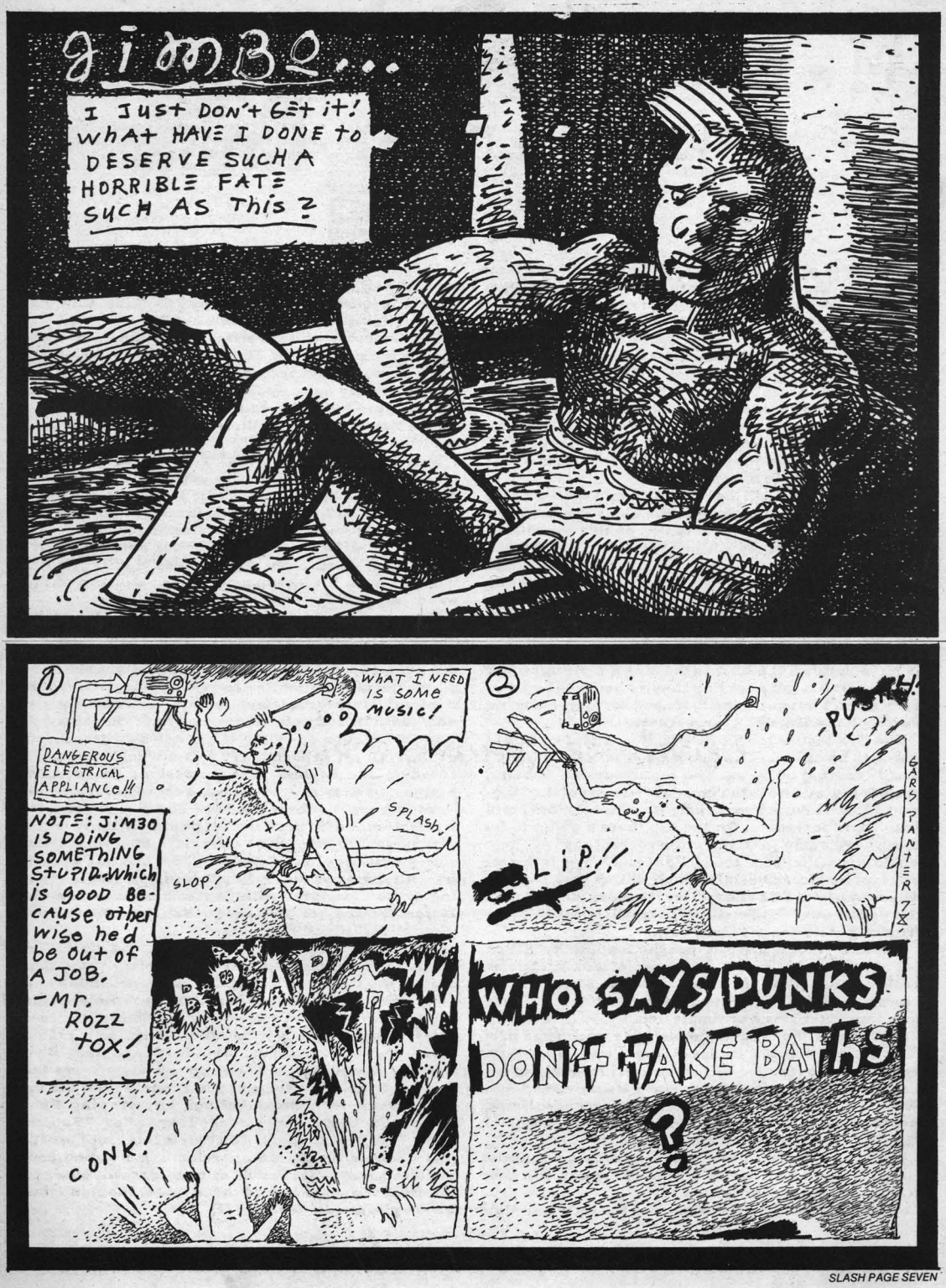
I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Susie de Kooning

CONGRATULATIONS, SCREAMERS!

Tomata, Gear, KK, Paul, Phil, Gorilla, Chloe & Brian,
with alumni David and Jeff not forgotten—
Seeing the band on July 4, 1977 first inspired the Masque
Congratulations on one year of screams.
Thanks for February 24th and July 3, 1978
Good luck, rave on forever
Brendan


JIMBO...
I JUST DON'T GET IT! WHAT HAVE I DONE TO DESERVE SUCH A HORRIBLE FATE SUCH AS THIS?
1
DANGEROUS ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE!!!
NOTE: JIM30 IS DOING SOMETHING STUPID-Which is good Because otherwise he'd be out of A JOB. -MR. ROZZ TOX!
WHAT I NEED IS SOME MUSIC!
SPLASH!
SLOP!
2
PUSH!
LIP!!
GARY PANTER '78
BRAP!
CONK!
WHO SAYS PUNKS DON'T TAKE BATHS ?

Metropolitan Mumblings

By Tony D.

The Clash play a free gig in Fulham and keep it so secret that the hall was only half-filled. At first it was rumored the Clash were doing it to record a live track for their new album, but the sound quality was such that it must have been just a warm-up for their tour. The set they played was mostly undistinguished new numbers with "Capital Radio," "Garage Land" and "London's Burning" thrown in. Supposedly they also played "All the Young Dudes" (old Mott the Hoople song) but I guess I must have missed it. Their tour was supposed to have had the much-talked-about New York band Suicide supporting but at the last moment Chelsea stepped in in their place.

The Vibrators split up! (did I hear someone say, "About time"?), Slaughter & the Dogs also call it a day, which brings no tears to this punk's eye either, unlike the news of the Killjoys' demise. The Killjoys, you will recall, made one of punk's finest singles with "Johnny Won't Get to Heaven," which still sounds as exciting today as it did a year ago when it was released. Unfortunately, it was their only single, and despite some rave reviews in the music media, they never really made their mark after that. There seems to be something of a buzz in the air for a group called Doll By Doll. I get a feeling they're going to be huge very soon. I haven't seen them yet, so, sorry, lads, no descriptions. But don't forget that name.

The Sex Pistols (or Ex-Pistols, if you prefer) film is going to be called "The Great Rock & Roll Swindle," and is coming out soon. The soundtrack LP is being rush-released due to the immense success of the "Biggest Blow (A Punk Prayer)/My Way" single that I told you about last issue. On the LP, there's going to be some very early Johnny Rotten recordings with new backing tracks recorded by Paul and Steve. Is this an attempt by Matrixbest (formerly Glitterbest, and we all know about THEM, don't we?) to devalue Rotten in the public eye? Also on the album will be more Biggs tracks (but he doesn't know yet).

Popular singles just now are the folk/punky "Jilted John"/"Going Steady" by a mysterioso character called Jilted John, the Clash's "White Man in Hammersmith Palais" (although it's hard to tell if it's genuine enthusiasm or simply because it's the Clash), "East Sheen" by O'Level (homemade sleeve and production type thing, bundles of charm and enthusiasm rather than expertise—I'm sure you know the sort of thing) and, unfortunately, the Pistols single. No doubt Malcolm is overjoyed at the controversy it's stirred up, with all the "Cosh the Driver" propaganda, but this hardened Pistol fan can't help but notice that it's glorifying a train robber who was only a capitalist thug. There's no positive result as far as I can see, unlike "God Save the Queen."

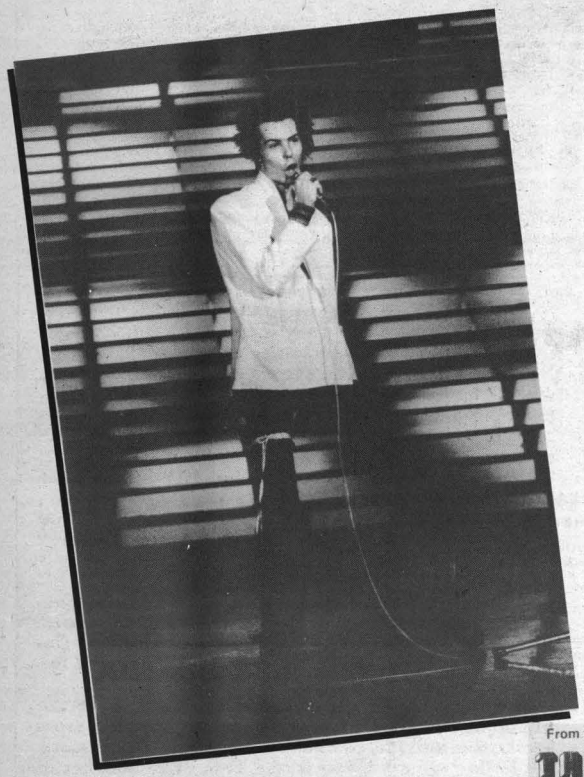
Siouxsie & the Banshees give up the fight and sign to Polydor, "I can't wait to get in there and throw the typists' paper around and get their typewriter ribbons in a twist," beamed a happy Siouxsie. Oh wow, and suddenly it all turns futile, huh?

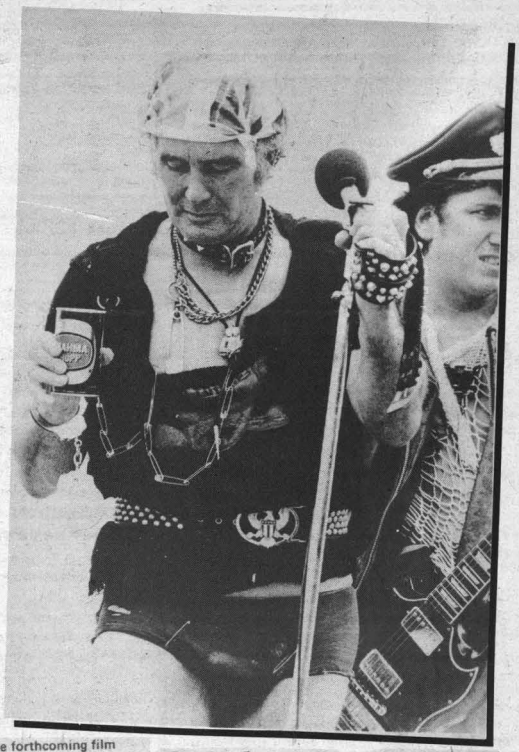
The Lurkers, who surprised everybody and their dog by making the top 50 national charts with their last single, are recording "Pills" for their next, the song formerly done by the New York Dolls. Also out are singles from the Buzzcocks ("Noise Annoys"/"Love You More") and Alternative TV ("Action Time & Vision"/"Another Coke")

Iggy Pop played two nights at the medium-sized Music Machine. Needless to say, he sold out both nights. Verdicts differed wildly from "the best he's been since '71" from veteran fanatics and "just his presence is enough" from a fainting girl to "grotesque theatrics and unconvincing musical trash" and "what more proof do you need that Iggy's finished?" from the skeptics. I include a photo of the event anyway.

Devo (well, some would call them punk) played the big Knebworth Festival and drew lots of praise from the critics and lots of abuse from the paying customers (who enjoyed Genesis and Tom Petty, neither of whom got much attention from the reviewers). Their bootleg "Workforce—Live on Site" is VERY hip just now (with its full color cover and lyric sheet insert). They were even on sale at the David Bowie concerts at Earls Court, where there was a whole stall dedicated to the lifeless four themselves (Devo suits, badges, t-shirts and, of course, records). Is there no limit to people's susceptibility? The Bowie concerts were attended by quite a lot of punks but there was a disheartening amount of normals in attendance. I'm sure you'll have heard enough about D.B. so I'll carry on with the news that X-Ray Spex's new single is going to be "Identity" with "Let's Submerge" on the B-side. It's another high production Spex number replete with distinctive sax break.

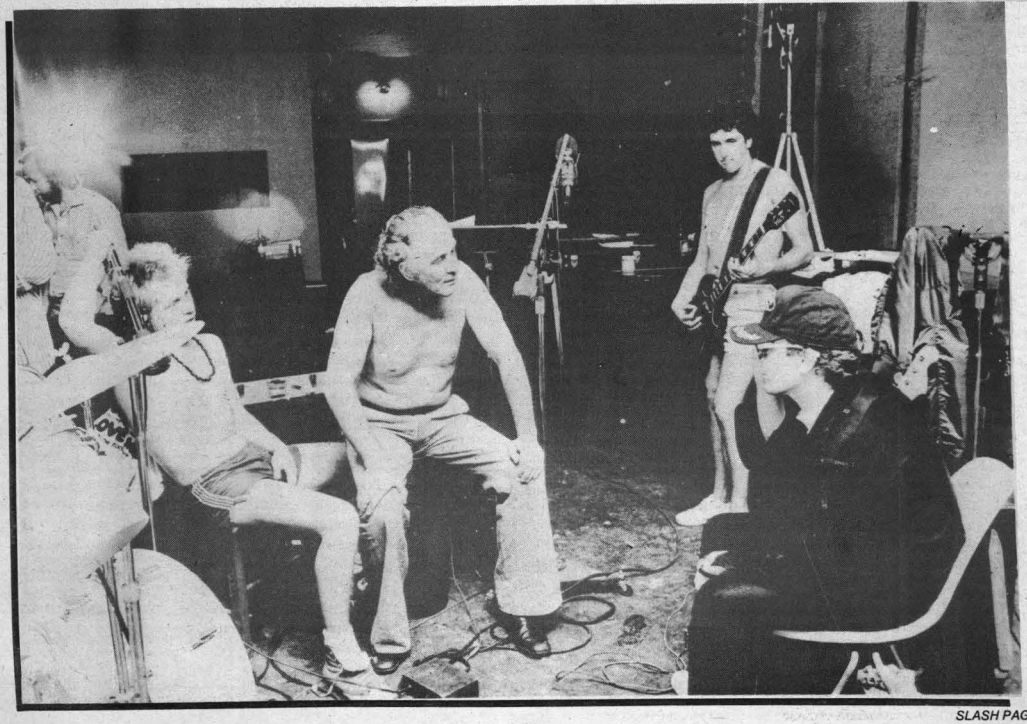
That's about all the regular news and stuff. The punk scene is still healthy and there's signs that maybe the skinhead movement has reached the end of its era. (We can always hope.) Oh yeah, before I go, didja know that there are three versions of the new Pistols single? One is in regular 7-inch form, called "No One Is Innocent"; the other is 12-inch size with a B/W cover and called "The Biggest Blow"; and the third one looks the same as the 12-incher but has an extra track with Ronald Biggs interviewing Paul Cook and Steve Jones tacked on after "Biggest Blow." It's not announced on the sleeve. I suppose it's just another MacLaren anarchistic marketing concept (or seeing that Pistols aficionados will now buy in effect the same record three times, shouldn't that be "capitalistic marketing"?)





From the forthcoming film

THE GREAT ROCK'N'ROLL SWINDLE



WOT'S HAPPENING WITH THE MASQUE...
NEXT CHAPTER...
DOES BRENDAN COME THROUGH OR NOT???

On the eve of July 1, the first anniversary of the Masque.

I suppose I have to admit I've been a bit vague with everybody in answering this eternal question—wot's 'appening wiv the Masque? That's because I honestly didn't know up until a few weeks ago, coupled with the fact that it was a bit too complex to explain in a couple of sentences and nobody can understand what I'm saying anyway...

Yi-uoo, I'm trying to learn yer language to speak, meanwhile I'll try to write a bit of it down... for those who are really interested and really care.

The Pussycat Pornographers have been trying to get me out of the basement since last year, ever since the place got indelibly stamped with the "p-word," but they haven't been able to do it because I'm protected by a five-year lease.

So far, all they've been able to accomplish is turning a lot of my hair grey, destroying my nervous system and making me take up writing homosexual prose in weird punk rock newsletters, even though I don't have any homo desires left to boast of.

I am not going. It's as simple as that. At least, not for a while. Even if the Masque re-opens as a museum.

On May 30, the Pussychats filed suit against me with the Los Angeles Superior Court to have me booted out on the grounds that they mistakenly rented me the cellar in the first place, since they were (or claim to have been) unaware that the City closed off the basement for any kind of usage more than four years ago, about a year before the Pussycats bought the building...

They claim in their suit that this "mutual mistake of fact" can only be remedied by my removal since the Pussycats stand in mortal dread of harmful repercussions if my tenancy is prolonged...

In a countersuit filed by me and my law firm, I content more effectually that my removal is not the only remedial means available since I represent the wishes of all (or nearly all, except for a few sour cheeses who make Xerox richer and who cannot tell the difference between real velvet and cheap velveteen worn-out hand-me-downs) the people who supported the Masque benefit in February of this year.

I am director of the Masque Trust Fund and I offered not only to submit a fire exit plan to the City but also to ***pay*** for it, even though it was ***their*** mistake.

My suit also contends the Pussycats ***knew*** or ***should have known*** that leasing me the basement for whatever purpose was an illegal act, therefore it ain't no ***mutual*** mistake of fact... at least, not mine.

I'm sorry, fellows, but that is ***your*** problem, your mistake... it cannot be mine, I offered to make peace for you with the City and you ***refused***...

I even went to the extreme of trying to set the Pussies up with an even better tax shelter scam than the one they have already (see previous Slashes for details of the LAICA scam), but they ***would not listen,*** so now they will have to suffer through the courts with me...

It won't be my first journey through American courts. The result of my last episode was (amazingly) that ***good old-fashioned American justice actually prevailed.*** I witnessed it actually working and was flabbergasted since all my disenchanted American friends are cynical and skeptical as hell about it. I'm not (yet, anyway) and my experience gives me optimism that the chances are good of it working again.

The final part of my suit will sue the Pussycats to make them pay for the damned fire exit.

The outcome of this litigation can go several ways. Either the Pussies can relent and give in or they will make me a decent-sized offer of settlement, considerably more than the laughabout $1,000.00 offer they made a few weeks ago.

It looks good that the Masque will re-open in 1978.

Meanwhile, the proliferation of new bands and new people picking up instruments goes on all the time. I see it every day downstairs, despite efforts by the Whisky to shut down their pit to the local community... who needs it?

It moves me to walk into the Masque and find groups of young kids coming in to help out keeping the place clean and keeping the rehearsal rooms in running order...

When people ask me what are these young "punkers" supposed to be saying? why do they exist? I say I don't know except that to me they are united by a strong-willed desire to ***do something***...

These boys and girls are doing it, while the jaded old fart punkers from the '76-'77 period complain, bitch and kill each other off in stupid petty bickering and needless backstabbing behind people's backs and in stupid little misinformed fanzines that in one case is actually the only justification for the existence of otherwise worthless little old-fashioned groupies.

It sounds horribly hippie to say it, but here goes anyway... this little community ***must come together and love each other.***

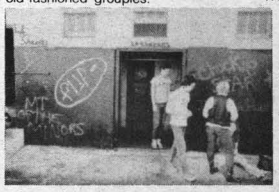
I'll continue to haul ass to make the Masque happen, then I'll quit after it re-opens and hand it over to public domain, my donation to L.A. before I leave the city forever.

Meanwhile, all I can say is, support Masque shows and all the other independently produced gigs which will turn up. The Masque fund needs dough for the legal fund and I promise not to buy jive velveteen panties or go to fancy restaurants unless I earn it.

Here's another hopelessly hippie maxim in which I bid you farewell from this epistle...

I actually secretly ***love you all,*** despite your sometimes shitty little ways.

Love... yi-uoo...
BOWEL MOVEMENT
THE PEOPLE WILL WIN!!!



SLASH CHART OF THE MONTH
(Who listens to what, or so they say)

BASHO
- ☐ "Nausea"—X
- ☐ "Leave Me Alone"—Lou Reed
- ☐ "He's So Fine"—The Chiffons

BO CLIFFORD
- ☐ "White Man in Hammersmith Palais"—The Clash
- ☐ "Anglepoise Lamp"—The Soft Boys
- ☐ "UK OK"—The Smirks

CHRIS D.
- ☐ "We're Desperate"—X
- ☐ "Know Your Product"—The Saints
- ☐ "Clash City Rockers"—The Clash

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH
- ☐ "Archie, the Red Nose Reindeer"—Tapper Zukie
- ☐ "Manners"—U-Brown
- ☐ No Wicked Can't Reign"—Ripton Hilton

DAVE ALLEN
- ☐ "The Day the World Turned Day-Glo"—X-Ray Spex
- ☐ "Idi Amin"—Black Randy
- ☐ "I Need"—Buzzcocks

GORILLA ROSE
- ☐ "Suspiria" soundtrack
- ☐ "Calling Dr. Death"—?
- ☐ "Orphans"—Teenage Jesus & the Jerks

KICKBOY FACE
- ☐ "Adult Books"—X
- ☐ "No One Is Innocent" (a punk prayer)—Ronald Biggs
- ☐ "Viva la Rock 'n' Roll"—Alternative TV

MELANITA
- ☐ "Punish or Be Damned"—The Screamers
- ☐ "Damned"—1st album
- ☐ All The Cramps songs

PEA
- ☐ "Gimme a L'il Pain"—The Alley Cats
- ☐ "Cairo"—Joyella Blade
- ☐ "Less of Me"—Teenage Jesus and the Jerks

MR. SAMIOF
- ☐ "I Don't Mind"—The Buzzcocks
- ☐ "I'm a Man, I'm a Boy"—Sham 69
- ☐ "Do the Dance" (long version)—The Weirdos

V.
- ☐ "We're Desperate"—X
- ☐ "Lexicon Devil"—The Germs
- ☐ "Somethin' Else"—Eddie Cochran

C O N S U M E R S

THE CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND OTHER MODERN MATTERS

This is not an interview. It started like one but halfway thru it became obvious that we would either transcribe the tumult taking place and win the award for the most meaningless publication or shake the tapes until fragments of intelligible information came falling down to forever take their place on these very mortal pages. Everybody talked at once or remained ominously silent, the Slash goon in charge (yours truly) rambled on about the politics of the single while consuming grape-originated refreshments, the band threatened to wash their dirty laundry in public, they lied, cheated and made a total mockery of the various feeble attempts at profundity on our part. Very frustrating, since now and then one would get a glimpse of above-average sophistication behind the contradictory mess.

At the time, they were David (singer), Michael (bass), Paul (guitar), John (drums) and Greg (guitar). Shortly after, the Consumers went to San Francisco to play the Mabuhay with the Alley Cats and the Bags. Michael left the group immediately after the shows, maybe not thriving as much as the rest on being hated for their aggressive obnoxiousness. Before this, they had also displayed their peculiar approach to the "one band—one soul" philosophy by punching the shit out of the lead singer while on stage at the Whisky. Some cynics argued that it was all planned and rehearsed, but there was no doubt in my jaded mind: the cut on David's lip was nice and throbbing, and he was shaking and achin' for revenge. The rest of the gang had disappeared, probably to plot their next display of solidarity. During the conversation at Slash I had asked them (routine inquiry in the punk world), "Who do you hate?" "David!" they all replied in unison but one. I then became clever and asked David the same. "Them!" was the heartfelt answer. Whatever happened to good vibes??

But we didn't only dwell in hate and resentment that night. Interspersed among the insults and the bickering were bits of philosophy, religion, art, past history, self-criticism, the lot.

. . . (***Slash—Why are you the Consumers?*** Consumer—Our love of everything, every product, every television show, every radio show, every record ever made . . . ***Slash—Is it sarcastic love?*** Consumer—No, it's true love. It's an American love. (Another)—It's like waking up, and you have a cream pie and a poodle . . .)

Soon, a mysterious obsession with poodles became evident. They even accused Paul of having had an intimate relationship with one a few nights before. I decided to be above all that and let the matter rest. More important to me was the fact that this edgy pack of youngsters had all only recently arrived on the "scene" and, until recently, all had been residents of Phoenix, Arizona. Now they all ('cept Paul, who proudly announced that he is living with a disco band on the beach) live at the Crazy Color Canterbury Complex. But two months ago they were playing their songs in "cowboy bars, weird rock bars, biker bars." They admit they were not exactly the darlings of the local discriminating audiences ("most of our gigs sucked," one said simply). "Intense" is how they describe these shows where most people considered them "a faggot band or a joke band."

. . . "There was this drummer there, a real asshole, he had this bottle in hand and he came up to Paul and he said: 'Gimme that guitar and I'll break it over your head' . . ."

The friendly drummer is now gone. They actually went thru eight drummers in their short past, so you see, all you local combos, what a great insecure future you can also look forward to. No wonder they had to invent drum machines. We all marveled for a while at the wonderful term "joke band," which must be used in millions of little towns to describe what you resentfully don't understand (how very well put).

Now, Arizona is a long way; nobody dares speak of "joke bands" and the gigs they have played are, if not always ravingly received, carefully watched and attended by the L.A. spikey guerrillas. Everybody hates to miss out on the birth of a new fab outfit, so they were there to see the Consumers at the May Day concert, the Black Randy show, the Cramps/Dyan Diamond display and the AlleyCats/Bags trip to S.F. that I already alluded to. By the time this gets to print they should also have played the Lobotomy special at the Whisky. Not a bad run for new strangers in town.

. . . "We thought we'd come to Los Angeles to make money, all live in the same house, drink every night, get two hours of sleep, catch diseases . . ." I don't know if they've caught anything exotic yet or made a penny but I'm sure the two-hours-sleep-drink-every-night wish has been fulfilled. Are those spiritual yearnings enough of a reason to be in a band, cactus heads? (Witty appellation for inland desert rats.)

How did you start?

. . . "Three of us used to have a band a year ago. More of a free music ensemble—we called it modern tribal music. (To which Paul adds): Heino (Eino? Hino?) is one of our biggest influences. He is a German pop star. (Ah)

Never heard of the guy but I'm a bit thin in my knowledge of German pop stars. Other influences are thrown at me, my culture level gets thoroughly tested but I pass. I have heard of their other aesthetic beacons. Wanna try it?

. . . "John Cage (he is modern)."

—Henry Cow

—The Fire Escape, one of the best groups of the '60s (I didn't know that one either!)

Everybody then gets excited and announces what/who in their eyes are the greatest records/musicians that ever were. "Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy" by Eno, John Cage's "Prepared Piano Pieces," King Crimson, Motown greatest hits, early John Cale, mountain Tibetan horns ("the only pure music left in the world"), and some singles by Subway Sect, Teenage Jesus, X-Ray Spex and the Spiral Scratch E.P. And "Pere Ubu is the future."

So the joke band might be a closet art band, uh?

(This gets totally ignored. Good for them.)

Well, what about ***your*** future, then? Do you think you have one? (I wouldn't like the sound of that if I were them. No wonder interviewers get punched.)

. . . "Possibly," says Paul, "not in our present taste . . . possibly a future for them."

Paul does not appear to include himself there. He is, in fact, steadily reluctant to approach any subject matter in which the band becomes more important than the individuals in it.

"He hates music," someone else confides.

"I'm the thorn in the side of the band. I'm an alcoholic and I act funny," he adds.

David gravely nods his agreement with Paul's self-evaluation.

He won't say much now. They're all ready to forcibly remove him from the room if I attempt to talk to him aside so he just listens and shrugs.

. . . "We barely tolerate our singer. We don't think like him."

The subject of politics (don't go, it's over!) is approached and discarded with indignation. "Political bands are too serious, politics is nowhere." A quick chat about the Dyan Diamond band's incident does not teach me much 'cept that there indeed was a bit of a rumble upstairs.

. . . "Kim Fowley's album, 'Outrageous,' is fantastic though."

I am also treated to a priceless genuine Kim Fowley quote: "As he told us, he does not move equipment, he builds empires." And a brief assessment of Mormon ethics: (they insist that they have Mormon backgrounds).

. . . "You can't drink tea, coffee; can't have sex before you're married; you can't kiss until you're 16. Like I couldn't touch myself when I went to the bathroom. It caused quite a disturbance in my psychological make-up. I used a washcloth until I was 18!"

That, I refuse to believe, but stranger things happen in this free land. And this alleged Mormon background is the official reason for the Consumers' existence, then?

At least it's the reason ("to counteract the Mormon church") for their vague "Church of the Immaculate Consumption" concept. Never thought we'd get to it, uh? The Church of the . . . is their project, their touch to the modern age. The sacraments are Kool-Aid and saltines and the rituals are ill-defined. I was made to kneel down with the rest but refused to involve myself any further. Another chance at salvation smugly turned down. And would ***you*** become spiritually involved with kids who told you an hour before: "We are poseurs to the teeth. We lie, cheat. Just a treat for your late night delight."??

B A G S

I N T E R V I E W

Present at the interview were: Alice, Craig, and Terry. Patricia arrived halfway through (after she got off work) and Rob left at the beginning, saying, "Death to everyone."

Dub: ***The personnel of the band has changed completely several times since you first started, how is the latest line-up working out?***
Terry: It just seems to gel, I think. Everyone is saying that and I feel it anyway.
Craig: It feels more like a band than it ever has before.
Alice: I sure hope so, I hate going through all the hassles. I guess we've finally found the perfect band.
Craig: I think one of the problems, maybe Alice might disagree, but, like, for example, when we had Johnny and Ricky I think one of their problems was that they were on a little bit of an ego trip and, like, sometimes there was this weird subliminal sexism when you have two women in the band. Terry and me and Rob are like totally not into that at all. You know, we don't see them as girls, we just see them as other musicians. It's amazing, like I get a lot of macho feedback, like guys saying to me, "Oh, how can you play in a band with girls?" and I say, "They're not girls, they're musicians, they're people." I don't see them as sex objects.
Dub: ***Do you have to put up with a lot of sexist crap?***
Alice: I don't, not really, 'cause there's always been girl singers around. I don't know about Patricia, I'm sure she does. But I don't experience it like she does. I've seen her get comments like, "Ha ha, ***she's*** going to play bass."
Craig: And she always blows them away, too—everybody—'cause she's totally confident in what she's doing.
Dub: ***Do you ever dress for the boys in the audience?***
Alice: It depends on what mood I'm in and it depends on if I thought ahead of time, "oh, this is what I want to wear." If I don't, I never plan anything, I just go in there and throw on something. I mean, if it looks appealing to boys, then fine. If it doesn't, too bad.
C: I think that Alice dresses more for herself than for a specific person in the audience.
A: I think so too, I just dress in whatever I have.
T: But I also think Alice is aware of her sex appeal.
C: It'd be silly to neglect that.
T: I think it's just there anyway, whether she tries to do it or not, it's just already there. There's no reason to dress up like a sanitation worker just to try to cover up for it.
D: ***What about your new ideas and new directions for the band?***
T: Yeah, we're all going to explode on stage.
A: We're all gonna swallow TNT.
C: There's so many I can hardly talk about them. You know, I think actually like new ideas and things are just natural progressions we make as a band. We don't really pre-think them that much. The Bags have always been involved in them since we first started. We've gone through so many changes, it's just natural.
T: Well, I think there's a more solid base, don't you think so? To work from now. I think the music is going from there. I think it's just going to get better and better instead of always in a transitional stage. It has a starting point now that it can work from and build on, build on a solid image and a solid base.
C: For a long time I think our main objective was just to go in and create a riot wherever we played. And we wound up getting banned a lot. For a while we were being banned and now we're trying to prove ourselves as musicians.
T: We still want to create riots . . .
C: Yeah, we still want to create riots but we want to create riots with a solid musical and lyrical backbone supporting it. Rob really contributes a lot, what he plays on lead guitar. He contributes to the arrangements of the songs and he makes them sound more solid by what he's playing 'cause he gives them more focus. But it's great 'cause the songs now are more of a group effort than like one person sitting down at home. I mean, we still have to kind of do that 'cause it's hard to collaborate, but when the song gets brought in, it goes through everybody before it comes out instead of just "this is it, you will play this."
D: ***How do you feel about your reputation as a joke band?***
C: The joke's on them, if they think that.
T: Yeah, the joke's on them 'cause we're gettin' better and better all the time and I just think it's silly to sit around and think of a band as a joke band and always think of them as a joke band. It makes no sense for the audience and it makes no sense for us.
C: I mean, it's stupid to deny your humor because we're representing everything, you know, humor is a part of it. Every band in a way, punk bands, started off as a joke band. The Pistols used to say that people laughed their heads off when they first saw them.
T: Yeah and they said that's their whole point anyway, the fact that they were just up there making fun of the whole thing and they're doing it for themselves.
A: If you see any punk walking down the street and you see a straight person, their first impression is to laugh.
T: But that was fine for a while. It was a joke, you know. You start it and then you get good songs and good musicians and you turn into a real band.
D: ***Tell me about some of your new songs.***
C: Confusion is about the very straight, orderly way in which you go through life and everything is perfectly planned about it because, if you thought about it, if somebody varied from their normal activities, they'd be thrown into a state of confusion. And actually, it's really good 'cause when you're planning anarchy or something, what you want to do is confuse people 'cause then they start thinking about what they're doing. Then they see alternatives and stuff.
D: ***What do you see as the alternatives?***
C: Alternatives to their straight, regulated lives, alternatives of . . . just like freedoms, that there's choices open to them. A lot of people, they've been programmed from the minute they popped out of the womb.
A: You're taking certain freedoms instead of asking for them or waiting for them to be handed to you.
C: We've had to take everything that we got as a band. We couldn't sit around and wait for anything to come to us, we always had to go out and get it.
T: I think most of the songs sum up what a lot of the new ones are going to be about too. I mean that general idea, something that's aware on a political level and a social level on lots of different levels.
(Patricia arrives.)
D: ***I've already asked Alice, but do you ever find that when people find out you're in a band, they tend to be condescending?***
P: Yes. Constantly.
D: ***How do you deal with it?***
P: I usually tell them to shove it up their ass. I never used to. I was, you know, girls aren't supposed to, that same old thing over and over . . . I used to get compared to the Runaways all the time, until they realize that you're a musician, not a girl.
D: ***Do people compare you to other girl bass players simply because you're a girl?***
P: Gaye Advert. But only until they see me play and they see that we have different styles and that I'm not the same. Her image is just to stand there and hit single notes. I don't just stand there so then they realize. It was two years ago, I'd say, yes, it was totally the Runaways—if I had my guitar case with me—"the Runaways" we were imitating. That's what they seemed to think.
A: When we started, we really looked for girl musicians but there just aren't any.
P: If you want girl musicians who've been playing for a while, forget it. This is my opinion, not Alice's, but if you're gay I feel it comes across on stage and most of the girl musicians I met were, and guys realize that. It's fine, it doesn't bother me, but that's not what I want my band to be.
C: It's the old tradition. For a girl to be up there and play solid rock and roll, she has to assume a masculine identity. It's almost like they're being forced into being gay sometimes. It's odd 'cause after a while, if everyone assumes you're gay, it's like, "what the fuck . . ." It's very easy.
P: They've done that to Alice and me. If they see us so tough and they see us fighting each other backstage or something, physically fighting, then they see us with guys and they realize it's not true, it takes them a while, usually. That's their first instinct 'cause that's what they've been brought up on. Or else you're a Linda Ronstandt. Not me!
D: ***Does the band fight a lot?***
C: Oh, all the time. The last time at Larchmont, Alice and I got in a fight during the first song and I broke my guitar.
P: And he had my shirt on and it's all in shreds.
T: I don't fight though. I just let them fight and then I make the final decision.
A: That's why he's BagDad.
C: Alice and Patricia and me are like real emotional people and I think that a lot of times that energy works for the band. That's where we get a lot of energy from, and even though we fight, it never lasts for long and it makes the music stronger.
A: Some people get really surprised when they come in and we'll be rehearsing and we'll be . . .
P: SCREAMING!
A: . . . like there's a really fine line and we'll be going crazy and screaming at each other . . .
P: . . . and then when it's over, it's all OK. It's just us, that's the way we rehearse.
C: If we weren't close to each other, we wouldn't do that. I'd rather have that than for one of us to sit there passively accepting the others' ideas.
A: Dad just sits back with his Dr. Pepper and observes the whole thing.
C: It sort of intimidated Rob at first, but I think he's gotten used to it.
D: ***Are you planning on trying to play outside of the L.A. area?***
C: God, I'd love it.
T: We were trying to finance something, like in Texas. Everybody is going north, straight up the coast, but we'd like to go to Texas or someplace like that.
C: Places where it'd be harder to please rather than easier, places where we'd be breaking ground instead of doing something that's been established.
T: Yeah, that's where the music needs to go anyway. It needs to go away from the big centers and into those places 'cause those are the people who spend $800 for a stereo system and it's very important to them. If they don't hear the music direct, and they only read about it in Rock Scene and Creem and stuff, the music is gonna die. It's never gonna be as good as it can be. If we go there, it will start bands out there, and it'll start something new.
C: We don't wanna be a novelty, we want to be a reality.
T: There are thousands of people outside the 75 L.A. punk rockers and those are the ones who lay out the bucks for the LPs and come into the Whisky. And they're the ones who will make the music valid for everyone else.
C: Yeah, it bugs me sometimes when I see a punk rocker giving like a snobby attitude towards new people that really wanna get into something, but don't know how to approach it. Then they get turned away by what they see—sort of this cold, clique wall—and I just wanna break it to pieces.
A: It's great to see new faces out there.
P: The last time we played the Whisky, I looked out and I was shocked there were all these new people on the pogo floor. I was so happy.
C: It's funny, I was thinking that now that we're getting some sort of decent reputation, we should go and just totally fuck it up just to be anarchistic about it. But we're not going to.
P: This is the real band. The others were just jokes when you get down to it.
T: But do we want to be a success? I want to be a success insofar as we really have fun up on stage and that we play really well. Together. If you do that, then you're satisfied. If you're satisfied with what you are doing, then that's all the success you need. The rest follows.
D: ***Do you want to make a lot of money?***
T: No, 'cause then you become a corporation and every year you make a profit.
C: All that stuff would take out a lot of the tension and energy in our music. I think that when bands get up to that level they sort of get sucked dry and then you just have this skeleton of what it used to be.
T: Yeah, but if you have something that, every six months, has to be in the black and make a profit, you know, it doesn't work any more . . .
A: I don't wanna be rich. I just never want to work at Jack LaLanne's again.
C: I never want to work at the nursery school again.
P: I just want to play on stage, that's my age-old quote.
T: I just want us to be good. I just want to listen to our single someday and compare it with the Buzzcocks and say, "We sound just as good if not better" . . .
C: We all work and that's why the band is such a great release. 'Cause you have to make all these fucking compromises all day long and you just have to stock all this stuff in your gut and you're just going on, thinking, "God, this is the worst shit anybody should have to endure," and we get into rehearsal room and . . . BBRRRAAANNNGGG!
P: It shows up on stage, too, I think. At least me, I'm so happy to be there, to be doing what I want, and looking like I want to look.
A: I think that's what goes through our minds when we're on stage—just how much you hate your boss, and how you want to kill that lady who's been bugging you and nagging you.
C: The only time I feel really happy and really alive is when I'm with the band. It's the most exciting thing that can happen.
T: I think it's really boring, myself. I feel really happy and alive when I'm watching TV, sitting back with my Dr. Pepper.
D: ***Dr. Pepper is life.***

Interview by Debbie Dub

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3

THE OFFS

A FEW WORDS WITH SAN FRANCISCO'S NEWEST NEW WAVE BAND, THE OFFS (ta ta!)

The Offs are: Don, Olga, Billy, Chris, and Fred. We talked to Olga and Chris one afternoon at the Screamers' mansion, then later that night to lead singer Don backstage at the Whisky. Since the Nuns were onstage while Don talked, the resulting tape is a garbled mixture of contradictory noises—the stuff that sends any dedicated transcriber up a wall (of sound). What remains of Don's words of wisdom has thus been strung along as colored beads on a hippie's necklace, with no thought of continuity or pattern.

Olga, Chris, and Slash

Slash: Who writes the songs?
Olga: Billy and Don write most of them. Billy is the one with the reggae influence. One of our reggae songs is called "Blacks Are Bigots." Other songs we have are "6-2-4-8-0-3," written by Billy, "Fagorama," written by Don. And we do covers, like "Johnny Too Bad," "Sweet Jane" . . .
Slash: Most of your songs are pretty long . . .
: On some of them, like "Blacks Are Bigots," there's a lot of improvisation. Personally, I like short songs. Short and fast.
Slash: How did you start?
Olga: Don had an ad in Aquarius Records in December for a drummer and a bass player, so I decided to join. I knew he had been in another band before, so I learned some of the songs he used to do from a tape. Then I met Billy and we jammed for a while. I told him about Don, and us three got together and rewrote some songs. Like "Fagorama" was from Don's previous band, like "Present from America," "Culture Heroes" . . . Then Fred was there all of a sudden, and then we got our drummer, Chris.
Chris: I had started playing two weeks before.
Olga: I started playing last December. I played classical piano before but I had to switch to bass because of neighbors.
Slash: When did you first play as a band?
Olga: In April we had one gig (Gary Valentine), but we really started playing in May, maybe ten times at the Mabuhays.
Slash: Any record projects?
Olga: Just talk.
Slash: How important is your music to you?
Olga: For me, it's fun, there is no money in it so I wouldn't be doing it otherwise. I like to play music, that's all. I like to play with other people, like Alejandro, the Dils. All these bands clashing with each other is ridiculous. They should play with each other. Sometimes I don't know why I'm playing music.
Slash: Has your music changed?
Olga: When we started, it was really three notes stuff, real rock bottom simple. But we practiced, always changing, adding new things . . . Do people down here listen to reggae music?
Slash: Some.
Olga: I never liked reggae but they forced meto listen to it so I could get a feel of it. I like it more now. Have you ever listened to Rank and File?
Slash: No.
Chris: What we kind of try to do is a synthesis between punk rock and reggae, real heavy, urban white boy sound.
Slash: Your reggae is like the Velvet Underground playing reggae . . .

• (Hollywood)

Olga: It's kind of trendy down here. They love somebody one week and hate them the next. But the Whisky has been real good to us, compared to the Mabuhays. You want an example? We had been asked by Howie Klein to play with the Cramps when they came. We said okay, we can make some money to come down here. On the radio and everywhere they announced we were playing second, at 12:00. Then I get a call at work saying we have to play first, at 11:00. It was ten o'clock, there was traffic, all that. And we had to open for Permanent Wave!

Since they have a list at the door where they check down how many people come for the first band, the second band, the third band, so they can tell who's drawing the crowd and gets the most money, and since all of our friends showed up during Permanent Wave, real pissed they had missed us, it looked as if all these people had come for them, not for us. That kind of stuff is upsetting. We make $30 and the next band makes $150. We don't have a manager so we find out the hard way. I get fed up with the middle man who gets all the money.

Now many bands are going to play on Grove Street, in this huge warehouse at the Gay Community Center, share the money and that's it. There's no bar but you can bring your own. And Dirk wants to blackmail bands that will play there, like, "If you play there, you can't play the Mabuhays."
Slash: Are there any concerts outside San Francisco?
Olga: People are starting to go and play Berkeley, there are some new places.
Slash: Do you go and see other bands?
Olga: What else is there to do?
Chris: There are less and less bands I'd pay money to see. Maybe five bands for which I'd drag my ass to the Whisky or the Mabuhays and pull out the five bucks.
. . .(talk goes on to parties where nothing happens)

Photo: Melanie

• (Celluloid existence)

Olga: I've turned off the TV about seven years ago. I get the news from the headlines in the newsstands. In S.F., I see the news on the street, the fights, the muggings, the shootings. There is a lot of violence on Broadway, I see so many fights. I also got my face busted at a Ramones concert for dancing. They were playing at the Old Waldorf with Crime and the Dils, the place was packed, oversold. No dance floor. Allthese Warner Bros. bigwigs were there to ***watch*** the Ramones. It's not something you can sit down and ***watch!*** Somebody yelled at me to sit down so I said, shut up, why don't you stand up? So this guy and these two couples fromBurbank started hassling me and throwing things, and I turned around and got hit in the face with a beer glass, got sent to the hospital for three days, 50 stitches, my whole face was busted. From that point on, I really got into playing music.

• (Violence at punk gigs)

Olga: They get a preconceived notion of what they're supposed to do . . .
Chris: Pogo can be a blast, unless there's some asshole . . .
Olga: Who's in there to crack heads.
Chris: I'm a wimp. I want to see the band, not get my ass busted.
Olga: I always felt the whole punk thing was healthy. I really get my frustrations out on stage instead of taking it out on somebody—releasing that violent tension you have all day long, the way people drive their cars. Stupid people left and right, you can release your tension through the music. But then these people get the wrong idea and they got to bust some heads . . .

• (Don: fragments)

—To me it seems if you can conquer L.A. you can do it anywhere.

—Someone made a remark to Olga the first night about having long hair. She does not want to look like all the other kids running around with short hair. She does not want to be a clone . . .

—The Screamers are my favorite West Coast band . . . It was my idea to do "Johnny Too Bad." I thought it'd be nice to turn reggae to rock 'n' roll. We are American, not Jamaican . . .

—What makes me mad? People not changing, doing last year's fad, not moving. If you don't change, you're gonna be left behind. Punk rock is a fad, too, that's why I don't like to label our sound. I think punk rock died with the Sex Pistols. I loved the Pistols a lot but they are not around anymore . . .

—I'm on unemployment right now. When that runs out, welfare? I might try for the big S.S.I. I have dug ditches, washed dishes, all bullshit jobs which I refuse to do now . . .

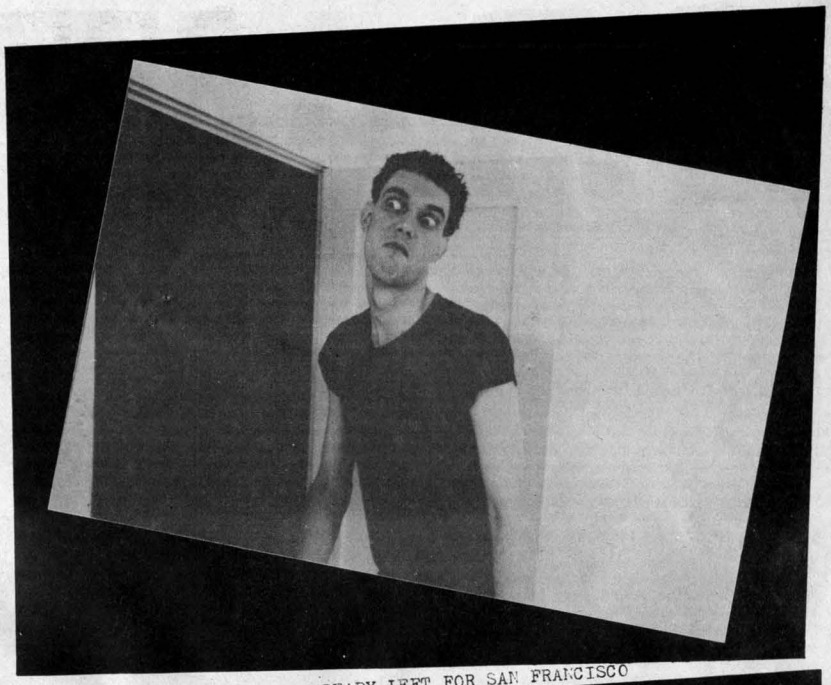
—We've been fucked a lot. It's really heartbreaking to think other people are going to have to go through the same thing . . .

—I hate politics. It's just another form of oppression. There's not one government in the world which works. Someone is always going to be oppressed . . .

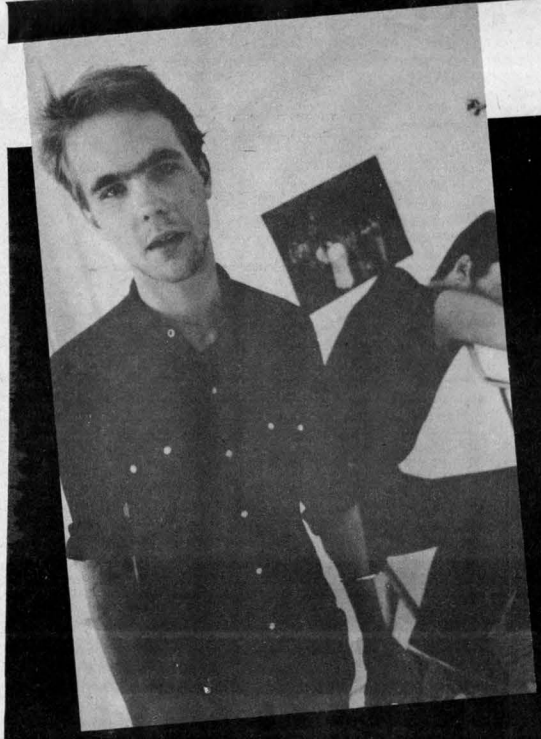
—Sleepers are one of the best new bands around. In England I like the Buzzcocks. It used to be Iggy Pop, T-Rex, and Bowie. My mother had an incredible 45 collection from her teenage days in the '50s. I listened to a lot of that . . .

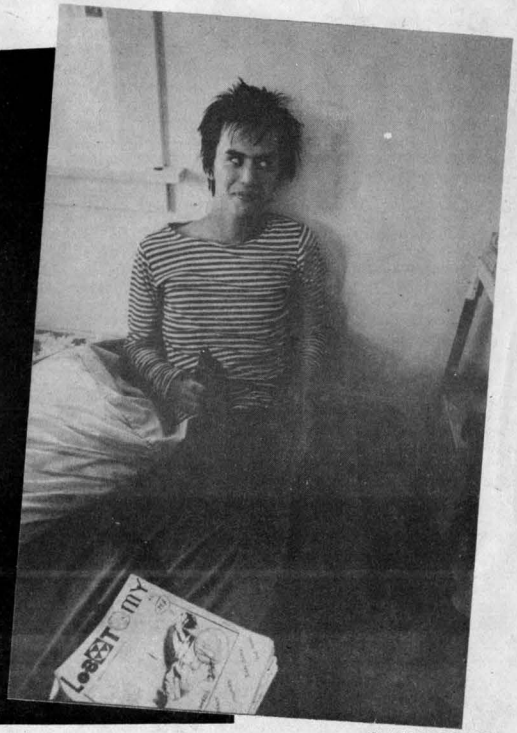
—I wish the youth of America would wake up and get behind the young bands. It's nothing to put a band together. Take your welfare money or your parents' money, buy a beat-up guitar and a stupid amp and do it. Just don't put yourself on a pedestal like so many bands I know.

Do THESE MOTHERS KNOW THEY DRESS LIKE THIS ? —



WE'RE SORRY WE DIDN'T GET A PHOTO OF OIGA, BUT SHE HAD AIREADY LEFT FOR SAN FRANCISCO NEXT TIME!!!!!!!

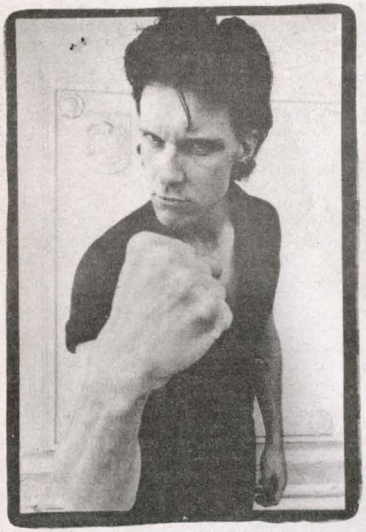




THE CRAMPS

(All the Cramps were present. They are Lux Interior [singer], Ivy Rorschach [guitar], Bryan Gregory [guitar] and Nick Knox [drums] who did not say a word.)

Slash: *So you drove out here?*
Ivy: Three days in a van.
Lux: We could sit in N.Y. another two yeas and nobody would ever know about us, so we have to do something about it.
Slash: *But you play a lot in N.Y.?*
Lux: All the time. The kids go nuts. We're the biggest draw of any unrecorded band there, but how much have you read about it?
Slash: *Not much.*
Lux: And you won't either, 'cos we aren't in the right clique. There aren't a lot of bands in N.Y. that are worth shit, I'm not talking about recorded bands like the Ramones or the Dead Boys, I'm talking about new bands that don't have albums out.
Slash: *Do you find yourselves billed with the same bands over and over again?*
Ivy: No. We don't really have a lot to say about that. Sometimes we play three nights in a row and the other bands will be different each time. For a long time we played second bill to the Ramones; we played four or five different dates with them . . .
Slash: *Tell us about the clubs in N.Y.*
Lux: CBGB's is really the only club.
Slash: *What about the "downtown bands"?*
Lux: My personal opinion is, I think it's a good thing to keep those damned art-rock bands separated some place where they can drop out of art school and work out their neuroses! They don't know anything about rock 'n' roll. You can't dance to their music and I couldn't care less about it. I'm not interested in music you can't dance to. Get them out of the bars and put them in a loft!



Ivy: There are a lot of bands trying to get in at CBGB's but the art bands are keeping them out, they're cluttering up the place. They should call their music what it is. They should play for the artists in Soho.
Lux: This "new wave," I don't know what it is. When rock 'n' roll changed to rock, it became acceptable. When punk rock changed to new wave it became acceptable and all these muck people started moving in, saying, "well, I don't know anything about rock 'n' roll but with this new wave I can start doing this . . . it's just jazz, that's all it is." That's all I have to say.

Slash: *So how do you define your music? Not strictly punk?*
Lux: Punk rock only existed in the mid-'60s, and rockabilly is the punk rock of the mid-'50s. Ours is a blend of the two. It's just rock 'n' roll, which a lot of bands in N.Y. right now are not.
Slash: *Once I saw you labeled "horror film rock" or something like that . . .*

Lux: We all dig horror movies (we did a horror movie right before we came here, with make-up on all of us, it was for the single) but I don't want that to get out of hand. Some songs we write are based on that, but it has to do with American culture and we're not trying for that image. There's a lot more to us than that. People also called us a rockabilly band, and that's not completely true either. We also have been accused of being comedy, of being a parody, just because I say some unfunny lines on stage.

Slash: *We didn't see you when you played with the Runaways. How was it?*

Ivy: He (Lux) went out on the catwalk and they got real upset. He broke the glass on the fire extinguisher box but he couldn't start it . . .

Slash: *The marquee said: "Kim Fowley presents . . ."*
Lux: We have no connections with him in any way.

Slash: *Do you know him?*
Bryan: He is a peculiar gentleman.

Lux: We're aware of his history so I was kind of looking forward to meeting him. I guess also because he is so bizarre looking. But we didn't even meet him. The Dyan Diamond band was beating up on this other band (The Consumers—see local shit. —Ed.) in our dressing room. That's all we saw. So we couldn't meet him.

Slash: *Did you feel like playing odd places while driving cross-country?*

Ivy: We wouldn't know where to play, what kind of set-up . . . I'd like to do it, be on the road like an evangelist show. That's more powerful than anything else.

Lux: If we get better treatment from the Whisky we'll be back and play real soon. It's worth the drive to play to people who appreciate it.

Ivy: We played in Memphis, now we're a real hot show there. We had a better reception than anywhere else.
Slash: *What are your first impressions of L.A. audiences?*
Lux: I thought they'd be a lot wilder than what we've seen so far. I have an idea that they probably are a lot wilder but I think they're kind of studying us. When we play N.Y., everybody's bouncing off the walls and bouncing off the ceiling. Real bananas. Playing with the Runaways this weekend wasn't a good idea as far as introducing ourselves to L.A. Last night was a lot better.

Slash: Runaways audiences are kind of specialized . . .

Slash: *Runaways audiences are kind of specialized . . .*
Bryan: Even though they were heckling us at first, they began to accept us. Even the ones that booed, liked it. They worked out their aggressions!
Lux: I can understand kids here being suspicious of bands from N.Y.
Slash: *Speaking of N.Y. again, why do you think you get no publicity there?*

Lux: Robert Christgau from the Village Voice despises us, so he won't write anything about us except snotty remarks and put-downs. He does not understand a goddam thing on what this band is about in the least. He also refuses to speak to us. I'd love to talk to the guy . . . A hundred people told me the show we did at CBGB's 2nd Avenue Theare was the best they'd ever seen and the review in the Village Voice called it "calculated . . . sterile . . . boring . . ."

Ivy: And it was the hottest show we ever did!
Lux: There's a whole clique of art people in N.Y., or people who call themselves artists, who have a lot to do with the press and they think of us as unsophisticated, silly shit, just junky garbage—not really *important* rock 'n' roll like Patti Smith or Television or who they think is important now, like Teenage Jesus. Our lyrics are not poetry, they're rock 'n' roll, and these people see that as something . . . lower class. They do. We've never been mentioned in Punk magazine, not once.
Bryan: They did an interview three times and then they wouldn't run it. They'd lead us on by saying: "Oh, we like you guys . . ." then they'd interview us, and nothing!

be big news all of a sudden. But if for some reason critics see something in you that they don't like or they don't wanna talk about, if they want to keep you a secret, they will.
Slash: *Aren't there any fanzines?*
Ivy: Not as many as here.
Lux: And most of them are not very good.
Slash: *And how long have you been doing it?*
Lux: About two years.
Slash: *You used to have a girl drummer . . .*
Ivy: Nick has been with us longer. Bryan's sister was our very first drummer.
Slash: *What music do you listen to?*
Lux (pointing to an imposing pile of used 45s on the table): This kind of records. You buy them in a junk store for 10 cents apiece.
Ivy: Nothing that's new. All the '50s stuff. Bryan grew up in Detroit, he must have seen the Stooges 500 times. I grew up in Cleveland, we've been into rockabilly, the Dolls. Lots of different influences, I guess.
Slash: *Aren't you sorry you left Cleveland, Lux? Now you could be in a special English compilation album . . .*
Lux: If I'd stayed I'd have a hole in my head! I don't care to live in the Midwest.

I'm really glad we came to L.A. though. I thought it was good.
Slash: *And finally New York audiences will be able to read about the Cramps!*
Lux: They'll say: Why do they like them in L.A. if they're such a shitty band?
Slash: *Typical L.A. geeks! . . . Do you see yourselves releasing bands' music on your label?*
Lux: I wouldn't mind doing that if we had more people involved. Right now it's just really us five or six. We don't have the time or money. Like the Rezillos were talking to us about releasing "Can't Stand My Baby" in this country on vengeance, but we couldn't really do it right, we couldn't do a good job. .
Slash: *Do you manage to live off your music?*
Lux: That's debatable.
Ivy: We are not really working, if that's what you mean.
Lux: So far we've managed to pay the rent, kind of. But we don't have any money.

Ivy: We don't have time to work. We can't afford not to work but, at the same time, we don't have the energy.

LUX

IVY

BRYAN

NICK

Photos: Melanie

Lux: Everything in N.Y. is very cliquey. If you wanna join their clique they'll do anything for you, but then you're part of that . . . thing. There are several cliques: the Max's Kansas City clique, the N.Y. Rocker clique, all these little "clubs" . . . I never had any friends al my life, I don't know why I should have friends now just because I'm in a rock 'n' roll band.
Ivy: New York Rocker now has changed editors and it might get better, but everything in that magazine was like somebody would write about their boyfriend's band. It was that kind of power position, with people in England reading it like it is some kind of bible of New York rock 'n' roll, but it is someone writing about their boyfriend's band as if it was the best band . . . Like their list of top unrecorded bands, the first two had members of New York Rocker in them, so they have this unlimited supply of coupons to give their friends to fill out . . . It just made me sick.
Lux: I'm getting a little damn sick of it. There's no other band that does as we do at CBGB's, we've been doing it for a long time and nobody knows about it. It bothers me. That's why we had to get money together and go places. N.Y. has been really disadvantageous to us in a lot of ways. If you become the critics' darling you can

Ivy: You can't play to a live audience there. You have to be a studio band first. There are no places to play, you can't exist. Devo and Pere Ubu are getting better now by playing to live audiences.

Slash: *What label is your first single on?*
Lux: Vengeance Records. It's our label. The second single will be out in 4 weeks. We did everything on the records: the art work, the photographs . . . no professionals for anything. Everything we've done with this band, we've been told: You can't do it that way. But we want to prove you can. None of us knew anything about playing instruments two years ago, we didn't know anything about putting out records. It's all been done by us four, plus Steve and our manager. You don't need record companies.
Slash: *Where are you going after L.A.?*
Lux: The Mabuhays in San Francisco and a mental institution in Napa. Then Chicago, a few places in the Midwest, and in Ohio we're going to record some tracks in my little brother's basement studio.
Slash: *Do you know there was a bomb threat on Dyar Diamond tonight?*
Lux: I thought there was a bomb there last night! But

Lux: Last night at the Whisky, it did seem like a job. They kept calling us. "Get down here. If you're two minutes late we're going to cancel you . . ." I was told to "grow up, come back to the real world" by a soundman. I went over, stood on his toes and stared in his face. So he said, "I mean professionally, of course"! . . . Some people are not aware there is a new style in rock 'n' roll politics that is different from the old style where you just take any shit you're given and the band does what they're told. Some people are not aware that it isn't going to happen any more.

The End

We don't usually make any comments after interviews, they're supposed to be self-explanatory, after all. But we don't usually follow any rules, even our own. So let us just say The Cramps are one of the finest bands we've seen in a long time and they MUST come back, whether they have to drive or hitchhike. Write to them at Vengeance Records, 930 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10028. Start a fan club, just make sure they know it is worth it. Amen.

Interview by Gore

Let's just get the facts.

Gear: The dates: San Francisco on the 13th and 14th of May; Portland the 18th; played Seattle the 19th; live on KRAB Radio (Seattle) on the 20th. Played Seattle again on the 21st at a street fair in the windows of a shop called Dreamland, which is a junkstore. We played San Francisco again on a Tuesday, coming back (May 23).

What do you mean, "in the windows"?

Tomata: The speakers were outside and I was able to come in and out of the store, in the doorway, in the window, out in the crowd.

Gear: In the street, Tomata got everyone doing "Vertigo" up and down the whole block. People in the stores didn't know what was happening. There'd be these crowds going vertigo back and forth down the street.

KK: Right after that, the police showed up. They said, "Alright, is the electric music over?" They said everybody on the street has to go into Dreamland. The crowd was too big, blocking the street and stuff. It was about 200 people. The store was a little hole in the wall. It looked like a riot.

Tomata: Afterwards, we autographed ties.

Gear: In Portland, we played Beaver Hall, an auditorium, with two local bands. One was called the Products.

Tomata: They had a fabulous girl drummer named DeeDee who we went bowling with.

Gear: The audience, while we were playing, spontaneously got all these magazines and tore them up and were throwing them, so by the time the show was over, the hall was covered with torn magazines. Even though they were the smallest, Portland was the most involved. A responsive audience, definitely.

KK: They've been having bands play up there for over a year now. Little pop concerts in the halls. The guy that used to be the lead singer for Negative Trend played just before we went on. He said he had died his last death, he was cryin' afterwards, he said he would never play again, it was such an embarrassment. So it must be a graveyard for San Francisco.

Seattle was a big hall, a big production—lights on scaffolding, radio station advertising, big P.A. system, the works.

Gear: Seattle was more curious, they mostly gawked, they really wanted to see what was going on. Towards the end they started dancing.

Tomata: There was too much on the plate for them at first. One girl had to drop acid to really get into it.

Who did you play with in Seattle?

Tomata: We played with the Telepaths. They do Mexican hat dances. The lead singer does Spanish dances (with a knife) and if it doesn't land on the stage floor, then he has to stab himself.

KK: Not to be outdone, the next band comes on and pours ketchup all over themselves and the audience.

Tomata: Then we played with the Enemy. Their singer was a Tommy Gear idol.

Gear: He made himself look just like me.

KK: A Tommy Gear clone.

Tomata: It was refreshing to go to Seattle and Portland because the fans were so much younger. Teenage territory. The majority of people into our music seem to be 18 and over, here. In Seattle, we were mobbed by 14-year-old girls.

KK: We kept the lights on the audience the whole time so nobody could sit down in the back. They had to perform for us. The stage was a small school auditorium, the stage was built to put plays on, it was like a living room. So here we are in this living room, playin' out to these people, with just the bare light on. No tricks, no nothin', just straight out.

How did your latest Screamer, Paul, work out?

Gear: If he can keep his yapping mouth shut in the car, he'll be just fine.

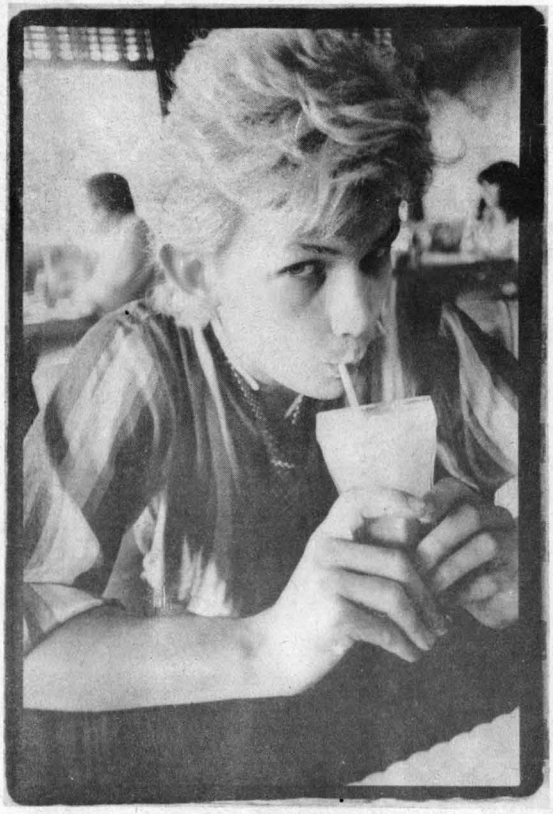
KK: Paul worked out better than anybody. He ended up being able to take "fakes" onstage. Like if Tommy quit playing and decided dancin' was more important, he'd fill in. He also came up with some very original mistakes. As long as we keep him tense, hyped-up.

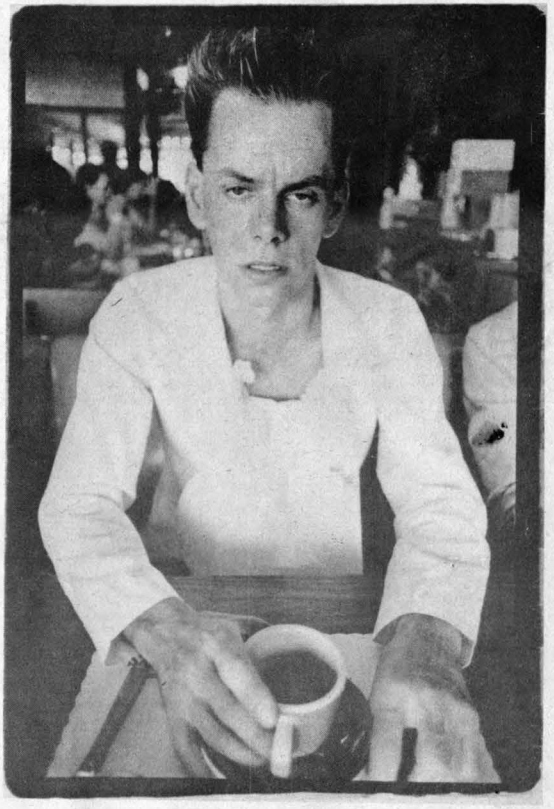
Tomata: He got the most fan mail of us all. Juicy letters from three separate girls.

Tell us about San Francisco.

Gear: Oh, you know, same old oddities.

Tomata: Up there, it's the four H's—hippies, heroin, homos and Howie Klein. And they're all waiting backstage, to get us.





THE SCREAMERS'

Gear: Waiting backstage was this guy with a fix of heroin for Tomata!

Tomata: But I sent him to Tommy Gear's new girlfriend. She's a private detective, and she threw him out. She carries a gun.

Gear: Yes, she's going to be working on a great mystery I haven't been able to crack yet—how to get a record contract.

Tomata: We played with a good band up there. The Offs, Don Vinyl. They specialize in inverted limbos. We had some skateboarders who came to see us. They wore their knee guards and their helmets and kept jumping on the stage and jumping off backwards.

KK: Me and Geza went down to the massage parlor. This girl begged us to come down so that she had equal time, 'cause she had come down to the Screamers. She had a trapeze act, she was good.

Gear: It was amazing. We played Mabuhay on the way back and the place was packed. All the girls from the massage parlors were there. It was great.

KK: Our competition was Patti Smith. She was going to come and jam with us, but when she heard we didn't have any guitars she felt out of place, so she ended up jamming with the Zeros.

Gear: I saw her concert at Winterland but I was disappointed. Like the Sex Pistols there, the same thing. It was real crowded and sweaty and I had to stand up, but I passed out flyers for the show, so it was good.

What made you take on such an ambitious tour?

Gear: 'Cause we got tired of L.A. We need to see new audiences, new places. It gets boring always playing the Whisky. We like to play the Whisky, but there are so few other places. It was sort of a trial run to see if we could stand it and now we decided we like it better than staying home.

Tomata: The Dils were the first ones to go, then the Avengers. We are the third ones to go. The Dils are the pioneers.

The pioneers of what?

KK: Punishment!

Gear: We were worked constantly by our agent, Phil Miller. He had a gun! We were rushed from one publicity event to another. It was incredible.

Tomata: From sitting in a pool at a carnival and having people bat balls at you to hanging from the Space Needle to handing out flyers for our own shows. There wasn't a minute's rest.

Any problems on the road?

Gear: The only major problem we had was Geza's appetite. We had to tape his mouth shut from San Francisco to Portland. Also, I got hit by a bus.

Tomata: There was this incident at this party for us in Seattle. As we were going in just to get some food, this girl came screaming out, pointing at KK—"That's the guy who raped me two years ago!"

KK: Lies! Lies!

Gear: We were very inspired by the provinces and we wrote some new songs. One of them is "The Age of Unreason."

What was the best part of the tour?

Tomata: Living out of a suitcase.

KK: At KRAB, we set up in a room about the size of the Masque and played live for about 30 people; set up "Eva Braun," let the instruments play themselves, went out in the car, drove around the block listening to it on the radio, then came back in and finished the set.

Gear: I had a dream last night. It had to do with this tour, I'm sure of it. I dreamt that there were all these bugs, like roaches, coming out of my suitcase. They got all over me and my clothes. I couldn't get rid of them, it was so odd.

What was it like between towns?

Gear: On the way back to L.A., the trailer we had, one of the tires completely disintegrated. Our equipment was in danger of flying off the road. Also, there was this crazy town called Sunblast or Sunburst or Explosion or some odd name like that . . .

KK: Fireball.

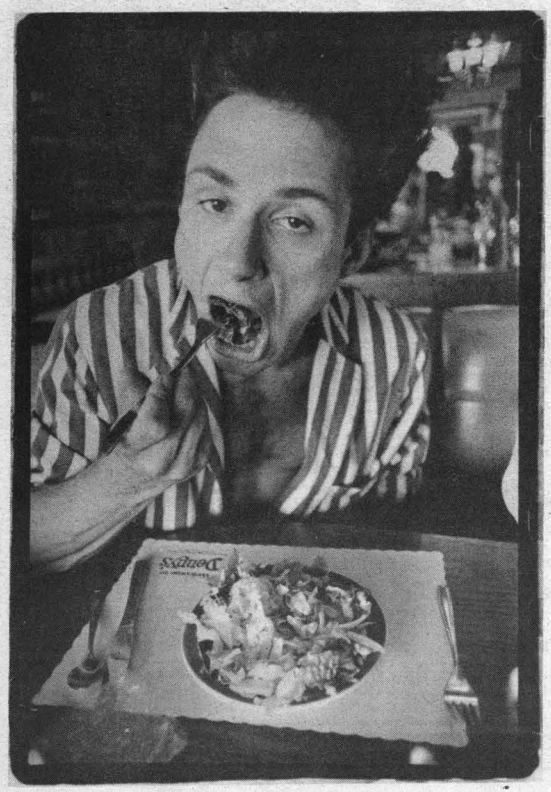
Gear: Fireball!

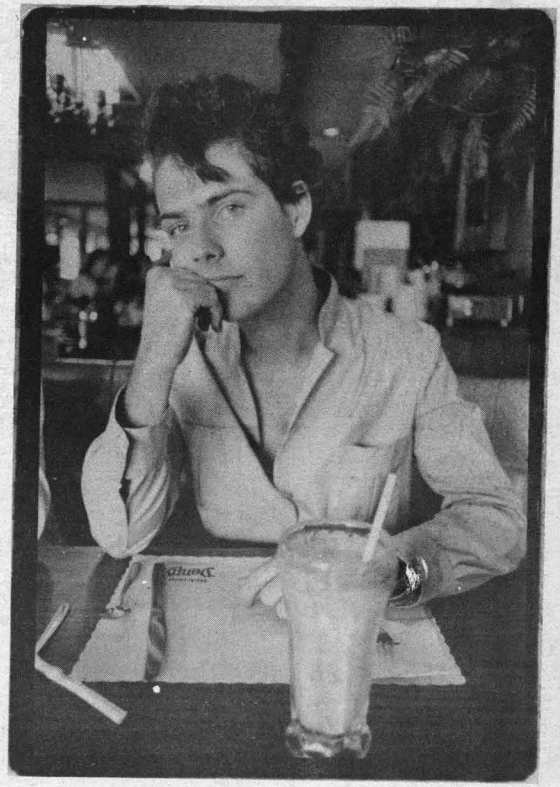
Tomata: The Denny's there was built like an Inca pyramid. It was a pagoda-pyramid combo. Very bizarre. It had a big gift shop that we went crazy in. We didn't buy anything—we just went crazy. But it really didn't matter what we did because we were traveling incognito.

Gear: Yes, we dressed as Arabs.

What were your feelings at the end of it all?

Gear: It was torture, you hated it. You had to work constantly, you weren't getting enough sleep and you were always running here and there, but it was great. Meeting new people. Just being in that kind of life—it was the best thing in the world. I loved it.

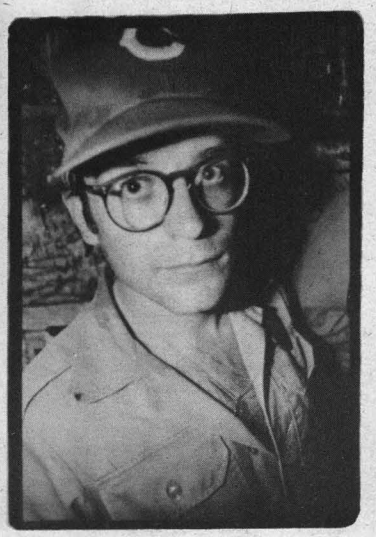


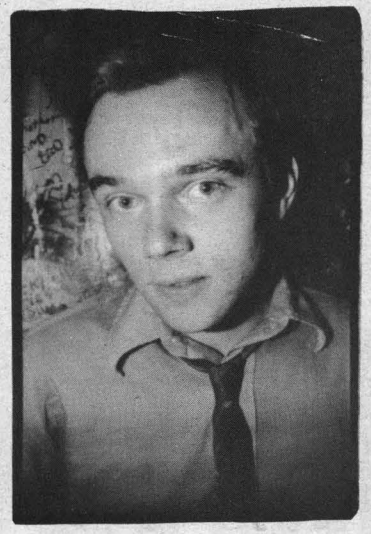


Photos: Melanie Nissen

WEST COAST TOUR

commandos





THE (SUICIDE) COMMANDOS ARE ALIVE AND WELL

The Commandos are Chris on guitar and vocals, Steve on bass and vocals, and Dave on drums. This was their first time in California. In the three years they have been a band, they have played New York (CBGB's and Max's) five times, the Midwest cities countless times, released a couple of singles on their own label and one album last Valentine's Day on Blank, a subsidiary of Phonogram records. They live and play in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Slash: How did you hook up with Blank?

Commandos: *Somebody heard about us, about the sinles and the trips to N.Y. and Boston and Cleveland, where we played with Pere Ubu. At that time, Pere Ubu were dealing with Phonogram, they were going to be on what they called a "nuggets of the new wave" thing. Pere Ubu are very secretive in their dealings but it seems they put in a good word for us with Chris from Phonogram. It's a standard contract, one year thing with options.*

S: How's the album selling?

C: *As well as we projected—10 or 15,000 in this country.*

S: There does not seem to be much publicity behind it.

C: *Phonogram are not backing it at all. They're not promoting Blank at all.*

S: Is there a good music scene in Minneapolis?

C: *Yes. New bands have come up, like the Suburbs, Fingerprints, Spooks. There's even a new label, Twin Tone records. There's one club that runs seven nights a week. We can play as much as we want, really.*

S: Do you work?

C: *We haven't since the album. We went on tour for six weeks with Pere Ubu, and we've played steadily since we got back.*

—We're now making a very meager living off our music.

S: More tunes to be recorded soon?

C: *We were going to do a single but Phonogram wouldn't give us the money, so we're going to do an album. Tommy Ramone wants to produce it; so do some guys in Nashville. So we might go for the N.Y. sound or we might go for the Nashville sound.*

S: I was surprised that live you didn't do that many songs off the album . . .

C: *We've been playing all these songs for two years. We did all our old stuff on the album. Now we have another album's worth, ready to go.*

S: Is there anything frustrating about your situation now?

C: *It seems we have an identity problem. We got out here and we don't really fit in with the punk scene. It seems there's still a lot of safety pins out here.*

S: Do you have a special musical background?

C: *Chris graduated from college, majoring in music and psychology. He wrote a rock opera there a couple of years ago. "Mosquito Crucifixion" is the overture.*

S: Was it worth it, coming to play out here?

C: *Yea, it was. The first two nights didn't quite click, but tonight the audience was different. The other nights they paid real close attention, but that's about it.*

—This is worth three trips to N.Y., as far as meeting people and establishing ourselves.

—The attitude of the Whisky was strange: they wouldn't let us use our own lights. Like we were not allowed to do anything that might upstage the Weirdos . . .

—That's because we're pretty much on our own and not backed by our record company. Phonogram doesn't even know we're out here.

S: Are you labeled as a new wave band in Minneapolis?

C: *Actually, it's pretty funny 'cos when we first appeared there hadn't been any articles on new wave, so we got called "underground." Then we were new wave. Now we might be power pop!*

—Doesn't matter what they call us, as long as they call us!

—We've really seen it evolve, and then take off.

—Our manager Chris was working for a booking agency. Clubs would call up and ask for Top 40 bands, so he'd say, "You can have one for $500 or you can have the Commandos for $150." We did that a lot 'cos there were enough places we could play just once.

—And which would never have us again!

—Now we don't have to do that anymore. We used to love making those audiences mad—no one liked us—and we'd get all this negative energy . . .

—Also, sometimes we'd get booked for five days and the first night everybody hated us,so we'd go to the manager and say, "Well, if you pay us for three days . . ."! We made good money a couple of times that way.

S: 3Why such bad reactions?

C: *This was a country audience!*

—And these guys would take their girlfriends to this club and not hear a single song that they knew, although we did a lot of '60s stuff, but another type . . .

—Over a few weeks period, we went fromtotally non-original material to mostly our songs.

S: Do you identify and sympathize with many new bands' anger and resentment?

C: *There's not much to be mad at here, unless you're really bored or really poor. Nobody in this movement is really poor. They may be broke, but not poor. The kids that were really poor from the beginning of their lives are not doing punk rock now, they're in club bands making $400 a week playing the Bee Gees, and they think that's great. But it's no big deal for a 21-year-old middle-class kid to have no money.*

—There ARE a few things to be mad about. Our major complaint a couple of years ago was that we couldn't play the music we wanted to play. Hearing the Dolls was such an inspiration then. They may not have played very well but hey had the right idea.

—Even now there's a station in Minneapolis that totally refuses to play our record. They said they wouldn't play anything even remotely connected to new wave or punk.

S: Is there an anarchistic feeling in a song like "Burn It Down"?

C: *I wrote it 'cos I thought it'd be a good song to sing along to. It's just a feeling . . . crowds really go for that one, too.*

S: Would you move out of Minneapolis if it improved your career?

C: *It wouldn't improve it. If we moved to N.Y. we could maybe play once a month. We seriously thought of moving there, went as far as looking for a loft. Minneapolis is a real nice place, though.*

—We can always cultivate our reputation from a distance. It's not that far.

S: What's your immediate goal?

C: *To have a hit single. We really want to be on AM radio. We want to have fun, and we're going to work real hard at that.*

S: Why did you drop the suicide part from your name?

C: *We don't want to die anymore!*

—Plus the group, Suicide, threatened to sue: "We were Suicide before you were Suicide Commandos," they told us in N.Y.

—And we don't want to be confused with Suicide.

—We even thought of calling our second album "The Commandos Commit Suicide," with those two brothers in straitjackets being taken to an asylum.

—Speaking of suicide, have you heard that herbal shampoo commercial featuring Marianne Faithful in which she only talks about Brian Jones and how he didn't commit suicide but was pushed in the pool . . . And it's brought to you at 7 in the morning by Clairol or something!

LIVE

CONSUMERS/DYAN DIAMOND/CRAMPS at the Whisky a Go-Go

New in town, the Consumers from Arizona, have a lot of fun on stage. They even brought a little TV and tuned it on Channel 10. The guitar player jumped into the audience, the agile bass player grinned demonically, the guitarist with the cast even thumped. They have a tight and classic punk sound but it is too easy to close your eyes and hear the Damned, Sex Pistols, and other Hall-of-Famers. It's hard to keep one step ahead in the global village where everyone has heard all the records, seen it on TV or ridden wheeled horses many miles to see how they jump and shout in the next tribe, but this is not the fault of the Consumers. Maybe now they've ridden the big bird across the giant hills of rocks they'll make some new noises.

Dyan Diamond is the latest pony in Kim Fowley's stable. The sweet young thing has some talent, but it will be totally mutilated if Kim. The basic mode is boozy confessin', the white girl bluesy, complete with git-down, whining harp player. The band is dressed in synthetic animal skins (including those ever-popular patchwork snakeskin platform boots left over from the beginning of the decade) which are wittily tied into the act with Dyan jabbering about, "Well, if you're wondering why we're dressed like this . . . (chord) I'm just an ***animal*** girl, and this is an ***animal*** world . . ." That's right, honey, and those vultures are devouring your brain cells. Her grand finale is a boogie-woogie crowd pleaser called "Let Me Rock and Roll You to Death," which sounds like a lullaby Kim might have composed for all his rock starlettes.

The first night, unloving punksters whose confused minds could not unsnarl the puzzle of why someone would book Dyan Diamond with the Cramps in the first place, began pelting the stage with ice cubes and Papa Fowley came to the rescue, shouting, "She's ***only 16 years old!***" Yes, the same protective Pap who ran an ad for her which read, "Sex, Death, Dope and Violence, Live on Stage." Shh-hhh. There's Kim snoozing on a couch over there. Let's crack his head like an egg and see what he's dreaming . . .

Kim lying in a room lined with leopard skins and telephones, filing his teeth with a diamond file. Urns overflowing with coins, bills, credit cards, quaaludes, and candy bars. His protogee stands with a scroll and a whip in front of a line of nubile, pink, gorgeous teenaged girls. Each enters the chamber singing a hit song, crawling on all fours with a gold record strapped to her back like a saddle. A girl approaches King Kim, kisses his feet. The protogee reads from the list: "Dee Dee, age 17." Kim lunges at her neck, making two deep holes. Musical notes pour out. Two goons come to remove the corpse. Kim snickers heartlessly. "Hahahahaha . . . Next."

Back to the Whisky . . . while the fighting ensued after Ms. Diamond's set, I noticed a very dark, slinky-eyed gangster up in the balcony calmly filing his nails with a 12-inch nail file, the kind you'd slip in a cake to a friend in prison. He was Nick Knox, the drummer for the Cramps,as eccentric a band as the world has known. They combine the '50s, the '60s, the Munsters, rockabilly, the Doors, surf, punk, and sleaze into the most entertaining act to hit the boards. I hardly know where to begin.

The female guitarist (Ivy Rorschach) is a bouffanted dirty blonde in sharkskin pants whose deadpan, zombie-like expression belies her skill and truly cool guitar style. The singer (Lux Interior) is a black leather worm with real greasy, real black hair who gyrates, masturbates, and occasionally sings quite sincerely into the mike just to prove he ***can***, in between slithering all over any available floor space. They presently have no bass player, but another guitarist (Bryan Gregory) plays a polka-dot Flying V with finesse, and, I confess, is my Dream Date. He had on a ruffly shirt, something purple, and black file pants with dried crust on them; and his hair was half-bleached and wrapped around his head so from one side he looked like he had a pageboy, the other a ducktail. His cruel smile revealed pointed teeth, but when he sucked his cigarette in and out of his mouth on the tip of his tongue while dropping to his thin, grasshopper knees, emitting a blood-curdling shriek on "The Way I Walk," I knew I had found my Prince Charming.

The Cramps do a lot of cover songs because they are real record "buffs" as I learned later at a tres chic party given for them at the Chateau Marmont by designer Georgia. Nick told me they all had worked in record stores for years and originally formed a group to re-do their favorite 45s. They also played a gig at Napa State Hospital (a loony bin in Northern California) that was videotaped, but other than that it is very hard to see them until they come back to the Whisky, which will not be for several months since they have to come all the way from New York.

This is the only information I got as I was guzzling Chenin Blanc to get up my courage to ask Bryan to marry me. The fine wines were flowing, the Quiche Lorraine was flying, but when I tried to kneel on one knee to pop the question, I found my heel on the nose of one of the editors of this magazine, who was on the floor, and I lost my nerve. Back to computer dating.

V.

ZEROS/HITMAKERS/PENETRATORS/EXTERMINATORS at Abbey Road

I came late but somehow didn't miss the first band.

The Penetrators haven't been at it for long, but already they've established themselves as a tight, energetic, enjoyable band. There are obviously a lot of different currents running through them, but that doesn't seem to matter: they apply equal intensity to the provocative "Revolution Now" and the sincerely patriotic "I Wanna Be An American," to the Iggy-esque "Jimmy Don't Do It" and the tender/tragic ballad, "I Don't Wanna Go Home Alone." This was by far the Penetrators' biggest audience and they responded with by far their best set ever; more is in order.

The Hitmakers are back for another try, mostly originals this time, taking in bits of the previous incarnations, low on energy and, unlike the Penetrators, unable to put it all together. The highlight was a rhythmic "I'll Be Your Mirror" —figures their best song would be from the Velvet Underground, the singer being an ex-Dil.

The Zeros played crazed, with much leaping about. It got a little sloppy but new songs "Right Now" and "Killin' Time" stood out, as did all the old classics, especially "Wimp," more vicious than ever.

(Abbey Road is San Diego's new wave club, like it or not—the owners don't. Things only happen here on Mondays—it's a teendisco the rest of the week. It's painful that way but it's also a start:)

Toombs

WEIRDOS and DILS at the Whisky

Together on stage for the very first time, L.A.'s plastic children versus the Southland-now-Northland politicos. Other reasons to be there: official first appearance of Bruce Barf, new bass Weirdo (anyone seen Dave?). Recent rumors of a Dils break-up. Plus, of course, the fact that these two bands have been going at it steadily for a year, rain or shine, audiences or no audiences, record contracts or no record contracts, constantly defining their sound, their image, constantly creating and recreating themselves for us (and them). It shows.

Although they look and sound different, both groups have the presence, the confidence, the energy to survive any series of adverse conditions or temporary disdain on the part of the industry.

The Dils are looking more and more like super-clean American youth unexplainably gone rabid. Nice, outdoorsy shirt and slacks with a hammer and sickle armband. Disturbing. So you could pretend you're just watching a party youth show by the shores of the Volga, but the music is exasperated white teenage noise, definite bourgeois decadent product, and the Volga vision dissolves, leaving you gaping at these nervous bundles of contradictions.

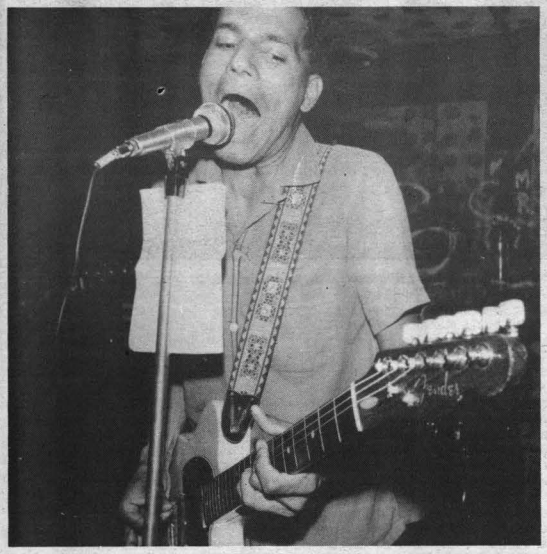
Tony the bassman is sharing more and more of the singing load, his nasal neo-Dylan voice a nice counterpoint to Chip's brutal military barkings. Gorgeous John on drums still hasn't much time left on his hands to smile or even look up, it's all thump thump thump in a blur of arm movements—with a night job like this, the poor fucker must sleep like a log all day! Chip doesn't exactly relax either, but with him it's more uncontrollable nerve-level type of activity, or a mild case of a strange disease.

All songs sounded good, the guitars were sharp, the vocals loud and precise, the songs instantly recognizable ('cept for that super-speeded square dancing that didn't fool anyone but the terminal pogomaniacs). Let's hope this break-up shit does not go any further than the very temporary fit of self-doubting that it was. It's too late to give up, pals.

Far from even thinking about giving up, the Weirdos are putting everything they've got into breaking thru to the apathetic thousands. Their sound is by now super-tight (listen to these Cliff/Bruce exchanges and dare say new wave is sloppy music) without becoming mechanical; John's vocals are strong and perfectly timed and his stage presence is less freaky than the early vintage drooling puppet act but also less distracting from the music. He's even got a couple of new "dance" steps that might make him the Fred Astaire of the androids.

There were a couple of new songs—"All the Girls" and "Fort U.S.A."—one of them was kind of slow and formless but first impressions are always relative. Halfway thru their set there was no doubt that the Weirdos are one of the most important things to come out of L.A. for a long time. Every time they play there are brand new fans valiantly learning the rudimentary pogo moves, getting trampled but bravely getting up again because what else can you do when the Weirdos are on stage? You might wish to stop and protect yourself but your body is hooked. "Do the dance do the dance do the dance," screams the singer, do the dance do the dance do the dance say the guitars, do the dance thump the drums. What can you do under such conditions? You do the dance, as everyone eventually will. The time has come.

Kick



FLESH EATERS, CONSUMERS, and ALLEY CATS

Only saw the end part of the Consumers' set. The talk afterwards was not about their music but their stage "antics." Singer David had been attacked by the other musicians; they had gone on with the show but David was a bloody mess and his rage seemed genuine. The crowd even wanted an encore (worse than the Romans!). They allreluctantly marched down 'cept for the bass player, singer shouted abuses to the missing one who eventually joined his "pals." There was so much tension in the band I kept expecting something to snap. It did add a very real feel to the performance but the price to pay for such intensity may be a bit high. How many times can you witness a band self-destruct until there is no one left?

Flesh Eaters seemed almost tame by comparison although Chris D. ("the one with the three voices," someone said) is not exactly a relaxing crooner. He yaps, booms, shrieks his gloomy lyrics of guilt and doom at various tempos that go from simply oppressive to barely believable while his visually low-key band follows him on his rather non-mainstream explorations and acts somehow uncertain with the whole affair. Now that Chris has just acquired a whole new line-up (drummer Jo will be hard to replace) we might get to see the other Flesh Eaters join in the fun. It just might make the difference.

The Alley Cats are more than appreciated, admired or "dug" by the L.A. audience. They are (blush blush) loved. There are little monsters that normally get their rocks off by pelting any band with missiles and obscenities, who, come the Alley Cats, exchange pleasantries with Randy and smile shyly at Diane. Magic. The touch. The ultimate good time. The band members are your friends, they deserve every bit of support and encouragement you can give them and you go out of your way to let them know you do and will. That's what everyone feels, you can tell by the faces around when they stop jumping up and down for a second. The music is actually superb, lean hooks, nervy vocals, instantly singable/danceable tunes that do not seem to ever become tiresome, or worn out. The band looks like no one else, an unlikely combination of easy-going presence and over-wound energy. They're unique, they're ***ours***. They make you go home with joy at knowing that soon, they'll be on a stage again and you'll be right there.

THE EYES and X at the Rock Corporation, July 6

John Doe calls the Rock Corporation "our biker friends who invited us over to play in their big living room." Yeah, and did the few people who managed to fall out of bed or put aside their drugs and come down, manage to get enough beer? Who really cares? Just watch out for that guy at the door who uses Seconals for uppers.

(Let me pause here and offer a word of rhetoric: If you who thumb through this rag once in a while to keep "in the know" don't start coming out to more gigs, more than just when the Weirdos, or the Screamers, or the Dickies play, then there aren't going to be any bands to entertain you on your more jaded nights when you'd like to get into something "fresh and new.")

The eyes played first. As they haven't been on the scene too much of late, I hadn't seen them without Charlotte on bass. Well, the change in personnel is a big improvement. The eyes are good and they're getting better. Their material is fast, crunchy, populated with a lot of '60s type hooks filtered through a raw '80s filter. A chainsaw through your brain tissue drummer, Joe sometimes calls it.

X got on the bill at the last minute, replacing both the Brothel Creepers and the Controllers (Gerard sick and Karla in the hospital with a hairline fracture). What did you say? You didn't know X was going to be playing? You would've been sure to make it if you'd only known? Oh, well, that's show biz.

X was wonderful, as usual, putting on the same show for 30 people that they would for 3000. Putting on a show that most of you don't deserve to see. X is one of the few bands who, like the Alleycats, hold nothing back onstage; they give everything they have to give and once that's gone, the show's over. No calculation, no pretense, no gimmicks, no narcissistic self-indulgence at the audience's expense. A good show. Too bad you missed it. The Rock Corporation will supposedly be featuring punk bands on Thursday from now on. Am I too subtle for you?

Half-Cocked

PLUGZ, CONTROLLERS, and BROTHEL CREEPERS

Badly attended show for the premiere of Gerard Taylor's new creation, the Brothel Creepers. Dim Wanker outside on the sidewalk sporting new neo-teddy boy hair style.

The Plugz valiantly played one of their best sets ever to a handful of people. Quiet Tito totally crazed on stage, twisted cross-eyed and snarling during "It Makes Me Sick," yanking the music out of his body and his guitar by a series of hard chords and notes that reverberate in your head. Barry the bassman looking disturbing, like the normal citizen of some grim future, more possessed by the songs and more intent on bringing them out right than 90 percent of most bass players. Charlie the drumming menace propelling everything at a very severe pace, with so little apparent effort you'd think he was handling a tambourine. The Plugz are becoming one of the very good bands around the pueblo, but only a few seem to have noticed, perhaps because they seem reluctant to bullshit or "hang around."

Good set by the Controllers, a bit disorganized at times, but making up by enough guts and punch. These three are for real, they live what many only play at. And I remember when this was a more important factor than flash or trendiness.

Brothel Creepers are a bit of the opposite of both other bands. Only recently together, they display little of the unity and solidarity of purpose than either the Plugz or the Controllers have in excess. They relied almost entirely on old material from rock 'n' roll's prehistory, and almost entirely on Gerard to make the songs come alive. Dim Wanker did come out of the shadows for some guitar work and their female drummer, Holly, performed a song on the guitar while Dim sat at the drums and Gerard took a walk, but it was all rather mechanical and uninvolving. I personally have very little affection for most of the "classics" Gerard tried to rejuvenate so I am unable to honestly evaluate their worth. There were the typical Gerard contortions and angry stance, the mike stand was mistreated and the tight leather pants stretched to the rupture point. The little girls loved it.

PUBLIK ENEMA, THE EYES, X, BLACK RANDY AND METRO SQUAD, THE DEADBEATS
in the Rose Ballroom of Pismo Beach

Talk about being dedicated: 3½-hour drive up the coast for one more lousy punk show. Just because it wasn't actually lousy (even quite fun) is no excuse. These short-haired fuckers will have me traveling to Holbrook, Arizona next! (Unless Slash starts recruiting foreign correspondents in every watering hole these crazed missionaries decide to convert to their shady cause.)

The concert was somehow organized by Black Randy (who else?!) and a local punk combo, Publik Enema.

Publik Enema is an interesting mutation on the punk phenomenon, and most probably an indication of what the big American continent has in store for us in the coming months: a long-haired, hoodlum-like, sleazy garage band (shades of the Seeds) with tons of chains, medals, rips, torns and tattoos, a band that a year ago didn't stand a chance in the world of Bostons and Foreigners (we're not talking about their musical abilities, only their ***image***, their ***look***) but that now may (or may not) be give a (slight) chance at . . . riding the wave. And you can be sure that it's certainly harder for these dudes to be what they are ***where*** they are than for the Weirdos to-be what they are where ***they*** are. See what I mean?? Not yet?

Listen to this then:

As we arrived early we took post across the Rose Ballroom (which, as I was gonna say later but I might as well get it over now, used to be a rock 'n' roll hall until the beginning of the '70s—Clapton played there, they say—but has just been bought by the American Legion so this was the very last rock show the tacky building would ever host—shed a tear and read on) . . . took our post across the ballroom inside a fish restaurant packed with Saturday night/eating out families, real simple folks out of a Norman Rockwell book, ordered some deep fried stuff (no fresh clams in Pismo Beach) and ***watched the action.***

Round the corner there are a couple of merry-go-rounds and shooting galleries, the blond high school heavies with the cowboy hats and the Budweiser in the fist are joking with the two town cops (also blond and of the same age but minus the Buds), the kids are cruising in their cars real cool and slow (you can tell how big the town is by noticing it takes one cruiser about 4 minutes before he pops up again, still real slow, still no chick next to him), the groups of girls are nervously giggling and sticking close to each other, it's Saturday night and everyone is dutifully playing his part. And in the middle of this tenth-rate American Graffiti appear two, three, then some more, ***punks.***

The reaction around us is immediate: ***the whole fucking clientele of the restaurant almost gets up off their chairs, goggling.*** No hostility, just sheer amazement. The so-that's-what-they're-up-to-in-the-big-shitty syndrome. The punks disappear but it's not quite back to normal in this part of peaceful Pismo. Lots of whispered conversations with the two little words, "punk rock," being thrown back and forth (now, "new wave" just wouldn't cut it under those circumstances, would it?). Outside, the cops and their civilian pals are snickering and hitting each other on the back, the girls are wide-eyed and the cruising cars almost run into each others' bumpers.

If only all these innocent citizens would have come inside the decaying dancehall, if only there would have been a semblance of advertisement throughout the area, if only this, if only that, this could have been a memorable night both for the natives and the traveling musicians and fans. As it was, the hall never quite filled up and the excitement never quite took off.

The Eyes (minus Charlotte) played to a dozen or so dancing kids plus two or three more dozen observers slouched on the surrounding tables (no booze but you can bring your own in a paper bag, advised the guy at the soft drinks counter). They sounded okay but what can you do under such circumstances? Publik Enema didn't seem to have much of a following on their own grounds and sounded pretty much as they looked (sloppy, crude and ***very*** basic), Black Randy and the Squad did get the audience moving and bopping although most of their sarcastic appeal may have been lost in the transplant, X sounded as good as X, there was pogo and near-pogo but I was distracted 'cos John stood on the right and I've always seen him on the left (we all get stupid sometimes!) and I left halfway thru the Deadbeats with a pounding head and a yearning for a cheap motel room.

Still, the fact that the concert happened at all is certainly something to write home about. The bands involved took chances and ought to be congratulated for it. And the kids who ventured into the noisy hall took chances and ought to be rewarded with more "roots" events of the same format. It will take time and balls but the noise we all live on will eventually reach every remote corner of the land. Now, let's all stand up and sing our national anthem. Or "We're Desperate" if you don't know that one!

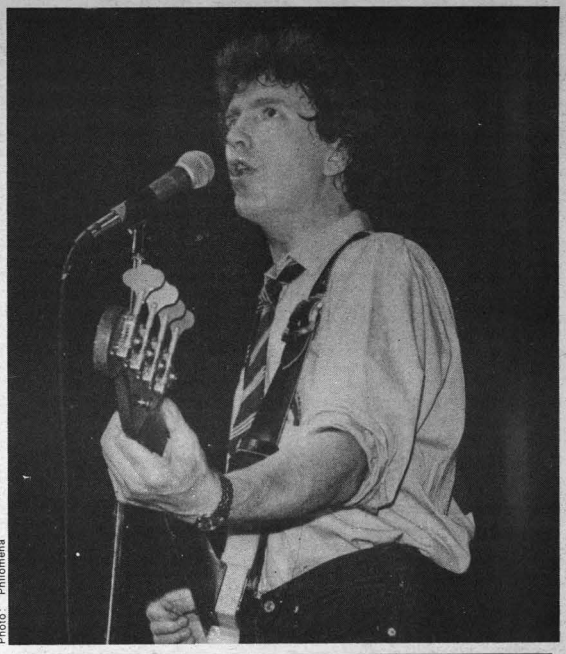


Photo: Philomena

TOM ROBINSON BAND
at the Starwood

Right in the middle of Boys' Town (Santa Monica Blvd. for all you out-of-town would-be cruisers), part-time gay activist/rock 'n' roller Tom Robinson spent two nights trying to convert the disaffected, uninterested youth of clean America to his cause. Should say to his causes, 'cos they are numerous. Racism, sexism, sexual intolerance, capitalism, Tom hates it all.

Unlike millions of other decent folks who know what's wrong from right but that's the way things are, ain't it? Tom seems seriously determined to affect people's thinking on such matters, if not to eradicate the most blatant manifestations of twentieth century ugliness. What can a poor boy do? Not much, if you ask me, 'specially when he insists on letting his record company (any record company) handle his packaging, his presentation, his bookings. The eternal dilemma, 'cept this time it's a bit more painful to watch, the gap between the intentions of the artist and the final result in public-reaching being inevitably bigger than it should be.

There were cute displays of record covers all over the Starwood walls (which made Tom R. obviously edgy—he kept referring to it throughout the set with more than an average amount of sarcasm), badges with the resurrected '60s power to the people logo—now the Tom Robinson Band logo. There were record execs and pr people, photographers with expensive arsenals of lenses, electronic flashes (always bound to make us real jealous here at Slash!), white wine and knickknacks backstage for the lucky ones with the right connections—unless you do as yours truly and just follow the band up the little stairway as they get off the stage, bouncers never take notice of exactly how many people are in the band!! There was heavy promotion, my lambs, and in the midst of it, I'il ol' Tom Robinson, grinning, winking, frowning, and mainly hanging on to his beliefs and his faith in the heart of such disheartening, unreal plastic circumstances.

Actually, he's not little at all, not especially eye-catching either 'cept for very intelligent eyes. And, no, you scum, he does not look gay or effeminate or like one of the boys. Speaking of which, I didn't notice many of the tight shirt/tight jeans/big boots/perfect mustache set in the packed club, which goes to show that (a) their grapevine isn't what it used to be or (b) they've all found happiness and esthetic contentment with the drivel they all shimmy to in all those flashing/strobing sweat factories of theirs.

Music-wise, Tom Robinson and his band worry me a lot. Average rock 'n' roll is a bad vehicle for progressive ideas, average rock 'n' roll is bad for ***anything.*** At times the in-between songs chatter and anecdoting had me wondering whether I was watching the Arlo Guthrie of the new wave, the hand-clapping of the "I Shall Be Released" encore (oh god!) was excruciatingly embarrassing, other bits here and there also made me cringe (please, Tom, not ***that!***) but among all these corny tidbits there were flashes of genuine anger (his singing the "Glad to be Gay" chorus with clenched teeth—as if gladness or togetherness were not ***at all*** what the song is about—which it isn't), moments of real power (yes, "Power in the Darkness"), hints here and there that if only, if only . . . the Tom Robinson Band could become a very necessary part of ***our*** music. But that night left me disconcerted, let down, maybe a bit taken. There ought to be more to revolution (even if it's only a vague, naive attempt) than a lame sing-along-with-your-brothers feeling.

The other acts that night were simply unmentionable, and a disgrace for the organizers.

Kick

DAVID JOHANSEN GROUP

Yesterday's daredevil darling, the marked angel, fallen from grace. Is this the final throw of the dice? What is so threatening about the sweet young swinger?

Is there more to rock than drunken motel parties? (When the boys refused, you would cut them apart and laugh.)

We should make some comparisons here—you know, every band has some cry to arms. His seems to be funky but chic. "I'm funky but chic!" What kind of cry is that? It's show business, laid bare—something about his arresting Motown medley.

We all miss the Dolls, the brawls, the sprees, the razor-edge wisecracks. They were stormy youths who rocketed their way to the top, into our hearts, whatever.

With a bunch of antiques behind him now, he's a party boy, a kid off the street. The Whisky was a joint to him, and he sucked on it deeply. Fucked up—yes. Why do you think we have him around? Jesus Christ! . . . I had no idea—oldies but goodies night. A sketch instead of himself. Maybe there's a story here . . .

BATTLE OF THE BANDS
Stardust Ballroom

Dynamite rock 'n' roll party! Neatest van! Neatest tan! Fun! Fun! Fun! They were lined up, three deep, down to the end of the block. Five dollars a head, it was a sell-out. Newspaper, radio and word-of-mouth brought fireworks to the Stardust Ballroom on the 3rd of July. Another Masque production—a battle of the bands.

The Weirdos shook 'em up, but the Screamers woke 'em up; the Controllers went outta and Crime paid.

All our favorite punk bunnies were there—the popsicle-haired girls from K-Mart, skeeks from the Valley,surfer scum, pop rockers and shutterbugs. (Even R-13 was there.) GIs, spineheads in their Frankenstein suits, guys from Thai Town, a Bay City Roller, and Wet covergirl Sheila, a Miss Bitchin' finalist.

A jumpsuit with a portapak hung from the rafters, getting all the good shots. There was a slide show in the lobby for Science Holiday fans.

First up: The Controllers. "Bubbling under . . ." They shook the dance trophies off the wall. Living at the Masque defines them. The muscle on Kid Spike sez it all—this is the hardest working band in town.

Then came Crime: The greatest thing on hangars. Right off the set of "Police Story" for the soundcheck, "Grease" for the show. Outcall models from San Francisco, dashing out Rent-A-Chord haikus.

Twin spotlights were on: The Weirdos. We sank our teeth into . . . the kitchen clutter. The screwballs of Catfish Row. John Denny hypnotizin', energizin', terrorizin'. (***Sex*** has come in the guise of Bruce Barf.) They were thick, fast and jumpy—a sock of wet confetti. How many guitars? I counted 20—they blew the fuse four times and still kept my little sister twistin'.

Only one would wear the crown: Miss Bitchin' California. A brutal, dehumanizing meatrack. Lobotomy's Pleasant won hands, feet, and face down.

They played two feet higher: Tied to no trend, progressing beyond the law. The Screamers—one year later—have become caged icons of their former selves. Tomata's tight-bodied, shorthand contortions, the whack attack of his voice. Tommy Gear throwing his body around like a mallet in a rubber room. Their set was a model of surgical efficiency, ice on the bare wires of tension. In the pit beneath Tomata's teeth the audience, like iguanas, slithered faster to the cold beat.

As the crowd screamed for more Screamers, Orrin Tucker was dialing the riot squad. Brendan announced: "God, that's punk!"—someone had just torched the men's room. Joe Citizen complained: "These kids will chop off their hands before they feed their faces!" And, to whoever stole the mirrored ball: just drop it off in the nearest mailbox.

P.M./Gamma/Alucard

Photos: Johnna

THE DUPLICATORS, MIDDLE CLASS, L.A. SHAKERS and THE CONTROLLERS at Larchmont Hall (still???)

In spite of somber predictions in the last issue, the Larchmont gigs do seem to be going on, or should we say limping on. This particular night was especially lousily advertised in the true "we don't know too much what we're doing isn't it what it's all about anyway?" fashion.

The Detours were replaced at the last second by a totally unknown quantity, The Duplicators (not that the Detours themselves were riding high on the exposure charts!) for the basic and valid reason that they just had broken up.

There must have been 25 people throughout the opening Duplicators' set, it was spooky but the band carried on as if they were top-billing at the Whisky (which may never happen, this bunch being at the moment rather informal in their approach to stage presence or sound precision). Their blind drummer played part of the set with one stick and one flat hand, having lost the other stick earlier. The drum kit itself was a miracle of simplicity and restraint. No fancy stuff like cymbals and other complicated devices for these boys! Their lead guitar (with a very classy Jimbo t-shirt and badly colored hair) did a "bottleneck" type of solo with a half-full 7-up bottle and the contents spilling everywhere. As for the singer, he either shouted in the mike until the veins in his forehead popped out, raced around the whole dancehall like a demented brat or threatened to eat someone during their final number, called "I Eat Everything." Then he hungrily went for my arm and wouldn't let go. A couple of bites later they ended their set by running off the stage and leaving their drummer to his own devices. Not yet everyone's idea of a great combo, but they will certainly appeal to anyone with a strong stomach and a hunger for raw unpolished madness. Worth seeking again.

Middle Class played hard, fast and slightly monotonous tunes that all seemed to melt into one another. Except for that final song with the slow spoken intro, everything is one big, blurry speed race with nothing to hang on to. Fine for the pogo set, but for the rest of us with the beer in the hand it was somehow short on excitement.

L.A. Shakers is another band I'd never seen before and wouldn't mind at all seeing again. Now with band-hopper Hector, the traveling bassman, they rocked thru some nice bopping tunes, enjoying themselves and their audience more than is customary in this day and age. As if they consciously decided to leave the aggression bit to the aggression experts and just take care of business.

The Controllers, definitely one of my personal fave bands, ended the evening with their very own brand of souped-up music, pounding and thrashing as well as usual thru their two-minute little holocausts of sound. Actually, the "as usual" bit is misleading since they literally get better every time they play, but words are words (brilliant, that!) and just take mine for it if I say they are right there on top with the best. Now will someone please buy me a thesaurus.

P.S. There was a half-hearted attempt by the Larchmont people to stop the show midway thru the last set, apparently more for tradition's sake than any other reason. The lights flickered on and off for a while (on meant the cop did it, off when some punk disagreed) but nothing else came of it.

X and THE AVENGERS

Super-reliable double bill, isn't it? What can I say that everyone except the so-called talent scouts (they still have such hilarious things, don't they?) in the big record co.'s does not know? The music of today is here, alive and kicking. The kids know it, the visiting surfers or skateboarders know it, the people who sign Detective or Styx don'tknow it. They're either deaf, blind, or dead (all three?) if they can sit (yeah, I know it's rough on the old legs standing up—who knows? you might even start bopping to the beat) thru any set by either X or the Avengers and not feel or see the excitement and the strength of what is taking place. I mean these people on the stage are fuckin' stars, if that's a term that might click something in your computerized head. They've got ***it***, the famous elusive concept that separates the nobodies from the somebodies, the show-biz screen-test ***it***.

So what's wrong? They don't flaunt it enough, the star is not enough, you want the bloody star trip to convince you?? Or maybe they don't do it ***like it used to be done,*** they're not coy and cute or cheeky, they don't pat the audience on its collective head ("there, there, good audience, now watch me pretend that I am human just like you . . ."), they don't pose or act even though they've got spotlights pinning them to the wall, colored lights that make them easy to remember as sophisticated objects one watches for kicks, anything but live humans. No, they only get up in front of us, they put their fuckin' hearts, souls or guts (depending on your theological persuasion) in their songs, in every note, beat, word they have and hope that it will do it, that we will understand, share the passion or the anger, feel the beat, love them.

Yep, unfortunately for their future, fortunately for their fans, they're honest. When they play, there are no masks of "true professionals," no cool stand or studied boredom, no phony intensity or sexual guitar show-offs. Exene growls and dances to herself; Penelope frowns until they have reached high gear and then relaxes, smiles and becomes the amazing passionate singer that she is; John shakes as if in pain while Billy grins at the beauty of it all; Greg and Jimmy disappear behind their sounds, fascinating butoblivious to anything but the tune; Don thumps away anonymously and Dan thumps away forcefully, both out of sight, no spotlights, no solos, just the holy, never ceasing beat of modern music. Sorry, no "chick singers" to be aroused by, no androgynous guitar humpers to tickle one's moral standards, no exploitation or put-ons. Just kids who happen to make some of the greatest American music of the decade. And who already know there ain't much to expect from the ones whosign contracts, organize press conferences, think mega-bucks and product. "We're desperate/Get used to it . . ." scream John and Exene. How true.

forty five's

ESSENTIAL LOGIC
Rough Trade Records Import
(Aerosol Burns/World Friction)

This is the band Lora Logic formed after leaving X-Ray Spex and it's a big improvement. She's still not the greatest sax player in the world, but she feels every note, ringing out full-bodied licks that compliment her shrill scat voice. Could this be what the Deadbeats are trying to do? Maybe not. But Lora accomplishes a truly difficult feat: she plays modern jazz that *really* rocks.

Chris D.

THE RICH KIDS
E.M.I. import
(Marching Men/Here Comes the Nice)

Dismal failure number 2. "Marching Men" starts real heavy and ominous so you know it's a masterpiece coming your way and goes downhill ever after. Ever after is fucking right, too, 'cos they don't know how to end the bleeding non-tune so they drag it on 'til producer Mick Ronson wakes up at the console and mercifully fades it out. Overall effect is one big, bloated nothing.

B-side is a live rendition of an old classic, the recording ain't too hot and the playing is strictly middle of the road. Just another single that begs to be forgotten.

Kick Face

THE SEX PISTOLS
Virgin Import
(No One Is Innocent—A Punk Prayer By Ronald Biggs/ My Way)

Or how arch-villain McLaren tries to think of more ways to shock jolly old England, and finds one. Who else would have thought of looking up one of Britain's most wanted men and have him record a bloody single in which he joyfully brags of his immunity and laughs at society and its puny laws? How much closer can you get to defying the existing order of things without being punished? There must be thousands of righteous subjects of Her Gracious Majesty muttering to themselves, "There must be a law against such goings-on."

The music itself is standard Pistols riff, Biggs' voice is somewhat untrained and certainly no substitute for the Rotten One but the song has an incredible sing-along quality, just the thing to bellow together at drunken parties or football matches (which is probably the very result sought for). McLaren may be the first of a new breed of businessman the future will have: the men who make a living at bringing chaos and confusion to a society which has become morbidly fascinated by its own demise. "Ronald Biggs was doing time/until he done a bunk/Now he says he's seen the light/and he sold he sold for fun (punk)..." How can you help wanting to join along in the fun? Looks like there is some adventure left in the world after all.

Kick Boy

SUBS
Stiff import
(Gimme Your Heart/Party Clothes)

Clean, innocuous pop with a bit more verve and energy that is required for such mundane subject matter. Good radio fodder.

Kick

FEAR
Criminal Records
(Now Your Dead/Living in the City)

First song starts okay but does not progress at all so you lose interest and wait for the end. "Living in the City" is good and more imaginative. They should make an effort to play concerts more often (only saw them once at the Larchmont) and try to grab our attention. We want action.

K.F.

PETER HOLSAPPLE
(Big Black Truck)
Car Records

The talking can cease, the legend of punkabilly starts here. Propelled by throbbing drums and sneering vocals, this rocker from N.Y.C. should set feet tapping from coast to coast. Give the skinny white geeks a break and buy this record. The automobile imagery continues in a very different direction on the flip with 96 seconds of "96-Second Blow-Out" and the almost Enoid "Death Garage."

Dave Allen

BUZZCOCKS

ZED ALTERNATIVE TOP 20

1) BUZZCOCKS-LOVE YOU MORE
2) BISHOPS-I WANT CANDY 6"
3) CLASH-HAMMERSMITH PALAIS
4) WIRE-DOT DASH
5) SEX PISTOLS-BIGGEST BLOW
6) EATER-LIVE E.P.
7) SNAKEFINGER-THE SPOT (BLUE WAX)
8) ELECTRIC CHAIRS-BLATANTLY OFFENSIVE
9) LITTLE NELL-AQUATIC SEX (RED WAX)
10) DICKIES-PARANOID (10" WHITE WAX)
11) RESIDENTS-SATISFACTION (YELLOW)
12) NIPPLE ERECTORS-KING OF THE BOP
13) JOHNNY THUNDERS-DEAD OR ALIVE
14) VIBRATORS-JUDY SAYS
15) STRANGLERS-NICE 'N' SLEAZY
16) ART ATTACKS-IM A DALEK
17) JOLT-WATCHA GONNA DO
18) KLARK KENT-I DONT CARE (GREEN)
19) RADIATORS-MILLION $ HERO
20) JOHNNY RUBBISH-LIVING IN NW3

EATER

ALSO THERE'S
SLIME - SLIMEY TOAD
GENESIS - MANY, TOO MANY
PETER GABRIEL - D.I.Y.
JOHNNY MOPED - DARLING LET'S
YOB RUN RUDOLPH RUN
LEYTON BUZZARDS E.P. 19th MAD
PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY - PUPPET LIFE
REALISTS - I'VE GOT A HEART (STIFF)
PATRICK FITZGERALD - BACKSTREET BOYS
YELLOW DOG - WAIT UNTIL MIDNIGHT (YELLOW)
POPPEES - JEALOUSY (U.S.)
TALKING HEADS - PULLED UP
SHOES TOMORROW NIGHT (U.S.)
THE LAST - SHE DIDN'T KNOW (U.S.)
BOB MARLEY SATISFY MY SOUL
BOY FRIENDS I DONT WANT NOBODY (U.S.)
SHAM 69 - ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES
ESSENTIAL LOGIC (LORA)
LEILA + THE SNAKES R+R WIERDOS
STRANGLERS SOMETHING (PINK) U.S.
WILLIE ALEXANDER-KEROUAC (U.S.)
X RAY SPECS - OH BONDAGE!
GLORIA MONDAY I GAVE MY PUNK
HUMPHREY OCEAN - WHOOPS A DAISY
BLUNT INSTRUMENT - NO EXCUSE
X - ADULT BOOKS
BLACK RANDY - IN AFRICA
ZEROS
DEADBEATS KILL THE HIPPIES

STIFF RECORDS

THE Boomtown RATS

Cheap Cheap Trick

SHAM 69

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JOHNNY THUNDERS
(Dead or Alive/Downtown)

A-side: A rush of Johnny Thunders' sour guitar. Just as we've heard it a thousand times before, but it still grabs ya. Heartbreakers style theme, Heartbreakers style music. A hair away from "Born to Lose." Heartbreakers style production. ***Thin.*** Especially the vocals. "Dead or Alive" refrain.

B-side: "Downtown." Sensible (?) slowdown for the punk. And a showdown: Beating the Stones at their own game. Western blues side saddled, pistols packing. What the Stones made dead, the Thunders crew brings back alive, for the moment. Ex-patriot Thunders imitating Jagger imitation American blues vocalists. A dead ringer for his voice, almost if not too close for comfort. True N.Y. pronunciation though—dyawn tyawn. Deadpan bass tells the joke. True Exile on Main Street fade-out. But where does it leave this punk crew? As to the identity of the rest of the gang, will the real Steve and Paul please stand up?

J. Caffeine

THROBBING GRISTLE
Industrial Records import
(United/Zyklon BZombie)

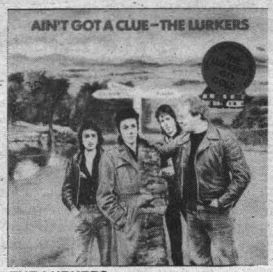
Experimental but not in a bad sense. It's reminiscent of very early Syd Barret, the difference being in that this brain damage is genuinely disturbing. "United" is slow-motion disco for impotent robots, defective synapses shorting in and out on a lonely walk down endless empty factory streets. "Zyklon B Zombie" is more disjointed and less interesting. Zyklon is the gas used in those camps over in Germany a few decades ago.

Chris D.

STANLEY FRANK
Polydor import
"Rejected"
(Cold Turkey/Hey Stupid)

"Cold Turkey" is credited to J. Lennon; I guess it must be that J. Lennon we've all forgotten. I'd never heard the song before and I wish things would have stayed that way. Don't need another long-haired shit to glorify the pains of junk withdrawal even if it appears to "condemn" the stuff. Don't give a fart about junk and what it does to the assholes that take it, go nod in a corner and leave rock 'n' roll out of this. "Hey Stupid" is more ponderous heavy metal flash with as much impact as a disco laser show. Useless music for uesless people.

Kick



THE LURKERS
Beggars Banquet import
(Ain't Got a Club/Ooh, Ooh, I Love You)

Quite boring, really. Comes with a nifty free gold flexi that looks great on the wall (frame it and pretend you're Abba) but sounds horrendous on the turntable.

Kick

THE CONTROLLERS
What Records
(Neutron Bomb/Killer Queers)

Not produced that well, but it still doesn't sound too bad. The guitars run wild and free through your living room with a crisp violent distortion. The Controllers aren't profound, they're not artistic, they're not particularly original. And they're not poseurs (at least no more than the rest of us). But they don't have to be any of these things, they don't have to live up to some nebulous image of punkishness as do some of the more well-known, local punk "business" bands. What the Controllers are is fun, unpretentious fun in the best "punk" definition of the word. This record testifies admirably to that. My only regret is that this was recorded before Karla joined them on drums.

Chris D.

THE RADIATORS
Chiswick import
(Million Dollar Hero/Blitzin' at the Ritz)

Heartbreaking, but true: The Radiators have apparently regressed to mindless power pop. All the anger and toughness of the "TV Tube Heart" album have been replaced by easy-listening sing-along type of stuff. About as dangerous as a dirty diaper. B-side is a speeded version of a tune off the album, not bad in spite of an embarrassing clap-along with the lads moment, but after the outrage of the A-side my heart ain't with it anymore.

Kick Face

SCRUFF
Track import
(Get Out of My Way/Rock 'n' Roll Woman)

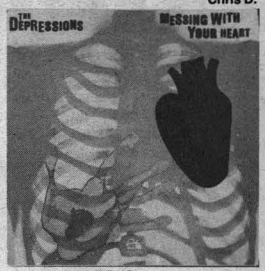
You've heard it hundreds of times before and if you don't watch out you'll hear it a hundred times more. I'm talking about rock 'n' roll drivel, narcissistic cliches that feed on themselves, imitations of imitations. "Classic" chords, classic progression, "classic" feelings. Trash from the past dutifully revived for your pleasure by faceless dorks with the imagination of an earthworm. Listening to "Get Out of My Way," I briefly wondered how many times I had heard a poignant line like "I can't see the light" screamed before. The opening verses of "Rock 'n' Roll Woman" (sharp title, uh?) may show you why I get real depressed sometimes even though some keep telling me things are looking up: "She comes home to me like a hurricane/and she takes away my pride/She comes moving in like a diesel train/and she makes you feel like suicide." Indeed. I'd take your pride away too, and your guitars, your drums, everything if it would shut you up.

Kick Boy Face

JOHNNY WARMAN
Ring 'O Records Import
(Headon Collision/London's Burning/Mind Games)

Leo Sayer after one too many 'ludes imitating Robert Plant. The guitar makes clear that it was cut from the same groovy hard rock Zeppelin quilt, totally nameless and devoid of life. "London's Burning" and "MindGames" aren't the Clash/Lennon tunes, but "originals." Also, it should be noted; the back picture sleeve indicates that Johnny belongs to the "old-sock-stuffed-in-crotch" school of musicianship.

Chris D.



THE DEPRESSIONS
Barn Records import
(Messing With Your Heart/Street Kid)

A-side is the lame "Messing With Your Heart" off the album, beats me why they would release it as a single. Fortunately, B-side is a new one, a packed nervous tune called "Street Kid." It's got real authentic sounding lyrics and it's got a driving, punchy sound that grabs you immediately. Vocals are good, too, kind of flat and breathless like Jonathan Richman before he od'ed on ice cream. Vaguely mentions smack, too, like the Stanley Frank turd but this time it makes sense sociologically, if you see what I mean. Like it's a life study, not a fuckin' self-indulgent moan.

Kick Face

THE JOLT
Polydor import
(What'cha Gonna Do About It/Again and Again)

Fair cover of an oldie. B-side features extroverted drumming and not much else.

Kick

LEFTOVER RECORDS
BY BASHO MACKO

Since everyone at Slash is very greedy, they only lend me records to review if they don't want them back. Since I don't want my name connected with any more garbage than what is intrinsically involved with Slash, I am going to review all these boners in one batch. We'll start off with the singles going from worst to best.

The stinker of the batch is Chris Tolin's all self-made debut. It sounds like an audition tape for Mary Poppins, the song about Charlie Manson too. Chris sent a note saying he'd just been released from a mental hospital so would we please be kind with his record. Also in the mail was vinyl from a lightweight Eric Carmen type combo called The Action. In their letter they asked if anyone could tell them what clubs in this area to debut at—where's the action, so to speak. Boys stay home and save yourselves the trouble; with bands like the Weasels out here, we don't need you.

The Weasels have a cute little record out on Siamese. "Beat Her With a Rake" is the A-side, "I'm the Commander" is the B-side. I don't know who they're trying to convince but you can tell from the titles if it's for you.

Another one for specialized interests is The Waitresses in "Short Stack," a fairly retarded advance guard single in mono from Akron, Ohio. One side's an awful blues number. The other side is worse. Armand Schaubroeck sounds good after it. Armand's put out a rock-a-billy side and an eerie ballad side this time. If he would have sent along a "kill me" t-shirt, I might review it better. At least he manages to sound like music with a sense of suspense, which is more than most of these things can claim.

Next up we have braggarts VOM, "Live From Surf City." These guys deserve special attention. Someone gave a lot of special attention to Willie Alexander and the Boom Boom Band's MCA single. It's on transparent vinyl and was produced by the guy who did the Weirdos' first single so you know Willie and his Boom Booms are pointed at the top. This is very serious competition to Patti Smith's new single, only what saves Willie is the grasp of humor in his lyric line.

Moving right along, we have The Cuban Heels, whose version of Pet Clark's "Downtown" sounds like a punk cover song. Their own "Smok Walk" is excuse enough to get the record for its cover.

"It's a Long Way Back to Germany" is why you get the new Ramones' single. It's a slowed-up tear-jerker like "I Don't Care."

At the top of the singles list we have Elvis Costello and the Attractions with special Clash guest Mick Jones. You got to admit the real emotion in Elvis' singing. Kinda nice, lifelike tunes, swirly organ parts. Smoke pot and call your mom on the phone.

Great, now we get the albums. First off, the Heaters' record which I have no business talking about. Then The Only Ones from England. They sound like Steve Harley singing for Seventh Wave. I guess a couple of years ago they would have been an esoteric cult item.

Now we have the Dead Boys' second album which makes you wonder why the first was so much more appealing. Which brings us to Lou Reed's new album, "Street Hassle," a cryptic look at life over the rainbow. It has a lot of artistic merit but it might give you a headache, too, if you don't remember where to laugh.

Finally we have David Johansen's new album, which doesn't really belong in this reject category at all. It's pretty cool in a conducted and arranged manner, should sweep the youg hip and alive scene.

Basho Macko

GARDEZ DARKX
New Records Bristol Imports
(Freeze in the U.L. Zone/Heartbeat)

Gardez Darkx has been listening to too many '60s blues/rock groups. Surprisingly enough, it's done more good than harm, everyone borrowing the few things that were worthwhile about those bands and having the sound judgment to leave the bad. Economic, punchy, trimmed of fat. Vocals are produced a la Yardbirds while the guitars do burning leads with a Creamy tone. A worthy example of assimilating influences selectively from the past and coming up with something almost new.

Chris D.

BLACK RANDY AND METRO SQUAD
Dangerhouse Records
(Idi Amin/I'm Black and I'm Proud/I Wanna Be a Nark)

Scientists foretold consequences, teachers taught against it, preachers preached the end and parents forbid a replay; but once again, that monster of modern genetics, Black Randy, has shoved hisself forward with his sleek, elegant than ever Metropolitan Squad. I've heard about these guys excessively, particularly the one who calls himself Black Randy. I have made an extensive study and the scientists were right, the teachers, preachers and parents have good reason to be afraid.

If this Black Randy, his philosophy and the disturbing melee his Metro Squad call music catch on and spread, then America and the world, too, for that matter, could be in for a turning-over. Big trouble.

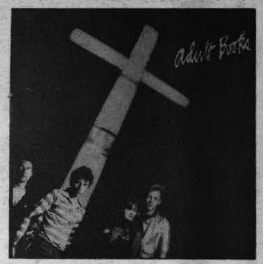
Take "Idi Amin" (please) in which the singer relates to Idi Amin's pleasures in a turbulent, nauseatingly vivid fantasy. The musicis a hodgepodge of savage beats, rhythms and screechings, the type of stuff you'd expect as dinner music in a cannibalistic household. The song ends on an ugly note and delves into something called "I'm Black and I'm Proud." A nasty song, its insinuating pulse sneaks off the record, then when you turn over for Side 2, it creeps up again to complete its lurid orgasm. The Monster's sex drive satiated, he (Black Randy) diverts his energy to drugs, violence, and murder. "I Wanna Be a Nark" is primitive wish fulfillment backed by a nightmarish soundtrack. Black Randy's persona does a turnabout as he conjures up a supernark whose victims are not safe from him even in the confines of hell. It's not funny. Black Randy is a menace to the mindlessness in us all.

R. Macarel

SHAM 69
Polydor Records
(Angels with Dirty Faces/The Cockney Kids Are Innocent)

I liked their album a lot but this is utter drivel of the worst sort—cute, crybaby nonsense about " . . . we're the faces you don't want to see." I'm afraid that after this single, Jimmy may be right. "Cockney Kids" is a reworking of one of their other songs; same riffs. Instead of the exploding dynamite of "George Davis, Etc.," though, we get music played with the ferocity of a wet firecracker. If Sham 69 wants to be a sham to their public by putting out boring records such as this, they might as well resign themselves to an early grave.

Chris D.



X
Dangerhouse
(We're Desperate/Adult Books)

Giving a measly X single to an X addict like myself is like giving a junkie a spoon to lick: it will be greedily grabbed but in no way will it satisfy the burning need. Both sides have already been played hundreds of times, the tunes ricochet around the walls of my head night and day, John and Exene's combined wails are haunting my most innocent moments, I burst with "Some people call me a creep" or "all in a line . . ." in the most unlikely situations, I am indeed truly hooked. Some songs are just songs, you can take them or leave them. Others are visions, jagged chunks of something bigger, more meaningful, more important. It's vague and it's confused but it's there. The record does not convey the fury and the passion that X carry on stage but there is enough there to feed one's imagination and one's curiosity. What is really needed now are a whole bunch of X songs (that's called an album—Ed.) so we all can get a better view of that elusive vision they're hinting at here. And of course for everyone to see them live and understand why they just might become one of the greatest American bands of the decade.

Kick Face

CLIFFORD'S CAPSULE COMMENTS:

There are two types of record collectors: those who devote themselves to a few artists and those who just ***have*** to hear everything. It boils down to either listening to a lot of records by a few people or a few by a lot. This column is aimed primarily at those who favor the latter approach.

I'll be trying to cover as many decent records as space permits and, hopefully, give you some help in finding them. Lots of places have mail order service and a card to me c/o Slash will earn you some addresses, so I won't waste space here.

One more thing before we get down to business: my tastes will become apparent soon enough so if you really want to use this as some sort of guide, here's a handy hint. If you don't happen to like what I like, you'll know that whenever I put down or totally ignore a record, you'll probably like it. Ready, begin . . .

Little records
with either big or little holes:

RIBS
Aerco UK
Man With No Brain/Long Time Comin'

In which the Ribs reveal that they are what they sing about. More like the band with no talent.

FRUIT EATING BEARS
Lightning UK
Chevy Heavy/'50's Cowboy

This was recorded before their ill-fated trip to Eurovision, but that doesn't really mean much. These guys were bad right from the start. Another fine Lightning product.

NASAL BOYS
Periphery Perfume German
Hot Love/Die Wuste Lebt

Finally, one with class! It took a few plays to realize "Hot Love" is ***not*** in German, but by then you should be noticing the great "***Hot*** Luhhhhve"s from the chorus. A really fun record to sing along with. As for the B-side, I'm still not sure ***what*** language ***it's*** in.

From the wonderful Stiff label come the twin delights of Jane Aire and Ian Dury. I know that Janie has been written up in these pages previously; I just have to say that I've been singing "Yankee Wheels" all the time lately (entertaining my friends, too). The dashing Mr. Dury presents "What A Waste," a new tune about spending one's life doing something that one does not want to do. What a waste, indeed! Backed with the LP's most popular cut ("Wake Up"), this is a good example for the uninitiated.

On Garage Records comes **SCHOOLGIRL BITCH,** an all-boy band that labels their 45 street side/university side! Guess which side "Abusing the Rules" is? That's right and the flip is "Think for Yourself." Not too bad for a one-shot, hard-core punk band.

Johnny Moped's guitarist, Slimey Toad, debuts with his band **SLIME.** "Controversial/Loony" (Toadstool) are two quirky riff-packed tunes that let Mr. Toad step out a bit more on guitar than usual. Simple, straightforward, and catchy!

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS have a very good and very limited edition (500 made) 45 on their own Rigid Digits label. "Suspect Device/Wasted Life" combine hot playing with good songs (with even a little protest thrown in). Kinda like TRB mated with a little Clash.

Little records
definitely with big holes:

From Boulder, Colorado, of all places, comes a surprisingly witty and listenable maxi-single by the **NAILS.** Musically, "Cops Are Punks/Big Star/Another Lesson" are closer to the regular rock 'n' roll end of things. It's their lyrics that really shine: "Cops are punks . . . they beat up drunks," "They'll shoot ya dead, that ain't that fun," "I feel like a Big Star . . . just like Mick Jagger," etc. So write Screwball Records at 750 6th St., Boulder, CO 80302 and meet the new Sam the Sham and the Pharoahs (that's a hint for future material, guys!).

From New York comes the debut of the **BOYFRIENDS,** a band reminiscent of the late Heartbreakers. "I Don't Want Nobody (I Want You)/You're the One" (on Bomp Records) is, simply, one terrific single. The A-side is a really romping pop stomp that will have you singing along almost instantly. The flip is an Easybeater if ever I've heard one. Worth the money for sure!

The Chicago-based Fiction label has released the L.A.-based **TREMORS'** debut, "Tonite's My Night/(Tell Me) What's Your Name." What we have here is a good, basic rock 'n' roll song done up right and proper. The weak moment is the ballad B-side. This band has a much different line-up now and has turned in some good live sets. Their second one should be hotter.

DESPERATE ANGEL (really, guys, couldn't you come up with something a little snappier?) hail from Atlanta, Georgia, and have started off December Records with a tasty little double-decker entitled "Shake You Down/It's All There." A little more originality would help, but this Big Star/Raspberries fusion works most of the time.

Dearborn (a Detroit suburb) is home for the **ZOOKS,** an "odd" little group whose "Ten Years Tangiers/Lead Free" hits these ears like a hybrid of Talking Heads and Pere Ubu. "Lead Free" especially; with its story of unrequited love at a gas station (the man is ***begging*** the bitch to buy some lead free). One to hear for yourself.

The Wrap:

That just about does it for this time. Next month there will be coverage of several new labels making their initial releases. Also reports on some big records with small holes. This is your vinyl buddy saying: whatever you do, it's for a good cause.

Bo Clifford

Starting next month, SLASH introduces its own twisted version of classified ads. Here's *your* chance to sell those unwanted guitars, or solicit a a new bondage partner, hype your band, make threats, *anything!* The cost is $5.00 ($4.00 for subscribers) and all you have to do is follow these easy instructions.

1. Take a piece of white paper and draw a rectangle 2 inches high and 6 inches long.
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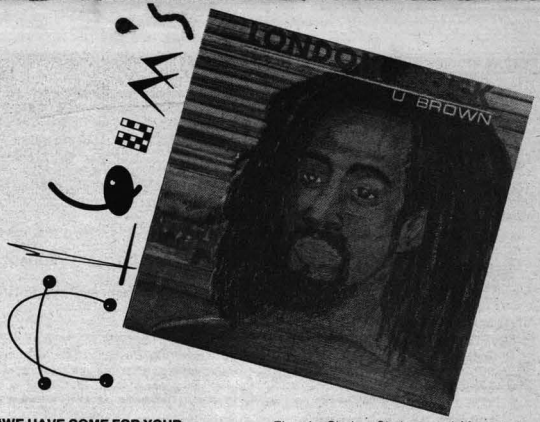
That's it. Ads will reproduce smaller (1 inch by 3 inches). If we receive your ad too late for the next issue, it will appear in the one after. Make sure your ad is the right size (2 × 6) or it won't fit, we won't use it, and we'll cash your fuckin' check anyway.



"WE HAVE COME FOR YOUR CHILDREN"
DEAD BOYS
Sire Records

Everything that goes wrong with second albums goes wrong here. The sound is overproduced for what's needed. The band comes off bored no matter how much energy is expended. The absurdly wonderful hooks of the first record are virtually nonexistent here. The stupidity of the words (the sole exception being the late Peter Laughner's sarcastic, over-the-edge "Ain't It Fun?") is studied rather than spontaneous. The music is sped-up heavy metal that begins and ends in the same place. I could go on and on. Shiny Chrome with literally Zero beneath it. Once a knife that threatened, you find out that the blade isn't made out of steel after all . . . it's rubber.

Chris D.

"ETERNALLY YOURS"
THE SAINTS
Sire Records

Talk about the great crossover record. Talk about the Great White Hope. This is it. By the same token, because of its accessibility, there are some weak spots that subvert the jackhammer strength that we became accustomed to on "I'm Stranded," their first album. The sound's mixed cleaner on this record and you can hear Chris Bailey, spitting out his disdain for the world at large with a casual, self-confident swagger that's almost too good to be true. Which is a definite plus. On the minus side, they've included one too many semi-acoustic pieces which dilute urgency no matter how well they stand on their own. Also, the single versions of "This Perfect Day" and "Do the Robot" are much better than the rerecorded ones on this.

Aside from that, "Eternally Yours" is a good record, its strong points outweighing its faults . . . good and strong enough to push through to the hard rock brain damage cases that make or break a band's popularity in America. But, as we all know is customary with Sire, this'll receive minimal promotion and virtually no airplay. Unless the Saints take it on themselves to start their own saturation tour of the U.S. Unless Seymour can get Warners to start pushing the products which he professes to believe in.

Chris D.

JUBILEE—The original soundtrack
Polydor import

Faded color xerox sneer of Jenny Runacre on the cover, a smattering of select bondo-trasho prints from the movie on the back. Jubilee—Cert. X. "The outrageous (never could trust the word) soundtrack from the motion picture." Side one: Five bargain bin, bubblepunk singles from Adam & The Ants, Wayne County & The Electric Chairs, Chelsea and Maneaters. Side two: Three spritely concoctions from Suzi Pinns and Amilcar, including a castrati choir version of "Rule Brittania," and two bands of atonal snooze music from Eno, who should know better. In short, no dirty gems, no driving anthems, no twisted excursions, no new music. Oh well—that's punxploitation.

Carbo/Sonovia

"POWER IN THE DARKNESS"
TOM ROBINSON BAND
Harvest Records

I can't say much else other than I hate it . . . not for the bleeding heart sermons or political slogans (for which I myself have a weak spot), but because everything is cloaked in one of the most MOR sounds yet to emerge from the New Wave. The attitude heregets old immediately, possibly because it's the same "brothers and sisters, are you with me or agin' me?" kind of hippie nonsense that helps to make a mockery of real solidarity.

Chris D.

"LONDON ROCK"
U-BROWN
Third World Import

This one did not do much for me at first (it is hard to get off the Tapper Zukie ways). I thought there was too much echo, too much facile repetition, too much "in" technical hipness for the album to mean anything in two weeks' time. Wrong. There is still too much of everything I've mentioned 'cept it does not matter, there is also enoughinvention and genuine moments of inspired toasting to keep you playing the thing over and over and over again. I suggest a gray, dull, "so what?" morning to really appreciate what U-Brown and whoever it is who is backing him can do for you. A few will make the inevitable comparisons with the granddaddy of it all, U-Roy, and they will be right. U-Brown did start as one of the countless U-Roy take-offs and he certainly could have chosen many worse examples as mentors. But in spite of the sometimes spookily similar phrasing or rhythm ridin', this carries its own load of original excitement and DJ sparkling.

There are incredibly tasty bits of instruments sprinkled throughout, elusive horns, teasing "chuk-chuk" guitars that fade in and out, and some fine background vocals, but the second U-Brown steps in, he immediately literally reshapes the tune to suit his own personal needs, and from there on it's smooth city (spliff city?), all slick delivery and heel-clicking demeanor. As I was saying, a real delight for those countless mornings when you just don't feel at all like a cool cat on top of the world. Try it, my brethren, it might help you beat that old Babylon blues, ya know.

Chatty Mouth

photo: john gulager

(attempt #256 at getting to your wallet)

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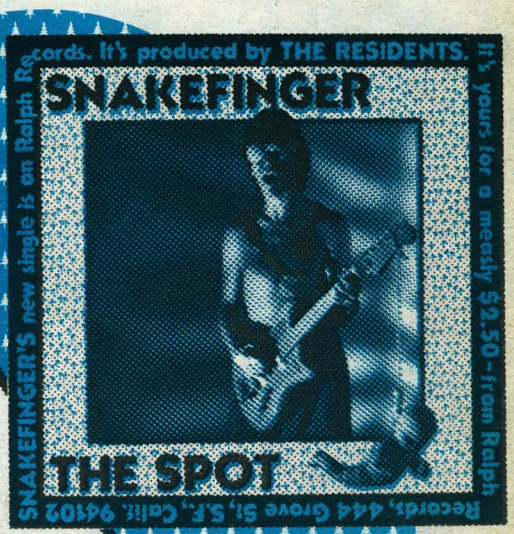

THIS MAN HAS JUST MADE A RECORD!

So what, you say?
So what because this man is **SNAKEFINGER!**
That's right, the guy who plays the
Weird guitar on **THE RESIDENTS'** Satisfaction,
Duck Stab, and Fingerprince records.
He also used to have a band in England named
CHILLI WILLI AND THE RED HOT PEPPERS.
NICK LOWE played bass on Chilli Willi's first LP.
The Willi's drummer now plays with **ELVIS COSTELLO**
And their manager founded **STIFF RECORDS**
And the list goes on,
And on,
And he's made a new record.
The Residents co-wrote and produced it.
Wait, don't run away.
The song is call **THE SPOT.**
You've been waiting for the next thing, haven't you?
Well, he's here,
At the right time
In the right spot.

SNAKEFINGER
THE SPOT b/w SMELLY TONGUES
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Ralph Records

SLASH
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We at Slash Inc. get the feeling an explanation is required about what you are now holding in your sweaty little hands. Ready ? Here it goes.

Nothing is wrong. Just because this thing that calls itself Slash is free (scary, that), is entirely devoid of lovable ravings, insults, biased reviews, unfounded gossip and out of focus pictures but instead loaded to the gills with ads and esoteric messages does not mean that a) we've gone soft in the matzho ball, b) we've sold out in the most radical fashion or c) we've finally run out of ideas, prejudices and resentment. No no no my droogies, on the contrary. The regular Slash rag numero eleven which will come out in a week, full of all those questionnable qualities. Also, it will cost fifty cents. What THIS is is a common yellow pages/thank you note/publicity flier/art and photos collection/clearance sale insert/self-congratulatory messages and a few plain obscure hints COLLECTION. And it is a quick legal way for Slash to make some money so tthat we can get on with the MASTER PLAN. And it is our way of thanking our fabulous although unbearable contributors by giving them space for their very own devious promotions. But mainly it is an obvious come-on to the millions of bored directionless people who haven't heard the news : The seventies are dead, everything is permitted. Just DO SOMETHING. Shout in a mike, paint your face, plan a medium-size overthrow, drink beer for a week straight, make a movie with no film in the camera, break up your band before it has started, it does not matter. There is more to punk rock than punk. There is more to punk rock than rock.

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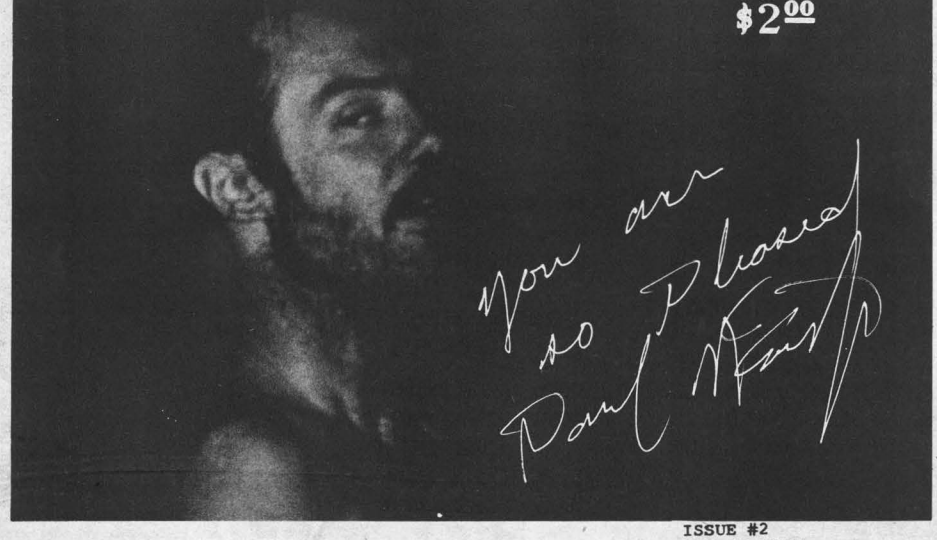

Interview with Paul McCarthy

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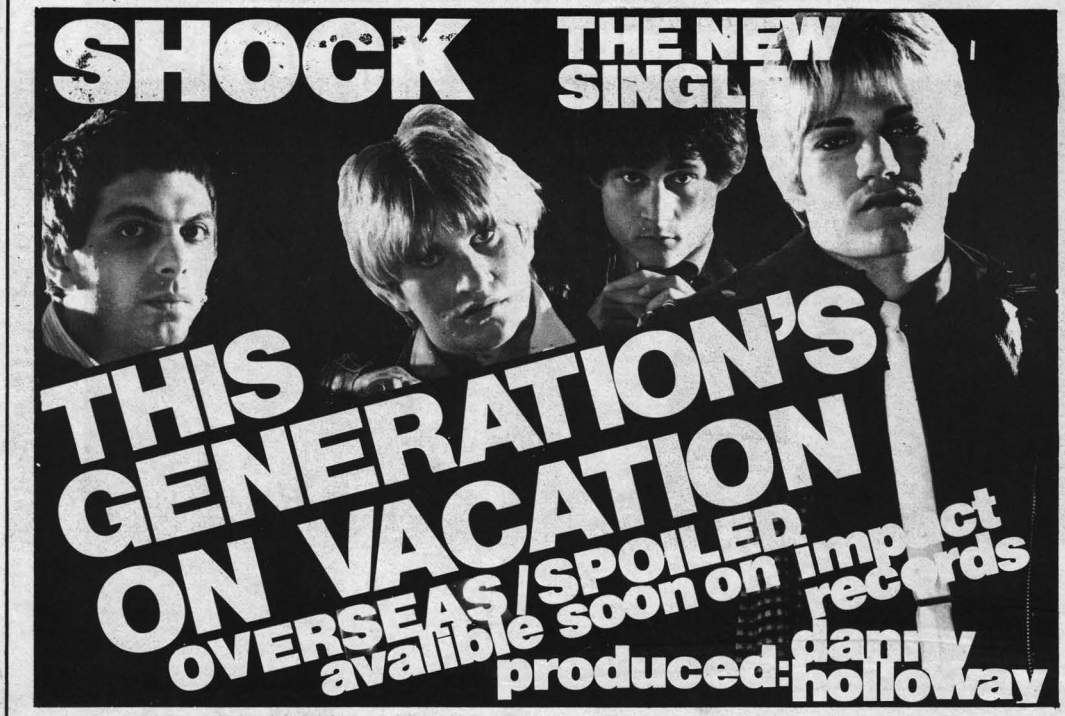
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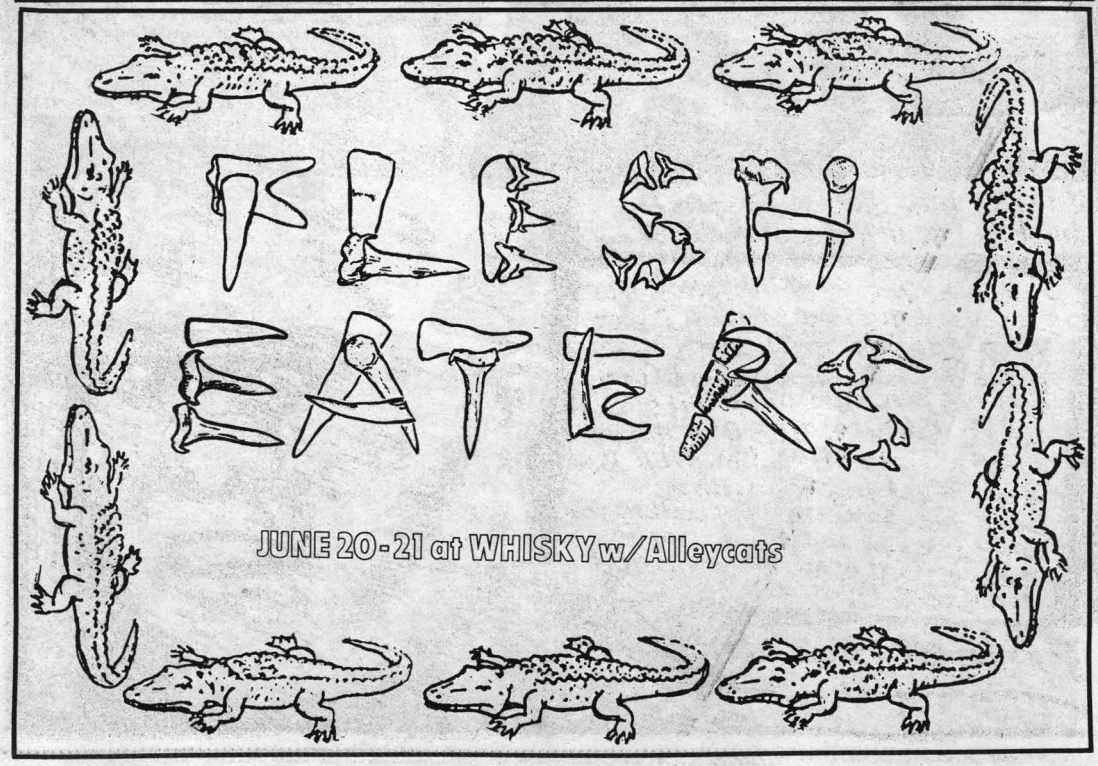
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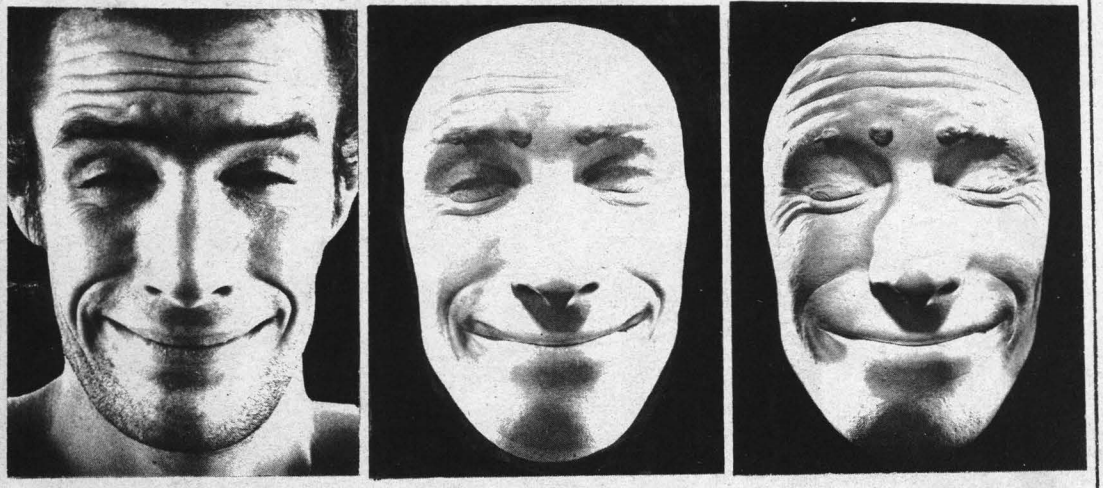

...LIFE MASKS

KERRY COLONNA
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JIM30

JIM30 has BEEN FEELING SORRY FOR HIMSELF LATELY...

I BREAK MY FUCKING NECK for this MAGAZINE! & DO I GET ANY FUCKING FAN LETTERS? FUCK NO. ALL I HEAR IS DEAR FUCKING KICK BOY FACE this & DEAR FUCKING KICK BOY FACE that... I'd like to KICK his dear fucking FACE, BOY! SEND ME SOME FUCKING LETTERS you INGRATES... you think I enjoy being tortured MONTH AFTER MONTH? FUCK NO! I'll tell you...

PATHETIC...

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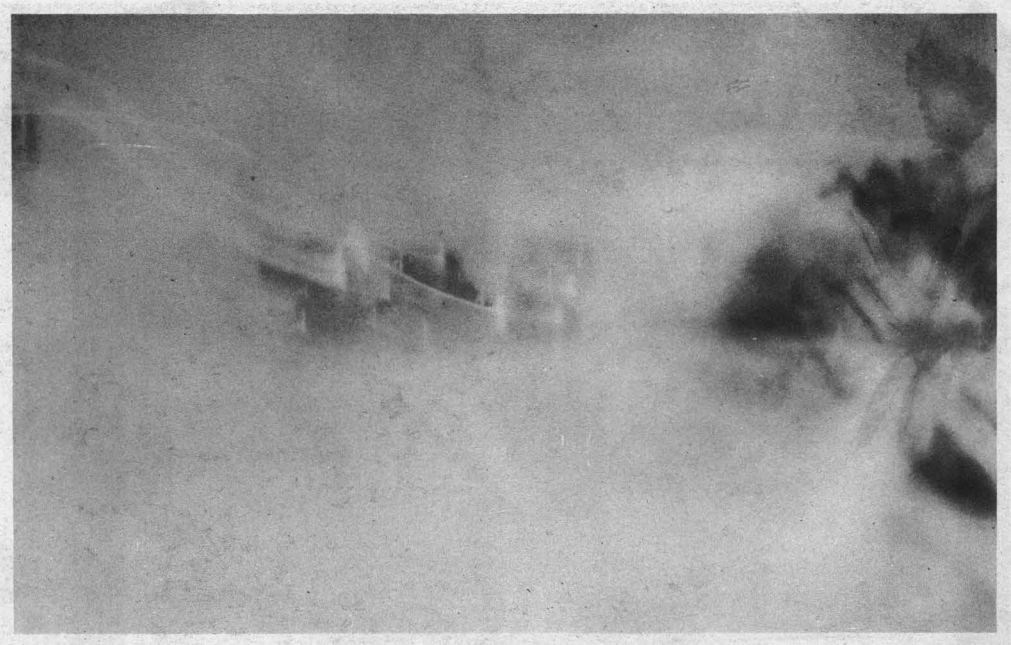

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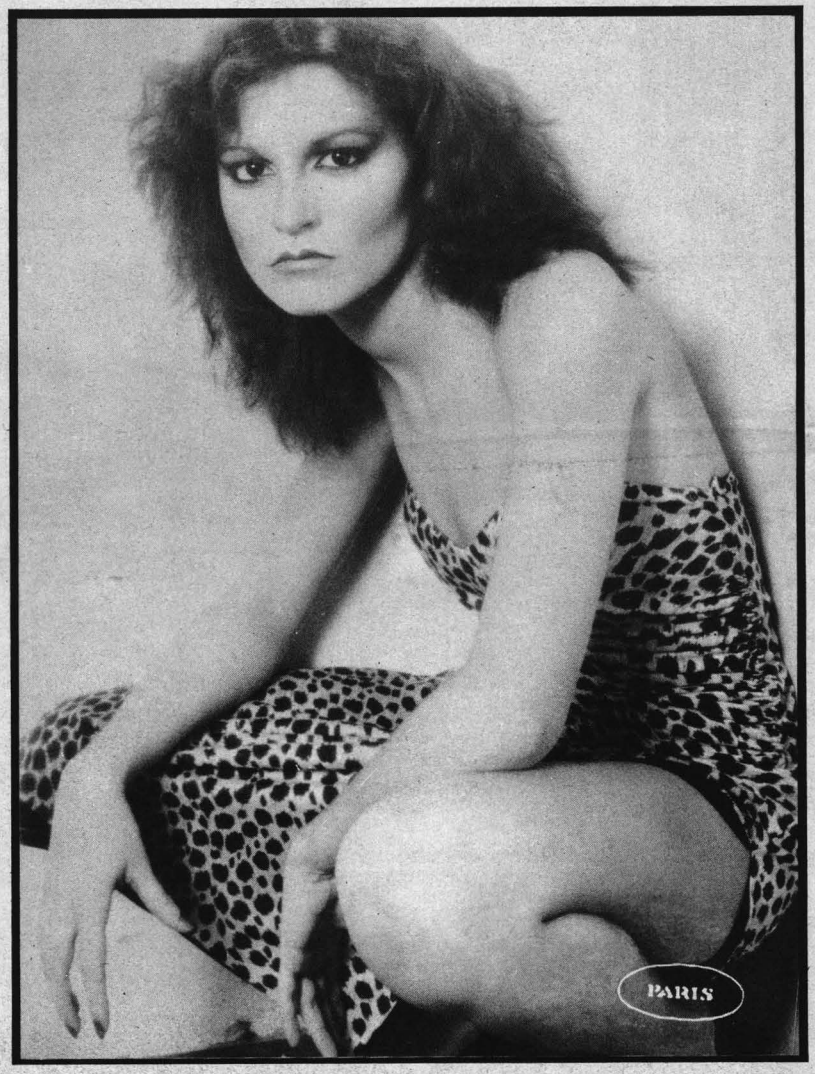

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THE WEIRDOS are having a WEIRD OUT at the WHISKY A GO GO, Sunset Strip, June 8, 30, July 1, 2, 1978.

THE WEIRDOS are making silence safe from the international menace. Photo: Jules Bates. Paste up, lettering, design: KLF. Made in Hollywood.

THE WEIRDOS are on vinyl: 'DESTROY ALL MUSIC' BOMP Records. 'WE GOT THE NEUTRON BOMB' - DANGERHOUSE Records, U.S. version. RADAR Records, U.K. version.

THE WEIRDOS are manipulated by PLANIT ENTERPRISES, 1260 N. Harper Ave., Hollywood 90046 213-656-4216.

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mit der **Flesh Eaters & Consumers**

June 20th 'n 21st

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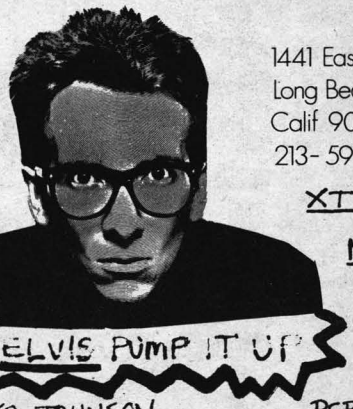

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"The Screamers are not an entertainment, they're an assault! Their music sounds like *danger!*"—*Twisted.* "The future—the one and only group in this galaxy to have done away with guitars and other lame gimmicks!"—*Slash.* "Mutant offspring of the New Wave, they are an evolution in what the movement is supposed to be all about—*something new.*"—*B.A.M.*

"As you might have guessed from their instrumental line-up, the Screamers are not just another guitar band . . . 'We're not trying to play music—we're trying to play an *anxious sound*.' "—*Cream.* "Their authoritative stage presence reflects an intense desperation . . . As a front man, (Tomata) is charismatic and visual. His movements range from cartoonish gestures and a demented glare to a statuesque quizzical gaze or arrogantly thrashing embittered outrage."—*B.A.M.*

"The music is more melodic, less harsh with the synth and keyboards . . . 'A *controlled nervous breakdown*' " . . . On stage, Tomata is: "Emotional, pleading 'I Wanna Hurt,' he climbs onto the piano . . . The audience is riveted, the lights are bloody. Then, he is doing a demented duck walk, eyes wild, mouth curled, hoarse-voiced, magnetic . . . 'In a Better World, everybody must be made to feel important,' he sings.

"Bristling and potent, glamor-boy Gear takes center stage for his anthem: 'If I Can't Have What I Want—I Don't Want *Anything*.' Shirt torn open, flailing a chain around, he moves like a whip. In a blur he dips, pivots and motors back to his instrument."—*Montreal Star.* "KK has developed into a booming, powerhouse drummer, punctuating the group's songs with diverse and infectious rhythmic patterns . . .

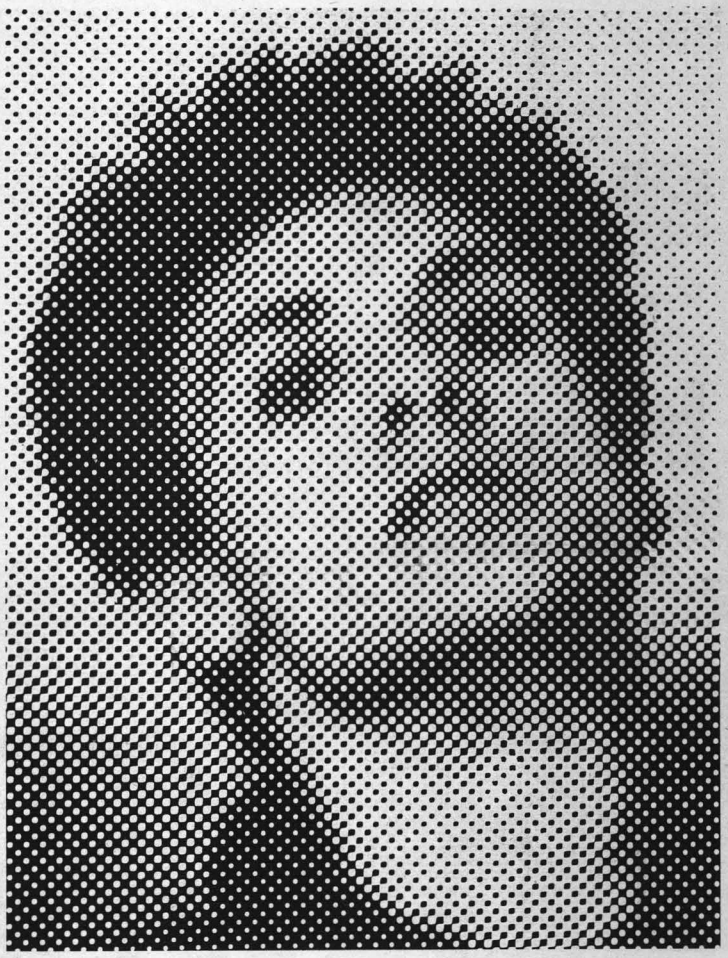
"Musically jarring and visually bizarre, it was mood alteration enmasse as the band shifted from the turbulent, upbeat 'Magazine Love' to their dark and brooding interpretation of Billie Holiday's 'Gloomy Sunday' with Tomata using a guitar as a percussion instrument . . . (The) crowd left excited, intrigued, and emotionally drained."—*B.A.M.*

"What the Screamers 'do' is a concept previously untried . . . they defy convention without sacrificing the . . . mass audience. They are like the wild animal . . . whose primary goal is . . . to survive. Instinct rules. Intelligence meshed with instinct—a force to contend with in anyone."—*Chatterbox.*

"Sophisticated . . . Punks — Hollywood-style."—*Variety,* Japan.

A BETTER WORLD BEGINS WITH...

GEAR—SYNTHESIZER—*(Seattle, Europe, L.A.)* "I have led a very dull life," dryly intones Tommy Gear. Building a nuclear reactor & studying Japanese as a child to finishing high school in two years have left their mark. Branded an "intelligent misfit" throughout his life, he never "fit in"... Threw himself into radical activism, dabbled in bizarre theatrics, took up formal music study, fitfully toured Europe. Career-bent from the start, he studied psychiatry—it didn't satisfy—turned to vivisection... Went from Med School to Music when he bought a synthesizer on impulse. He made music his passion and a new structure to his existence began to emerge. His new wave leanings became a commitment when he went from his first group, the Tupperwares, to forming the Screamers. "There is a definite need for Screamers music today. Anxiety, frustration and rage must be worked on constantly, underscored. Brought out in the open and positively resolved." This is what the Screamers do, our music does this, in fact that is the purpose of the group," says Gear. Reputation: Perfectionist. Still subscribes to Scientific American.



THE CRITICS
FROM THE BEGINNING...

5-28-77: Screamers make their performance debut at a *Slash* magazine storefront party. "Standing in the midst of the frenzied crowd it dawned on me that the Screamers had tremendous potential and truly epitomized everything associated with punk rock."—Bob Taylor, *Hollywood Press.*

7-4-77: To a packed house, the Screamers make their official public debut at the Starwood. "The Screamers are real showmen and their act is much more varied than most of the other punk bands... Their songs speak eloquently but directly to their peers ... (They) create a sound that has few comparisons in pop music."—Phillip Miller, *I Wanna Be Your Dog.*

7-7-77: Demo tape is cut, featuring "Punish," "Anything," "Peer Pressure" and "Magazine Love."

7-28-77: At Mabuhay Gardens in San Francisco, Screamers headline for the first time. "Screamers had the audience up and dancing... they far surpass the better-known new wavers (in L.A.) in terms of originality and ability to communicate their art."—Jack Basher, *S.F. Progress.*

8-8/9-77: Screamers play the Whiskey for the first time out of five times to date.

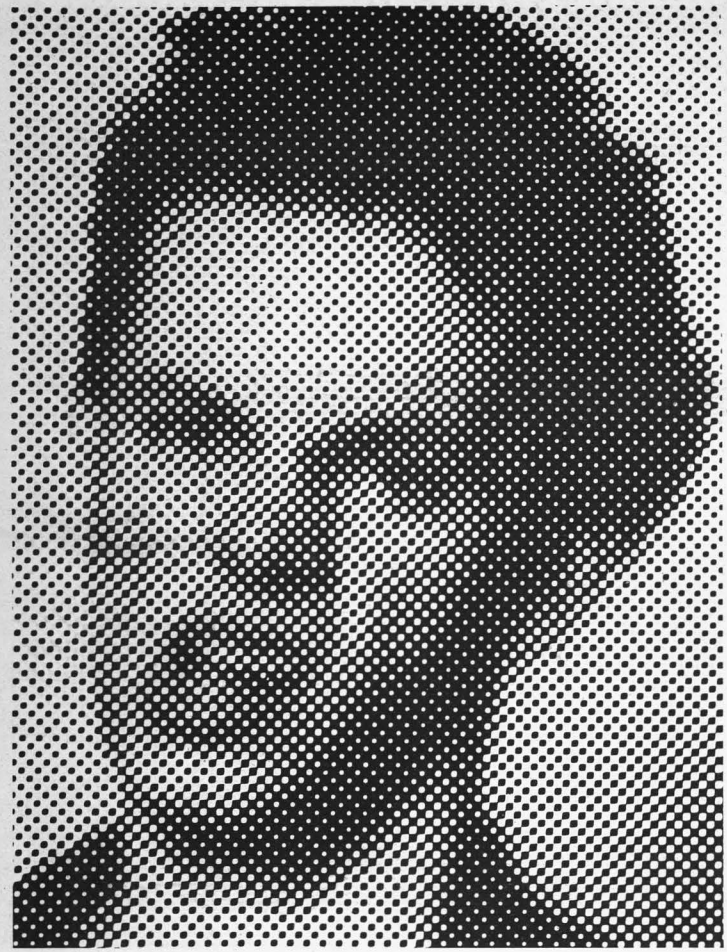
8-16/17-77: Benefit for *Slash,* Larchmont Hall in Hollywood.

8-7-77: Screamers perform at a private party in Malibu for Iggy Pop. Iggy dubs them "Tomorrow's Leaders."

David Braun exits group to form Dangerhouse Records. Enter Jeff McGregor, 17, as temporary keyboardist.

12-16/17-77: Benefit at the Masque Club cabaret in Hollywood. Introduce "Violent World" and "I Wanna Hurt." "The stage is swamped with bodies. A chickenwire 'fence' goes up as part of the psycho-drama... Coming closer, paying attention, the crowd crawls into (Tomata's) hand. Eight songs, the set is over. Strong, hard, quick."—Susanne de Lotbineire-Harwood, *Montreal Star.*

PHOTOS: FAYETTE, TIM GRISWOLD, DIANE GROVE, SCOTT LINDGREN, HERB WREDE.



TOMATA—VOCALS—*(New York, Seattle, L.A.)* Raised on the island of Manhattan, hated Catholic school, was a constant daydreamer. Ran away from home at age sixteen, recommends the same to everyone. Star-struck, he migrated to Hollywood and landed a job selling maps to the star's homes . . . Hung out constantly, craved the crowd. Not to be noticed, but to be a part of it all. Fascinated by the freeways, it "ached him inside" when he became too attached to a passing car and then, like *that*, it sped away . . . Organized a radical theater group, stuck it out in Seattle a while, then bused it back to Manhattan . . . Was neighbors with Blondie and the Ramones, wrote porno, performed off-Broadway, did experimental video. First group he sang with: Suicide Blondes . . . Is there a reason for Tomata du Plenty? Is there a need? Tomata thinks so: "I ask myself, 'is it possible to be all things to all people?' Yes. It is my fate to assimilate the inner turmoil of others. I am a human illustration of struggle, anxiety & fear." Reputation: Spotless. Posed for Naked Teen #1 (try and find it). Has kept a ten-year journal of his life.

THE CRITICS

12-18/19-77: Back to Mabuhay Gardens. New Songs: "Let's Go! Vertigo!" and "Better World." Screamers' demo tape gets airplay on KSAN radio.

1-5 thru 7-78: At the Whiskey. Art with a vengeance: Tomata rips through a 50-foot-wide wall of black plastic to open the show. First sell-out crowd. "There's more variety here than in the usual three-chord punk sound. Its instrumentation . . . leads the sound into an electronic area, where it develops pleasant hypnotic patterns and occasionally approximates a more conventional rock band sound."—Richard Cromelin, *L.A. Times.*

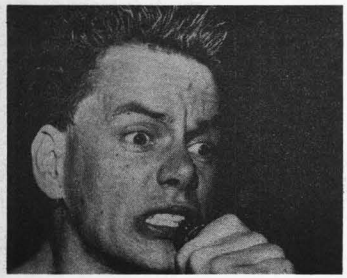
2-28-78: A benefit for the Masque Club at the Elks Hall in downtown L.A. "The show climaxed with the Screamers who lived up to its strong local reputation with a well-paced and often electrifying set . . . lead singer (Tomata) fashions a style of techno-punk completely his own. Keyboardist Tommy Gear . . . delivers vocals with equal fervor. The Screamers have a unique, high-voltage persona that should take them a long way."—Kristine McKenna, *L.A. Times.*

3-15-78: At the Marquee Club in Arcadia. Screamers introduce "The Girl in the Car with the Glasses and the Gun."

3-23-77: Screamers play an Easter Dance benefit at Camarillo State Mental Hospital. "The affinity was obvious—anxiety level music for anxiety-wrought minds . . . All attention was focused on the Screamers, however, as they ascended the stage. Some were repulsed and others fascinated . . . (The performance) was a welcome deterrent to the confined, regimented existence of those less fortunate than us."—Bob Taylor, *Slash.*

3-25-78: Down to San Diego for a night at the Straighta Head Ballroom. "They opened their set by proclaiming, 'We'd like to thank the first groups for playing you music of the 1960s and 1970s, now we'll give you music of the 1980s," and they backed it." —Mikel Toombs, *Slash.*

4-8-78: Back to the Elks Lodge, this time for the annual Artists and Lawyers Ball.



DESIGN: GORILLA ROSE/AL NAKAS

KK—DRUMMER—*(Oklahoma, Detroit, L.A.)* Hustled from state to state, went to six different schools, survived early drowning . . . Misguided aggressions made him "Class Clown." Trying to fit in somehow, he got his first snare drum to join his Jr. High School Marching Band—was kicked out two weeks later for throwing his sticks. Didn't drum again for seven years, kept a constant ear to a transistor radio . . . Bought his first full drum kit from a roommate for 90 bucks. A rickety, gold-sparkled set which he painted battleship grey and played everyday for six months, practicing to Aretha's "Chain of Fools." He developed his own threatening approach to drumming with an avant garde Okie group called Mondo Combo . . . Felt stranded in Oklahoma, his restless nature drove him to L.A. where he met Gear and Tomata at a party. "He seemed to have a lot of pent-up aggression," Tomata says, " . . . He was elbowing people and sort of pushing and shoving. His crowd behavior was his audition." He then sent for his battered old grey kit and became master of the Rhythm Generator . . . Reputation: Lady Killer. Executive producer with Dangerhouse. Never wears T-shirts.

THE CRITICS

4-13 thru 15-78: Another sell-out Whiskey booking, the Screamers introduce "122 Hours of Fear" and re-introduce a new "Eva Braun"—backed by a wall of construction-site scaffolding.

Exit Jeff McGregor (back to school). Enter Paul Roessler, currently on keyboards.

5-78: Screamers embark on their first West Coast tour, playing San Francisco, Seattle and Portland. In the works: New York, Japan, England.

WHERE THE SCREAMERS HAVE APPEARED:

NEWSPAPERS: L.A. Times (1-7 & 2-27, 28-78), National Observer (6-77), Montreal Star, Canada (1-78), San Francisco Progress (7-77).

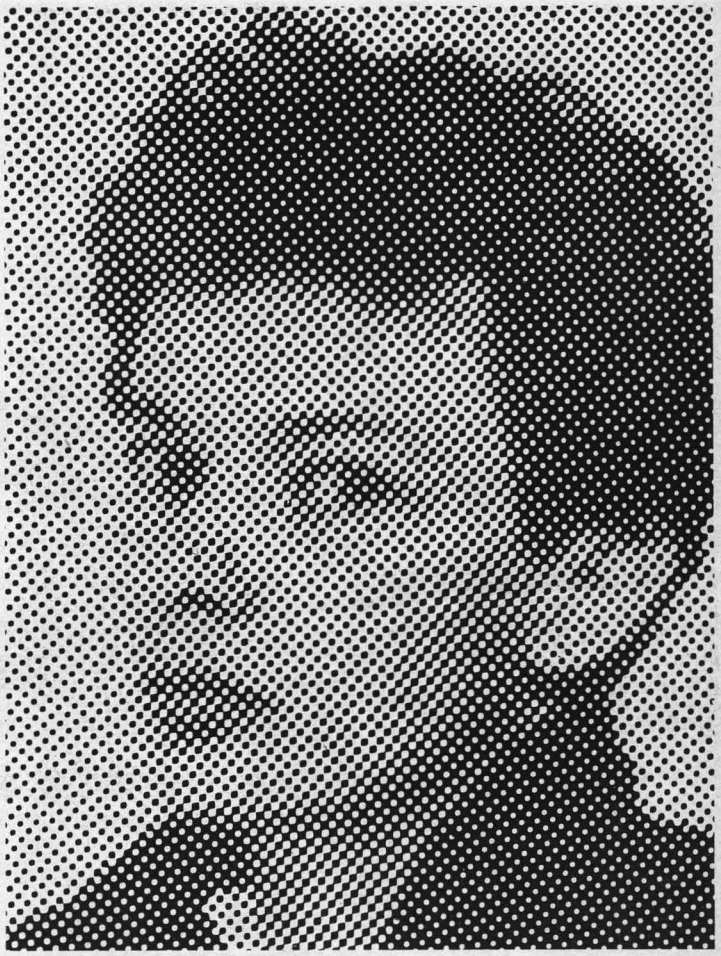
MAGAZINES: New West, Bomp, Wet, Synapse (12-77). **In Japan:** Apache, Rock Show & Variety.

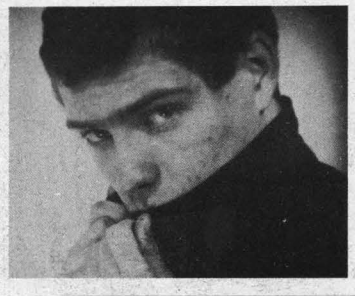
ROCK PRESS: Creem (12 & 1-77), New York Rocker (#8), Circus, Slash (#1, 2, 10), Rock Scene, Chatterbox (#6), Trouser Press, B.A.M. (5-78), Twisted (7-77), Phonograph (5-77), Record World. **In England:** N.M.E., Sounds, Melody Maker.

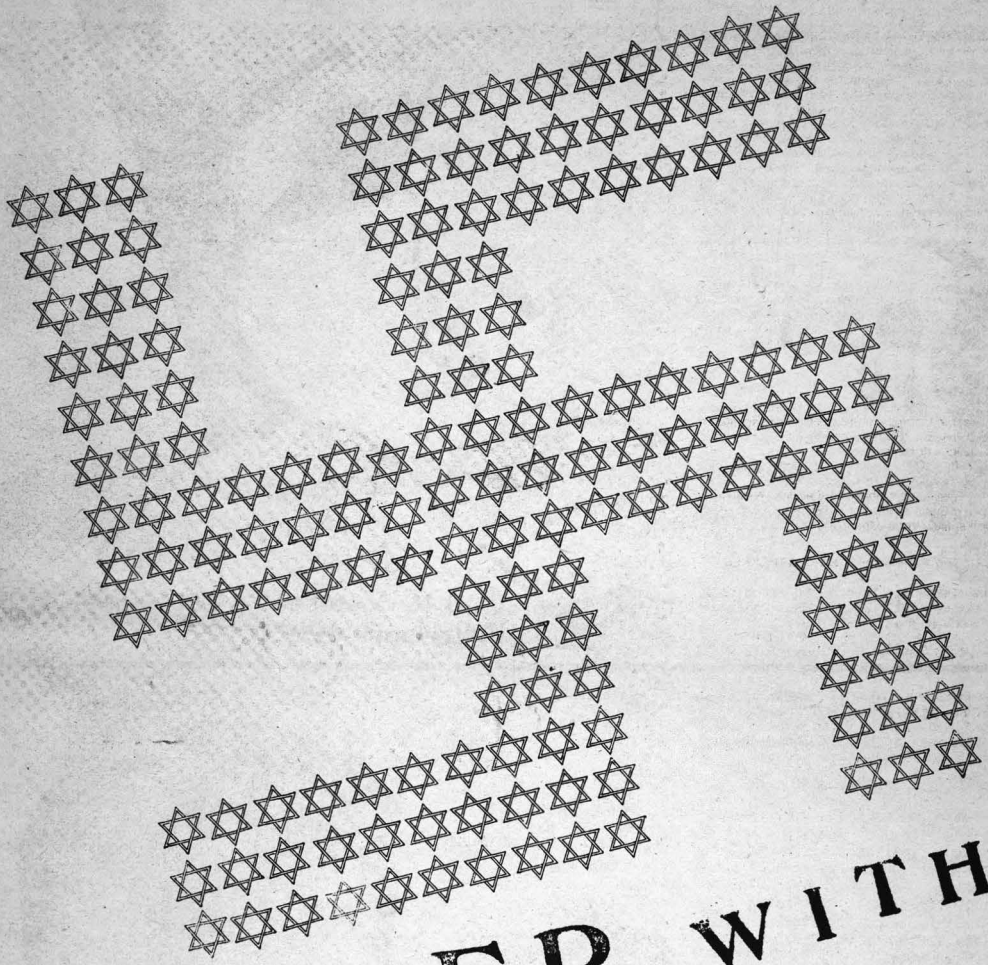
FANZINES: Lobotomy, I Wanna Be Your Dog (#7), Search & Destroy (#5), Joyride, Flip/Side, Raw Power, Street Life, Blank Generation, Nightmare, Back Door Man.

"Let the machines control the machines, let the people control the people." —*Gear*

JOIN THE SCREAMERS FANCLUB!
Fax, fotos, fanletter. Send $2 to: SCREAMERS ALERT, P.O. Box 367, Ontario, CA 91761.



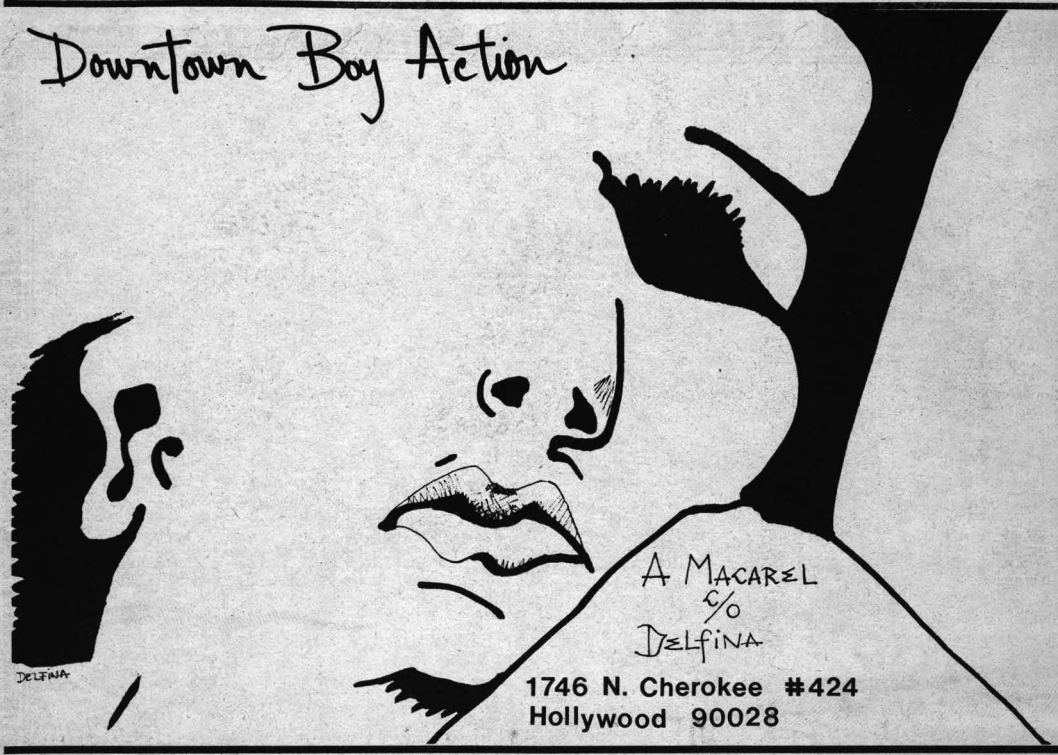




SHOWER WITH A FRIEND

billy billy

Downtown Boy Action



hi ! I'm a face & voice of the times...
here's what I have to say...

the only thing now standing in the way of the Masque re-opening is a thing called Walnut Properties whose specialty is cheap porn

Pathetically artless quick buck suck and cum-in-the-face porn, the Great American Crass Celebration of the Apocalyptically Pointless Boner and there's nothing you can do with it except to cut holes in the pockets of your pants and to slide your clammy claw gratefully down there and to squeeze it nicely now because there isn't a single available soft orifice anywhere in the movie theater in which to stick it...

Females ! Your equivalent pointless boner is sitting there suffering the discomfiture of damp underclothing or soaking wet panties depending on the dimensions and re-activity of the labia majora..

Your only alternatives are hand or finger release in the head or you can run away

back out into the night
five dollars poorer with a sticky hand

SHOULD THE NEW ROCK AND ROLL MOVEMENT CHAMPION POINTLESS BONERS, EVEN THOUGH BONERS TO EXCESS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A PRIME DICTUM OF ROCK AND ROLL ?
OR SHOULD THE NEW ROCK AND ROLL MOVEMENT BE MAKING A LOT OF NOISE ABOUT IT IF IT MEANS THE NEW MUSIC GETS SUPPRESSED IN THE PROCESS
NOBODY IS RIGHT OR WRONG, BUT WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT ? WHAT DO YOU THINK ?

WATCH & LISTEN CAREFULLY FOR FUTURE ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINCE YOU CAN'T HEAR THE WORDS UNTIL YOU SEND FOR THE RECORD WE DECIDED TO PRINT SOME OF THEM HERE FOR YOU TO READ:

"MOVE"*

I THINK YOU'RE PASSÉ / I THINK YOU'RE OLD / I THINK YOU'RE ANCIENT/AND WE'RE ALL GONNA MOVE YA / WE'RE ALL GONNA MOVE YA // COME ON HATE ME/ DO SOMETHING TO CREATE ME/ COME ON HATE ME—"MOVE"// HA! YOU THINK WE'RE CAOTIC/ AND YOU THINK I'M A CHEAT··· (CONTINUED ON THE SINGLE) *

"MINDLESS CONTENTMENT"*

WELL I GOT MINDLESS CONTENTMENT/ WELL I GOT MINDLESS CONTENTMENT/ WELL I GOT MINDLESS CONTENTMENT/ WELL I GOT MINDLESS CONTENTMENT/ I DON'T WANNA WATCH T.V./ I DON'T EVEN WANNA BE WITH ME/ I DON'T WANNA DO ANYTHING/ I DON'T WANNA DO ANYTHING ANYTHING, ANYTHING// WELL··· (CONTINUED ON THE SINGLE)*

"LET GO"*

LET GO, LET GO, ALL THAT SHIT INSIDE/ LET GO, LET GO, UNBIBLICAL PRIDE/ AND REPRESSION / LET GO LET GO, LET GO, MOVE THE TENSION/ ALL OF YOUR RAGE/ LET GO, LET GO GET OUT OF YOUR CAGE / LET GO LET GO, LET GO, ALL OVER THE STAGE/ SUFFICATION / LET GO, ··· (CONTINUED ON THE SINGLE)*

SEND FOR YOUR FIRST RUN PRESSING OF THE PLUGZ SINGLE ON SLASH RECORDS BY SENDING $1.50 AND THE COUPON BELOW TO:

Slash

P.O. BOX 48888
LOS ANGELES, CA. 90048
213-654-2876

JLM

* © 1978 PLUGZ/JAN LUCAS MEDIA HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

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STREET ADDRESS _____
CITY & STATE _____
ZIP _____

PLUGZ

SEND ME ___ COPIES OF THE NEW PLUGZ SINGLE ON Slash RECORDS AT $1.50 EACH SO I CAN HEAR THE MUSIC AND THE REST OF THE WORDS. #(1)

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LIVE ON STAGE

Johnny Novotny

WHISKY

JUNE 27 & 28

(WITH THE ZIPPERS)

INSTANT INFORMATION:

LIVE VIA RADIO

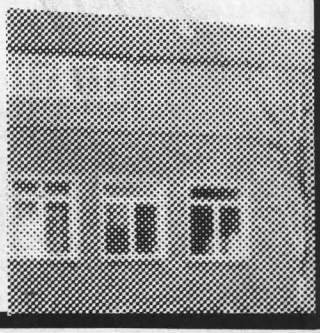
Johnny Novotny

KPFK 90.7 FM

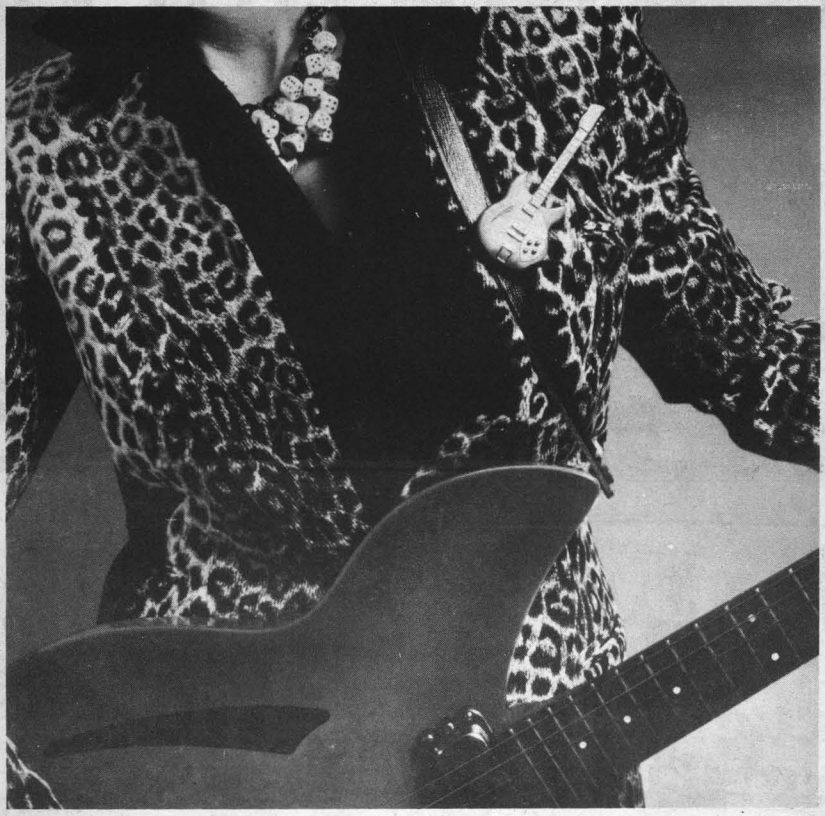
JUNE 10

MIDNIGHT

RuN, frIEnD, tHe oLD worLd Is BeHinD YOU !!!!



FAB



GEAR

GUITAR PINS available at:
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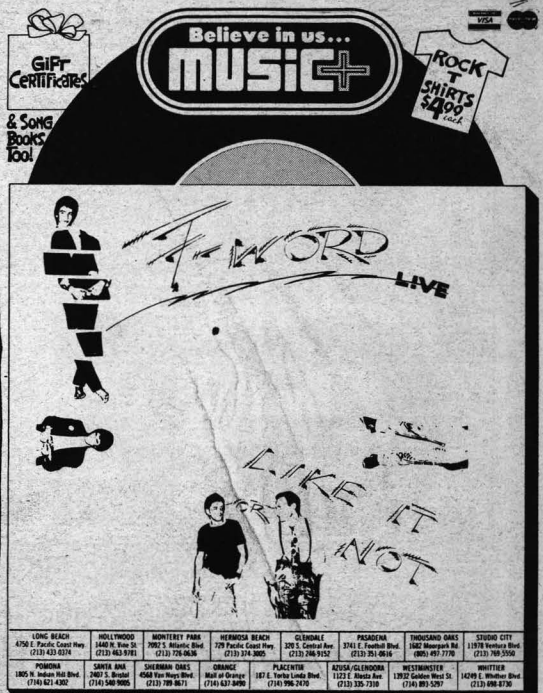
F-WORD! ON SALE 2.99 FROM JUNE 16

SLASH MAGAZINE WANTS YOU TO GO TO A PUNK ROCK CONCERT!

...don't fuck around! If you ain't been to a p-rock concert, you Must be stupid! This summer's Gonna BE a Bitch! So buy "SLASH" & find out what's goin' on or call these TELEPHONE #s to get in the KNOW: !! ① Whisky 652-4202 ② MASQUE 462-0258 ③ CALL US - 654-2876 ④ TRY THE STARWOOD (THEY HAVE Punk sometimes) 656-2200 + KEEP YER eyes open for handbills (if you are 'new' TO ALL THIS, the good bands usually Have 'weird' & sometimes 'violent' names - but don't be scared, They're nice kids really). !!



PUNK LOVE:

I like sex.

Oh my God! Infatuated?

She seemed really crazy & I wore this leather mask,

but it didn't last too long. *which is cool*

OK, good, that takes care of that . . .

which is cool

WHAT'S IN A LABEL:

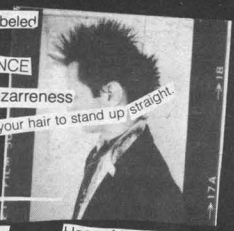
How do you feel about being labeled

. . . it's a bunch of bullshit.

Were you born with your STANCE

I had visions of some real bizarreness

(yawn) you can't judge a book by your hair to stand up straight.



remember, it's choreographed by the confines of the stage

Slash: Here comes our famous question—drugs?

All those screaming well, I don't ***love*** them.

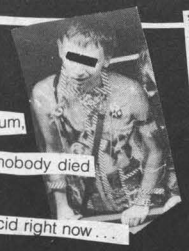
—Shit!" heroin . . . and acid . . . bubble-gum,

knocked out flat, in a drunken stupor got laid, nobody died

The white world menace to clean-cut America

And you're responsible?

we're on acid right now . . .



the SLASH staff couldn't take it . . .

We're into Heavy Manners, loud music

boogie, high energy disco even

leather a joke (laughter all around) Love crowd

"sicko enter tainment"

the Tropicana) dollars. fucking poetry reading.

Merv Griffin the L.A. scene Barmitz-vahs? . . . bitching

torture Mexican food TV hooliganism. abstract concept

looking mean. speed lovely boutiques

blood, guts and gorum. 14-year-olds. parties Blacks

esoteric puns unusual nature Short songs big deals rumors

the corner liquor store useless items rainbow zoris

Punk music, at least what little of it we have seen and heard . . . let's outdo our neighbor the future

well placed lungers Fucking SLASH magazine . . .

anything???

Everyone talks about politics.

Have you a message

.we don't like the Poseur Nazis. We're not like teenage robots

fucking abstract nonsense; I'm as liberal as the next Generation

Obviously freedom is *still* the Paradiso, but we're not

going to fuckin' kill ourselves for any incestu ous crowd for too long.

What's your religion?

Jehovah's witnesses!

Are you in this for money or Teenage Jesus concerts.

Oh Christ! . . Everyone needs to get out of Holly-

wood once in a while and Heaven

(a former Puerto Rican dive)

is only half an hour away on the freeway . . Jesus

So as for you personally, what are your plans for the future?

On a superficial level

"Greg Shaw is going to do a single for us . . ."

That sounds a bit trite . . .

Just ask your heroes back in England

A few la-la-la's won't kill you . . .

Do you think life is essentially a painful experience?

let everything happen, man, peace and love

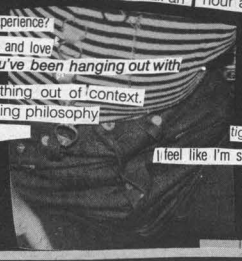
Don't you know who the fuck you've been hanging out with

Don't accuse me of taking anything out of context.

go back to masturbating and studying philosophy

I think you're real relevant.

and therefore you ain't punks.



(How do you fit in this scene?)

tight. "You're lucky to see me, mate" . . .

I feel like I'm some kinda guy in love with child prostitutes.

Yea, 'cause I've always been a bit arty . . .

That could stop some people.

(I'm not sure about *you*)

Enough rhetoric and fucking dialectical dogma What do you **want**

sooner or later I'll have a family with Andy Warhol with the hope of creating some kind of a different

social outlook on kids that's the one thing I suspect that anybody young that I've met appreciates *(not us, pal!)*

uh? Too good for that kind of shit and all that?

So what do they want pleasure?

Yeah, eat your hearts out, America

"I Wanna Be Your Dog." Don't believe me? Read on.

we've got to keep this section interesting (or worth committing suicide for).

Slash is a pain in the ass.

The whole page is as crystal clear and

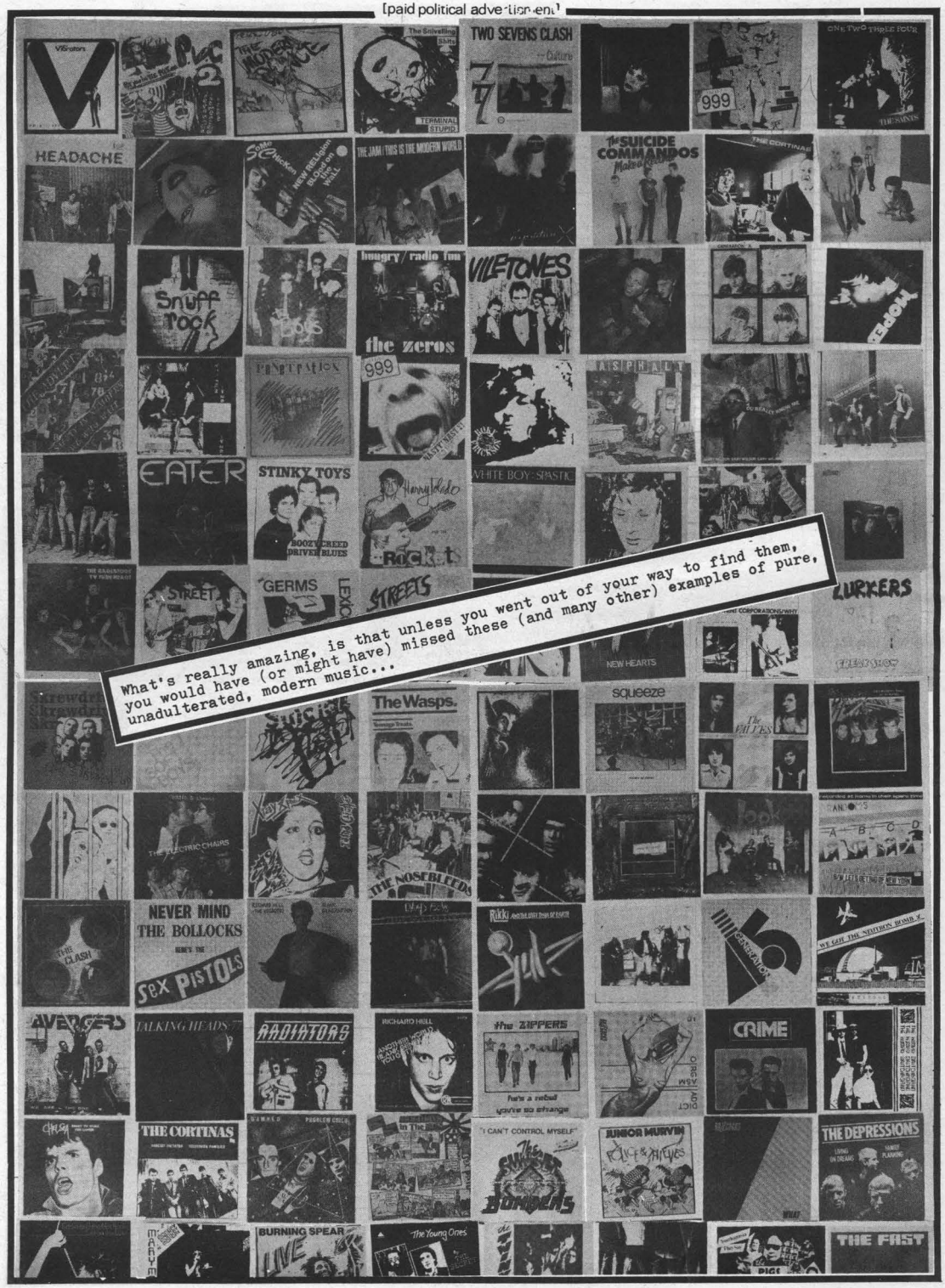
down to earth as the $ixties

That's good, sweetheart

you JUST WANT TO MAKE Me CREAM

A complete success!" . . .

[paid political advertisement]



THE GERMS

45

DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT, THE CRITICS ARE RAVING!

"Don't buy records.
Waste your money on liquor instead."

Brendan Mullen
Masque proprietor

"Who wants to sit in one's room and play some dopey rock 'n' roll record. I think it's boring."

Malcolm McLaren
Sex Pistols manager

WHAT'S LEFT TO SAY, EXCEPT SEND NOW!
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"I like the beat. It's really neat!"
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GET WITH IT AND START HAPPENING LIKE THESE NOW CITIZENS!!!

JoAnn McCone, 17
2563 Jefferson Ave.
Ogden, Utah 84401
Future Stewardess, likes boys, wild clothes.

Satoru Teshima, 16
c/o Mr. T. Watanabe #197
Miyanishi-cho
Matsuyama, Prifecture
Ehime, Japan
Likes going to the beach, girls, fast cars.

Barbara Pleasant, 16
8149 Newcastle
Reseda, Calif. 91335
Likes long-haired boys, mini-skirts.

Ruhl Barker, 12
125 Crescent Dr.
Monticello, Iowa 52310
Ambition: pro wrestler
Likes Monkees beach parties.

Mary Carter, 17
1729 Sturm
Indianapolis, Ind. 46201
Likes guitar players, Troggs. will answer all.

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"LET'S MAKE THE SCENE"

RODNEY BINGENHEIMER

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photo: Johnathan Postal

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Love & Peace . . .
CLAUDE & Philly -
Steve & Melanie

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THE MOST HATED BAND ON
THE LA PUNK SCENE?

THEY'RE NOT UGLY
AND PROUD OF IT

BECAUSE THEY MAKE
MUSIC NOT NOISE

THEIR SONGS ARE
SECOND TO NONE

IF YOU LIKE UGLY BANDS
WHO JUST MAKE NOISE
DONT SEE THE KIDS
YOU'LL BE DISAPPOINTED

SLASH

THE YEAR IN PICTURES

SLASH

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Music and Lyrics by
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A SUITABLY SHORT EDITORIAL FOR DAYS EVEN SHORTER ON EXCITEMENT

Makes you feel like puking, don't it? Or swallowing your safety pins so taking a shit in the morning at least will guarantee a bit of excitement.

A random glance at the past few weeks' festivities and what's in store for us in the near future: prehistoric outfit Spirit limps back in our consciousness at the Whisky, a "disco queen" invades the same stage, ghosts from the idiotic past Jan and Dean due to scare us any day at the Starwood, KROQ goes off AM, Canned Heat dishes out their cold refried boogie all over the place, hanging out outside a club where YOUR bands play suddenly becomes a crime (only a super civilization would manage to turn the most basic human activity, doing nothing, just standing there, into an offense!), I would go on but the tears are blinding me.

Yea, there's been some decent flashes in the night, some interesting people from far away dropped by and reassured us we were not the only ones hanging on by our fingers above the great void of b.p. (before punk), and some bands have tirelessly pumped their life fluids into our shriveling bodies and minds. But even then one of the best shows had to be fucking disguised as a party. A new music summer it sure wasn't!

To everyone who didn't even notice the ugly signs all around 'cos they were so busy putting each other down and constantly looking for the newest target of their ever-so-hip scorn, we say please go back to school in September, don't matter if you graduated ages ago, you'll be more useful and more at home in the back of the class passing silly notes to each other than lurking in the real world poisoning the already dubious atmosphere.

To others who patted us on the back as long as you believed there was mucho dineros to be made off the same fucking backs, we say please get locked in that holy walk-in safe deposit room at your beloved bank and run out of oxygen before morning.

To the rest of you, who try a little or try a lot, say nice things to us or bad things that are useful, who come to the concerts or help each other out, put out fanzines or lend their amps, we say: WELCOME BACK TO THE UNDERGROUND. Nobody ever said it was going to be easy, now, did they??

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PHOTO: MELANIE

Local Retraction

Brendan Mullen objected so extremely to wanton misuses of his name in this column last issue that drastic measures have been taken. Never again will the innocuous Brendan's name be mentioned unless for something profound, revealing and delightful.

Local Transients

Mick Jones of the good old Clash was in town recently. He was given a tour of the Canterbury and promptly left town thereafter. He came back, though, and has been caught mildly hanging out.

The Stranglers were also in town, as everybody knows. They ended up in Blank Frank's Canterbury suite sucking up the local spliff, shamefacedly unable to afford anything better.

Also unable to afford anything better, Nick Berlin and Howie of New York's The Blessed have been camping out at Screamer K.K.'s Home for Wayward Boys in the Canterbury.

Speaking of New York, Alice Bag left with fellow Piranha Shannon for a vacation in said city. Trixie (Plungers) is still there. According to everyone who should know, she is enjoying a smashing success involving many big and exciting names. This is of no consequence to those who knew her when, who often say Trixie should "come home and make life worth living again."

Mary the Rat came home from London and so did the Dickies who did pretty good there. Helen Killer's expected in on the next big boat, having been deported for stealing too many cars.

The Plugz went to Texas and played Austin, El Paso, and Dallas. The band that opened for the Sex Pistols opened for them and in Austin there is a nice arrangement where the band got room, board and 90% of the door. The Plugz have a single out to plug on Slash Records.

Black Randy got talkative the other day after a week at San Francisco's "welfare baby" bars and movie houses. He vowed that his serious psychedelic band would perform outright and regally within 90 days, as soon as his piano player gets back. B.R. then turned around to say he had a special deal where if he retired from the stage they'd pay him more than David Bowie currently makes. After this and other startling revelations, the Negro passed out face first in his plate of tacos.

The Deadbeats went all the way to San Diego to play the Comic Book Convention and came back with the impression something went wrong. Devo is in town, being spotted at a local Xerox store making art.

Breaking Up Is Hard To Do

One night Nicky Beat (Weirdos' drummer) got so drunk that he quit the Weirdos to go solo as a singer/songwriter. Of course, next day, Nicky sobered up and chickened out, but Alice Bag didn't move back in with him even after she sobered up.

The Zeros' Robert claimed to have been squeezed out of the band by his brother and Hector Penalosa (ex-Zeros, ex-Metro Squad, ex-Gold Cup, ex-F-word, ex-L.A. Shaker). Hector wanted back in. Now, supposedly, Robert's brother, in a fit of remorse, quit too. Robert expressed a desire to settle down married at the Canterbury.

Spies Flash: Rock Bottom goes solo; Blank Frank uncertain; Ygaar quits band six times at dopey party. Rock and The Rockets are Mr. Bottom's next project. With three prominent Piranhas backing him up, the competition is shaking. Rock surprised everyone by getting himself married on the 20th day of August. We'd like to extend our congratulations to the couple and wish them the best of everything.

The Skulls reunited for a performance at Amber's sloshed Masque birthday paraty where she didn't want to let the Germs in because they once found humor in her peculiar personality and physical attributes. X also played as good as ever and John Doe and Exene ***do not*** have separate apartments.

Bobby Pyn/Darby Crash took a girl out to dinner and paid for it! The Consumers' much beaten and abused lead singer quit the band for obvious reasons. Reportedly, Don Bowles, the Germs' ambidextrous cactus-headed drummer is going to juggle the Consumers' front-man duties while simultaneously keeping the Germs' beat.

Deadbeats at War: Following a stormy consultation about a missed date in San Francisco, stage presence, and general public misbehavior, the Deadbeats ceremoniously dumped Geza the guitarist/arranger/producer. Pat Delaney, the sax player, decided if that's the way it was gonna be, he'd take the long Deadbeat vacation himself. Pat has been replaced by 15-year-old Deadbeat protege Roger Groover. An electric violin player is being lined up to fill the Geza gap.

The Sleepers (San Francisco) may have chucked it quits because the band got fed up with Icky Ricky hitting them on the head with his microphone stand.

The Masque's new manager is not Chinese, as reported elsewhere. He is an associate of X from out of state named Peter.

Basho Macko, Slash's most tolerated contributor, was discovered dead in an alley. He had evidently walked off a roof, leaving behind an erratic trail of $25 debts. Any donations to help deter the strain on Basho's wife and children would be heartwarming and should be sent to the Basho Macko Fund, care of this paper. His final column appears within these pages.

The big break-up of the month has been between patients and their doctors, who seem to have developed an allergy to Quaalude prescriptions. The result is a glut of Placydil Psychosis and Miltown Melancholy.

The world-famous Whisky a Go Go has closed its door to punk rock after a new wave of disturbing incidents. At the Dickies' return performance, the place got trashed by a mess of young energetic positive new blood to the chant of "Kill. Kill. Kill the Dickies." Someone also lit Rodney's hair on fire, which he didn't think was very funny. He chased after the wrong people and yelled, "You're banned. You're banned from the Whisky." Who wants to see the Mystic Nights of the Oingo Boingo anyhow?

A group of L.A.'s latest nuevo elite scenesters set aflame a trash dumpster at Licorice Pizza's parking lot across from the club and rolled the bonfire down San Vicente to protest the Whisky's stringent booking procedures. No one involved got to take advantage of the L.A.P.D.'s stringent booking procedures so we didn't get to ask how this inferno on wheels is going to help the situation.

Canterbury Tales

Piranhas/Poodles Scoop: The Piranhas ("We're man-eaters") have reached an impasse with the Poodles because the Poodles disbanded due to lack of support in their war against the Piranhas, who, according to the elevator walls, eat lesbian shit. "We just can't quit eating that lesbian shit," admits Shannon, an ex-Punk Bunny who co-founded the Piranhas with Sheila from Detroit, who used to sing for the Sillies there. Sheila (Drusela to you) was admitted to a special hospital only to be released with a guaranteed income.

War games may be at an all-time low between the two female gangs, but battle is high elsewhere. Rover, who proved beyond capabilities as the Masque's manager, beat one of those Portland girls half to death for the glory of it and Bobby Pyn/Darby Crash came to fisticuffs with Alice Bag over a conjectured clash of moral values.

The fight of the month took place in the hall outside room 414 where they were having a Geritol party. Most of the antagonism was directed at the thoroughly despicable Rick Wilder (ex-Berlin Brat) though DeeDee, the small female guiding light of San Francisco's UXA, is the only one who got hit. It started a few days earlier when Rover and Pack accosted DeeDee, demanding money and drugs.

"Every one of you beggars line up against the wall so I can slap you all at once," said DeeDee. Rover stewed her juices for a day or two until the scene at the party. DeeDee and Rick Wilder walked into the geriatric haven to general consternation. The languishing hostess, upon seeing Rick's face, belligerently declared the party over. The couple, DeeDee and Wilder, made to depart. In the hall they were attacked by a girl smelling remarkably similar to Rover, who dumped liquid on DeeDee and ran. DeeDee chased Ms. Watersport back into the party, only to be physically removed.

No one's exactly sure about the fracas in the hall involving the drummers of two L.A. top good-time bands, but it is certain they were swinging at DeeDee's mouth.

A feud developed and died away with alleged commie-faggot-middleclass-Jewish-hippies clanned up against so-called ignorant-NaziYouth Party-junkies. The graffiti battle (swastikas, Stars of David, Die DeeDee, 414 = resthome) marked the entire hotel up and many people got in trouble and are moving out.

Racial tension is also about to snap at the place. Evidently, the influx of Masque-proven new and improved punk rockers have yet to realize that black is beautiful. Shouts of "nigger" and flying spit were the order of the day. The heartwarming results were a Negro man running around in nothing but bikini briefs and a gun. Also a pan of boiling soup was thrown on one girl's white body and, by black magic, room 304 was instantly evicted. All vacant apartments are being filled with Afros as the Rev is fed up with "punk rocks," as he calls them.

The Good News

The Go Gos played a major gig at the Rock Corporation to the approving misty eyes of Sparks and nice guy J. Fluery. There are now five Go Gos with the addition of Charlotte on guitar, who used to be in the Eyes. The irreplaceable Pat Delaney joined the girls on sax for one number.

Outside the club, Trenden Sullen told a group of cheap shits that his next big thing is going to cost $8.50. "Not just $5. $8.50." The two questions of the day were: (A) Will this event be staged in Glasgow? And (B) Will he pay the bands? Mr. Sullen went on to announce that his alternative cabaret's new manager is a Chinese who "hates punk rock and new wave and has vowed to stamp it out."

As merciful fate would have it, though, the emigree staged a concert with four worn-out headline acts at the Club Azteca, charging only $2.50 and bringing more new hope into the scene than a busload of fresh trade from Orange County. Also attending the show as an extra added thrill were the local police dept.'s riot squad who took the stage with mace guns and received a warm ovation because everyone assumed they were the San Francisco band, Crime.

Special Last Flash: The Real Dirt

From the desk of our lovelier-than-thou Rod Donahue comes this report: Miss Gazarris 72 dances the Woogie Boogie while shooting up Talwins, then goes in public and kisses R_____ W_____ and gets chased down the street with a stool, but still doesn't get home with cigarettes before bashing "M_____'s" face into the concrete ***three times*** first.

LOCAL

SHIT

STOP THE PRESS . . . THE MASQUE LATEST DEVELOPMENT . . . GOOD NEWS FROM CHEROKEE

With a huge lawsuit threatening the outer rim of that anal-ring piece, the Pussycat has finally relented in their determination to keep El Masque closed!

As we went to press, Brendan tells us that the Pussies are finally ready to consider a compromise and to sit down and talk turkey about where the damned fire exit should go.

They have even gone to the extent of calling in the city to find out exactly where the hole in the wall should go and what else has to be done before our favorite dive can reopen.

Quote Brendan: "It took all this time, a big jive law company, and a few grams worth in legal fees to get to this point. The fuckers had the cheek to say at the end of the last meeting, 'but you better keep those damned kids under control this time' . . .!

"So much for the original Masque Anarchy Total . . . When the joint does reopen some time during Fall, I think I'll call it Masque IV since it's already gone thru three quite distinct periods . . . Will it have current relevance or will it be a nice old shrine? A lovely museum of nostalgia? Who knows? I'll be curious to find out. Incidentally, folks, that's where a sizable chunk of the Elks dough went—up my law firm's nostrils and not up mine. More details next month. Bye."

slash page five

micro LETTERS.....

A NOTE FROM THE FRIENDLY EDITOR : THE BRENDAN/MASQUE CONTROVERSY STIRRED UP SO MUCH IRE THIS MONTH THAT WE FOUND OUT WE SIMPLY COULDN'T AFFORD TO HAVE THE WHOLE BLOODY MESS TYPESET! SO ONE POOR FOOL AMONGST US HAD TO TYPE IT ALL, LET'S HOPE EVERYTHING TO BE SAID HAS BEEN SAID BETWEEN THE WARRING FACTIONS SO THAT OTHER FASCINATING TOPICS CAN BE DEALT WITH IN THE COMING MONTHS IN SIMILARLY COLORFUL FASHION.

OPEN LETTER TO BLACK RANDY FROM HIS SEVERELY DISAPPOINTED MAKER
To the readers of Slash: Let the parable of Black Randy show His True Color, A Disgrace to All Races, Be A Lesson To Us All

Black Randy, you black scoundrel, why don't you sign your evil name, for what it is worth, to things instead of wimping out under still "curious boy" pseudonyms? I am very amused to find you, of all people, taking it upon yourself to decide Masque policies for me. Black Randy, the crowd would KILL me if the same fate befell the poor old Masque as it did with Dangerhouse.... GONE, GONE,... WAY UP TO THE SKIES IN ONE DIVINE POOF OF DUST, ACID, SPEED, VODKA AND SPLIFF.... Were I to give a moment's consideration to any of your suggestions on how to run a business!!
Black Randy, I am not in business to provide "entertainment" for inept hippie peasants such as yourself, stated more simply, the Masque never loses sight of "AIMS", it just gets bored with them from time to time as it does with tiresome nowhere big little penis bands that clutter up space and do nothing at all... Consider it in perspective for a moment. Why would I, sweet rose-smelling Brendan, want to provide "ENTERTAINMENT" for you, awful-smelling, leprosy-faced Black Randy? Think about it, what for? Entertainment is for the Fat Idle Dreary Decadent, Black Randy. I am NOT interested in the Fat Idle Dreary Decadent. I am interested in a simplified kind of honesty and I try to live that way. I live in an environment of Realism that you wouldn't be able to handle for ten minutes AND I am NOT a corrupt man at all.... That's more, some questions MAY be unanswered in your feverishly catatonic little mind, as indeed they SHALL remain unanswered until such time as I deem it rightful to make announ cements... BUT, all is not lost, however, since forgiveness comes easily to my white soul and absolution is only a beer or a BIG, BIG five dollar concert away as I sit here contemplating your irresponsible follies and what to do with you, as the same time as I put the Rabble once again into its true perspective, as a basically good-hearted, harmless litter of bleach-haired aimlessly lower middle class Irish setters... The point being, they MEAN well... So they're worth going to work for. Who do you work for, Black Randy? Certainly not this alleged "record company" you purport to represent which did not do a damned thing to promote the Dils or the Avengers at the time they needed it the most. The very acts which could have brought more credibility to the "goings-on" and to your "record company" in particular. Black Randy, I do not have the time to dwell on this particular aspect much more, you make me sick. Pray let us continue.... Black Randy, I have decreed it one time before, now I shall pronounce it once again: I DO NOT ACCEPT CRITICISM, I WILL NOT TOLERATE IT. I do not need it. The Madding Crowd does not rule me. I am beyond all criticism and reproach. That is for the common man, Black Randy, it is not for me. Why? Because, Black Randy, I am a holier man than you are now and I am a holier more sanctified man than I was ever become, because I am sacred, I am wholly consecrated, I am a blissfully divine man of beautiful disposition, if not countenance, and you are only a noisy cretinous little church cub scout pretending to work for a sunday deacon in a desperate bid to get attention and to get closer to my aura, so that you can vampirise my energy in a vain attempt to sidetrack me from doing better things. Good heavens, I myself cannot be allowed to have your opinions because you are only partly educated and cannot be expected to arrive at any accurate conclusion on any subject because you simply don't have all of the facts and you have to form your little "opinions" from fragments of misinformation, various prejudices, jealousies and other pieces of gibberish collected during social encounters with the Rabble.
Throughout history, democracies fail every time because allowances are made for the poorly educated Rabble to express their incoherencies and ignorance to the long term detriment of themselves. They are easily confused by each other, become afflicted by ultra paranoia and turn on each other to try and destroy each other, usually because of their own selfish headedness of the race in general... It's the fate of the race. It is hurting the overall picture now of what was supposed to be going on loca lly, in the "community" last year. The same happy Old Stuff. Slash, beware and take heed.... Therefore, Black Randy, alias John Morris (or whatever you're called), with the interest of the Rabble at heart, becau se I like none of them individually, and on behalf of our Lord Jesus Christ and State, I hereby formally divest you of any right to "opinion" until such time as you repent, do penance and EARN THAT RIGHT by becoming educated with Reality.... I am indicting you for sedition and treason in the face of uncertainty while under the pending threat of anonymity. You are a stupid, stupid being, Black Randy, and your opinion is nullified as of now because it could affect the sanctity of otherwise well meaning innocent people. I do it for YOUR OWN GOOD, too. Black Randy, Black Randy, in parting I ask of you for heaven's sake how could you have done this to me? How dare you have cast shadows on my impeccable integrity? Did I not secure for your first engagements, both at the "lost-sight-of-its-aims" Masque and at the thankfully lost forever Whisk y a Go Go? Did my hand not very generously extend for you once, you on Metro Squad some of their reject ideas for you to use in your shows? Don't be an enemy of the Masque, Black Randy. Don't be a horrible old jade just because you failed as singer for "record company" you auditioned twice in succession with the Dils and the Avengers. Others will try to continue without you and I'm sorry your funkless, rhythm-less band got axed by the Whisky and that everybody split on you, but down that bhong for a minute, please.. while there is time still.. come down from cloud 9, come on down to the Masque, help us out, you could let us keep the floors clean or maybe hose down the alley until the reopening. You can start your absolution NOW... Black Randy, you are merely one more less in the ranks that we must look to for hope as standards and moral divisio and dwindles down into the final death throes.... I'll go out and say a prayer for you for you to get strength in your hour of weakness and uncertainty as you fade away way, way back into the anonymity from which you came. A sweeping, overwhelming rush of melancholia envelopes me, Black Randy, there's a tear in my blue eye, you let me down, down, down. You let the side down.
one more of the faithless became lost to the wilderness.
Love and forgiveness
Your Maker

PS: Also, quit ridiculing the Dils and the Clash for at least trying to represent something worthwhile, or I will have you shot.....
Dead By the Syndicate

Dear Brendan Hullen,
I can't take it anymore. All this whining about the Masque and about how awful the people are who oppose you and are asking questions about what exactly happened to the money from your benefits. First of all no matter how great the Masque was, without it things are not THAT much different. People still play and people still get drunk. Why do you think we need the goddamned place so bad, We don't. And more than a few people now don't even want to be seen there because it means they nay be thought of as supporting your "cause". I hope you never reopen. Second. Your frequent and inarticulate outlashes at that "cheesy little xerox fanzine" are so lame and unjustified it makes me puke. What the fuck is wrong with Xerox anyway? Should we all rush the newsstands each time a Slash comes out? The whole format of Slash and its contradictory editorials are EXACTLY the same old Music Business Morality that we want to destroy. Slash is no different than Rolling Stone basically. The Xerox zines are more spontaneous and refreshing. They offer outlets for kids not boring old farts. Half the news in Slash is usually so goddam old it's silly to read about again. How many times has Slash had nights at the Whisky for new bands? Besides the writing in Lobotomy is one hundred times more intelligent than the old boring crap in Slash. I've met Pleasant the editor and she's nineteen. NINETEEN. And you say in your editorial in the new Slash that she is old fashioned. She took a chance by inditing you and she opened a lot of people's eyes. The tide is turning. AGAINST YOU, WHY DON'T YOU SHUT UP AND LEAVE TOWN!! WE DON'T WANT THE MASQUE IF WE HAVE TO HAVE YOUR ATTITUDE BEHIND IT! WHO PAID FOR THAT AD SIGNED BY YOU FOR THE SCREAMERS? OUR MONEY NO DOUBT! YOU CROOK. FUCK YOU! STOP WHINING!!!

DEAR ANONYMOUS LITTLE CUNT PRICK,
ONE: YOU ARE A YELLOW BELLIED LITTLE TURD FOR NOT SIGNING YOUR BILIOUS GARBAGE. TWO: THE BRENDAN ACCUSATIONS HAD ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH OUR "CONTRADICTORY" EDITORIAL. LEARN WHAT THE WORDS MEAN BEFORE YOU THROW THE RED, IDIOT. THREE: SLASH HAD NIGHTS FEATURING NEW BANDS BEFORE AWBODY ELSE DID, AND THAT WITHOUT HAVING TO RELY ON THE "STATUS" OF THE WHISKY. FOUR: PLEASANT HAPPENS TO CONTRIBUTE TO SLASH, SO SOME OF THAT BOVINE OLD CRAP IN IT MUST BE HERS. FIVE: SLASH = ROLLING STONE? BRILLIANT! IT HAD TO BE SAID. SIX: IF YOU DON'T LIKE BRENDAN'S METHODS WHY DON'T YOU TRY TO ORGANIZE SOMETHING THAT COMPETES INSTEAD OF DEDICATIN YOUR PITIFUL LITTLE SELF TO AN ENDLESS PUT DOWN OF OTHERS' ENDEAVORS? AND MAKE SURE YOU DO IT IN THE OPEN SO WE CAN'T JUDGE AND CONDEMN EVERY MOVE YOU MAKE. DO YOU HAVE ANY CUTS 'CEPT BEHIND A TYPEWRITER? SEVEN: WHERE DID UP YOU GET THE IDEA WE HATE THE XEROX PUBLICATIONS, DUMB SHIT? ASK ANYONE OUTSIDE THAT TIGHT CIRCLE OF COCKROACHES YOU MUST HAVE AS FRIENDS AND THEY'LL TELL YOU WE DO AS MUCH AS WE CAN TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE THEM. EIGHT: THE MASQUE AND WHAT IT REPRESENTS (OR COULD REPRESENT) CERTAINLY DOES NOT NEED YOU, YOUR BLIND RESENTMENTS (HAVING TROUBL GETTING LAID ON WHAT?) AND YOUR HATEFUL AND STUPID GENERALISATIONS. AND I AM SURE YOU DON'T NEED IT, ANY BATHROOM MUST DO FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT.
KICK BOY

PS: BRENDAN HAD BETTER THINGS TO DO THAN ANSWER YOUR POINTLESS CRAP BUT YOUR THICK MISINTERPRETATIONS AND ACCUSATIONS ANGERED ME ENOUGH TO WASTE MY TIME TELLING YOU WHERE YOU CAN PUT IT. I WOULD LIKE TO ADD THAT I HAVE MORE RESPECT FOR WHAT BRENDAN DID IN ONE YEAR THAN WHAT YOUR KIND COULD ACCOMPLISH IN 10 LIFETIMES. MAY WE NEVER READ ONE OTHER WORD OF YOURS AGAIN, IT'S DEPRESSING TO REALIZE WHAT CRAWLS AROUND THIS TOWN!

Dear Slash and Curious Boy,
This letter is gonna make a lot of people eat shit by showing how wrong and stupid they are once and for all.
I don't know where you get this shit from. All I know is that I am trustee of the Masque bank account right from the beginning. Brendan asked me to be one when I was working at the Masque. I happen to know where every single goddan penny is going of the benefit money and it sure isn' t going to Brendan at all, not one thin dime of it, it says on the contract that he can't spend this money himself even if he wanted to. Now do I know this? Because I've seen the trust papers and because Brendan has to have me sign all his checks everytime he writes one, everytime there's a lawyer bill or for anything else. I'm getting sick and tire ed of bills for damage done to halls by those creeps at Masque gigs. I am the one who has to be called in to sign his checks because my name is on that trust contract too. I'm sick and tired of these stupid rumors, every time there is one Brendan gets left with the damage and a bunch of jack asses haggling about paying five bucks to see four bands in a decent sized hall. The bands have to make a living too. Even if Brendan booked the Stardust gig didn't work for free. All the bands got paid, the security guys get paid the sound company got paid the insurance company got paid the radio stations got paid the advertising got paid, all the printers got paid the owner of the hall got paid those guys who put up the posters got paid because nobody else would help out like they've always saying they want to. Nobody works for free except maybe Brendan, nobody got rich off that gig and there was supposed to be all these people that were gonna help that end and nobody did. As usual, Brendan has to have charged more than five bucks if he was into ripping people off, I saw all the money afterwards, Bren'an hardly made fuck all because of the damage and all the freeloaders and useless asses that got in free for doing nothing and the gig was supposed to make more money to make the Masque happen. I arw him going to the bank to put what little money that got made in the right bank account and I didn't get into his personal account and he didn't even take a dime for himself. All this stuff printed about Brendan makes me laugh. When he asked me to be a trustee I told me that the only way I'd do it was if I protected me the dumbness of some people and to protect himself from narrow minded jerks that get jealous for no reason. He said it happens everywhere you go no matter what you do because people are stupid that way. All these people putting him down right now show how dead right that statement was. And I don't kiss ass to Brendan at all, and I don't believe he is always right the way he does things. He can be a really little fucker sometimes but I'm saying this in this letter because it's right and all those othe r people are WRONG. If the music dies in this city it sure won't be because of Brendan. It will be because of all you assholes and there too spineless to sign your names to these jackass letters. Leave the fucker alone, find something else to bitch about.
Bruce Barf

Dear Slash clique,
Lux of the Cramps was saying how cliquey in New York it was. Well its just as bad in L.A. I've never had too many friends either. Ya for the individual. But even they are accepted in the scene after a while. I'e even learning to like these cliques! Oh well
Heartbreakers
All by myself
Hol Pol

Slash, Jimbo and the rest
slash is fucking great, the only thing worth reading in this ulcer on the stomach lining of the world, San Clemente. Please get some bands to play down here it's a long way to the Strip. I am the only one down here who even cares I hope someone contacts I need company. HELP. X Ray Spex are over the top.
Dubiously yours,
Weird Anthony

Just saw Patti Smith in concert and that rock n roll turd can take her new sex image (ha ha) cunt bitchiness star-not-to-be-touched dribble drool ramble-on-Rimbaud mutterings pathetic guitar rape ear piercing shit and dive into that big black abysmal grave she has dug for herself.
Timbo

Dear Slash,
Re the "Curious Boy" letter in yer last issue, I have a "sizeable" comment. His name is Black Randy and his favorite S&M torture game is to make people lose faith in one another so he can watch the fireworks (i.e. our fuck ups). Little trash can burnings of Lach. Everybody's favorite pseudo negro anal retentive wants to make us look as small as his deformed pea-pee and his empty heart. I personally know of a one way ticket to England that Brendan has carried in his possession for a year and a half now. If he wanted to "take-the-money-and-run", why didn't he?? So while Black Randy smokes dust and dickers with the Dickies in the hopes of receiving small prizes from their twists, we the gullible public, are supposed to join the chaos that threatens the Masque with cries of "Kill Brendan!". Black Randy wants to kill the Masque, lil' critters, just so he could brag to his friends that he did it. I see some of that money get spent because Brendan had to pay me for equipment that was broken or ruined during the benefit and it was like pulling teeth from a brick! So go sit on your enema bottle and stop playing games with our heads, B.R., your big mouth is better suited to sweet talking little boys into doo-doo games.
Geza X

Note that I did not call myself "serious boy" in the hopes of "peeing without being peen".

Slash,
nom de dieu, how could you? Yes, I'm still in New York, NOT waiting for the Dickies to come back and no, I won't be leaving too soon, although I wish I was at the Tropicana now drinking gin with Tom Waits. "Ready to pick up where the Plungers left of(".. Are you fucking kidding MCBOUY could even ATTEMPT to slightly TOUCH anything the Plungers ever did, much less PICK UP anything that we left off. I'm still singin.... Just because we never played' We are ETERNALLY the world's most famous off stage band, the best band that never was and ever will be. I was too drunk to see the Go Go's on the eve of my departure.. I'm sure they' re great, but REALLY, plungerism is sacred. Makes me miss Trudie so much. People tell me Hollywood is in a sad state of affairs. C'est triste. Perhaps I shall have to come back and rescue it. But not til Chuck Wagon marries me! See ya.
Love love love, Trixie Plunger

Slash,
my school (Loyola Marymount Uni.) is rather conservative. Besides my enjoyment of Slash, it is worth at least $ 5, to watch the faces of those in my dorm as they set aside their Eagles albums to check out my latest edition of Slash. One girl got so upset she started crying, sayin I was helping to destroy the american family life. Geee... Oh well
Fuck on..
Kae

IT'S REACTIONS LIKE THIS THAT MAKE IT ALL WORTHWHILE.
Kick

Slash,
fuck this inbreeding, I'm moving to the Midwest. After the Dickies' Whisky thing I heard some doughfaced posturing on the current hyper acceptable punk look - safety pins are rather passe, don't you know. Well gosh, maybe someone ought to write a book on punk fashion, after all the look is so much more important than the music or the attitude. Fuck you bugger face, you think you're a real punk because you get aggressive (quick, be violent, the press is watching), aggressive about fashion. Big fucking deal. You have the mentality of a brain damaged sheep, why don't you just THINK FOR YOURSELF. Stop calling other people posers. You can't hide your own poses by making noise about other people you pre tentious punk SNOB. Just because you play in a local band with a record label behind it you think you're gonna start a fashion dictatorship. You're a real hard core punk, aren't you? Who do you pay membe rship fees to? All you clandestine Vogue magazine infiltrators who grab onto punk because of its healthy reality coefficient (it makes you feel alive for a change, doesn't it, but you won't admit it) why do you try so fucking hard to seem bored? Don't believe everything you read in Slash,even if it's true. (???? Ed.). Who cares if safety pins are out? Who cares what's in? Who cares what? If you keep this shit up, don't be surprized to find yourself at a punk nostalgia party one of these years. Go stick your head between wildly throbbing speakers turned up maximum and just DIE OF PAIN. It'd like to see you try your fucking safety pins on a fore ds with the blunt end of last year's Clash button (a humiliating, unlash lonable way to croak - why couldn't it be something more .. well.. in style ;).
Just fuck off, you crotch infection. Next week you'll be saying punk is dead. (You read it in a magazine). Well, if punk is dead, I guess I'm a necrophiliac.
Pick your ass and eat it. It's the nu thing to do.
Elna

To certain Slash readers (you know who you are):
Cleese, eloise, clique... "It's a punk", "It's no punk", "Fucking skin head", "she's a poseur", "my band hates your band"....
Poor lost ones, you know where you are, but you don't know where you sho uld be + the ubiquitous hole that'll take the bands) by night, Oran ge County, Torrance, and the valley by day.
You punk princesses are the last word. No o.d. (Only Disco) glamour girls can compare. Even you semi psycho Tough boys have your good points - maybe. But get off your pedestals, you're not the only ones.
Your "Hollywood vogue" crap died with Rodney Bigenheimer's english disc. Your big brothers and sisters were out and long with their lame trousers and sequined platforms. There's plenty of punks (and proud of it) all around you, more and more every day. Some of us are new, some of us have been into it for a while. Just because you never saw us before dont mean shit. We think like you, we feel like you, we like the music you like, it's the same disgust. Some of us want to know some of you (especially Trudy!), you might even like us. But keep up your "we're groovy" attitudes and you're gonna meet us the hard way! When you see somebody new on the scene don't turn your nose up. Somebody might break it.
Axxel C.Reese, the "Cears",
Highland Park, Ca

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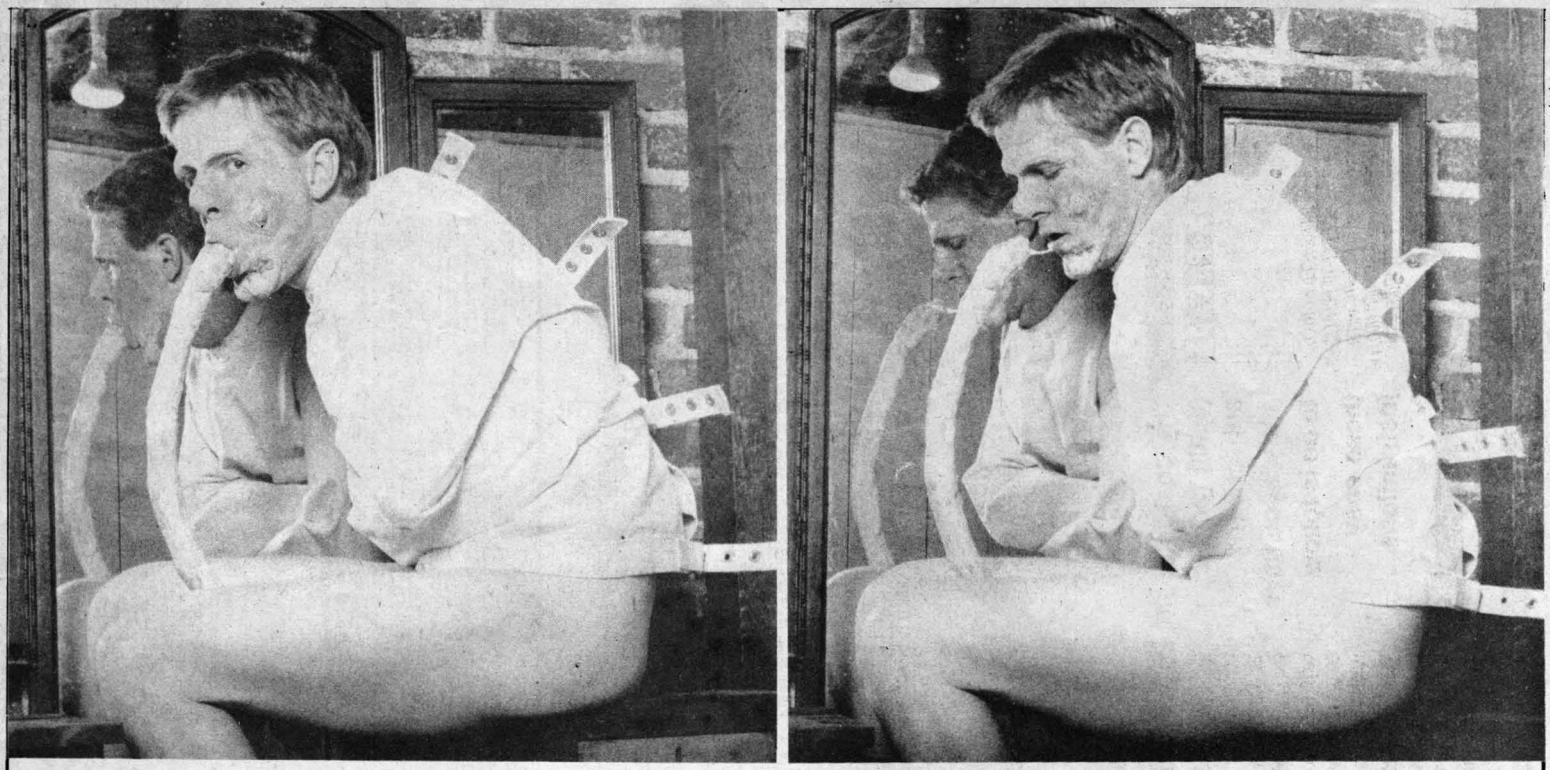

here i am seen
thinking of you.

CONFESSIN' WITH THE BLESSED

"How do I capture someone's attention? By pointing to the person next to me and saying he/she hates niggers."

—Nick

"I used to be embarrassed by fan magazines, but now it's part of my job."

—Eileen

They're New York's most arresting new phenomenon. They're loud, brash and snotty, satisfying today's special needs. They're for people who deny themselves nothing—they're the Blessed.

"Our first gig was at Max's last Christmas. We broke the house record for attendance on a Sunday night . . . Invited to play for a party of 20 at Nirvana (a Pakistani restaurant where Robert Plant eats), we invited 200 people. It caused a riot and $1,500 worth of damage . . . We played a private birthday party at the (very exclusive) 21 Club. Chip Carter (son of . . .) said: 'I'm really into punk rock, I beat my wife.'

"Then someone poured a bottle of Perrier water on his head. Later Chip begged, 'You've got to get me stoned, I'm dying.' The power was turned off two times and it all ended with another riot incited by us and Cheetah Chrome playing 'Chinese Rocks' for 30 minutes. Then we harassed the waiters and started a chant of 'Fuck the 21 Club.' "

Two of them, Nick Berlin (15, Italian, guitar, vocals) and Howie Pyro (18, bass, blond, pink, blue and green hair), were in town with their manager, Eileen (she gets them jobs, buys them cigarettes). Her first night in Hollywood was a date with Sheik Mohammad Al Fassi.

At a Warner Bros. executive's house party, Nick borrowed the hostess's swim suit to go swimming, Howie was seen tending bar with Trudy in a shower stall. A few days later, Howie broke his arm and shoulder in a battle over Alice Bag.

The Blessed are kids who hate their schoolbooks as well as Patti Smith. Still at the age when they stay up all night watching horror movies on TV while sleeping out in the back yard, torture "scares the shit" out of them, like "Destroy All Monsters" or "Little Shop of Horrors."

Talk about narcissism: "Sometimes I remind me of me," says Nick. And what is he? He's like one of their songs: "Kiddie Matinee," "Flagellation," "Teen Idol," "Kindergarten Hard-on," or "All Day Sucker." Getting it up for Nick is "doing a pull-up" and keeping it up is "staying there." Prison record: "Arrested for smashing a phone booth." Will only submit to: "Black girls who force their desires on me." We spoke of influences, he spoke like a car thief in reply: "Not many things start out as mine, but they're sure mine now." (The hubcap was still shining in his hands.)

"A crane" gets it up, "nails" keep it up and "a walk sign" makes Howie come. But a hamburger is his way of life—his new stomping ground is Jack in the Box. Describes himself in a word: "Chewy, chewy."

The Blessed can speak for most of us when we asked them "What do you like most about your job?" and Howie replied: "What job?"

Fabi/Zyklon-B

PHOTOS: KERRY COLONNA

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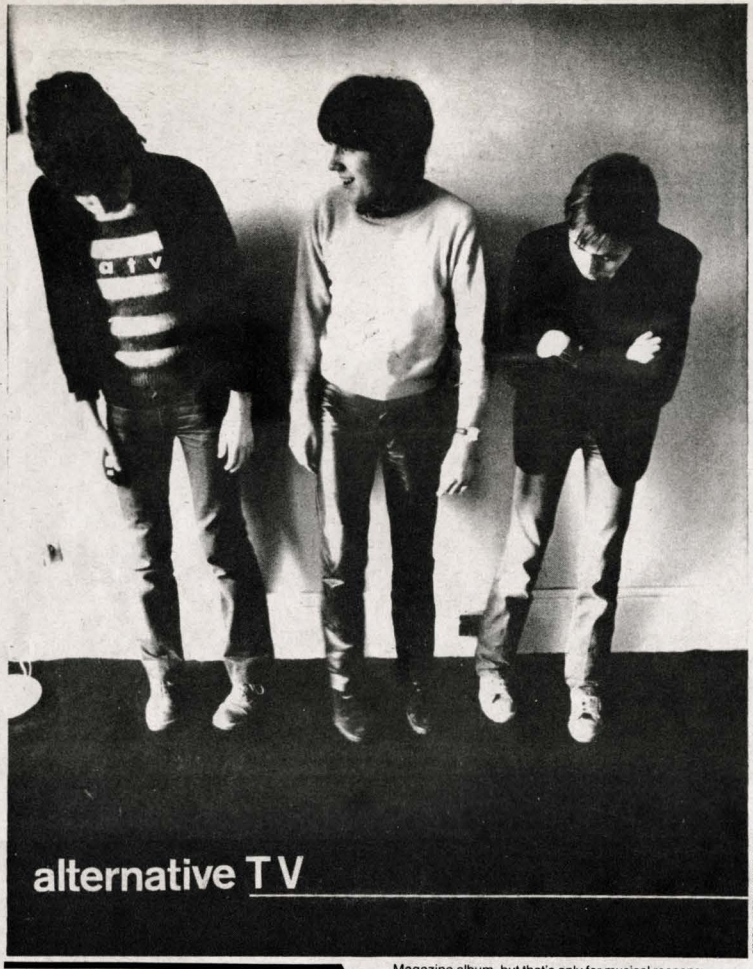

PHOTO: BARRY NORLOND

ALTERNATIVE T.V.
An Interview with Mark Perry
by Jean Caffeine and Tony D.

J = Jean, **T** = Tony, **M** = Mark Perry

J: When you sing, who are you singing to?
M: I'm singing to the audience. I like to do my words as if I'm talking to an audience. Before each song I always explain what it's about.
J: Do you see yourself as a stand-up comedian sometimes onstage, when you have to be jokey about things that you feel are really real?
M: Yeah, that's interesting. I think we're humorous, our band. I've never seen any band, especially in London, talk to the audience, but we do. When an audience shouts something out, we'll go, "What was that?" and explain things. I like people to be involved, to hear what a track's about and then hear it. I don't like rock & roll machines who just say "1-2-3-4."
J: Are there any punk bands you still believe in?
M: Not really, *musically* I still believe in a lot of them. The Clash, I still think they're a great music band, although I don't need them.
J: Have you thrown out the whole concept of rock & roll being essential?
M: Well, it isn't really. Rock & roll now has got back to being a little slot on t.v. for us again. But there's still some great rock & roll, like Wire and Adam & the Ants live.
J: What do you listen to at home?
M: At the moment I'm listening to the Wire single, "Dot-Dash," the Akron Compilation and little private tapes of Cabaret Voltaire and This Heat that the bands sent me. The best album to come out in the past few months is the Magazine album, but that's only for musical reasons. Nothing really inspires me at the moment.
J: You used to be really into reggae. Have you gone off that too?
M: Not really, but I dislike all this shouting about reggae. I don't think it affects anybody and the record companies and the media just used it. I think the biggest effect it has is the black kids even get to hate the white kids more. A band can do so much. Say Steel Pulse and Gen X play a gig—there's black and white kids together. *But* Gen X are controlled by Chrysalis and Steel Pulse by Island. It doesn't mean a thing. For that one night it's a great party, okay. I had a great Christmas party with my mum and dad.
T: What about Rock Against Racism?
M: It's a good thing rather than a bad thing, I suppose, but it's not a serious political thing. It's using rock & roll for a means even rock & roll doesn't know what it's all about. When an organization uses bands to say something, it all gets diluted and mixed up and no one really knows what they're on about. I don't understand Rock Against Racism and I've had it explained to me so many times.
T: What about things like the "R.A.F." and the Angry Brigade then?
M: One thing I don't like about them is they infringe on people's right to walk down the street. I don't like terrorists at all, I don't care what they're fighting for. Another thing about the R.A.F. I don't like is that it's so lush, it's almost in fashion and that's dangerous. The best way to get things done is to make your own little thing; you can't change much but you don't have to let them take you over. My main passion is to do it myself, keep it independent.

J: Is your main interest in the band and not the record company now? (He's still the A&R man for Step Forward records.)
M: If I see an amazing band, then I still think, Christ, we'll sign them like we signed the Fall recently.

J: What happened with Sham 69, did you go off them?
M: No, they went off us, which was a pity.
T: Would you still go and see them?
M: No, I still like Sham 69 but I don't like Polydor. Polydor aren't my idea of a music company—there's no real people there, it's like Marks & Spencer. My favorite thing about buying a record is the fact that it's on a little, nice label. I'm really going off records on big labels. I resent paying out 70p to some American company who's got oil fields and stuff.
J: Why do you think the fanzines stopped?
M: Lack of enthusiasm. There was no one really with any enthusiasm apart from "Ripped & Torn" (which is still going).
T: It was more because of the shops. Shops started saying, "Oh, we won't stock any apart from 'Ripped & Torn' and 'Kids Stuff' " or something.
M: At first we had this guy who helped "Sniffing Glue" when it went a bit wonky, and helped "R&T." Then all these fanzines came out, and when there's so many the individual profit gets less, so the people who were helping the fanzines clammed up and said "that's it."

It's the same with a lot of records. When we (Step Forward) first put out a record, people used to go, "Oh, independent Step Forward, great." But now, where they'd have taken 25 copies, they'll only have 5 because they're also getting Zoom Records and Raw Records and all these different companies, they have to take a little of each thing. A kid doing a fanzine has to sell 200 to have an incentive, but most fanzines only sell about 25, so they don't bother making another one.
J: What's the next step? Now the album's out, what next?
M: We're now trying to get a live album out of the Here & Now tour. (A band formed from the ashes of Gong, a hippie-type band. They and ATV went on a free tour round England.) It's going to be sold for £1.50 and it's going to be called "What You See Is What You Are." We'll be on one side and they'll be on the other. Our side is going to have two new numbers, ones which aren't on the album, and a new version of "Action Time & Vision" called "Action Time & Lemon."
J: Do you like doing interviews or do you think everything is self-explanatory?
M: Our music needs explaining because of people's pre-conceptions. They jump to conclusions and they're totally wrong most of the time.
J: All the things you've done before, statements you've said in "SG," do you find they haunt you?
M: Oh, all the time. I get bored with that. If you're a punk, people expect you to go, "I stand up for punk and that's what I'll always stand for." I'm not like that, punk for me was about change, about using things you had around you.
T: Would you still call yourself a punk?
M: The thing is, the media gave punk a really thick image, and you get a kid up north who reads in his paper, "ATV are a punk band" and he goes, "I know what they're all about." It's like being a breed of animal; I don't like being pigeon-holed. Punk was supposed to break those barriers, but it's become a prison in itself now. Even so, I think Alternative TV keep the punk ideals more alive than any other band in Britain at the moment.
J: Do you think you used to be a vital force in something and all of a sudden you're totally removed from it? You *were* the vehicle for the punk scene and now maybe you can't even be bothered.
M: No. I don't mind giving opinions about punk. About a year ago, if someone asked me what the Clash were, I'd have been able to tell them, and Mick Jones would probably have agreed with me, it was on that sort of level. But now the punk thing is Gen X, the Rich Kids, the Buzzcocks—as far as I'm concerned, they've given up.
T: What about all the squats in Earls Court, Belsize Park and everywhere, all these punks with bands like Menace and Raped? You're removed from that?
M: Yeah, I am, but they're a different thing altogether.
J: Third Generation punk.
M: Yeah. The thing is I find that these type of bands give me much musical satisfaction. Although they're great, it's all energy and I've had so much of that in the past with the Clash and everybody I'm getting a bit sick of that. I might be getting a bit past it. In rock & roll, you can be a rocker all your life and you'll probably die young. I lived it for about a year, really pogoing and going crazy, up till four at the Speakeasy, smashed out of my head. Going to three gigs a night. It lasted about a year but I just couldn't take it, it was affecting the band. I suppose I don't know what Menace or Raped are about, I don't know their predicament, but they shouldn't bother about me.

A lot of people go out of their way to say, "Mark P., he doesn't know what it's all about, he's got long hair now." Why bother saying it? Just get on with what I was doing two years ago.

If you kept up the energy, you'd be Jim Morrison, you'd die young. I want to still be working when I'm 40.
T: Doing what?
M: Making good records I hope!

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LE PUNK FRANCAIS
by Nathalie Thiebaud
(Marie et Les Garcons, Telephone, Starshooter, Stinky Toys, Electric Callas, Bijou, Metal Urbain, Asphalt Jungle, Exit Death et Cardiac Vinyl)

As soon as I arrived in Paris I went to various record companies in order to track down some of the better known groups. I ended up with a few 45s, some phone calls and the news that a festival titled "The Rock from Here" was scheduled for the end of June.

It started with Marie et Les Garcons, a group that has just completed a 45 with John Cale as the producer. It was recorded in New York where they played once. On stage they show a surprising restraint, being totally still and showing signs of intense concentration on their faces. They also look like they all come from good families but it is only an appearance behind which hides a very studiedly stark music. They certainly come across quite differently from the rest.

Bijou then ruined this nice beginning with their heavy and impersonal brand of rock, something a bit like Johnny Hallyday in his bad moments. They also have a hard time playing more than two songs without singing horribly out of tune.

Two days later was the famous "French new wave night," the one show everyone was waiting for. Most French groups (about ten of them) were there, along with an audience of over 2000 people. There was no room to move and there were crazies everywhere. Because of our bad L.A. concert habits, we arrived late and missed the first two groups.

Asphalt Jungle was already on stage, and badly disappointed me. Just a typical Parisian group of sterile aging junkies who only relate to a small sterile minority.

Then the Lou's came on, a pretty good girl group with much energy and a very classic brand of rock 'n' roll.

I'll only mention the Stinky Toys because they were there. They haven't been able to grow and are just about finished. The girl singer is pretty but the music boring.

Starshooter came on as quite a few people were starting to doze off and brought their much-needed humor, realism and energy. They probably have more of those qualities than all the other groups put together. It was the most impressive part of the evening and it woke up everyone.

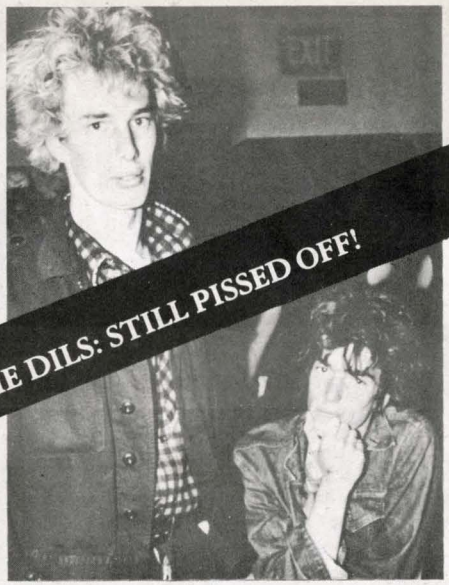
After them, Metal Urbain, displaying their definitely very personal style, although personally I would never be able to sit thru an entire album of their music. The single is quite sufficient. They only played three numbers, their synthesizers being out of commission that evening.

Then Electric Callas, who, in spite of a nice stage presence, have nothing to offer musically.

Next was Telephone, a band that is rapidly growing in popularity in France at the moment. Their music is somewhat lightweight, they have a very young public and the singer has a tendency to do a Mick Jagger number. They even perform Stones covers live, which in my opinion is not to their advantage. Yet they also have their own type of music and it is quite good. I also saw them play in Corsica while I was there, along with local groups like Cardiac Vinyl and Exit Death. The first one sings in French, the other in English. Cardiac Vinyl has a nice style.

And speaking of styles, there is no doubt that French bands are finding their own, different from either the English or the Americans. Sometimes they can also produce some very good sounds that are already attracting quite an audience there and may even one day reach the American public. Obviously some of them (Marie et les Garcons, Starshooter, Telephone) will go far. They have style, energy, humor; they stand out from the rest of the noisy sinister pack; and they totally believe in what they are doing.

THE DILS: STILL PISSED OFF!



Tony and Chip talked to us a while back, when the Whisky situation was still uncertain and only some bands were unable to play there. For better or worse, everything has become crystal clear now, the Whisky days are a thing of the past, the future is more uncertain than ever but nobody's given up.

SLASH: You guys have a different hair style.
TONY: I dyed my hair dark brown!
SLASH: Have you found the true brethren in San Francisco?
TONY: No. At least I like the weather up there.
SLASH: What about the political weather?
TONY: It's better, but it's still no cigar. But people do think about it up there.
CHIP: We've got an audience that comes to see the Dils, they know what we're singing. No cigar, but maybe a cigarette!
SLASH: It looks like you've built your own audience down here, too, since you left . . .
TONY *(laughing)*: Yeah, we've been wondering about that. We've done very well on our last two trips down there.
CHIP: We've got a good drummer, we're a better band. Also a little more confident.
SLASH: I saw you were quoted in a Rolling Stone article about that miners' benefit . . .
CHIP: Any article, even the Slash articles, even this—if it ever comes out—is fun for about five minutes, then you realize how totally worthless they are. They don't mean shit. We've got a foot-high pile of articles, and I still go without food for periods of time, and I still can't pay my bills.
TONY: They're good to wallpaper your bathroom.
SLASH: You're touring quite a lot these days . . .
TONY: We're going up to the Northwest again in a month. We're traveling a lot. Clubs back East are also calling us, but we can't go and tour, then come back and have no place to live, have to bounce around from house to house in San Francisco.
SLASH: Going to play L.A. soon?
TONY: Not for a while. I love playing down here, we started here, we couldn't have done it without the people who supported us, but this Whisky nonsense that's going on right now, we've had enough of that bullshit. We've played the Whisky for over a year now and still they can't get their fuckin' story straight. Why won't they let the Dils play this month? Nobody will tell us to our face, everybody we talk to gives us a different story. I'll play a Brendan show if Brendan gets his shit together. Unless we can do it ourselves, which we are working on, I don't think we can play down here. We've had it with the Whisky. Who the fuck needs them? If they're having a ban on some punk bands whose name starts with a "d" and ends with "ls" . . .
CHIP: That's us and the Dolls! It's kind of funny, the Whisky took over when the Masque closed, and now they're fuckin' your scene over but no one is calling to arms. I would have thought the bands that could still play there would say, "Why are you banning these bands?" Where's the solidarity?
TONY: In San Francisco, when Dirksen started calling bands, saying, "You play the Grove St. place and you won't play here," and since Grove St. isn't a steady thing anyway and whatever bread most bands make is at the Mabuhays, what happened is there was a closing of ranks. The Nuns told Dirk, "If you're going to ban any band, we will never play the Mabuhays again."
CHIP: And it happened overnight. Actually, Dirk even announced it on stage!
TONY: We had told him that if he was going to ban bands that actually needed to play there, needed to build up an audience, then we wouldn't play there either. And if he hasn't got his headliners, he does not make any money.
CHIP: We're not even talking about fans boycotting the Whisky. Fans are fans. I'm talking about the band network.
TONY: Either side could do it. If the bands don't play, the fans won't go, and if the bands want to play, well, the fans could do without their monthly fix of Weirdos music or Screamers music. Then the Whisky would shut down. But there is no solidarity. The bands are saying, "Well, *we* are playing this weekend. The Dils can't play? That's too bad!"
SLASH: Where do you stand now with Dangerhouse?
TONY: Now they want us to take less money than what the original contract said.
SLASH: What was that?
TONY: Fifty per cent of the net.
CHIP: We've been bombarded by all this flakiness bullshit from all sides. I can't really see any reason for signing another contract for less money.
TONY: Our relationship has been rocky since the beginning. From the first time we put out the single they gave us this stuff about "this band is selling more than you, that band has sold so much in this period and you've sold less . . ." plus the Black Randy harassment, which we got every time we came down here.

One time that we played the Dangerhouse night he was trying to keep people off our guest list. That's what Joe Strummer was singing about in "Complete Control," and he was talking about CBS doing it! Shit, this is Dangerhouse, people who are our friends. They've always tried to make us feel like shit, then they say why don't you want to be friends with us? So we just told them, "We're working for you right now, we don't have to like it. We're just another band on your roster." I wouldn't like RCA either if we signed with them.

SLASH: So, a year later, no trace of creeping mellowness in sight. The Dils are still angry . . .
TONY: Punk was going to be new, it was going to change things. Well, it's not. It's just a microcosm of the big scene . .
CHIP: Lord of the Flies.

● THE ●

DICKIES

● STILL HAPPY AS HELL ●

We got together with the Dickies a week or so after they'd returned from their N.Y.-U.K.-V.N. (Van Nuys) tour. Just thought it would be nice to hear what the rest of the world thinks of an L.A. punk band. (This reporter would like to note that the Dickies refer to themselves as a punk band. In the light of recent statements from other big label bands in regard to their quotation marked identities, it's refreshing to hear a band not safely label themselves for the comfort of their label??? Get it?) Anyway, we chatted it up with Billy, Leonard, Stan and John, their manager.

SLASH: Well, how was it?

BILLY: We were really scared on our first gig in England. Everybody from A&M England was there and it was a very small place and we turned up our amps really loud and everything was really distorted . . . It was really a bad evening . . . After a few gigs, at the Hope & Anchor it was really good . . .

There's a lot of kids over there . . . The English kids are really fans. They travel for hours just to see the bands . . . Some of them knew our songs even before we'd ever played. They'd say, "You didn't do 'Bananna Splits' " . . .

SLASH: Did A&M help you out a lot?

BILLY: Actually, when we got there, they didn't know what to do with us. There was an interview in SOUNDS the week we arrived, that was really good. A&M decided we better put a single out quick, so they mastered it and put it out in less than a week . . . It entered the charts at 85, and tapered down from there . . .

We played all over the place, for disco crowds. In Birmingham, after the first songs, they clapped and then halfway through the set, they started spitting *(laughter).* I think is this the last city that you'll find people really gobbing . . . We were getting rained on. It was fun though *(?),* we put up with it.

SLASH: Didn't you spit back?

BILLY: There was really no reason to spit back . . . We got pints of beer thrown . . . It was really, like, part of the whole thing . . .

The Dickies' Five Favorite English Things:
The Clash, Buzzcocks, Fish & Chips, Fullers ESB, Keith Tibbet (?)

SLASH: What were some highlights of your tour?

BILLY: Oh, here's one! When we were in New York, Dutch . . .

JOHN: We had this huge water fight in our hotel . . .

STAN: It got out of hand, throwing buckets of water . . .

BILLY: So, Dutch is in this room (Dutch is an infamous roadie/security guy with a perpetual broken leg), with our equipment and he'd just order room service and put it on our bill . . . When we were in England, we finally got the hotel bill and it came to $1600 . . .

LEONARD: Now you know why Dutch got so fat!

JOHN: Dutch did say he owed us $200, but there was like $600 just in magazines!

STAN: He'd order nine cokes and a $24 bottle of Jack Daniels.

JOHN: Were you embarrassed when that lady opened the door?

LEONARD: She wasn't any real sign of authority, but she was menacing!

BILLY: The lady that John threw water on?

(Somebody): We're having this huge water fight in the hallway and the whole place is soaked . . .

BILLY: John's in the hallway with this bucket of water and this lady opens the door and she says, "Who do you think you are?" and he says, "We're the fuckin' Dickies," and takes this bucket of water and covers the lady!

LEONARD: It was an old English lady and she told John he was a disgrace to his country.

SLASH: Was it a posh hotel?

STAN: The poshest we could get!

SLASH: Overseas sex?

BILLY: One of the funniest things that happened was, me and Stan and Kent, our roadie, went into this porno shop in London. In the back, they had these closets and inside they had films for 10p—you go in and close the door and the film starts . . .

STAN: And they have signs that say "occupied" and "unoccupied" . . . So there was this fag film and we figured we'd go in . . . So we open the door and there's a guy sittin' there with his fuckin' . . . Wanking . . . We got out of there so fast; we were laughing so hard.

LEONARD: Remember the madam that approached us in Soho?

STAN: You mean the negro? Yea, how much was that?

LEONARD: £20 an hour . . . and they throw in a little grass . . .

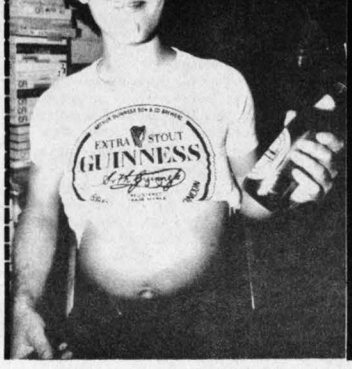
SLASH: Well, did you do it?

LEONARD: Nah, she said, "Are you gonna do it or not?" and I said, "Well, we're scared of the consequences," and she said, "The only consequence is that you'll fall in love" . . .

SLASH: Bringing you back home: how's the single doing?

JOHN: It's sold around 26,000. *(!)*

STAN: We're gonna put Van Nuys back on the map!



SLASH CHART OF THE MONTH
(an easy way to tell at a glance who to trust and who to suspect)

BO CLIFFORD
—"Black Vinyl Threat," Cinecyde
—"Justifiable Homicide," Dave Goodman and friends
—"Jilted John," Jilted John

CHRIS D.
—"Suspect Device," Stiff Little Fingers
—"White Man in Hammersmith Palais," Clash
—"If the Kids are United," Sham 69

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH
—"Fernando Sancho," Dillinger
—"Garvey Rock," Culture
—"Bible," Prince Hammer

DAVE ALLEN
—"White Man in Hammersmith Palais," Clash
—"96 in the Shade" album, Third World
—"Natty Pass His GCE," Shorty the President

GORILLA ROSE
—Trudie's Fan Club Christmas 45
—"Better World Blue Print" (video disk), The Screamers
—"Dos Equis" (double live lp), X

KICKBOY FACE
—Siouxsie and the Banshees tape
—"White Man in Hammersmith Palais," Clash
—"Big Country," Talking Heads

MELANITA
—"Adult Books," X
—"Mindless Contentment," The Plugz
—"Ku Klux Klan," Steel Pulse

MIKEL TOOMBS
—"Thin White Line," the Avengers
—"Beat Your Heart Out," The Zeros
—"My Boyfriend's Back," Kristy McNichol

PEA
—"White Man in Hammersmith Palais," Clash
—"Oh! Didn't I Say," Tubeway Army
—"Three Piece Suit and Thing," Dillinger

MR. SAMIOF
—"The Prisoner," The Clash
—"I Am That I Am," Pete Tosh
—"Gary Gilmore's Eyes," The Adverts

V.
—The Deadbeats' EP
—"If the Kids are United," Sham 69
—"Oh Shit," The Buzzcocks

PETE TOSH

PETER TOSH OFFERS A FEW INSIGHTS INTO THE MYSTERIES OF REGGAE MUSIC AND RASTAFARIANISM

The interview (lecture?) took place in Tosh's room at the Tropicana. Some rasta musicians were meticulously washing bag-loads of fruit in the kitchen, Peter sat on a stool with an acoustic guitar in his lap, his unicycle laid on the floor beside him and the color tv set silently blasted Babylon's commercial messages to no one.

Tosh *(to one of us)*: Please don't light that cigarette here, sir. Surgeon general warns that cigarette smoking is dangerous.
Slash: Is nobody allowed to smoke in your band?
Tosh: Yes, they smoke. But not in my quarters, sir. It disturbs my third eye visibility, you see.
Slash: ???
(He lights up an average-size spliff.)
Slash: Do you still get in trouble with the law?
Tosh: Always, I'm always in trouble. As long as you smoke herb you are in trouble.
Slash: Does not stop you though . . .
Tosh: No. As long as I know smoking herb isn't wrong . . .

Slash: What did they do to you in Jamaica?
Tosh: Same thing they would do to me in America.
Slash: Did you write "Legalize It" because of going to jail for smoking?
Tosh: I didn't go to jail for smoking. I made the song "Legalize It" because of police brutality, because the same laws that . . . you see, they make them to incriminate and defamate the character of man. That is the reality of it, sir.
Slash: There was a big reggae peace festival in Jamaica recently . . .

Tosh: Yes. I performed at that concert. It was a great concert, man, it went down in history. Never been a concert like that in Jamaica, and I don't think there will be another one.

Slash: What was the occasion of the festival?
Tosh: To me, it was the occasion of integration. People have been segregated by political differentiations and all kinds of organizations and denominations. It's just a coming together of black people; because western philosophy is to divide and conquer, people have been divided for so long, and dividing of the people is the destruction of people and I am to live among the people and go tell how to be constructive amongst the destruction. So, thru the divine powers of his imperial majesty emperor Haile Selassie, who gives I inspiration to write songs that I write, I keep on writing the songs and it keeps on inspiring me and shows me that I don't have to suffer or do anything that is subversive or defamating to my career or my integrity because of the law. See? So I keep on smoking herb and write music. I don't take cocaine, I don't take morphine. I don't take no other drugs. Herb isn't a drug. *(Punctuates with a few chords on the guitar.)*

Slash: What is going to happen to Jamaica politically?
Tosh: Let me ask you one question. Why is the world so interested in asking about Jamaica?
Slash: Because they became interested thru the music?
Tosh: Columbus discovered America, so they say. Jamaica has been traditionally in the eye of the world because of the contents of its culture. Jamaica is where the first revolutionaries who fought against imperialism and colonialism and all forms of exploitation come from. You have many of them, including Marcus Garvey. Jamaica is just a headquarters for the awakening of the black morale. That's why it has been so much observed by the rest of the world. And the time has just come when black people have to be elevated.
Slash: And you believe music can play a part in this?

Tosh: I *know* that it can. The creator that created music says, "Singers and players of instruments, I call upon thee. Let thy work be done in earth as it is in Zion."
Slash: On the old Wailers' "Rasta Revolution" album cover, you were all dressed in guerrilla outfits . . .

slash page fourteen

Tosh: Yes, man. Same way we look in Rhodesia, same way we look in Mozambique, same way we look in South Africa. It's no difference. We don't want the world to live in fear, man, it's just fighting against forces that belittle man's authority, because no man was given the power to eliminate or incriminate or defamate the character of no man because of his creed or his color. See? So any man or anyone who bids to us forces will have lots of forces to fight, which won't be physical forces but spiritual forces. Because the world of evil is equipped with evil forces, so the world of righteousness is equipped with righteous forces, see?

There is such things going on from such times, it is nothing new, but it reach a time when what has been down is getting up and what is up is getting down. First shall be last, and last first. Many are called but few are chosen. See? The stone that the builder refuses becomes the head cornerstone. That's just a manifestation of prophecy. We're told that Daniel, Joshua, Moses, Elijah, all those prophets died. They didn't. They're still here. I could be one of them. See?
Slash: . . . Do you think guitars are effective weapons to change the world?
Tosh: Yes, man—very, very effective. 'Tis the most effective weapon to awake the morale of people because the psychological effect it has on people. It hypnotizes the mind with the music and leaves you in suspense to listen to the words. That's the power of music.
Slash: Your music seems to have changed. It seemed more mellow on stage than on the records . . .
Tosh: That's the difference of the music and the power of the music and the qualification of the music and the integrity of the music. Reggae music can be played in so much attractive ways so that people must be attracted to the music, because you have promoters and producers who program to the people the branches and the leaves of reggae. Reggae is a tree, and the people have been programmed to the branches and the leaves for years, but now that the roots come around, it has to be very psychologically effective.

Slash: Would you play your music the same in Jamaica?

Tosh: Same way. Same music. Reggae music was created, its foundation was the heartbeat. You know how the heart beats, with those two parts—toop toop part, tip tip, tep tep part—that's the heartbeat. Reggae music was built around, its foundation was around the heartbeat. When the castle has been built it must be properly decorated, to penetrate from the heart to the mind. See? If you don't know how to build that castle of music, you're building the branches and the leaves but not the roots, and a tree without roots must fall.

Slash: Can the white man play reggae?
Tosh *(emphatically)*: *No, no.* It can play the branches and the leaves, but it can never play the roots. *(A few slow guitar chords)*

Slash: Some of the musicians in your touring band, Word Sound and Power, such as Sly Dunbar or Robbie Shakespeare have literally played on hundreds of Jamaican recordings . . .

Tosh: They are pioneers of the roots music, man. I've got them under my portfolio, they are my brothers, my brethren, my musicians. Jamaica is fertile.

Slash: Why did you leave Columbia for Rolling Stones records?

Tosh: One of the reasons I left Columbia is my contract expired and I didn't pick up the option; one because Columbia was inexperienced to market reggae. Columbia is experienced to market jazz, other musics. Reggae is a different music to market.

Slash: How should reggae be marketed? It does not seem to go beyond a certain stage of popularity . . .
Tosh: You know why? Because reggae is black. Anything black is held back, anything white is right, anything brown can stick around. That's what I learnt in school.
Slash: Why do black Americans seem to ignore your music?

Tosh: You know why? Because reggae is black. Anything black is held back, anything white is right, anything brown can stick around. That's what I learnt in school.

Slash: Why do black Americans seem to ignore your music?

Tosh: It's not a matter of they don't seem to hear or they don't seem to like or they don't seem to love; it's just a matter of, that, the producers don't put the music in the black ears 'cos anything for black people is taken away and given to all other nations to be recognized and to be loved and to be worshipped and then, after a period of time, what's left of it comes to the black people. My duty is to make the music more psychologically effective, so you find yourself psychologically hypnotized with the subconscious taking over, so that people are not conscious of it. Then it takes over, and makes the foot tap *(taps his foot)* and the head nod *(nods his head)* and the fingers snap *(snaps his fingers)* and then one starts to dance and then the ears begin to listen to the lyrics.

Slash: How many years before there is a way out of the race problem?

Tosh: I haven't really seen a way out. Though the world is so destructive I am here to warn those who want to live. It's either you love Jah and live or curse him and die, because he is the creator.

I have been brought up in a world of tricknology *(sic)*, fantasy, politricks *(double sic)*, imagination, illusion and nothing that is real. And all those worlds have been painted as real worlds. And when I investigated the facts, I found out that the world was painted as real but wasn't. When I investigated history, I found out how everything was. The Bible is my history, I *am* the prophets from such times who are reincarnated in this time, see? Only the name has been changed. *(Giggles)* . . . *(a few more chords)* . . . yes. In the beginning was the word. And the word was I.

Slash: Do you still live in Jamaica?

Tosh: Yes, and I'll continue to live in Jamaica until the time of repatriation.

Slash: How influential are the rastas in Jamaican politics? Are they still persecuted?

Tosh: It hasn't stopped. That was traditionally laid down 2000 years ago, not 400. That was laid down long before Columbus, to be aware of the prophets that will return in this time. It was prophesized that those who were followers of Christ, that went down with Christ, shall arise with Christ and it shall be within the 2000 years. So *we* are reincarnated souls from such times—Rastafari!

Only the name has been changed, and the name has been changed because this time Rastafari will not return like Jesus Christ to be crucified and all his disciples crucified. This time it was prophesized 2000 years ago that he shall return in like manner—which means skin, flesh and bones—but his name shall be changed, and his name shall be terrible and dreadful amongst the heathen. And you know what his name is? Rastafari!

No one in the world gets hassled like Rastafari. If even a white man has long hair and calls himself hippie he gets hassled 'cos he looks like Rastafari. That's all it is. Nothing new. I'm telling you what I knew 2000 years. And it is I from such times, see? Only reincarnated in this time because of the power of life and the violence of death. See?

(Peter Tosh interrupts the conversation to instruct the rasta in the kitchen on how to clean the piles of various fruit he is taking out of the bags. There are obscure mentions of dry-cleaning and perspiration . . .)

Slash: Why are rastafarians so strict about what they eat?

Tosh: To be a rastafarian, you are fundamentally dealing with life, progress, elevation. Nothing degradating. To deal with life, you must eat levitated foods, plants with no corrosive . . . fertilizers. That's dangerous.

Slash: Do rastas participate? Like, do they vote?

Tosh: No. Rasta does not go to the voting poll.

Slash: A couple of years ago, Manley tried to gain the rasta votes by going in the hills with what was supposed to be Selassie's stick . . .

Tosh *(cracking up)*: Yes, all these things were prophesized to happen. You know, believers will always believe, but the knowers will still know. When you believe, belief is 50 per cent of doubt. When you know, you're positive what's going on.

Slash: How do people at Rolling Stone records relate to your philosophy?

Tosh: They don't *know* my philosophy, man. My philosophy is traditional, my philosophy is no imitation, my philosophy is educational, my philosophy is inspirational. It was the law of the earth. But I find it very nice with the Stones, they appreciate it very much. They appreciate these things. I find that we can do some progressive business because of their respect and their love for the music.

Slash: Is there a new album coming out soon?

Tosh: Yes, man, very excellent. It will be released all over the world. The message is worldwide, man.

Slash: What do you think of the other branches of reggae music, the toasting records, the dub stuff?

Tosh: Well, they have to be here; commercially they have to be here, financially they have to live. That's the part of the music, that's the entertainment side of the music. But the conscious part of the music is what I am playing. The message. You must have some entertainment part for the times to be entertained, but within the school of reggae music there must be an intellectual side, a time for school and a time for play.

Slash: What does it do to you to find yourself playing here mainly to white audiences?

Tosh: It does not do anything to me. I don't care who is listening because of what I put in my music means it's coming from the heart to another heart.

Slash: Do you think being with Rolling Stones records is going to be better as far as reaching new black audiences?

Tosh: Yes, man. A hundred million times better. First, to commence, I am the only artist they have to concentrate on. They have affection for the music, every time I walk in I hear them playing reggae. I know the affection they have for it.

Slash: Are you aware of the punk music scene?

Tosh: Reggae is the roots of music. I don't have the experience of the punk music. I heard about two records of punk, and I didn't get so deep down inside them to differentiate them. Message-wise, I don't know. Music-wise, it didn't really attract me and make me say that something was going on effective that would make me listen a second time. Because music must be created of attractiveness, built around the heartbeat. Some build music from the foot beat. You can't build music if it does not come from the heart. Some people adapt music, some people live music, some people learn music.

Slash: Do you still see Bob Marley?

Tosh: Yes, man. When he is around, I see him. But he is not around generally, he is here, there and everywhere. I'm supposed to see him tonight, and if something works out nice, I may walk in and help him sing "Get Up, Stand Up" . . .

PHOTOS: MELANIE

STRAN

The night before, at the Starwood, Jean Jacques Burnel had (after an initial rebuttal that would have discouraged less stubborn press scum) reluctantly agreed to talk with us. Jet Black had also agreed to be there. We spent most of the afternoon with them. There was a conspicuous absence of hangers-on and other typical rock 'n' roll interruptions. Later they made it to the Masque where they caught the end of a Plugz set. They said they would have liked to play there.

JET: Eighteen months ago, just before it all happened, it was impossible for anybody to get a record deal. Bands would go to record companies and be told, "We're not signing anyone for a year. We got Led Zeppelin, Elton John, Rod Stewart, nothing new is happening . . ." and they'd ignore the fact that something *was* happening, and then they all suddenly realized that if they didn't get off their asses they were going to miss the boat. So suddenly they all came out of their offices, went to all the clubs with checkbooks, signing up everybody, and they signed so much crap it's unbelievable.

It was really funny to watch it all happening. At one stage, we went to 20 or 30 record companies with tapes, and they all laughed us out the door. And then, months later, they were all coming around with the most outlandish offers, offering us fortunes . . . We said drop dead, get lost. The boot was on the other foot, sort of speaking.

SLASH: What's the situation like now?

JET: It has more or less died now. Most of the original punk bands are slowly strangling themselves and selling out all the way down the line. It's quite pathetic to watch. Most people succumb to temptation, it's very hard. We are very popular at home; we could play to 50,000 people, but we haven't. The biggest crowd we played to was about 2,000 in London, and one gig out of London of about 4,000. We would prefer to play to 2,000 people five or six nights a week than do one night in a 10,000-seater. We *have to* do some large gigs, but we still play 200-300 seat clubs where the kids are jammed and all moving, really into the spirit of it. And that is what is satisfying in playing that kind of music.

We don't want to play to an audience where the kids are sitting way back with binoculars, falling asleep, not seeing what's going on. It was because bands like us insisted on playing small venues that the record business, the radio, the TV regarded it as insignificant. If we'd gone out and played those huge venues, which we could have done, they would have paid attention. But they thought, "Only a minority of people like them." But without airplay, we still can make the Top Ten, which is more satisfying . . .

(The talk goes to their relationship with the English press, which lately has not been that good.)

. . . The only time we did anything for the press is when we took them to Iceland. We got them all drunk! One guy was so drunk he couldn't take his flight back. He collapsed in the airport! *(Has a good laugh at the memory.)* All the other parasites of the press photographed him, just to get a story in the other papers about their colleague, like, "Look what the Stranglers did to him." I think he was from the Evening News or the Evening Standard. That's the sort of parasites they are.

We've always treated the press people as one would treat fellow human beings until they proved that they were just what we reckoned. We don't criticize them for saying we're a lousy band or they don't like our music, but they get so personal in order to justify their lack of perception that we're the sort of band everybody can like.

We have a scrapbook going back to three years with everything ever written about us, and over the first two years everybody was slagging us off, saying we were atrocious, the Stranglers will never get anywhere. Then the album was released and went straight to #4 in the charts. They had first reviewed it as crap until it zoomed up there. Then it was, "Yeah, great gig last night, the Stranglers were amazing . . ."

. . . To give you an example of the sort of reviews we had that we find quite distasteful, we once played a gig in Glasgow, around the time the Pistols had been well over the top, doing all kinds of stupid things to get publicity, and there was this tremendous furor in England over anything to do with punk or new wave (the Pistols had said "fuck" on television); we were included in this, regarded as outrageous, the victims of devious journalism aimed purely at selling newspapers. Anyway, this gig in Glasgow was tremendous, all the punk bands had been banned for months and finally we managed to get permission to play. We do the gig, and the next day the Glasgow papers are full of, "Last night, the Stranglers hit Glasgow, and there was violence, muggings, rape, terror, murder, robberies . . . *This city is not safe!*" What they failed to say is that *every single day of the week* in Glasgow there is violence, murder, rape, terror!

SLASH: Only in England do they view it so strongly. Here, it's just another phenomenon . . .

JET: Like in most countries, actually. It's so distant to any other country outside of Britain. They just pick up on what somebody else says about it, so, as the rumor goes from hand to hand, it becomes more and more exaggerated and when you get to America you find the kind of reporting that has no relationship to what's happening at all.

We've had an awful lot of curiosity here from people in the business about what's going on. They just don't understand it, and they probably never will.

I get the impression that even punks in America see the punk ideology as being anarchy and destruction, and they live up to it. But in England it does not work like that at all. The kids *look* aggressive and they dress outrageously, but they got brains. They talk about what they think is fucked up in the country, they usually don't want to wreck places. They applaud social changes, it's healthy. When you get out of England you find these ready-made punks that buy the gear and start smashing things up. It's all a bit unreal.

SLASH: Tell us about the first time you came here to check things out. . .

JET: We came to check out some venues about a year ago, checked all around the East Coast, New York—we decided there was nothing happening in N.Y., which is why we haven't played there until now. We talked to some radio stations, found out they were totally fucked up, real middle-of-the-road boring crap. But wherever we went there was real enthusiasm when kids found out we were in town, and that was great. We met kids with a lot of right ideas, but all the doors were closed to them.

(Jean Jacques then walks in. We talk about his French origins, his family. His parents left for England right after the war. Jean Jacques tells us why.)

JEAN JACQUES: . . . after the war was probably the most mobile time in Europe. As opposed to America, where being mobile is a tradition, people in Europe stay in their part of the world. But after the war, it was different. My parents went to England. There were still buildings there! (Their home town, Caen, had been totally wiped out by American bombers.) My old lady did about everything, waitressing, all that. . . . *(still talking about the war)* . . . Europe lost a lot of people. All the best people were killed, and all the wankers were left, like Heath and Wilson. Wilson had an office job during the war!

(Suddenly repeating what the television was just whispering in the background): DRIVE THE CAR THAT CALIFORNIA IS DRIVING TODAY!

(To Kickfrog): Anyway, what are you doing here?

JET: He's probably been drafted in France!

J.J.: And he can't go back for 50 years!

SLASH: What about *your* situation, Jean Jacques?

J.J.: We can't play in France because of it. It's a big hassle. I'm going there in a few weeks but I've got to do it by going through the mountains from Italy. I met this dealer who can smuggle me through.

SLASH: All because of the army?

J.J.: I was tried in my absence, I'm a deserter. I can't go back for 50 years. All the concerts we were supposed to do in France were canceled, so I had to fly over France when we played Europe in order to get from Italy to Spain.

SLASH: Do you want us to delete the bit about getting smuggled in? We don't want to blow your cover. *(How many French immigration officers read Slash? —Ed.)*

J.J.: No, I will have done it by then.

G L E R S

JET: The crazy thing is that he is British. He was brought up in England, and he has always lived in England, and he can prove that he is not eligible for French service 'cos he was a student at the time. He presented all this, and yet they still want him.
J.J.: They like to keep hold of anybody halfway French. It's not that populated there! It's quite a sweet attitude, just fucks up a few rock 'n' roll gigs.
SLASH: Did you have visa problems coming here?
J.J.: Our manager did. We were held up by immigration for two hours. What was the hassle?
JET: The first time we had an H-1 visa and this time an H-2. They thought it was suspicious.
J.J.: And our manager has a criminal record. He axed someone. He is a quiet guy with glasses, and he always has hassles.
SLASH: Should we talk a bit about the Stranglers' music?
J.J.: Ask us why we're here. I hate it when all we're asked about is our sex songs, our recording commitments, that sort of shit. We're animals like you, we move in a certain world, in certain circles, and it's our movements, the results of being a certain kind of social animal that make us what we are. We happen to make music that's a reflection of all that.
SLASH: So why are you here?
J.J. *(laughing)*: We were coerced into coming here. By quite a few people. Our manager, various record people, and because we were told some people wanted to hear us here.
SLASH: Are you sorry you came?
J.J.: It's not so easily answered. I'm glad I don't like a lot of what I see, it's reinforced my faith in our Europeanism.
SLASH: What's in England to go back to?
J.J.: Your roots, your people. You're never able to deny your roots. It's a bit of a cop-out to run away to the sun. There are great things happening in Europe at the moment. We're actually building towards a United States of Europe, which will not be like the United States of America. All the tribes will still be tribes—the Scots, the Welsh, they've been under British domination for hundreds of years but they're still Scots or Welsh. You have roots in Europe, and there is a movement toward all the tribes living next to each other and appreciating each other, and also not being political pawns. You have to have a greater sense of history than seeing as far as the end of your nose. There's a great fight to be fought in Europe. There's nothing to be fought here.
SLASH: Do you think A&M is doing a good job promoting the Stranglers?
J.J.: I couldn't care a fuck.
SLASH: Well, how do you get along?
J.J.: As we smashed up a few record companies' places in the past, and burned an American flag there in Holland, they're very paranoid. We are with United Artists in Britain, which licensees us out to other European companies. Our licensee in Holland is E.M.I., which was also the Pistols'. Anyway, we went there one day to the office of the president, who wasn't there. We walked around, talked to secretaries, and then I saw this American flag in the president's office. So I set fire to it, walked out and forgot about it. A few minutes later, there was smoke coming out of there 'cos the flag had fallen onto his desk and then on the carpet, melted his tape recorder and all that. So they related the incident to all the companies and now they stay clear of us!
JET: These record company people don't understand how anyone can be motivated to want anything but financial gain. They think if you're not coming here to make a lot of money you got to be crazy.
J.J.: It's totally alien to their way of thinking.
JET: Did you see that Peter Frampton thing last night? I was so embarrassed. He was doing the whole "Gee, it's great to be here" number with this interviewer. You could see he was reading all these phrases that please record companies.
J.J.: We sometimes make the mistake of opening our mouths too much and blowing it for ourselves, but that's what happens.

Know what I saw on TV the other night? Peter Noone and Spencer Davis. Being all lovey-dovey. There was Wolfman Jack saying, "Remember the British invasion? Well, the new wave is discovering what they discovered 10 years ago," and Peter Noone and Spencer Davis are saying, "Yeah, in those days we did't have a penny, we'd get a little group together and jolly well played," and Spencer Davis is saying, "Yes, and we loved the blues and this is a blues song; I'll sing it for you," and Peter Noone says, "Yes, *yes*, and I'm going to sing it with you, Spencer." So Spencer does a few chords and Noone goes, "Great, Spencer, *great*" . . . It was embarrassing, man.

Then there was this sort of film of Noone going, "Hi, I'm Peter Noone and if you don't remember me, I was in Herman's Hermits. Watch *this* . . ." And there were Union Jacks everywhere . . . Here they were, trying to get some bucks. If you were into it, you wouldn't want to prostitute it like this.

And in Santa Monica nc *w*, all these British exiles have a fucking cricket team! They're not English, they're fuckin' Californians. Admit it. It's a cop-out. It's not reality. It's all show business . . .

In Frisco, I was playing billiards and this guy was talking to me and said, "Rock 'n' roll is not real." And I told him, "You speak for yourself, man, rock 'n' roll is real for us," even while Crosby Stills and Nash are having that thing put on Sunset Boulevard.

People are so cynical over here, they don't believe anything. The other night one of our road crew picked up this chick and after a few minutes she said, "Look, don't come up with this English accent with me. Cut out the Michael Caine bit!" and all he could say was, "Hey, I am what I am." He had to show his passport! Everyone's got an angle here.
SLASH: Did you relate to the audiences at all, either in San Francisco or here?
JET: I thought Frisco was gonna be the better of the two, but after *that* gig I was really depressed. I thought, "what's L.A. gonna be like then, it's so laid back" . . . But the gig here was quite fun.
J.J.: We did two sets in Frisco. After the first, we did no encore or anything, and after 20 minutes, when most of the audience had split, we went back on stage and did a whole set for about 12 people.
SLASH: Are you financially successful now?
JET: We are making a living, but it took a long time. It's never a lot of fun being hungry but we did it 'cos we wanted to do it.
J.J.: Four years ago when we started, I had cropped hair, Jet had peroxide blond hair, little drain pipes that only came to here. I was coming out of my skinhead phase, we were only playing two-minute songs 'cos that's all we could play . . .
JET: As a band we were not too hot. Probably people hated us because we were terrible as well as because they didn't understand our music . . .
J.J.: We'd go to a pub that wanted a rock group, we'd play a set and they'd say, "You're not a fuckin' rock group, you only play two-minute songs . . ."!
JET: Hugh used to phone up venues and say, "I have this great band called the Stranglers who do rock 'n' roll . . ." and they'd say, "Oh, we are a jazz club." So a couple of hours later, I'd phone up and say, "I've got this jazz band called the Stranglers . . ." . . . One night we were a jazz band, next night a soul band, always playing the same stuff. Consequently, they hated us everywhere. Frequently we wouldn't get paid, or get booed off stage . . .
SLASH: You have played an awful lot of gigs, haven't you?
J.J.: More than anyone.
JET: When the Clash hit the streets as the Clash they hadn't played one gig and they had this two-page spread in the papers. I gotta admit I got a bit envious of that. Such a hype! At that time we had done about six or seven hundred gigs . . .
SLASH: What are your immediate projects?
J.J.: Well, there was this free concert we wanted to do in Hyde Park, but Virgin records didn't exactly help us. It's a long story. Originally the permission wasn't given to us, as Virgin records was trying to fuck us up. It costs £40,000 to play there, the stage, the lights . . . and our record company does not want to help us with it. We could find it, but there are all these hassles, we hadn't come up with the money by deadline time. You see, Virgin has the concession to Hyde Park, so you have to do it through them, and then they go to the department of environment. It's a concession. That's what we're fighting against. They keep saying, "We've got street credibility, the Pistols, etc.," but tey've delayed it for so long, I think it's out of the question. We were expecting maybe 100,000 people, but our record company, who can afford it, won't do it. They got the maximum out of us, the most out of their investment, and now they don't want to know. They just don't want to do us any favors. It seems like everybody shits on us . . . So we locked the lawyer in his room for the night. Locked him in his office.

Staged Events

THE GO GO S PHOTO: SAMIOF

MIDDLE CLASS PHOTO: MELANIE

**CANTERBURY NIGHT—
GO-GOS and MIDDLE CLASS
at the Rock Corporation**

Alright . . . We're gonna *skip* the description of the club (Valley biker joint with a TV dinner tray for a stage), the scene (usual carousing guest-list crowd), and what this reporter was drinking (Pernod, Blue Bull and Ruby Chablis) and cut right down to the meat of the matter . . .

Got a new *fun* group for you this month—can't help but love 'em—the Go-Gos. Five really gone gone girls, direct from the Canterbury, California (home of the new wave happenings).

The very petite and pixie-ish Jane Drario seems to be the leader of the group, by virtue of her commanding eye contact in the back-up vocal and 1-2-3-4 count departments.

Lead singer Belinda, smartly tailored in suit, slacks and slicked-back hair, is a real pouncer onstage, sort of Black Randy's soul sister in the zig-zag, dart, jerk and spin around school of punk theatrics.

Fluorescent Margot on bass (I think) seemed hesitant about stepping out from behind the shadow of Biba Queen Jane, but gives every indication she can strut with the best when she's got all her fingering memorized. (We've got to keep in mind that this was only the second public performance the Go-Gos have had. Half the magic of discovering a new group is watching them battle to master their machinery as we struggle to absorb their material.)

Their drummer (no name, drives a Mercedes) seemed very competent in semaphore-signaling the beat while the third ax basher onstage (no name, sorry) looked like she had been borrowed from the Bags and played with deeply grooving concentration.

All in all, a dynamic set of female rockers, guaranteed to alert the most jaded minimalist, visually as well as musically. In fact, one male member of the audience was moved to rush backstage and give them all head. "Okay," said a Go-Go. "But don't expect us to remember your name . . ."

The Middle Class look like a bunch of rampaging Scientologists onstage. Suits and ties, cold fires in their eyes. Leaping about like they were all joined at the elbows and wearing the same suit while somebody was pouring ice cubes down their back. Angular, obtuse, rat-tat-tat (machine gun surprise) music. Another transient herd of young bucks playing out of the Canterbury. You could take their set list shopping at Pep Boys. —(Insert car parts and song titles here.)

They do about a 20-minute set, consisting of 30- to 90-second songs with ominous silences in between. Songs full of loud, sharp noises—like bells ringing, doors slamming, dogs barking—come before and after extended periods of increasing electronic silence. (Subliminally, the most significant aspect of the group's work.) The psychological plateaus of tension triggered by the climactic building of musical crescendos are shattered by the abrupt, loud "silences." This constant tension/relief, tension/relief has been proven to induce exhaustion in the listener, and sometimes even nausea (which is not to be perceived as a critical opinion—we are dealing with scientific fact.)

While there was never any conscious awareness within the Middle Class audience of "angry bees buzzing," without a doubt, subliminal seduction via hypnotic induction is the accidental result of their performance. A random sampling of the audience after their set revealed many had been sexually excited by the behavioral engineering techniques utilized by the group.

DAVID JOHANSEN: A FUNKY BUTT WITH CHEEK

I was ripe to be entertained when I went to see David Johansen's group at the Whisky. I needed a change of luck so bad that I defied my trendy roots and went to see the punch-faced cherub even if he had been given a hostile reception in this paper. I (having an inside informant) knew that the duo responsible for the negative review held an ancient grudge against dear pug mouth David. This was the time an inside scoop did me good.

Things looked up as I got to the window with my date and our names were right there on the Epic Records list. I don't know who was more surprised, me or Jimmy, when the charming lady handed me a drink tab with my very own name right on top.

I amused myself with the new-found novelty of signing my name at the bar and getting a drink for it. If Pavlov was still around I could get a job. I signed my name off and on with purpose while the Pop innocuously went on and off. Then I surveyed the crowd. It was a crowd. People and everything, lots of them, total strangers. For one horrid moment I forgot my name in that mass of anonymity, but then David and his pals came on.

I went to the stage and concentrated on Daavud. The old sport strutted around a bit to get limbered up. He was wearing black and white saddle oxfords, a sport shirt, chinos, and a little stringy brim hat perched on top of his head. That boy is too cocky. I guess 'cause his guitars and bass player was all wearing tight leather pants, he had to compensate in his courderoys so there would be no mistaking who was the boss in this band. David kept his players in line throughout the set by barking out commands in an exaggerated Negro voice, using the same voice to ask the crowd if they were wearing bellbottoms. David let Sylvain Sylvain (who out-Geza's Bruce Barf, the real Marc Morbid archetype, you know) goof around more than the other guys because Sylvain's leather pants were orange.

So they hocused and pocused up there, going through most of Davuud's new album, a few Dolls songs, some Motown revivals, and Bonnie Tyler's AM smash hit "It's a Heartache." All the songs were done more or less in the style of the new album with Davad belting out the lyrics in his insupressibly eager and buoyant style. From the moment he first stepped on with a swirl and a curtsy you knew Daavid was no stranger to the stage. He acted with a professional finesse that many would have found too relaxing but it was the perfect thing for the state of my nerves. I got the impression that Mr. Johansen could be just as grim, tough and mean as a real punk like Tomata or myself but you know I don't know how I missed it all these years, but deep down I think the guy's always been a bit of a comedian. He likes to have fun you know and that's the impression they wanted to come off the stage and it did. I could just picture them up stage horsing around prior to the encore.

"Hey, wise guy."

"Gee, clowny."

"Oh you kidder."

The encore was a real encore. Davud, being the professional showman, showed gratitude. Real gratitude. Well if it's good enough for him, it's good enough for me.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Daavuud and Band, The Whisky management and employees, Epic Records and Slash magazine for making such an enjoyable evening possible for me.

Ralphy Macaral

JOHN DENNY PHOTO: MELANIE

SCREAMERS PLAY ORANGE

So they use black plastic backdrops in the city of Orange, do they? Perhaps it was appropriate—what *other* ultra-modern convenience can *never* be absorbed by the environment, even if cut up and burned? None . . . except the Screamers, who proved their ability to endure even the harshest of circumstances by playing as a *three piece* to a hodge-podge of smog-damaged orange people.

This concert was a "benefit" for a nebulous society of discouraged artists (who showed their artistic autism by advertising with a xerox copy of an L.A. Times article) and the crowd that showed up looked like a roving asylum of excuseless existence: surfers who don't surf, hippies who aren't hip, morons who are even less. One guy in a *gangster* get-up, another poor wretch with india ink dribbling out of his mouth and Fazio's fish stapled to his coat. Where's the *safety pins?*

Beyond these gawkers' problems (organic or not) our heroes also had a small difficulty: no *Tommy*. The Screamers were missing a gear. He was last seen driving a syphilitic Thunderbird with a busted something or other, dripping a slow trail along the San Diego Freeway, but now not even god knew where he was. I didn't have to ask god, he was *there, incognito* and taking notes . . . he seemed confused, too: where *was* the Holy Ghost??

And so there was nothing to do but *wait* . . . gulp and gulp down the punchless punch (3 parts tomcat urine and 1 part red dye #2) and try to ignore the throng of half-wits all anxious to see Tomata (as if *he* could make them whole). Some, the more *intelligent* of the bunch, looked a bit concerned: would you let *your* daughter worship a Screamer? To increase tension, but relieve boredom, Paul and K.K. mercifully set a demented repeating cocktail rhythm on synthesizer and rhythm box. You could look at a point on the ground a full ten minutes without noticing any time go by—you could yawn and it seemed to take an hour. An hour and a half dripped by and still . . . no Tommy.

Unable to endure this social tar pit, unable to get drunk enough not to *care* what would happen if they attempted to beat up the *whole* audience, not able to grab the equipment and flee, Tomata, K.K. and Paul edged onto stage and the crowd edged closer. Paul wove the mausoleum rhumba introduction to "122 Hours of Fear," Tomata faced the black plastic backdrop as if to give *his* opinion of the whole affair. Wondering why no one was yelling "rock out!" or "let's party!", the crowd started chatting and glancing about suspiciously—their suspicion well warranted when the intro chopped short and a gyrated Tomata commanded, "Be quiet or be killed!" No more chatting after that.

Any *true* Screamer could feel the absence of Tommy Gear, just as any *true* parent could feel the absence of one of his child's toes—both visually and functionally. Despite impaired manipulative ability, troopers K.K. and especially new keyboardist Paul Roessler are to be given swift heterosexual slaps on the back for their ingenuity. With the unlikely musical "line-up" of one electrical piano and one adequately grey drum kit, these wiseguys formed a formidable back-up band, at least good enough to pull a fast one on the bewildered Orange audience. It was certainly something those people will remember, cherish and relate to their grandchildren as they are being eaten by cancer: the Orange Musical Event of the century. And, next to the time the cancer victim saved his grandchildren from a burning building, it was also the most heroic: what other group has the balls to play as a two-piece plus singer? (Arthur J need not apply.) Tomata seemed moody and contained—perhaps to keep the band's balance, perhaps to keep his own. You shoulda been there.

For the second set, Thomas Gear appeared (just *appeared*) out of the shadows like Genghis Khan claiming his troops. God, are you taking notes? It was evident from the redone "Four Digits" that Tommy's backwash synthesizer is the backbone of the Screamer sound, from which the head and limbs flail and thrash about—the wet cement in which the other Screamers do the watusi. With Gear standing there and sucking you into his eyes, Tomata was free to push you back away. His energy was suddenly cranked up a half million volts and he gave a performance that made my pubic hair straighten and kink. *NO ONE is Tomata du Plenty.*

Wiseguy Paul teased a gargantuan hippie by dousing the guy with his own beer, adding the "razor's edge" to his performance by hearing the brute threaten him the rest of the set with physical damage. A beast so big he must have *two* pea-sized brains in each fist, and Paul just grinned at him very blue icy and *rocked out in his face!* A sledgehammer "Girl in the Car with the Glasses and the Gun," a suffocating "I Wanna Hurt," a spasmodic "Violent World." The crowd left pale and silent. You shoulda been there.

Next: a set without Tomata?

Will L'Amato

MIDDLE CLASS, NEGATIVE TREND, WEIRDOS and DILS at the Azteca

Yippee, a new place! This show was a last minute change from the Saturday night thing that was to take place the next day. Brendan did it again, under short notice, for a ridiculous entrance fee and if there are goons out there still rumoring and bitching and badmouthing, I will personally come up behind them at the next show and piss in their pockets!

Chicano territory, which could be why the police representatives outside are equipped for major riot situations. Downstairs is crowded, smokey and cute in a cheesy cocktail-lounge-gone-seedy way.

Tiny stage a foot or so off the main floor, Middle Class are on, ferociously delivering their brief capsules of white kid noise gone berserk. Front line pogo pawns gleefully bounce back and forth between the mike stands, the singer's kicks aimed at their crotches and the second line pogoers who sadistically shove them back to the stage for another dose of abuse. In other words, a fine evening on its way.

While waiting for band #2, everyone greets everyone else with "long time no see you old rascal" hugs and below-the-belt punches, hair dyes are exchanged and Dils armbands ceremoniously pinned on. An intermittent basement subculture blissfully thriving on its insecure reality.

Negative Trend go on, the pogoers return to their high risk posts and the beat goes on.

Then it is the Weirdos' turn, who, in spite of a painfully obvious lack of room, quickly raise the temperature a few degrees and the sweat fall a few inches. Halfway thru, the peace officers treat everyone to a comic interlude by stepping onto the stage and standing there, making vague threats and accusations while the astonished crowd stares, jeers or derisively performs Sieg Heil salutes in unison. A while later, they bow and retreat to the safety of the armored car probably parked in the back, not forgetting the darling automatic mace guns they had so thoughtfully brought along.

However, paranoia and foggy visions of a white riot are now with us for the rest of the night, in spite of the Dils' exhortation to forget it, we're not chicken but let's have it on our own terms, not in a trap of a basement. Half of the nervous punx and sympathizers keep peeking at the entrance, expecting the dreaded Metro Squad battalions to materialize any second while the other half furtively checks out all the possible exits.

Such an emergency atmosphere of course does wonders for the Dils, who perform with the rage and intensity of cornered guerrillas. Nothing like a potentially explosive situation to turn once theoretical tunes into appropriate expressions of immediate frustrations.

Drummer John Silvers collapses of exhaustion after the encore and it is up to Mad Dog Carla to help Tony and Chip satisfy the insatiable crowd for another few minutes. Then everybody and visiting dignitary Mick Jones go home or go party, more effectively dispersed and defused by freeway distances and lack of transportation than any dedicated law and order riot squad could ever hope to achieve.

Kick Boy

DICKIES/MIDDLE CLASS Whisky, August 12

The last Whisky show? For now? Forever??

Air tense from the word "go," excited talk of trashing on excitable lips; something was meant to happen and something did. Blitzkrieg exposure, relatively successful recordings and being away from home helped the Dickies pack four separate shows with what appeared to be a well-mixed crowd although few hardcores were in attendance. They've become out-of-vogue for the majority of that set and I don't think it has much to do with them "selling out" to a major label. Their choice of Middle Class as opener made the reasons glaringly obvious.

It's funny, Middle Class is rapidly gaining a reputation for trouble—their gigs are more often than not intense, teeth-gritting affairs that leave the participant dazed, stunned, even irritated. The incitable nature of their strange, assaulting music coupled with the growing number of their unpredictably rabid fans result in chaos and confusion. And it keeps getting more and more and *more* frantic, those affected bashing harder and faster as the set crushes on. The effect is not unlike kissing a semi at full speed.

Some of their songs (couldn't begin to tell you any titles except their epic "No Applause," real anthem material) start out at a leisurely pace and suddenly lurch into another tempo, tripled or quadrupled to the point where there is no tempo or it has been re-tailored to meet their needs.

And they look so harmless! Far from it, as the sterile Whisky would be quick to admit after desperate Saturday-night fans sacrificed two chairs, devoured a monitor and forcibly communed with the band again and again. This was how it *should* be: ALIVE.

The Dickies seemed like pabulum after that but they are nonetheless fun. A recent description of them as being "punky Monkees" is very apt—they're not troublemakers, merely rib-ticklers. Some of their songs have a definite punch, are well-constructed and work, but the overall impression is one of—yawn—blandness. The light-hearted bounciness of the presentation, novel at first, grows old fast.

They are adept individuals, however. Leanard has always been a spontaneous trouper who holds the proceedings in check; Billy is a ready steady bassist; Stan, Carlos and Chuck are more than adequate but a glossy sameness overrides their efforts. Perhaps they sense this too and were trying to eradicate it by having those three essentially talentless female Dickettes join them for "Shadow Man" and "Banana Splits." I thought the Leon Russell days were over! It's no wonder they were snatched by A&M. They're safe. No worries here.

The last Whisky show? For now? Forever??

Lively

slash page nineteen

THE CITADEL—CHRIS BURDEN

Chris Burden is the artist whose list of accomplishments reads more like an arrest record: "747," took a shot at a jet with a pistol; "Deadman," lay in the middle of La Cienega with a blanket over him until apprehended by the fuzz; "Shoot," was shot in the arm by a friend; "TV Hijack," hijacked a tv program by holding his interviewer at knife-point; "Trans-Fixed," crucified himself to the back of a Volkswagen; "Doorway to Heaven," nearly electrocuted himself by touching two live wires to his chest, etc.

This was Burden's first performance in L.A. in four years. "The Citadel" was performed in what used to be the paint booth of an ex-furniture shop, just off the alley that runs behind Pico Boulevard, near Redondo Boulevard, midday, mid-summer, L.A., hot! Me and three others were led into a room of total blackness. The maximum capacity was four people for each performance.

The show began. I could hear two tape recorders being punched on. From one came woowoo spacy sounds, and from the other came Burden's voice explaining what we were about to see. He lit a candle and held it over his head. I could see lots of tiny (1×2 in.) lead starships appearing to float in space. Apparently they were hanging from the ceiling, perfect in their pseudo-scientific detail. There were hundreds of them hanging in the room.

As Burden moved around I could see 50 or so starships at a time and his Buddha-like profile. The taped explanation pointed out the dangers of star travel, the different kinds of starships, how they were equipped, all said in perfect Star-Trek terminology: "the destroyer from the carnivore fleet is equipped with a triple redundancy laser communicator."

After some ten minutes of this, the tape told us these starships had come from all over the universe to investigate the inexplicable infinite citadel wall. Burden then moved his candle toward the back wall of the tiny room to reveal a regular factory brick wall painted black. The end.

"When the saint drinks,
He pleases God as much
As when he prays and sings."

Chris Burden has been compared to every half-pint saint and martyr from St. Benedict to the big one. Little wonder, considering his earlier work mentioned above.

Then, in 1975, Burden stopped with the weird stuff. No more cutting, burning, electrocuting, shooting. When the blood stopped, the ink stopped too. Yet he continued to work. He began to build a car from scratch. When it was completed, he began a tv from scratch. It seemed that the Holy-Art had been replaced by hobby-art, and the Saint had become mortal. "The Citadel" appeared to be an intelligent mixture of the two.

Finally to the point. Yea, those Burden biographers were right, but for the wrong reasons. Burden's a saint, okay, but not because he shot or crucified himself. No matter what he does, his art is clearly the only possible vehicle for his survival.

I left with the certainty that what I had seen was an unquestionable necessity for Chris Burden, (also a feeling of guilt that it was not for me). In a lesser degree it might be called honesty or presence, but with Burden it's a divine power. The power reserved for those who act from biological necessity rather than choice.

Hobby or holy, it's all the same when there's no choice. sponsored by Carp

PETE TOSH and THE ROOTS OF CREATION at the Starwood

Either reggae music had become incredibly popular overnight in skateboard-land or else something was wrong. Something *was* wrong. The thousands who jammed the sidewalk outside the Starwood, paid small fortunes for scalpers' tickets, lined up like good cattle under the megaphoned directions of some pint-sized uberkommandant and the bovine scrutiny of gallon-sized meatheads with colorful security windbreakers on their King Kong shoulders, submitted themselves to a series of body searches worthy of an Israeli embassy in the middle of Arab territory; those pushed and shoved and probed and humiliated thousands (out of which only hundreds made it in) were no Jah Jah children coming to see one of their brothers. The only time they probably had heard of reggae was when High Times did a thing on reggae and dope, emphasis on the second.

They were here because their creaky-but-still-valiantly-touring-like-good-pros-in-need-of-cash-should idols, the Rolling Stones, were *rumored, whispered, hinted at, supposed* to be making a "surprize" appearance on stage with their new protege, Pete Legalize-It Tosh. Yea, Rubber Lips, the Toronto jail bait, Ronnie shag hair and the two other family men might shake their arses and inevitably "steal the show" tonight. Well, maybe not *all* of them. Maybe just one or two, for a minute, or a few seconds. Or maybe just Billy Preston. He is black, after all.

Should have heard the rumors going back and forth in that sea of hair outside. Every limousine that pulled up, someone would wet their pants. "Here they come, I know it. No, just some more funny looking spades . . ." And the Stones were 600 miles away. But don't tell the assholes. Let them lose their stupid money on a show they won't like. When you start worshipping, you're begging for someone to make a fool out of you. Write *that* on your ticket stub before you file it away in your souvenir book, rock 'n' roll nurd!

Inside, it's real cute and nostalgic. Once you pass more Godzilla clones that make sure you won't smuggle in your potentially fatal projectile glass of beer and packs of boogie creatures fondly recollecting Altamont, you reach the stage to get a better look at the army surplus and woolly hats bunch from San Francisco, the Roots of Creation, who are making a rather impressive Jamaican sound in spite of the less than interested atmosphere, and realize with horror that the great spot you thought was entirely devoid of denim freaks is actually packed flared pants to flared pants with *cross-legged sitting jerks dumbly staring at this strange opening act,* waiting for you-know-who to strut on stage before they get off their lard and sing along to "Honky Tonk Women"!

But don't let the appearance that we're just mellow children groovy cosmic together sitting on the floor close to the earth our mother attitude fool you. Them expanded consciousness leftovers are *rabid hyenas:* they almost tore off the head of the one I was with when she lightly tiptoed among the Indian patterns and puddles of patchouli oil in order to get closer to the live music. This was their field of vision, they were going to keep it intact until the holy moment came. Admittedly, she then proceeded to kick some fat thighs and pull some frizzy hair and had to be restrained before the love generation found itself with blood on its hands.

Meanwhile the Roots of Creation bravely tchuked-tchuked along, they even tried an audience participation type of thing but the zombies would have none of it. The Roots wasted their great music on this thick honky crowd but I hope they will not draw the wrong conclusions. It was just a giant misunderstanding, they should try us again.

When Word Sound and Power and Tosh came on I thought for a second I was hallucinating, maybe getting a contact high from one of the "heads" in the audience. One tall dude with a guitar looked like he had just stepped off Parliament Funkadelic's Mothership. Very unroots looking, I thought. Pink fur and jewelry galore and neo-Hendrix high fashion touches. The rest were more traditional looking, all woolly hats, red, gold and green and soccer sweat suits (obviously *the* status outfit in reggae circles) and luxurious dread locks.

So here I was, the reggae fever bubbling in my temples, ready to skank my way easily into the night, having forgotten my dreadful generation all around and its indulgent yearning for its collective past, forgotten the football players some criminals repeatedly let loose at these music things, and *nothing fuckin' happens.* I mean the band did start playing, Pete Tosh singing, even the audience vaguely moving, but *it did not dread. No way.*

Well, maybe a little here and there, the beginning of one particularly moving song, some nice exchanges between Robbie Shakespeare at the bass and Sly Dunbar at the drums, the occasional great singing Pete Tosh is capable of when he momentarily comes down from his cloud of ganja and remembers that he can be passionate and soulful and angry—but more often than not, the tunes would be stretched dangerously thin as the guitar players would indulge in vacant flashy outbursts and the compactness of the song would dissolve. The dancing I had started became mechanical and the lack of vitality in what I was hearing became more and more oppressive. At one point I retreated to the bar where a couple of "beautiful people" were doing an uninspired disco peacock dance number for the benefit of a tv or video crew. I guessed I was right. If these plastic swinging Barbie Doll and her boyfriend Ken robots can do their pathetic strutting to it, we're a long way from Trenchtown.

I danced a bit more, at odd moments, a bit out of duty, a bit because for 40 seconds or a minute or even two, they would cook (musically), stay close to each other, make songs not solos, feel like *one.* Then it was over.

The audience, still deprived of its Stones, some of us still waiting for truly heavy manners, and the crowd outside still lined up for the second show, still throwing rumors around to feed their insatiable need for fantasy and glamour. Inside, a few particularly slow morons tried chanting, "We want the Stones," but the off-duty quarterbacks quickly put an end to this sad display of naivete. As we walked out past the impatient second batch of consumers, we loudly commented to each other on "Mick's performance," and "Wasn't Keith's solo in 'Tumbling Dice' incredible?", but our hearts weren't in it.

THE STRANGLERS at the Starwood

To use an old cliche, the Stranglers certainly did deliver that night. No doubt about it, these guys are hard-working rockers and gave every fan his money's worth. Someone did complain about them not doing his favorite, "Peaches," but it must be the ***only*** tune from their albums that they didn't do.

On and on they went, going thru song after song of doom, anger, and gothic paranoia. Jean Jacques and Hugh pretty evenly traded vocals while Jet methodically hit the skins and wild man Dave Greenfield wove his neo-psychedelic spooky progressions on the keyboards. Jean Jacques also crouched forward on his guitar while hopping like a gnome and Hugh did a very, very strange "dance" during the "Down in the Sewer" epic.

A long, solid show which made it very clear why they enjoy such fanatic support from the English rock 'n' roll masses.

After hours of stomping, screaming and begging from what had first seemed like a very tame audience, they consented to do a long encore. In conclusion, an evening admirably devoid of any kind of bullshit or self indulgence.

SKULLS/PLUGZ/X at Amber's party at the Masque

Patient: Doctor! Doctor! What are those tubes, that big knife? . . . I feel funny . . . Oooo, that needle looks so long! Oh, oh, my head is throbbing and I hear pounding noises . . . It's music! Lots of music!

Doctor *(to nurse):* He's hysterical. Please give the patient another whiff of gas from the mask . . .

Patient: Gas?? Did you say ***gas***? In Auschwitz? But I'm not a . . . Mass? Is this a funeral Mass? . . . Mask? ***Mask!*** That's it! Masque . . . the walls are spinning . . . I see writing everywhere . . . ***Big*** writing . . . spray paint and gold and black letters . . . red words like blood dripping . . . and skulls! I see skulls . . . No! I don't want to die! But I see boys on stage saying ***they*** are Skulls! They are playing guitars and shouting! Billy Zoom is at the board, pressing buttons and dials and everything sounds so wonderful . . . I hear wild music, real loud and . . . yes, I like it! I like the Skulls! It's been six months, but they sound great! Better than ever! More skulls! ***More skulls!***

Doc: He's a totally helpless case, but we'll have to keep him alive by machines, we can't pull the plugs . . .

Patient: Plugs??? Oh, the Plugz . . . Oh, Doctor! Can't you hear the music? The endless, pounding chords? No, don't pull the Plugz! They can sing! They can play! I swear! Can't you see Tito right now, in front of the stage with his guitar, playing ferociously . . . It's dark in here . . . Can't you see it? Can't you hear it?

Doc: You see, he's simply mad. He's rambling about Marshal Tito; next he'll think he's Napoleon. He doesn't even know his name. He signed his admitting papers with an "X." Just list him as another John Doe . . .

Patient: ***X??!! John Doe??!!*** Please, Doctor, let me see X just one more time before I die! Please! They are my favorite band! Oooo, oohh, my eyes are rolling, I can see those scribbly walls again . . . a crowd of blue- and pink-haired kids is jumping up and down like puppets . . . The fans are going wild! And there is X on stage! . . . desperate . . . books . . . kitchens . . . creeps . . . But here's something I've never heard before . . . something about, "If you don't like it, you can lump it, you got to get back to the base . . ." Oh, no, please don't send me away yet! I want to stay here! I want to get a beer out of the refrigerator! But it has a padlock on it! People whose heads look like porcupines are asking a short, big girl, "Where is Eno?" Is that another planet? And Darby Crash is wearing the hat of an SS officer! . . . Kids are slipping and sliding on a floor wet with beer and mud . . . Is this the River of No Return? Are we heading back to the base? Forward, march . . . 1-2-x-u . . . all in a line . . . ooo, there's that wild music again! It won't stop down here! It never stops! Doctor! Doctor! Can't you hear it? Can't you??

V...

AVENGERS/ALLEYCATS Whisky a Go Go

Counting R-13 graffiti all the way to the Whisky, under the vacant blinking stare of Laura Mars' eyes—grey features on a grey face, blink, blink, blinking. ("She's looking right through me and I want her to stop!") Somebody points to the spot where they flipped over a bus in "Riot on Sunset Strip" (AIP, '66). Then a wildman jumps on the hood of our car and gives us his secret parking spot.

The dumpster in the parking lot behind Licorice Pizza has been torched again. Another Punk Nite on the Strip.

The swarm is buzzing outside the Whisky. Rank and style, weird tribal rites. Someone shoots down a stream of ice water from the dressing room window. Then, with a throb and a shake . . .

The building starts to rumble "We Are the One." The Avengers have begun their second set. It runs through the crowd like a rumor and we all get sucked into the door.

Inside, Penelope is jutting out over the audience, her face gleaming—Mephisto's angel, the banshee Madonna—getting her pores steamed open. Looking very butch in a gold-lame jacket, red jumpsuit and her cowgirl's-nod-to-rockabilly boots.

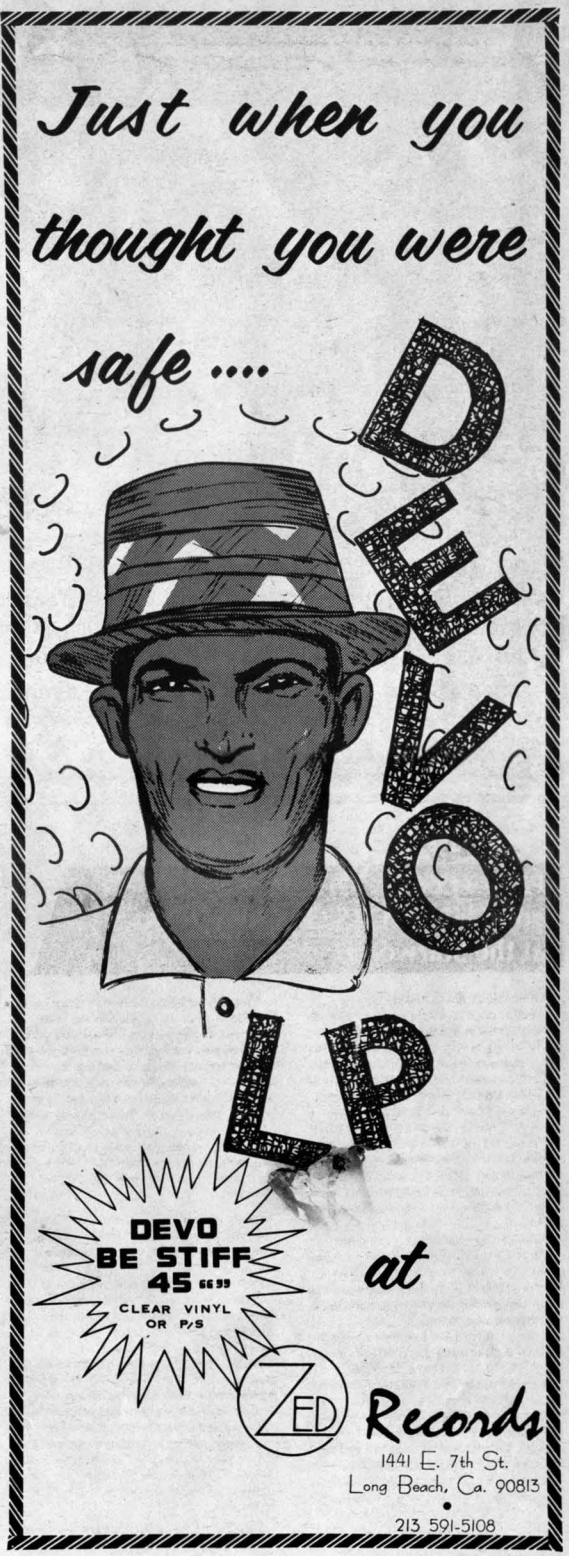
Jimmy is jack-knifing around in the dark behind her in one of his big brother's prom coats. Guitar player Greg is pistol whipping his machine. Danny on drums is beating out a punch-drunk frenzy, sweating up his boxer skivvies, demanding the crowd match his ferocity.

A houseful of poker-face grins seem to be only bluffing, they call the band's hand and raise them once.

Not without clout, the Avengers always work hard to lather up some suspense each time they play the Whisky. This time out, they were a nod to Dr. Jekyll. Their usual socio-political attack was underscored by swirling, multi-punch light effects, bringing out the moodier, more impulsive side of the group.

Now we're back to the third paragraph here—"The swarm is buzzing . . .", etc.—except everybody wants to know where the party is.

—Ripper/Sake/99



Admission is $2.00 at all gigs.

ROCK CORPORATION

Jeff Simon's ROCK CORPORATION thanks everyone for some great wednesday gigs, and now introduces a series of sunday afternoon punk, beginning

September 17: The return of F-Word, The Eyes (with David Brown) and the Simpletones (of Rosemead)

September 24: Control Productions present the Controllers, the Plugz, plus a Salsa band with TBA

October 1st: X, Middle Class and ex-Skull Steve Fortura's new band

October 8th: Shock, Go-Go's and ex Berlin Brats Rick Wilder's new band.

And, during the week :

Wednesday and Thursday Sept 13 and 14 : Bobby Gibraltar, the Knack

Wednesday september 20 : Flipside presents Blow-Up, the Crayolas (with Spazz Attack)

Thursday september 21: Blow Up, Fly-Boys, the Jetters

Thursday september 28: The Bags, the Flesheaters, Red Lights

Sunday gigs are from 4 to 8 p.m., evenings gigs start at 9 p.m.

There is room for bands wanting to introduce their music by playing opening act Contact Jeff Simons at the Rock.

14310 Oxnard Street ★ Van Nuys, CA (213) 997-9412

7" seven Diameter vinyl

VINYLLY by Bo Clifford

Hello, hello. I'm back again. With a new title (the other was just *too* too) and more than enough records to fill this column twice. Let's go . . .

New Label Dept.

From England comes It Records with their first four releases: Speed, Midnite Cruiser, Duggie Briggs Band, and Outcasts. The major plus here is the united image presented by the graphics and musicians (e.g., Speed is the same band as Midnite Cruiser + one). Too bad that there isn't all that good music here. With the exception of Outcasts (whose record is a fine, fierce recording), this stuff is pretty ordinary. Since their record is the most recent of the four, perhaps that means good things for the future.

Off to a better start is Twintone Records in Minneapolis, a label funded by the studio owner, the S. Commandos' producer, and the owner of the best record store in town. They debut with three records that vary quite a bit in style *and* quality. Each EP has an arty, full-color sleeve and they average 14 minutes of music each (first 2500 on red vinyl, too). Taking them numerically: The Suburbs present nine rapid-fire tunes; not all are great, but at least a couple are and the rest are pretty damn good. "Your Phone," "Stereo" and "Prehistoric Jaws" are all top-notch and show a band with *real* potential if they can keep up the standard of their writing (the true test of any good band).

Spooks, on the other hand, sound like a band that until recently was comfortable doing Angel covers in bars. With a weak "futuristic concept" and some really familiar, cliched music, these guys can go nowhere but up (or, hopefully, away). Serves 'em right for recording before they'd ever played this stuff live.

The Fingerprints fall somewhere in between the other two. With an instrumental attack that recalls Beefheart's more straightforward efforts, you'd expect better lyrics to match the music's quality. They show promise, especially on "Wasted on You," but it'll take more than this effort to fulfill it.

Records From Points Closer to Home

Now that their first, extra-fab 45 has been re-released ("She Don't Know Why I'm Here" on BOMP!), the Last have released their second single on their own Backlash Records. It takes a few plays to get thru the grunge of the production, but it's worth it. "Every Summer Day" easily enters the California Summer Song Hall of Fame! If Sky Saxon was "alive" today, he'd sure appreciate the "Seeds meet Jan & Dean in a garage" quality of this record. The Last have genuine talent and Joe Nolte can really write songs. It's a shame that they are probably L.A.'s best-kept secret. The limited availability of the new 45 (only 150 made) will do little to change that.

It always does my heart good to see new records coming from the Motor City. Being an ex-Detroiter, I've always had a soft spot for the music of factories and feedback. That's one reason for rating Cinecyde's new EP, "Black Vinyl Threat," my fave rave of the month. The real reason is it sounds like "Funhouse" outtakes. Dense walls of guitars falling on top of each other, especially on "Underground" and "I Don't Want Nothin' From You." Another Detroit band, the Mutants, have released their debut: "So American" and "Piece o' Shit." They've been together in one form or another for several years and have developed a tough, metallic sound reminiscent of the Dictators. A truly *American* sound.

From Georgia come the B-52s, sounding very fresh and alive. Traces of such diverse sounds as Blondie, Dan Hicks, and Abba, on "Rock Lobster" and "52 Girls" is pure Shangri-las in the '70s. In plain language, the goods.

Records from Faraway Places

The fine Toronto fanzine, Pig Paper, has started its own label. The first release is by Simply Saucer and it's a pretty good one. "I Can Change My Mind" is much like R. Hell without the obnoxiousness of the vanished one. A really good record that gets better and better.

A couple of records from Australia have shown this month. Radio Birdman have a fine Stooges cover in "TV Eye." The other side is "New Race," an earlier version of a tune off their LP. A late breaking flash has these guys calling it quits. Since I'm one of the two or three people in the world who liked their album, I'm sorry to hear that.

Remember that kid in Florida who, after killing the old lady next door, claimed he was temporarily insane from watching TV? Well, the Victims' "Television Addict" deals with that as its subject. A strong, funny song ("just because I watch Dinah Shore doesn't mean I need a facelift") that shows good things in the Victims' future if they can break out from down under.

Which brings us to two near-simultaneous English releases by L.A.'s own Dickies. "Paranoid" (what . . . again?) with "I'm OK You're OK" and "Eve of Destruction" with "Doggie Do." The cover versions are alright in their own way, but the boys will either stand or fall on the strength of their original songs. If I only had these two songs to judge them by, I'd say they were sitting. "Doggie Do" seems more a fragment than an actual song. It's here, and then it's gone; more forgettable than anything else. Why A&M is pushing it is beyond me. However, "I'm OK . . ." is *very* strong. Its good-natured humor has flown past most English ears, but this irreverent slice of a Hollywood kid's life is just plain fun. It sticks a finger in the ribs of all that self-help bullshit, too. Add this to "Hideous" and "You Drive Me Ape" and you'll hear that the Dickies *can* survive on vinyl.

I See Colors Dept.

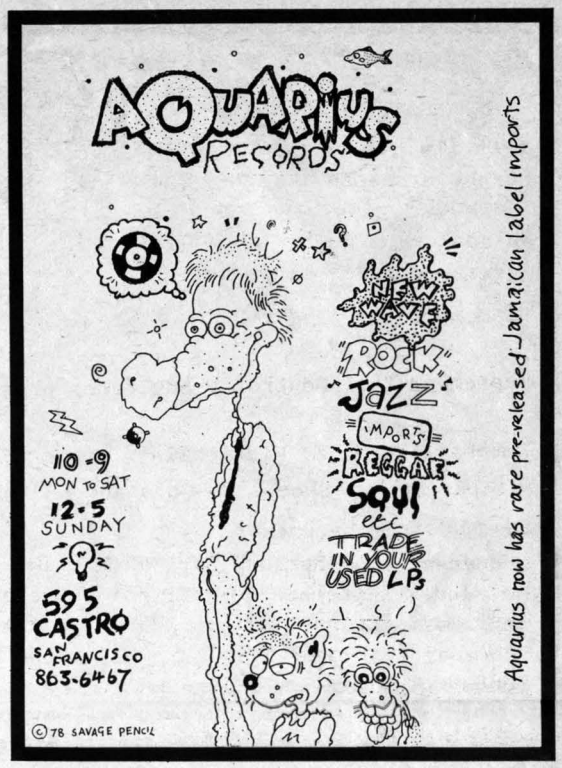
Since more and more records are being released on colored vinyl (ever notice how they smell like money, too?), their presence will be noted in as unobtrusive a manner as possible. The name of the record will be followed by a color abbreviation: red (R), yellow (Y), and so on. This method will keep those interested informed while not detracting from the actual music (what it's all about, right?!). I'll start doing that next time; you have been forewarned . . .

While we're on the subject, you might run across some Stiff product on colored vinyl (45s are yellow and LPs are blue). Reliable sources (and my own keen eyes) say these are counterfeits. Somebody, somewhere, went to a great deal of trouble and expense to press these up and if it weren't for the slightly shoddy graphics, it would be very hard to tell real from fake. They had the Stiff sense of humor, though, by inventing the "Cou-B" prefix for their numbers.

Benediction

Remember to send all questions, comments, bits of vinyl for review, and anything else to me c/o Slash . . .

Bo Clifford



BASHO'S LEFTOVER RECORDS

This pile of brand new singles really doesn't offer anything you've never heard before but it's still thrilling to have a wide selection of mediocrity from which to draw day to day inspiration. I've divided these innocuous offerings into two categories: Foreign and Domestic.

On the home front we have **Jim Basnight,** a merryhearted Seattle lad whose "Live in the Sun" had me reaching for my shades. He himself admits the B-side ("She Got Fucked") is a joke. Not to be left behind, **Ozzie,** a group of funny guys from Sacramento, have put out a "concept single." "Android Love"/"Organic Gardening" effectively prove the "concept" concept dead. The guy on the cover has a beard but should not be confused with Jesus, who could raise the dead.

The Pagans, a self-proclaimed Cleveland fun band, have put out a punk single, another admittedly dead concept. "Street Where Nobody Lives"/"What's This Shit Called Love" is a better approximation of Jesus raising the dead and is a satisfactory substitute for the Deadboys' second album.

On the topic of death, we have **Willie Alexander**'s rollicking, good-natured re-release ("Kerouac"/"Mass. Ave.") on Bomp Records. Rumors persist that the Bomp company will fold despite records also out by the **Boyfriends** (most known as the unwilling hosts of a scandalous motel party) and the **Last**, who, contrary to widespread belief, are from the L.A. area. Since the Last have such a wide following, I don't need to tell you that they sound like a '60s L.A. band copying a '60s London band. Remember, when Greg Shaw goes broke, these records will be collectors' items. Also familiar to collectors are the ever-buoyant **Marbles,** who have a similar sound to the Last but could claim to have done it first. Another thing they hold in their favor is that they are from New York and all look like Phast Phreddie.

On the immigration scene we have five singles by Canadian bands. As we all know, Canadians are the epitome of wit and good cheer. Start off with the well-meaning **Cads**, whose "Do the Crabwalk" E.P. is the equivalent of a public service broadcast on the topic of body lice. One step beyond that is **The Curse** (an all-girl band who sound like Eater if Eater were all girls) who warn of the hazards met by shoeshine boys in the big city. Side two is about Killer Bees.

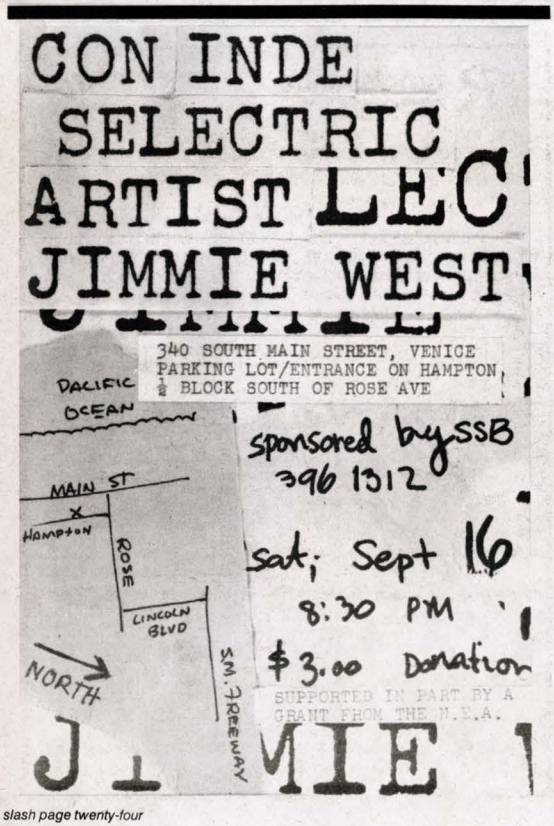
After the Curse, we do the **Dishes.** The Dishes are not girls but they do an early Roxy Music drag. There's also a band called **No Fun** from 13536 98 A Avenue, Surrey, B.C., Canada V3T 1C8. They want two dollars American. The last of our erstwhile Canooks is **Zoom**, two guys who've since formed another band. Zoom's single is a stylized, fey, Quickish poke at decadence. ("Sweet Desperation") and violence ("Massacre at Central High").

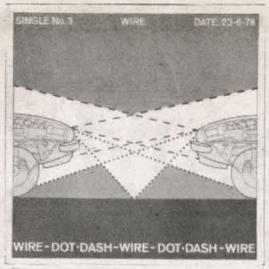
From Holland, the home of decadence, we have two singles. One by **God's Heart Attack** and one by **The Helmetts.** God's Heart Attack has a frolicking punk sound that makes me think they must have the kind of upbeat scene there that we enjoyed here in L.A. for a time. The record is more a souvenir than a landmark. The Helmetts have an insane sound and if they'd come out a year ago they would have been a landmark, like the Users. The Helmetts even use a Jimmy Page solo to good effect.

1984 (a group of fun-loving Frogs) have a metallic punk single ("Salted City"/"D Section") out. It's obviously a "message" single but they just can't screech English well enough for you to get the effect of what they say.

Well, I wasted more time writing this than you did reading it but neither of us wasted as much time and money as putting out these singles.

B. Macko





WIRE
E.M.I. Harvest Import
(Dot Dash/Options R)

They're getting more esoteric, more obscure all the time as this attests. But somehow, through all the charted artistic concepts, they still make whatever they do come alive with a raw spontaneity and a minimum of instrumentation.

Both "Dot Dash" and "Options R" are uncluttered, to the point, danceable Rorschach ink blots that don't seem too relevant at first, but root around in your subconscious until they've found a home. They stay, getting nasty, refusing to leave. And that's where the fun begins.

Chris D.

SHAM 69
Polydor Import
(If the Kids are United/
Sunday Morning Nightmare)

Okay, this is more like it. No more of that shoddy self-indulgence or self-pity stiffening up with rigor mortis that was so evident on "Dirty Faces." This is better than their album with the exception of maybe "Ulster"; "United" is a chant raised to its most glorious, uplifting form. Jimmy may sound like he has his cosmic tongue ("...you are him, and he is you...") planted firmly in cheek, but he means every word of it, and in the context of musical disintegration around us right now, it's very nice.

"Sunday Morning Nightmare" is a funny putdown of Sunday hangovers, a la a disco punk whose friends think he looks like Olivia Newton-John.

Chris D.

SNAKEFINGER
Ralph Records
(The Spot/Smelly Tongues)

Most commercial release yet on mysterioso artso experimento tongue-in-cheeko San Francisco labello Ralph Records, which don't mean it's going to take over the airwaves, just that you can sing it, hum it and copy it. Neo-dada lyrics and edgy, psychotic sound reminiscent of late Beefheart before the fall, fits quite nicely with the growing batch of limey experimental singles oozing their way to our back brain.

The deep ocean blue vinyl also looks quite pretty with all the other red, green, transparent, polka dotted releases.

After a few days of hesitation, I seem to have selected the B-side, "Smelly Tongues," as the one to get up to on those days that demand a healthy dose of Throbbing Gristle, The Normal, and other mind-grating musical attacks.

Speaking of gutsy records (as opposed to gut records), some recently heard demo tapes of Cabaret Voltaire, the Pop Group, and Siouxie and the Banshees make me believe we're about to see an explosion of records that only occasionally fit the old pop music mold. But, of course, Ralph Records and its resident mad scientists knew it all along.

Kick

PENETRATION
Virgin Records Import
(Firing Squad/Neverr)

Half-hearted and wasted in a near-mindless void, Pauline sounds like a cross between Petula Clark and Cilla Black gone MOR punk. I wanted to like this after being halfway satisfied with "Don't Dictate," but how can you achieve penetration when you're nodding out before you even hit the microphone?

"Firing Squad" is a total loss, not because of the song itself but because of the boring, apathetic performances. "Neverr" builds moderate tension when Pauline isn't singing.

It's all in vain, though, because it all ends up nowhere. The kindest thing I can say about this record is that it's gutless.

Chris D.

RAZAR
Polydor
(Ascension Day/Ain't No Mystery)

No idea what "Ascension Day" is about. Music kind of old-fashioned rock 'n' roll that builds up, singer with old-fashioned rock 'n' roll voice, old-fashioned lead guitar noise in the background—yet there is something intriguing about it all, some directionless energy maybe.

"Ain't No Mystery" has a nifty opening line ("you go around preaching sex and violence but I bet you paid for your tv license") and quickly sinks into power rock. The singer really sounds like Slade on this one, which might appeal to some of you.

Kick

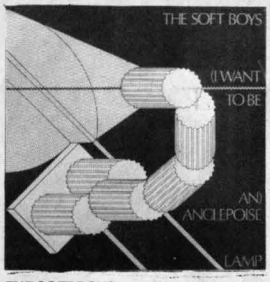
KLARK KENT
Kryptone records import
(Don't Care/Thrills/Office Girls)

One man doing everything by himself (vocals, drums, guitar, bass and typewriter). Competent if not thrilling. "Don't Care" cooks fine and will stick in your head for a while if there is room for it, "Thrills" is

forgettable, and "Office Girls" kind of cute with soundtrack of chattering secretaries and clinging typewriters. The snazzy pic sleeve and green vinyl also add to make it a respectable product.

Next one,

Kick



THE SOFT BOYS
Radar import
(I Want to Be an Anglepoise Lamp/ Fat Man's Son)

Some people I know raved and ranted when the Soft Boys' ventilator thing came out, making me feel like a dumb nurd for not understanding its brilliance and importance. Then they started wearing badges that said "acid punk" and I felt even dumber. I sincerely believed (still do) that in the past ten years every little drop of valuable contribution to music and happiness has been thoroughly squeezed out of psychedelia. In other words, enough is enough, let the exhausted fad rest forever. Hence my disturbed state at seeing two such contradictory words as "acid" and "punk" linked together by the fad makers.

Fortunately there ain't much in this single to support that bastardized direction the new wave prophets were toying with a while back. Not very "freaky" stuff at all, really, unless you consider "ooh ooh aah aah" wimp harmonies freaky (which they are, in the medical sense of the term). It's all very well played and well sung and well forgotten soon after (A-side).

B-side, "Fat Man's Son," is very good pop bursting with ideas and an acute lack of ability to choose. Rich Kids meet Magazine meet the Move. Ooh, my head!!

Kick Face

X-Ray Spex
EMI Import
(Identity/Let's Submerge)

"Shame on you child
The way you dress
The state of you
Oh what a mess
Your hair is natty dread
Your shoes are ted
And you used to be a skinhead."

"Identity is a crisis, can't you see," because nothing seems to mean nothing anymore. Not in England, where punks battle skinheads just for the right to listen to music, where re-evaluations are necessary to see who is/was what when, why, how and who cares. And whatever claim to political impact the punks have made is being questioned—the Clash subjecting themselves to an "accepted" producer, the Sex Pistols finally turning into the joke (a funny one) the unconvinced always held them to be.

Here in L.A. we knew it didn't mean quite that much in the first place, but the trend is here, too. Not only in the obvious (/inevitable?) cooptation of record co. signings, but also in the suspicions concerning the Masque—cries of blatant outright capitalism, Whisky-style—and even in the rush-released Slash "published monthly" no longer a hopeful promise but a realized threat. Responsibility and old-fashioned American security are taking hold, the magic is fading, revealing the all-too-predictable machinery beneath, and we know/should know what that means.

X-Ray Spex know what it means because that's why they exist. "Identity" poses the question ("When you see yourself/Does it make you scream?") but doesn't answer it, because that's where you come in.

Suzi Cynical

THE PLUGZ★★★★★
Slash records
(Move/Let Go/Mindless Contentment)

That wonderful little label not trying at all to be a big label has put out another wonderful little single—this time by fast-growing trio, the Plugz, and it is everything it should be: fast, raw, and full of spelling mistakes. No slick Dangerhouse two- or three-color packaging for this bunch. If you're lucky you might even find a few fingerprints on the vinyl. The lyrics are included so that you may sing along next time Tito, Barry and Charlie go frantic and sweaty opening up for the big shots. And although it was recorded a few months ago when Jehovah Robot was the one behind the drums and Charlie still dreaming up various ways to get out of the countryside, it is still a hell of a way to spend four minutes.

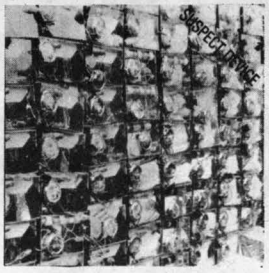
Now, all together: "I don't want to do anything, I don't even want to be with me, I don't want to do anything, anything anything." And, kiddies, it comes with a super garish sticker that will give that definitive touch of class to your apartment door and the creeps to your building manager.

Kick

EATER LIVE E.P.
"Get Your Yo-Yos Out"
The Label Import
(Debutante Ball/No More/ Thinking of the U.S.A./Holland)

Eater is still a very young band. They deserved more attention from their first two excellent singles than they received. However, a so-so debut album with too many covers and some throwaway originals didn't help. This is a different matter. They sound like they've been playing for years with a definite surplus of ideas and no abatement of energy. The exuberance and vitality, especially on "Debutante Ball" and "Thinking of the U.S.A.," are something to hear.

Chris D.



STIFF LITTLE FINGERS
Rigid Digits Import
(Suspect Device/Wasted Life)

I've already expended so many cliches and superlatives about the quality of a cer-

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SNAKEFINGER-THE SPOT (COL. VINYL)
VIBRATORS-JUDY SAYS-PURE MANIA
CLASH-WHITE KAN-PRISONER (T/S)
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tain record when I really believe it to be good that I'm at a loss for words. I can go on and on talking about the way the performances and production compliment each other, the kind of vision and strength I pick up from this, and you wouldn't be any the wiser. So you'd better go out, buy it and see for yourself.

Chris D.

LA DUSSELDORF
Nova import
(Silver Cloud/La Düsseldorf)

"Silver Cloud" is a pointless instrumental with ups and downs and in-betweens that could go on for hours but mercifully doesn't. Super-clean, antiseptic pinkfloyd-ish "theme" with variations—it's a true, boring Teutonic exercise that means nothing the first time you spin it and less thereafter.

Other side toys with new wave speed and delivery, only to fall back on laboratory musical prettiness when the pointlessness of the fast approach becomes apparent.

How do you say "so what?" in German?

Kick Face

CLASH
C.B.S. Import
(White Man in Hammersmith Palais/ The Prisoner)

Joe Strummer wins the elocution prize of the year. As usual, I can understand maybe three lines out of each song.

Also as usual, there is an iron-fisted, blood-slitting eloquence that transcends coherence. The Clash are heading down a road that not many want to follow. Those who see it under the vacuous term called "politics" will one day realize what the word means when the quality of their six-pack-on-Friday-night lives lies forsaken and broken in their own bloodied, exploited street.

Chris D.

TUBEWAY ARMY
Beggars Banquet import
(That's too bad/Oh! Didn't I say)

Not very recent but still worthy of attention. Why this paper insists on reviewing brand new, unlocatable vinyl turds and ignores some of the less flashy product is a trendy weakness I would like to do something about. *(Who's calling who a trendy?! —Ed.)*

Tubeway Army (great name) are a bit like Bowie if Bowie was years younger and had gone on rocking like a rebel rebel. "That's Too Bad" takes off on a speeded-up "Pretty Women" type of guitar riff that carries the song all the way to the end with admirable smoothness and efficiency. It rocks without ever becoming thick or predictable.

B-side is all murky bass roots with cocky Jean Genie vocals.

Kick

ART ATTACKS
Albatross records import
(Neutron Bomb/I Am a Dalek)

We in L.A., being real experts on tunes about the neutron bomb, probably won't be blasted away by this English attempt to tackle the subject. It's kind of flat and one-dimensional—less skin contact than the Controllers' and less holocaust than the Weirdos'—but given a chance, it will make it to your memory shelves too. Five bad points for closing it with the obvious sound explosion bit.

"I'm a Dalek" (a robot creature from an English kiddie tv program) is fast and pogoable to. The singing is better than on "Neutron Bomb." After the "Streets" album I expected slightly more from the Art Attacks.

Kick

THE SUBURBS
Twin Tone Records
(Memory/Go/Stereo/Teenage Run-in/ Chemistry Set/Your Phone/ Couldn't Care Less/You/ Prehistoric Jaws)

What??? Nine songs on a 45? What's this crazy shit??

Actually, this is 33 things per minute but it's seven inches, looks like a single (unfortunately will probably get as much attention), does have nine (very brief) songs on it, comes from Minnesota and is a long way from being bad. Yea, Minnesota, you know, the Commandos. And like the clean-cut trio I like in spite of its definitely unfashionable aura, this is fast and direct and eminently catchy.

Did I say the wrong words? Okay, it's not doing anything especially new, mind-boggling or super-disgusting; you could call it pop if the word didn't hurt so bad these days. Thank god these guys don't care about labels and blissfully churn out their grinning, loony brand of music.

Recommended airplay list (keep dreaming!): "Teenage Run-in," "Chemistry Set," "Your Phone." Go to it, D.J.s. Come on, a small effort. It can't be *that* hard getting off one's ass???

Kick Face

THE FALL
Step Forward import
"Bingo-Master's Break-Out!"
(Psycho Mafia/Bingo-Master/ Repetition)

I'll start with the B-side 'cos I'm totally obsessed by it although I doubt I can intelligently say why. *(How about your usual way then? —Ed.)* Especially with *that* creep in the control tower making wise comments. "Repetition" is . . . well . . . about . . . of . . . into . . . hhmm, repetition. It's rather slow and . . . repetitive. It does not go anywhere 'cept there are various approaches to it, resulting in either a totally different appreciation of the song or not. See what I mean? See what I mean? See what I mean?

It could be about the music of the past 20 years and very sarcastic or it could be about the new music and also very sarcastic or it could be about their music and not sarcastic: pick one or several. There are hints and counter-hints, the hilarious "My Generation" chorus at the end, the West Germany "simultaneous suicides" bit (political as well as musical satire??), the moronic "heavy" guitar run that does not bulge until the last three seconds, the snotty, exaggeratedly stoopid delivery of the singer making fun of whom?

Fuck it, listen to it and tell me what you think (just joking). If only I could see the group perform it, or just a picture or an interview—but nothing, big zero. Take it as it is. Only thing I'm pretty sure of is a definite affinity between this bunch and the Alternative TV outcasts (beyond the obvious label connections).

On the more accessible side, we have one vintage, raw, hard-core Step Forward offering (there is an undeniable Step Forward sound, due either to their recording techniques or mastering techniques—everything up there, fuck this separation nonsense and all) and one slightly less usual tune ("Bingo-Master") with the flimsiest lead guitar since your little brother and his chums gave it a try for a whole summer in your parents' garage. Remarkable and rather pure.

A hell of a single but don't tell that studio musician friend of yours about it. He may try to have you committed, or at least will certainly stop shoving his coke up your nose whenever you meet.

Kick Face

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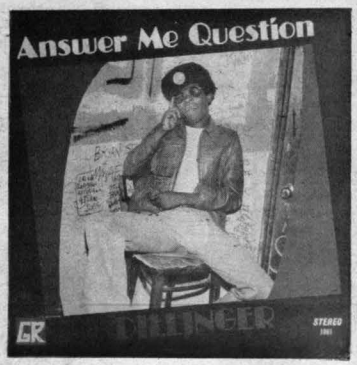
slash page twenty-seven

ALBUMS



REAL LIFE
MAGAZINE
Virgin import

Whenever I put this record on I get virtually every reason in the implied "punk etiquette" book for not liking it. Rubbing sleepy eyes, friends conjure up an excuse to leave the room. I wait patiently until they've gone and turn it up louder, as loud as I can stand it, because this is unquestionably one of the masterpieces of the year. It must be absorbed by osmosis, mainlined to the brain, until it's impossible to eat, can't think of anything else, impossible to even carry on a conversation. I can barely collect these thoughts to put them on paper. It's that good.

Infatuation came later; what initially caught my attention is the astounding variety of the presentation. It ranges from the modernistic quasi-jazz of "Definitive Gaze" and "The Light Pours Out of Me" to sleek freeway pulse ("Coil") to sombre processional ("Motorcade") to stately ballroom glide to cabaret dementia on what's proved to be the album's most engrossing piece, "Great Beautician in the Sky." That one, which I originally considered a blemish on an otherwise perfect product. When all else is silent, I can still hear vocalist Howard Devoto's drunken, demanding growl as if it were at full volume. Infectious is hardly the word. Contagious is more like it. I feel pleasantly diseased after a listening.

Devoto founded the Buzzcocks and left shortly after the "Spiral Scratch" EP, a precedent-setter in itself. Claiming to be jaded with live performance, he retired for several months, then resurfaced with the great "Shot By Both Sides" 45 (a revamped version is on the album). Let's face it, this is music that's going to last for years, eons even. Devoto and his cohorts are positively the most intriguing, forceful unit to arrive since those first hints of vitality (Clash, Pistols, etc.) last year.

A warning: do not ignore this record or this band. This is real life. I'm convinced.

Lively

SATURDAY NIGHT POGO
(A collection of
Los Angeles new wave bands)
Rhino Records

Hopefully the rumored Dangerhouse LP due to come out one of these days will eradicate this fast attempt at catching the undiscriminating, uninformed curiosity seeker from out of town by surprise. You sure won't be able to do any kind of pogo to 99 per cent of it and you will have an equally hard time understanding what's especially new about this wave from the dark past.

The selection of unburied tunes, demos and vinyl jokes ranges from wimp schlock rock (Daddy Maxfield, talented rock-writers) to heavy metal carbons (Dogs) to tongue-in-cheek satirical punk (Low Numbers/Vom) to genuine pop music that probably cringes at being linked with safety pins, destroy and vomit (Motels/Needles and Pins/Droogs).

And then, out of nowhere, the Dils. Mystery element in this already mixed-up mixture, hair on the soup, the finger up the ass, the hammer and sickle in the American Legion hall.

This album's gotta be the ultimate package deal of the day, so blissfully unconcerned it is with underlying unity or just plain meaningfulness.

Cuts to avoid at all costs: Daddy Maxfield, the Dogs, the Young Republicans. Needles and Pins, Droogs, and Motel won't hurt you. And you know the Dils.

Sorry, forgot something. The Vom number is actually well done, although you've heard the same stuff dozens of times before (I *know* that's the point, silly. Can't I be clever too??) and the Low Numbers' "Belsen Was a Gaz" an insult to the Rotten one's memory.

Kick Boy

THE IMAGE HAS CRACKED
ALTERNATIVE TV
Deptford Fun City Records Import

Intellectual heavy metal. But real intellectual heavy metal is modern jazz. And punk is the only modern jazz that I can listen to. So where does that leave this? It's hard to say.

David Brown says that he thinks it was manufactured not out of vinyl, but old army boots. Aside from the dismal pressing (mastering? production?), I listen to this quite a bit, then wonder why later.

"Action Times Vision" and "Viva la Rock 'n' Roll" are probably the reasons. The rest is okay, too, but it's hard to say just what I find so interesting here.

Chris D.

V2
THE VIBRATORS
Epic

Not much to say about this. More fast, predictable tunes with carefully tailored new wave sentiment in the cliche-ridden lyrics, uniformity of sound, feelings and tempo. The Vibrators are (were) giving us what is supposed to sell 'cept it probably won't.

They are certainly competent players and often come close to writing the perfect commercial new music ditty, only to blow it by their too obvious calculatedness.

The album still remains quite playable, as a filler between doses of the real thing. There is more substance to the two minutes of "White Man in Hammersmith Palais" or the five minutes of the Fall's "Repetition" than in the 40 or so minutes of this vibrating pseudo mania. Automatic music not very much into the future.

Kick Face

MORE SONGS ABOUT BUILDINGS AND FOOD
TALKING HEADS
Sire

Probably as many things could be said about the Talking Heads' new album as there are sections in the cover composite picture. I never did like the 1st LP very much and was astonished to find myself thoroughly obsessed by some parts of this second release and only mildly annoyed by others.

Once past the initial shock of David Byrne's shrill, maniacal vocal mechanics and the sometimes neo-funky discoid riffs (used here for rather different purposes, one quickly discovers), I got trapped by the super-cool, ironic music laid down by these ordinary eastern wasps.

Then there is the Eno production, immediately detectable only when this or that tune threatens to repeat itself or lose its initial impact, but actually present and in action at every moment, burying Byrne's words when the music can say more than the lyrics, giving the second part of a tune that slightly automated touch of the absurd when obviousness or predictability might set in.

Throughout the album there is a constant dual effect which produces in the listener the exciting inability to decide if what he is hearing is simply carefully crafted pop music or something rather more sophisticated and disturbing. The lyrics, of course, should solve the dilemma, but they are so de-emphasized (with a couple of exceptions, like the super-silly "I'm painting again" shriek) as to well go unnoticed while the rhythms of the tunes grab hold of you.

And if you conclude that the Talking Heads are just too clever or remote from real life to have any real impact, like a bunch of artists *toying* with music before they tire of it and go on to toy with another medium, the final "Big Country" number should set things straight: they are acutely aware of the rest of the world and its trite ways but simply want no part of it. At least not as long as the price of constant boredom has to be paid for living in it. In a rather slow rocking tempo, Byrne starts by enumerating what he sees while flying over the American continent: stadiums, restaurants and bars ("for later in the evening"); it's all vaguely patriotic, except for the detached tone, but in no way are we prepared for the devastating chorus which wonderfully smacks of snotty elitism and even un-Americanism: "I wouldn't live like that, oh god, no siree/I wouldn't do the things those people do/I wouldn't live there if you paid me to." Then he describes the daily life led by all those millions below—the shopping, the evening get-togethers, the kitchens full of food—and once again blows up in an emphatic denial of kinship or sympathy: "I wouldn't live like that . . ." Even if a couple of verses toward the end admit the loneliness and inherent sadness that such a refusal carries with it, the overall effect is that of optimism and gladness in the superiority of one's fate. It is also slightly mad (the lyrics make way to ga ga ka ka ga ga goo barks) but anyone refusing to drown in the big warm brotherhood of the average man is always considered crazy anyway.

Certainly the most important cut of the album (it is, after all, the only tune vaguely connected to buildings or food), it is also the least equivocal in its message.

Once the more obscure aspects of their art are tackled and exorcised, the Talking Heads just might soon turn out one of the most devastating statements of this musical era.

KickFace

slash page twenty-eight

MESSAGE FROM THE KING
PRINCE FAR I AND THE ARABS
Front Line Virgin import

Of all the toasters and jive masters riding the rhythms in every obscure Ja studio, the man who calls himself Prince Far I just may be the most removed from a hypothetical white audience acceptance, so esoteric is his art, so totally alien his talent. Prince Far I does not sing, scream, blabber, hum; Prince Far I simply preaches the rastafarian creed in short allegorical parables that sometimes feature a basic, stark, musical backing track with unattached horn lines weaving in and out, a distant singer wailing the theme line thru layers of electronic echoes, and sometimes rely on nothing but a booming, repetitive bass line and of course the Prince's deep, roughly textured voice.

Ja, Zion, Babylon, Ethiopia, Jamaican weed and natty's earthly tribulations: it's all there for everyone to be edified and enlightened. And whether the spiritual implications that literally cram the album go over your evil head or not, you stand a chance of being hypnotized by the strange, moody "tunes" that have been recorded here.

In a number simply called "Wisdom," a singer loudly praises Prince Far I ("Behold, behold, listen to what Prince Far I has to say . . .") while the Prince himself exhorts and prophesies in superb form. Perhaps a trifle short on modesty, but wouldn't you be too if you had become the Almighty's own vocal chords?

Chatty

HARDER THAN THE REST
CULTURE
Front Line Virgin import
AFRICA STAND ALONE
CULTURE
April records import

Now that the Diamonds have safely retreated to middle-of-the-road harmonizing and cooing, Culture appear to be the brightest hope for the future of vocals-oriented roots reggae. This month, no less than two albums by the inspired trio came my way. In spite of the fact that some tunes (even if spelled slightly differently) can be found on both albums, every fan will want to possess the two, and it is very hard (and futile) to decide which one is the best.

While the English Front Line package offers a slicker, more engineered sound (with the ever-present Dunbar/Shakespeare/Lindo/Cedric Brooks team at the instrumental controls) and additional horn parts, it is still a superb album that should satisfy the most demanding listener. As is usual with Culture, the harmonies are totally integrated with the overall sound, there is no special emphasis on this part or that part, everything beautifully merges together in a smooth, effortless way. It grabs you from beginning to end, follows you around all the time and probably makes you a slightly better person in the end.

Although harder to locate than the Virgin release, the Jamaican "Africa Stand Alone" LP is worth seeking. Its versions of "Iron Sharpening Iron," "Tell Me Where You Get It," and "Love Shine Brighter" are rawer, "dirtier" than the British re-recordings (different musicians are credited) and it features the fantastic "Garvey Rock," strangely excluded from the "Harder Than the Rest" LP. There is also an unusually long cut, "Behold the Land," that successfully blends vocal reggae and dub explorations.

Two essential albums that will perform miracles on your weary soul. Get yourself some Culture.

Chatty

ANSWER ME QUESTION
DILLINGER
Gee's Records

Totally up there. A real knock-out with more than half of the cuts coming close to being all time masterpieces of deejaying. Dillinger's patois can be thicker than the deepest jungle but his superb rhythm and crazed sense of humor need no translation or special knowledge of reggae lore.

This time the inventor of bionic dread tackles Mexicans as seen in western movies ("Fernando Sancho"—are you the gringo that come to smash up the place, drink my tequila, ha ha ha ha . . .—all done in exaggerated Mexican accent, rather insane and unforgettable); girls of small virtue ("Everybody Girl"); money lenders, and other modern matters. There is even a cut ("Tickle Me Girl") where Dillinger spends most of his time giggling, laughing and generally destroying all serious notions of what one should and shouldn't do on vinyl.

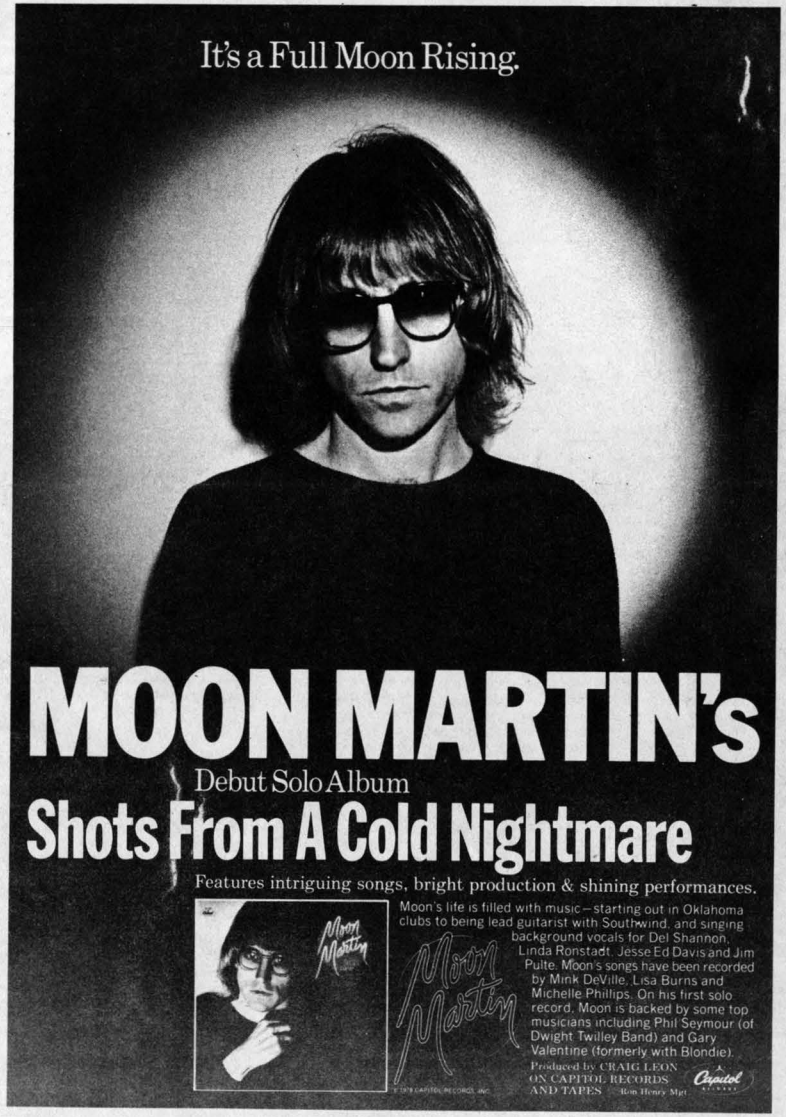
BIBLE
PRINCE HAMMER
Front Line Virgin import

Good, if slightly predictable toasting (or "dub-lyricism," as it is called on the liner notes) with a couple of outstanding cuts.

The tune titled like the album ("Bible") has to be one of the most outlandish audio examples of futuristic culture clash I have ever heard. After an odd intro of vaguely Spanish background wailing and a spelling of the word "bible," the tune kicks off with a very steady bass pulse, Prince Hammer starts reciting a Christian prayer ("our father who are in heaven, hallowed be thy name . . .") that quickly turns into rastafarian propaganda. A chalice (herb smoking instrument to you) is lit and passed around, with great puffing sounds, while the Spanish-with-spaghetti-western-overtones wailing fills the gap. Various echoes and electronic tricks are grafted onto the melody and the toaster, now truly energized with a few lungfuls of weed, babbles on in a very inspirational manner until the sudden ending marked by more puffing sounds in the silence of the room.

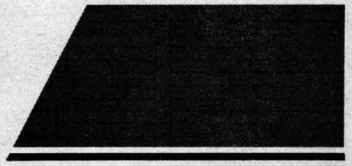
Now beat that for sheer lunacy. Wonder what the Vatican's feelings might be were those mummies to find out what some demented blacks are doing with a few elements of the Christian faith?!

Chatty



THE FIRST ANNUAL SLASH READERS' POLL, or "IT'S TIME TO GET TO KNOW THE IDIOTS."

A Slash survey into all the heavy stuff you're all too fuckin' illiterate to express in long, grammatically correct sentences. If you're too shaky to make a cross on the "yes" or "no" box across from the question, just stick your finger in your hair and press hard on the paper. The resulting grease spot will be accepted as a suitable answer. The results of the whole enchilada will be published in two months' time, major findings will be turned over to the Smithsonian Institution and all advices, criticisms or threats regarding Slash will be taken into consideration if we feel like it.



1. Are you a subscriber? ☐ yes ☐ no

2. Sex

3. Age

4. Hair color this week

5. Means of support (check one)
☐ work ☐ mom and dad ☐ welfare
☐ pillage ☐ blackmail ☐ none of your goddam business

6. Favorite hometown band?

7. Most hated hometown band?

8. Favorite band in general?

9. Most hated band in general?

10. Do you ever listen to the radio? ☐ yes ☐ no

11. Which station(s)?

12. Do you buy records? ☐ yes ☐ no

13. How much worth a month?

14. Favorite music magazine (besides you-know-what)?

15. Most hated music magazine?

16. Favorite fanzine?

17. Most hated fanzine?

18. Any political beliefs? ☐ yes ☐ no

19. If yes, which ones? (make it short)

20. Would you describe yourself as (check one, two at most)
☐ a real punk (man!) ☐ a real punkette
☐ a closet rastafarian ☐ a wimp
☐ an art fart ☐ a stinkin' rich kid
☐ a clique-clinger ☐ a band manager
☐ a black randy
☐ a nameless nobody who is never in Slash and won't lose sleep over it

21. If Slash started a regular reader-sponsored alternative music chart, would you bother to mail in your picks every month?
☐ yes ☐ no

22. A little knowledge goes . . . (check one)
☐ a long way ☐ merrily along ☐ off the deep end

23. If you're a subscriber, are you
☐ moderately satisfied with the delivery
☐ surprized that it arrives at all
☐ quite annoyed by the three issues gap but tickled by the special, super-secret beaver fold-out included in the last envelope.

24. If you're *not* a subscriber, what are you waiting for?
☐ the U.S. mail service to give up the battle and turn its duties over to reliable private services.
☐ to be reasonably sure your rag won't disappear from one day to the next
☐ to go to jail so I can get the fucking thing free from you guilt-ridden liberal scum

25. Is punk . . .?
☐ alive ☐ dead ☐ rotten
☐ hibernating ☐ about to burst ☐ last year's thing

26. Next big thing is . . .?

27. A few badly needed improvements in Slash are . . .

28. The biggest mortal sin is . . .
☐ secretly powerpopping ☐ selling out
☐ not pogoing ☐ posing
☐ growing one's hair ☐ living in Beverly Hills
☐ owning a Destroy/Chaos t-shirt and a convertible Mercedes
☐ weekend punking

29. The worst social affliction?
☐ art damage ☐ gay damage
☐ glitter damage ☐ poetry damage
☐ old-fashioned booze and drugs damage
☐ New York damage ☐ Politix damage
☐ Slash clique damage ☐ the damage theory itself

30. Suggestions to improve the desperate club situation in Los Angeles (or favorite city):

31. Suggestions to improve the desperate world situation:

32. If Slash raised its price to $2.50, would you still buy it?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ kill!

33. If Slash raised its price to $2.50, would you still steal it from your best friend?
☐ yes ☐ no
☐ don't know—question too complicated

34. Who is the enemy (strictly confidential)?

35. If we're all so clever, how come we're not getting anywhere?

36. If you had to describe Slash to an innocent stranger, would you say it is . . .
☐ un-American ☐ un-cool
☐ unpretentious, for very obvious reasons ☐ unconstitutional
☐ uninteresting to career girls ☐ unfunny
☐ unto something big ☐ unavailable for comments
☐ ungover ☐ under heavy manners
☐ unable to find its way out of a paper bag
☐ uneligible for a Rockefeller Foundation grant
☐ unsurprisingly superficial and directionless

37. Think of a slogan for Slash that would capture its essence in a few words. (Best slogan will be used somehow, second best will be graciously offered to a worthless little fanzine of our choice and then will be relentlessly ridiculed in "Local Shit.")

38. What's the use?

29. Have you ever considered writing for Slash?
☐ Yes, but I can't afford the $25 fee to be deposited before my article is submitted
☐ No, I am not up to your high literary standards
☐ Yes, but I can't take the surprize deadlines
☐ No, no hable ingles
☐ Yes, and I do all the time, you brainless wind bags.

40. If for some odd reason, like judicial skirmishes, tax fraud or bomb threats, we had to change the name of the paper, a good substitute would be:

41. When you were a happy little kid, did you know your life would come to such a miserable state?
☐ Yes, I knew society had it in for me from the start.
☐ No, I honestly don't know what went wrong
☐ I'm still a happy little kid

☐ Special token box for those of you who have already died from overdoses, delirium tremens, bank robbery shootouts and Laurel Canyon mudslides. Just want you to feel like you're still with us even though your molecules are never going to find each other again. We might even include a specially blank record review section in issues to come to keep you in the know . . . *(Oh, shut up, this is sick! —Ed.)* . . .Sick, but not dead, ha ha. (The sick one)

42. Plans for the future?
☐ wife and kids/husband and kids
☐ serious TV addiction ☐ a little combo of my own
☐ any cult ☐ alcoholism
☐ catatonia ☐ janitor at the Masque
☐ random destruction of self and/or others
☐ record company executive post
☐ other

43. Out-of-town band most eagerly waited for?

44. Favorite part of Slash?

45. Worst part (watch it!)

46. All-time favorite album?

47. All-time favorite single?

48. Favorite punk cliche?

49. Favorite hippie cliche?

50. Favorite music press cliche?

51. Favorite historical disaster?

52. Favorite hereditary disease?

53. Favorite type of hangover?

54. Favorite mind-shrinking substance?

55. Favorite tv show?

56. Favorite way to wait for night time?

57. Favorite international criminal?

58. Favorite junk food?

59. Favorite type of police brutality?

60. Would you say it wouldn't hurt any if our next super giant saving annual poll is . . .
☐ a trifle more concise
☐ more concerned with the real issues
☐ devised by a relatively sane person
☐ trimmed down to one yes or no question
☐ simply forgotten and the author of this one abandoned in the middle of Compton at 2 a.m.

Thank you for participating. All questions need NOT be answered. An extra touch of creativity in making up your own question(s) and answer(s) is more than welcome. DO NOT CHEAT and send back two or several replies in a pathetic attempt to rig the outcome. It would only mean a bigger waste of time for you and an undeserved sense of popularity for us.

JiMbO.
DEVIL DOG & RAT BOY OUT FOR A WALK.. They take the back alleys... MINDING their own business... is it FATE OR SIMPLY A melding of time & chance that Leads them ... into... the JIMBO ZONE?
SMOGG
... WHERE, AS FATE has it, JIMBO sits TYING His Shoe.
GARS PANTER.
OVER... UNDER..... AROUND... through... IS That it? GAA! MY Legs ALWAYS Get IN the WAY!
The MAN who curses his legs today MAY TOMORROW PRAY FOR THEIR SWIFT RETURN!

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PROTOCERATOPS

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Cover: Siouxsie and the Banshees
Photo by Stevenson

SLASH: THE MAGAZINE THAT DOESN'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT

Guess what? We're big shots now. Serious. A big write-up in the LA Times, Kickboy what's his face officially named spokesman for the L.A. punk scene (if there is such a thing please call us collect and tell us where to find it, we can't seem to locate it lately), an occasional radio show on KPFK that nobody's listened to, not even us (for more info on that read this paper from cover to cover) THE FUCKIN' WORKS! Obviously Slash has gone establishment, boo piss on them pass me the amyl nitrate and turn up KROQ. In fact we've gone so establishment we've picked up their worst habit with no apparent effort; we've very smoothly very easily gone into debt, a big bad chunky mother of a debt. We shouldn't even be telling you these things, it makes us look bad and irresponsible and all that but we know we can trust you, you've been buying this rag since the beginning (fuck me!), you've been doing everything you can to help us make it thru the night (double fuck me with a snicker), and you're entitled to know the truth. And the truth is (get ready now, this is hilarious) we lately got to the point where there was nothing any of us could do or think of doing but reach (in a dignified manner of course) for the legendary panic button. So suddenly there were ten quivering little fingers reaching for that knob and pressing all at once. And the only thing that happened is that a white sign popped up with one simple little word on it: NERD! Yep, nerds we must be. Nerds for believing for one second that we would get any help from the very record companies who are peddling OUR fucking music and using our fuckin' insights to fatten their wallets and polish their credibility, nerds for thinking we would get all the support we needed from all the money making organizations who can't tell shit from gold and need nerds like us to tell them whom to sign and who to watch out for and then turn around with pursed lips and distaste on their android mugs and look the other way while we naively demand that ad they've been wasting on the readers of every lame publication they could come up with. You want names? Easy. Just look at these pages, and quickly figure out who, by all logical means, should be advertised in these pages and isn't. You know, all the bands that you and I were talking and writing about when hardly anyone else in this fat land of mental peasants knew what the fuck we were raving about. But times have changed, and maybe there is gold in dem new wave hills. And finally we were nerds for wishing for a better music scene, therefore implying we were wishing for a better living scene in general, with all the fat cats and the bullshit artists and the oppressors and the miniature dictators and the followers taking a well deserved holiday and never coming back to get in our way. It doesn't look like anything is going to change, and Slash should probably drop its joyful colors and come out in black from now on. But we ARE nerds, so we now give you two colors, more wonderfully idealistic and nihilistic garbage (what can you do when the positive outlook has been taken over by the drab jogging death patrols?) and the wrotten promise that IT will be said, one way or another. Our ads will come from wherever they come and will be worthy of respect because they ARE our oxygen and our life supply, our readers will come from wherever dissatisfied and curious cases come from, which is everywhere and everyday, and our inspiration will come from the ever growing alternative world that one day will strangle the present powers in their sleep. And if you think we're being funny, cut this out, put it away and read it in ten years. In the meantime, start compiling your own list of enemies. It will some day be very useful and save us all a lot of pointless bloodthirsty running around. Slash, the yellow pages of culture guerillas. And, if it never comes out again, you can add "repression" to your everyday vocabulary. Preceded by subtle.

PUBLISHED & EDITED BY Steven Samiof & Melanie Nissen SENIOR EDITORS Claude Bessy & Philomena CONTRIBUTORS Gorilla Rose Will L'Amato Gary Panter David Brown Chris Desjardins Judith Bell Kerry Colonna David Allen Michael Toombs David Wiley Allan McDonell FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS Tony D. Jon Savage All contents copyright 1978 by SLASH MAGAZINE BOX 48888 LOS ANGELES, CA 90048

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SHIT

(FORMERLY LOCAL SHIT)

photos:melanie

The Weirdos should go far on looks alone.. (El Monte?)

The past few weeks have seen an impressive number of local combos taking their music and wisdom to the heathen. The Weirdos spent over a couple of weeks playing Berkeley (where the entire audience consisted of the Search & Destroy staff, Chip of the Dils and Peter Urban:), Seattle, Portland, the unavoidable Mabuhays (quaintly described by Cliff Roman as "a toilet bowl") and a country and western joint in Santa Cruz. "Basically fucked" is how Cliff summed up his feelings about the tour. Yet them Weirdos have in no way become home loving folks with no desire to venture outside again: their next big project is an english tour sometime at the beginning of the year. No one has actually asked them to come and no record company has offered to pick up the tab so they are going to save their bread, grab a Lakers charter and simply show up with their suitcases full of instruments at the door of every club and demand to play. If this is not determination, it is madness. It is also quite admirable, and a shiny example of creative independence. And they don't even have a manager to tuck them into bed and lead them by the hand as they recently severed all ties with Jonh Ingham, the english fellow who had been looking after them for the past few months. (As I type this an other Weirdo news just arrived : drummer and bon vivant Nicky Beat was stabbed in the chest while performing his cab driving duties. Mr Beat is recovering and does not plan to cancel any concert.
The Controllers have almost become of the Mabuhays resident bands, playing there on different occasions with various hot and not so hot local outfits, and are soon going to take control of Texas. While up North, they played with the Vancouver band D.O.A., a group that has lately made our usually blase contacts very excited. One last crumb of news on the Controllers: Bass player Johnny Stingray spent some meditative time in jail a while back for various driving offenses (they all narrowly escaped arrest the night before as they had been caught putting up their fliers a wee bit too close to the Whisky), which is nothing special 'cept that he used to have small parts in police training movies in which he invariably played the part of the arrestee on which rookies could be shown how to properly handcuff your man and other civilities. Another example of Life imitating Art.
X, the band with the short name and the big sound are about to take their modern tales to faraway places with exotic names like San Antonio, Baltimore, Detroit and New York, where they will headline for two days at CBGB's and show the New Jersey kids what it is to be truly desperate. X will also be seen (and heard) on a cable tv program called "View" (Channel 3) in the first part of November, as they appear in one of the few experimental films being shown together that night.

(Before we move along, a brief tip to other bands planning to go and play up North: the man to contact in Portland Oregon is Peter Noble, at the Community Center for New Arts)

Now, since all these travelling news are probably making you car-sick or air-sick or just plain sick 'cos you never get to go anywhere 'cept to the valley and the only way one could call that a trip is calling it a bad one we will stop right now and instead start digging in our own backyard to see what valuable and educational information is hidden under the dirt.

"EXENE FEELING NEGATIVE"

Hole # 1 : The Screamers performed the shortest set of their career at a certain Fiorucci's, which is not, as many believe, just another spaghetti and linguini chain restaurant. The Screamers' entourage claims the culprits were the Beverly Hills police and fire depts (Beverly Hills must have something against the lads : months ago they were prevented from playing Beverly High School!), but a few treacherous elements of that same entourage hinted that the band was unceremoniously drowned out by less nerve-wracking disco syrup.

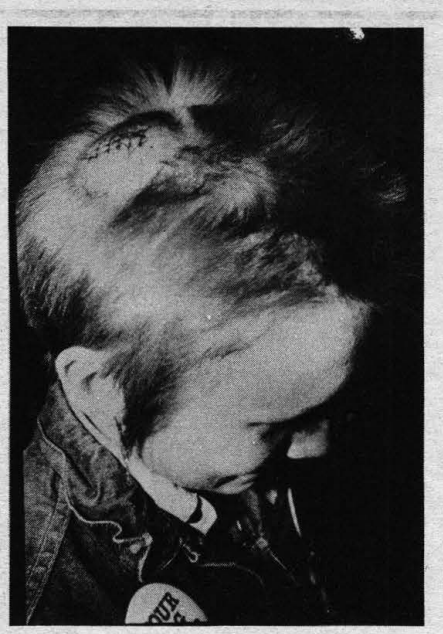
Determined to hit all media fronts and multiply their chances of a breakthru, the same Screamers also spent days in San Francisco polishing up video performances of their greatest hits. "122 hours of Fear", "Let's go, Vertigo", "Punish or be damned" and "Magazine Love" all ended up on cassettes that were immediately taken by a trusted messenger to curious european television networks. And, to leave no stone unturned and no territory unexplored, they organized a few days later a live direct-to-disc recording session of "Eva Braun" and two other songs. The result was described by one of them as "a possible non release". Exhausted, but with a sense of accomplished duty they shortly after left for New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Akron, Montreal and Toronto (thought we were thru with the geography courses, uh?!).

Other recording news concerning the screaming quartet (kind of) Lydia Lunch, the very independent non singer of Teenage Jesus (now rumored to have left that band behind) has chosen to launch her solo career by recording one of the most demanding tunes ever imposed upon young and innocent audiences, the Tommy Gear extravaganza "Gloomy Sunday", the very song

CHUKE of the MONTH: BLACK RANDY

the Screamers reluctantly dropped from their repertoire under mounting peer pressure.

Hole # 2: The officially closed Masque has unofficially seen much hoopla and fringe activities lately, from punkettes exploring each other's bodies in the middle of a medium-sized lake of beer while festive spectators swilled and cheered to a cow that refused to negotiate the difficult flight of steps that lead to everybody's fave cultural center. The first incident was a minute segment of a grander event that had been explained to naive outsiders as "a birthday party for about twelve people" but was justly understood by everyone else as an excuse to once again go



Rover: Latest object of public scorn Photo: Canterbury Archives

nuts for the night and rip the joint apart (and it takes imagination to still find something vaguely rippable in El Masque, my droogies!). So everything and everyone got ripped, drunk bands played while taking numerous swigs of whatever anybody would offer (the quality of the music was somewhat below average), pogo masters did death-defying leaps and landings, fights broke out and romances bloomed, and the Rabble was once again flamboyantly reaffirming its faith in... whatever. The other incident (the cow and the stairs) was the premature ending of an art performance that was to include the animal, a tv commercial, naughty films of bestialism and the reading of a peculiar confession. But nobody had realized that cows are much less easy going than punks, who, when facing an especially steep stairway, simply swallow a half pint of some gazoline substitute and let themselves roll down to the bottom!

Hole # 3, or YES, THEY CAN DO OTHER THINGS BESIDE VOMIT AND FIGHT.

The punk/punkoid alternative press of L.A. is now seriously laying siege to the print racks across town, claiming for space and fair treatment and, in the true situationist spirit, "being reasonable by demanding the impossible". Nile has come out again (used to call itself Nihil, and now boasts of being "the worst L.A. fanzine), the Upsetter has a second issue for sale, Flipside is as strong and bitchy as ever, and an impressively meaty newcomer, No magazine, has already been banned by more merchants and vilified by more horrified public than all the rest of the rabid publications put together (they couldn't even get printed down here!). Records are coming out from all directions like frisbees on a summer day (but you better duck if you want to keep your face intact), the Plugz are taping an album of live and studio material, the Flesheaters' independent release is out, the Dangerhouse double release of the Bags and Howard Werth will be here any day, Shock has a red vinyl EP and an EP was made from the live F Word album.

Keep your ears open for 15 minutes of real music brought to you by Slash on KPFK FM at 10:30 P.M. on the next two alternate wednesdays. Not to end on this egocentric note we will revive the old local shit format of who's breaking up with who and who's startin' what new band : John Silver has left his drumming position with the Dils, Spas Attack is no longer singing with The Visitors and David Wiley (exbattered face Consumer and now flaky part-time and very soon battered-face-again Slash reporter)has a new band. So long, and don't forget to let us know what band YOU are joining or leaving this week.

...lest we forget our boys overseas, a bit of a go with "the limp wrist of London:

Margo-Go seen mingling with an unknown yet seedy promoter...

METROPOLITAN MURMURINGS

Well playmates, we finally get to hear the Johnny Rotten single called 'Public Image' (which also happens to be the name of his new combo). It starts with a throbbing bass line and Mr. Rotten/Lydon saying 'Ello' six times and the song lyric-wise, is all about (aah) the price of fame. His singing's smoother and higher than before, only on the last verse does he return to the familiar vocal style. No doubt the boys and girls in LA will give you a more informative review when it comes out. Supposedly prereleased bootlegs of this

have been selling for 20 pounds. The Banshees have made the National top ten with their debut release 'Hong Kong Garden', surprising even their most staunch fans and it'll probably sell in vast quantities.
A massive punk bill at the Great British Festival, Reading, lead inevitably to violence between the old guards who faithfully wheel themselves there every twelve moons and the bright young things who haven't yet learned their elders ways of queing three days for the toilet and sitting motionless on the damp grass for 8 hours at a stretch. Aesthetically speaking this could be viewed as the big cop-out parade, every band who played on the bill selling out the new waves principles, especially the big bands who headlined, The Jam, Sham '69, Patti Smith... anyway the Clash made a lot of people happy by not playing the major London halls on their tour and instead doing 4 nights at the still big but manageable Music Machine. Suicide supported them most of the way after all and they received a hail of glasses and gob at practically every date on the tour and rave reviews in the press and fanzines. The Clash were good, improved a lot since the pre-gig date I saw them at, but still aren't as good as their reputation.
The Ants single 'Young Parisiens/'I Saw A Lady'(and 'She was Naked'), is imminent and I can promise you it's a killer. It's uncategorisable really, the a-side is purposely not one of their frantic numbers (expect the unexpected), but the b-side rocks out like the proverbial bitch. What with the Public Image single, a new Generation X single due any day called 'Beyond the Valley of the Dolls' the new Buzzcocks album, 'Love Bites' practically knocking on the door and Johnny Thunders making his best record since the Dolls, 'You Can't Put Your Arms Around a Memory' it looks like it's going to be a fruitful autumn/fall. That J. Thunders single sounds like the New York Dolls meet the Only Ones meet the Vintage Stones and finishes up sounding incredible. His album is finished as well, and contains a whole mob of stars and semi-stars, including the rapidly aging Steve Jones, Paul Cook and the delectable Peter Parrett of the Only Ones.
Hip groups in London, journalist wise, are Stiff Little Fingers and the Fall.
Filming is still going on for the "Great Rock n Roll Swindle", utilizing hundreds of street punks in crowd scenes. Reports filtering back from the scenes of the crime suggest a pretty bizarre film, whether it's bizarre good or bizarre irritating I can't work out yet. There's something to do with effigies of the Pistols being burnt by an angry mob, and a scene supposed to resemble a 1976 punk rock disco. If it's as good as it sounds it might resemble the Monkees classic film "Head".....
And that is a small part of what punk is now, we're still here and the optimism is flowing. Don't stop to answer critics' lies, just keep on creating and follow your instincts. Punk on.

Tony D.

A message from our accountant...

Dear Readers:
From my heart & tear-stained ledger, may I urge you to indulge yourself in a SLASH classified ad. Not only will you enjoy much satifaction and renumeration, you will rest peacefully in the knowledge that if every one of you does place an ad, we will be quite comfortable indeed. In the neighborhood of 50 grand. So dear friends, what the fuck are you waiting for??

anxiously,
the accountant

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•LETTERS•

Dear Slash: Sept issue mourned the sad state of punk in LA, but the Aug one explain ed why. That Aug Slash was up to here with punkier-than-thou crap and jaundiced with accounts of the quarreling between folks in the Scene. What is this 'Devo (well, some would call them punk)' & Tom Robinson Band 'could become a very necessary part of our music'? What's with the Them/Us jazz?
In the review of TRB's Starwood date, Kick asked the whereabouts of the 'tight shirt/tight jeans/big boots/perfect moustache set',guessing that they were probably down the Blvd at Studio One bopping to musical sewage.
It's too bad that so many of us suffer from a musical myopia, unable to see that, like good punk, good disco never gets radio airplay, as is the case with a lot of good music. As far as Kick's put down of the gay pretty-boy image, don't we all ho hum these days at the sight of yet another white rim bespectacled pogette in yet another pair of imitation-cheetah-skin-pegged-pants-the tackier-the-better?
If we had used our collective power and said no more Whisky until they bring down the cover and bring back good music I could try the idea that punk means something other than SCHOCK APPEAL, I could get into a discussion of is DEVO really punk. But as long as we go with the (money) flow and when the punkless Whisky is hard up we jump at the chance to see the Screamers at Sunset & San Vicente for old times' sake, it seems pointless to squabble about this four letter word.
I was at Screamers/X Thursday night and got a better pogo out of my Gumby than out of the deadbeats on the Whisky floor, and it wasn't because all the hardcores thought there was still a boycott on or something. We have become a little stiff, uh? Gosh, let's have some fun. The music says any basement band can get recorded, we don't necessarily need clubs like the Whisky as long as we can get it cheaper somewhere else, we don't need haute couture as long as we have the stuff we forgot about in our bottom drawers. I won't go dig up some punk legion of avengers, but I won't confine my appreciation of music. And Kick doesn't go for disco "drivel" but then gives a good review to MOR Talking Heads/Eno.
Are they punk? Me goes for music, it all sits on my shelf. Happy thing to see the Sept reviews ideas for more records to look for, not just the ones to stay away from.

Dan Druff

RIGHT. No more Them/Us jazz! From now on it will be "those lovely people outthere with the slightly different music and life aesthetics"and "Us demanding and awfully pretentious but basically well-meaning lot in here". Long live Music, Good Disco, Flowers and Little Puppies. LET'S REVIEW EVERYTHING!
(you're a little bit right, and a little bit wrong.)

Kick

Dear Slash,
the staff of Slash are in a moderately enviable position: every month you are able to state any view, pass any comment and rampage your theories to and about the people that take the trouble to read your magazine. Although some members of your staff say that the mag will eventually "self-destruct", that it is not a serious affair and what have you, it is serious enough in that it exists and is read by many young people. A few have been influenced and have opted for a new lifestyle. It is therefore your unquestionable duty to expand and stimulate their minds with profitable and intelligent arguments and ideas. When you first started, it was your intent to provide, hopefully, an intelligent and beneficial viewpoint about music

ANDY WARHOL SHOWS TORSOS AT ACE GALLERY

The seedy teen who presented a portfolio with smashed cockroaches between the pages on his first job interview now:
...has 'Andymats' with all his favorite foods and pay TV's in each booth.
...wears 2 wristwatches, one with New York time and the other with the time in whatever city he's just jetted to.
...has made stars/junkies out of unknowns like Joe D'Allesandro, Nico, Valerie Solanas, Lou Reed.
...is movie mogul, magazine tycoon, painter, gossip columnist, author, dish collector and confidante to the Iranian hierarchy, Halston, Bianca and every other rich snit in NY.
...is persona ALWAYS grata at Studio 54. Just call him Andy.
This ex-starving artist who once shared 3 rooms with 17 people scuttled his private DC-3 at LAX and limo'd to the Ace Gallery in Venice where 1,000 people waited to view his latest painted silkscreens

Society Column

'Torsos'. The man who made a fortune off the soup course finally got to the meaty dishes, baby with vulvum velveetum scrotem en totem and genitalia doggy-style slashed with Frankenstein stitch brush strokes. The Ace preview eliminated the ones with sticky drips and squirts shown in Paris and Dar-Es-Salaam. Maybe they were all sold to oil billionaires, petro for porno.

The NY/LA/Paris/Rome Interview Mag Shuttle Set attended an exclusive 'Let's Go Slummin' disco reception at Roberts eaterie on the chic promenade known as the Venice Boardwalk dotted with colorful winos, ex-cons and wack-wack dealers (one of whom, I swear, tried to sell me some 'Rice-A-Roni'.. must be some new drug code).
No Slash staff member 'remembered' to bring an invitation or was wearing a single wristwatch, but one could smash one's nose against the window and glimpse hustling among the chic flunkies and fag hags to the strains of 'Evening in Parasites':
...Mr. Norman Bates of 'Psycho' (Mr. Berry Berenson).
...Marisa Berenson's sister (Mrs. Tony Perkins).
...Anthony Perkins' sister-in-law (Mrs. Barry Lyndon).
...'Honey Andress (of Dr. No, 'She' and 'What's New Pussycat')
...Fredo De Niro (artist/cabbie)
One Slash contributor did sneak in, swizzle some Dom Perignon and pick up a fashion designer who in turn was picked up by the LAPD for a 503 (drunk driving). When cops asked Slashman to 'Walk the line', he tiptoed ten paces then bolted back to the other side of the tracks.
PS: Hey, Andy, WHERE ARE THOSE ELECTRIC CHAIRS WHEN WE NEED THEM?

Majarincess Jetta Vendetta

and, considering earlier editorials, life. Since then I have noticed a complete inconsistency of thought, an adolescent lack of solid intellectual aim unbecoming of men and women your age, experience and personal self satisfaction. This chaos of thought, the emphasis placed on the virtue of unhealthy and time wasting activity, the concept of it being fun to be destructive, animalistic and generally thoughtless and stupid, is inflicted on the minds of IMPRESSIONABLE young people whose only monthly reading may be confined to the dubious pages of slash.
All's said with the best will and a hope to give good advice.

Gerard Taylor
England

That all? Gee, I was afraid you were going to criticize us for a second. Thank god you're only suggesting that our dubious pages are leading the youth of america straight to hell, and that we're irresponsible and evil schemers with an uncanny power over our poor readefenseless readers. THIS we can take. We even WELCOME suggestions for minor teeny-weenie nothing-to-speak-of really improvements. See, in spite of the highly complimentary and admirative tone of your letter, we just KNEW that that, yes, maybe something undefinable was slightly bothering you about Slash.

Next time, don't hesitate to be more outspoken if there is ANYTHING that you object to. No need to pussyfoot around with us.

Kick

Dear Slash,
in regards to: "Let's all bury Black Randy" letters in last issue. What is the big fuckin deal? B.R. does quite well at digging his own grave. In a way it's his life-style.
But now Black Randy is spotted as the Enemy! What a ridiculous farce. Is he not a reflection of all of us. Fickle, clever, cool as hell assholes. I've known him for 9 years, and I won't deny he's one of the biggest son of a bitch I've ever known. But then I feel at times I want to HURT those who get too close to me. And then I get chicken-shit. I think, if only I could be like Randy and make it so.
Of all the letters I read not one said: "Black Randy sure gave me a thrill. When we said I dare you: you know he took you up. (the kids love'em). The bad guy sure can look great. Just looking at him makes us laugh..What a clown.. What a fool... and then we all left thim passed out on the floor. How smug and removed we are.
It hurts to get close to genius. They're pricks like Black Randy. But I don't think you have to worry. They're too damn few.

I love you B. R.
Tomata du Plenty
Hurt Me!

SLASH,
What's going on? Is punk really going to the high class businessmen? That's what punk was against in the first place. Punk is always and will always be the best music around but we've got to keep it alive. England has gone power pop and disco and N.Y. never did have anything to offer aside from the Ramones and the Cramps. L.A. is the only true punk place and it's up to us to keep it going. So all you people who think the scene is dying get up and do something. Start a band or fanzine, anything at all to keep punk alive. Just because the Pistols broke up does not mean it's over. Just listen to the Germs, Avengers, Dils or Middle Class. If every one says punk is over and gives up on it then it will die. Punk is OUR music so stay with it! Thanks to Rodney for still playing punk.

Steve Tragic
of The Asexuals

Dear Mr. Tragic,
please stop whining, it's embarassing. We're not giving up, you're not giving up, the bands are not giving up, my dog Spot is not giving up, the enemy is not giving up, it's a stalemate! Everyone stay on their position and let the allmighty decide.
Anyway, I'd say punk is going to the "low class" businessmen if it is going to businessmen at all. Don't cry now, we'll get to the ol' promised land yet. God, why have you chosen me to reassure every wimp in town??

Kick

Slasherinos - Wot's goin on? We want to play your town again but where? All we get is eye-strain from your mag trying to sort out the masque dirt. Just because prop 13 passed, let's not phase 'punk rock' out of the budget. Communicate - Crime.

Hey Crime,
there's still Bace's Hall, Club 88, the Roosevelt Hotel, The Blind Pig (well...) but of course nothing as grand as San Quentin! Anyway, now that your wish has been made public, I'm sure every seedy promoter that reads us will soon be knocking on your front door.

Top Charts

(Yea, we still listen to music. Quaint, innit??)

BO CLIFFORD
-"Down at the tube station at midnight" THE JAM
-"Ever fallen in love" THE BUZZCOCKS
-"Ghost of princess in tower" THE RICH KIDS

CHRIS D.
-"Invisible Man" GENERATION X
-"Alternative Ulster/78 RPM" STIFF LITTLE FINGERS
-"Iron Sharpening Iron" CULTURE

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH
-"It dread inna England/Man Free" POET AND THE ROOTS
-"Mr Bassie Special" AUGUSTUS PABLO
-"Running Away" BOB MARLEY

GORILLA ROSE
-"Eva Braun" (feedback machines only) direct to disc recording THE SCREAMERS
-"Theme from Airport 77" THE VENTURES
-Screamers live at CBGB'S (over the phone)

KICKBOY FACE
-"Bullet" THE MISFITS EP
-"Rebop" MARIE ET LES GARCONS
-"She Electrifies me" THE PLUGZ

MELANITA
-"Chairs missing" WIRE LP
-"Ever fallen in love" THE BUZZCOCKS
-"Know your product" THE SAINTS

PEA
-"Attitude" THE MISFITS
-"Nervous wreck" THE NIPPLE ERECTORS
-"Attitudes" MARIE ET LES GARCONS

MR. SAMIOF
-"Noise annoys" THE BUZZCOCKS
-"The prisoner" THE SAINTS
-"The love I need" JIMMY CLIFF

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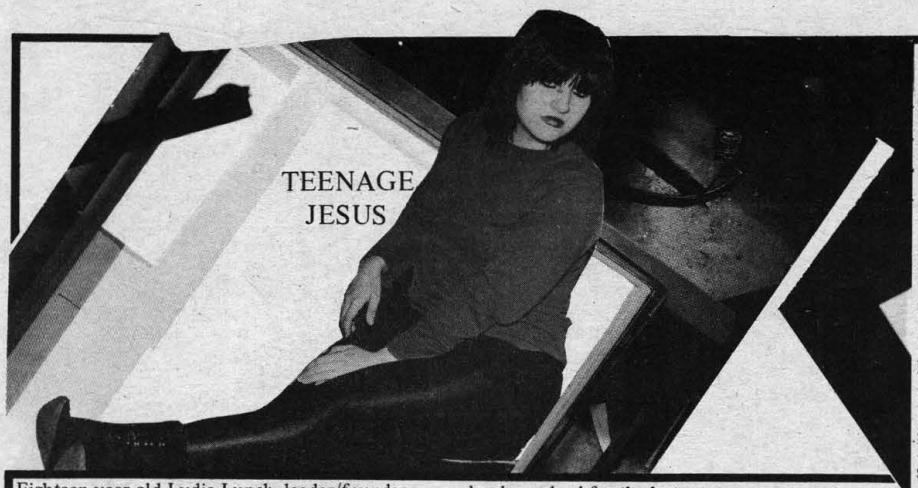

Eighteen year old Lydia Lunch, leader/founder of Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, is a person that knows her mind. She knows that life is fucked and that rock music in general sucks. Few of us could disagree. Thus, her band is one of the final hopes many have to rid today of uniformed rock music.

"Our music is like rocks against a wall. If you kept banging your head against the floor it's what you would eventually hear. I don't think we're real revolutionary or anything, I wouldn't give myself that much credit. I'm just as stupid as anyone else but maybe I was just a bit more stupid because I took the most simple example, I mean this goes beyond simplicity because it has no chords or no melody.

"I was so sick and tired of all these bands rehashing all that boring sixties shit and calling it new wave." In SLASH the Cramps mentioned that Teenage Jesus were not important. "May the Cramps die along with Rock n Roll which has been dead for the last ten years, not to mention Rockabilly which has been dead for twenty years. Who needs it now?

Lydia doesn't like much. She hates adoration and loves annoyance. "I really don't care what people think of my band. They have to like us for the right reason or I merley dismiss them. Now that punk rock is dead, I think that it's a good idea for all fans to be faceless. I mean, they're mindless a)because they're fans, so b) why not be facesless. A lot of people find us to be 'artistically stimulating' which is really stupid because we are totally anti-art. I like to think of the band as a hammer over an artist's head.

"After I started this band a lot of other people decided it was easy enough for them to do too. I say let them rip us off because it makes my band look so much better. I guess a lot of people respect us because I took these people, myself included, that knew nothing and made it into something strong and not limp wristed. It's not punk rock but something totally different with the total incompetence to begin with.

"Our songs are mostly about what it's like for me to have to exist and the penalties I have to face. The songs are not at all political, it's just how you're treated by society, not as an outcast but more on a one-to-one basis."

What does Lydia think of the growing acceptance of women in bands? "I think it's just stupid for girls to be in bands because they always look so incompetent. They try to be cute, they're not! Most of them look like total lames running around the stage making fools of themselves. The only other girls in bands that should be allowed to live are Exene of X and Siouxsie of the Banshees, both of whom I've met. All other girls drop dead or kill yourselves right now."

"I think it's important that everybody hears my music now because it's so off the wall and blunt and so unmelodic. It's not going to be so important in say five years from now, of course there will still be bands like the Angels and the Babys for people to listen to, but I think now is the time for people to hear us."

Plans for the future? Lydia is now busy on a twenty minute solo EP which will feature her new band (she says one band is just too boring) Plans for the future? Lydia is now busy on a twenty minute solo EP which will feature her new band (she says one band is just too boring) on one track. We should get a bigger taste of Teenage Jesus on the "NO NEW YORK" album produced by Eno due out any time now.

"I want to be a super villain and fight justice because I believe it should be abolished and everyone should be pig-headed and selfish and do whatever they want to."

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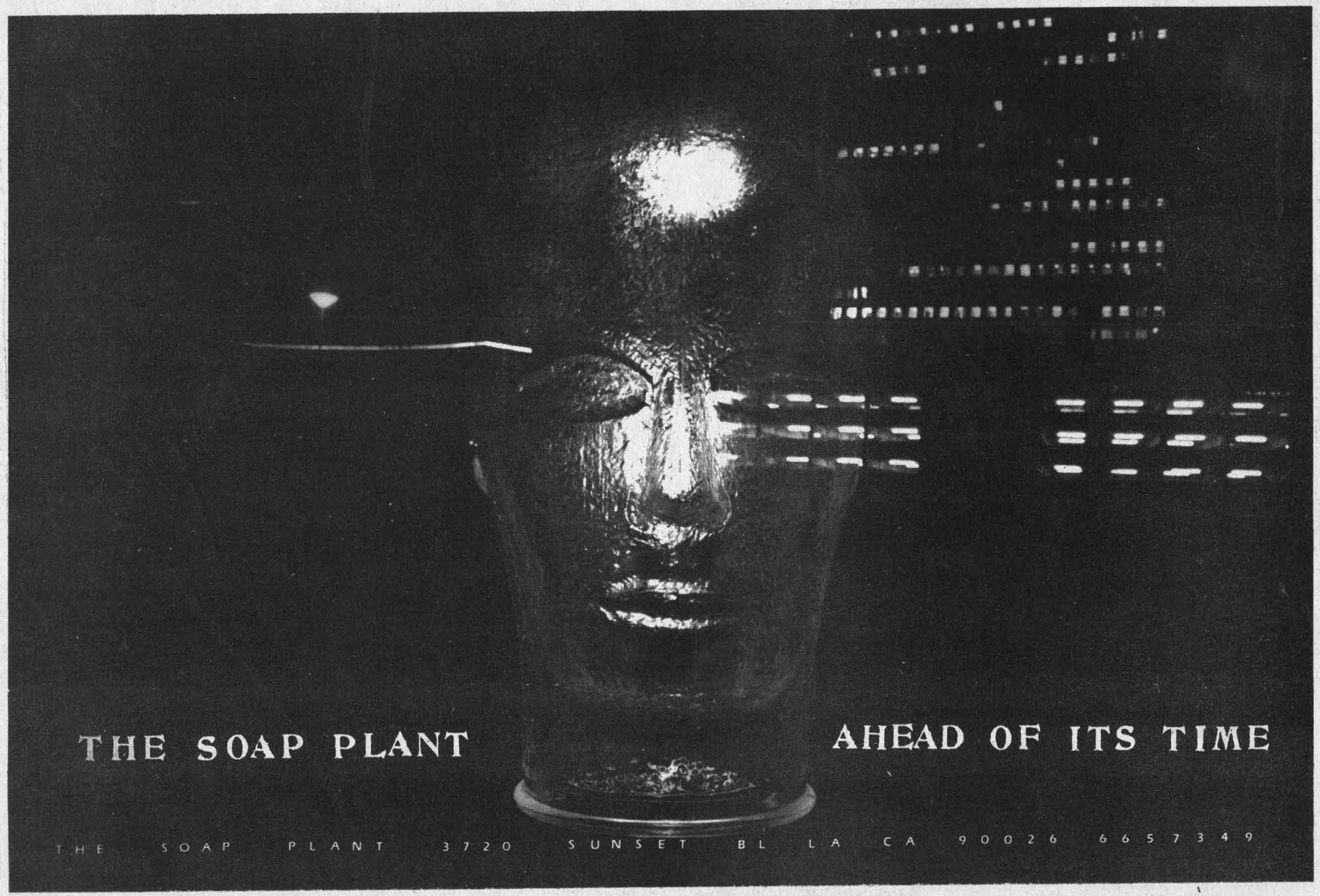
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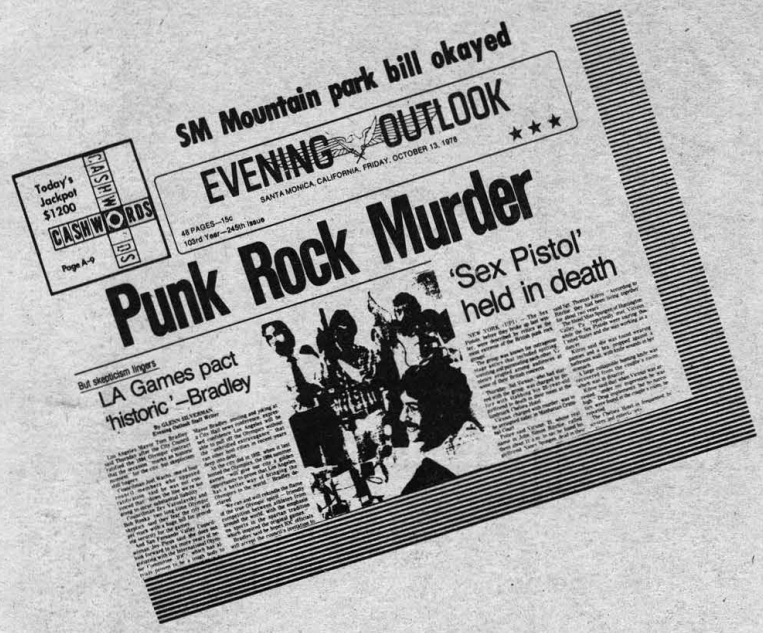

Simple recipe for cheesy newspaper editors short on marketable headlines and shock value stories: Take a rather common sordid happening that by itself would only get a paragraph in the 5th page, link it with something that you know nothing about but would just love to vilify, carefully pick out the two or three words which, when craftily combined in enormous bold headline letters will undoubtedly thrill and offend your ignorant readers, shake the whole mess and serve it steamin hot on the morning racks. Do NOT worry for a second about premature conclusions, irresponsible associations or smear tactics.. SELL SELL SELL your rag, reinforce the stupidity of your customers, and add your little touch in making the press the despicable foul smelling threat we will eventually have to eradicate. Fuck you in the ass, dear Evening Outlook folks. Such behavior makes us ashamed of being part of the same medium.

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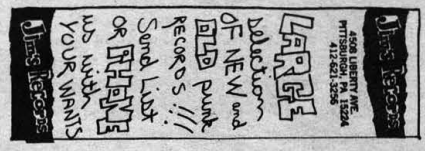

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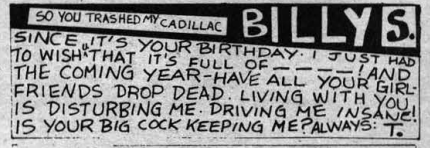

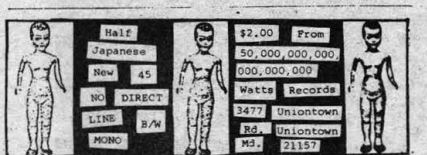

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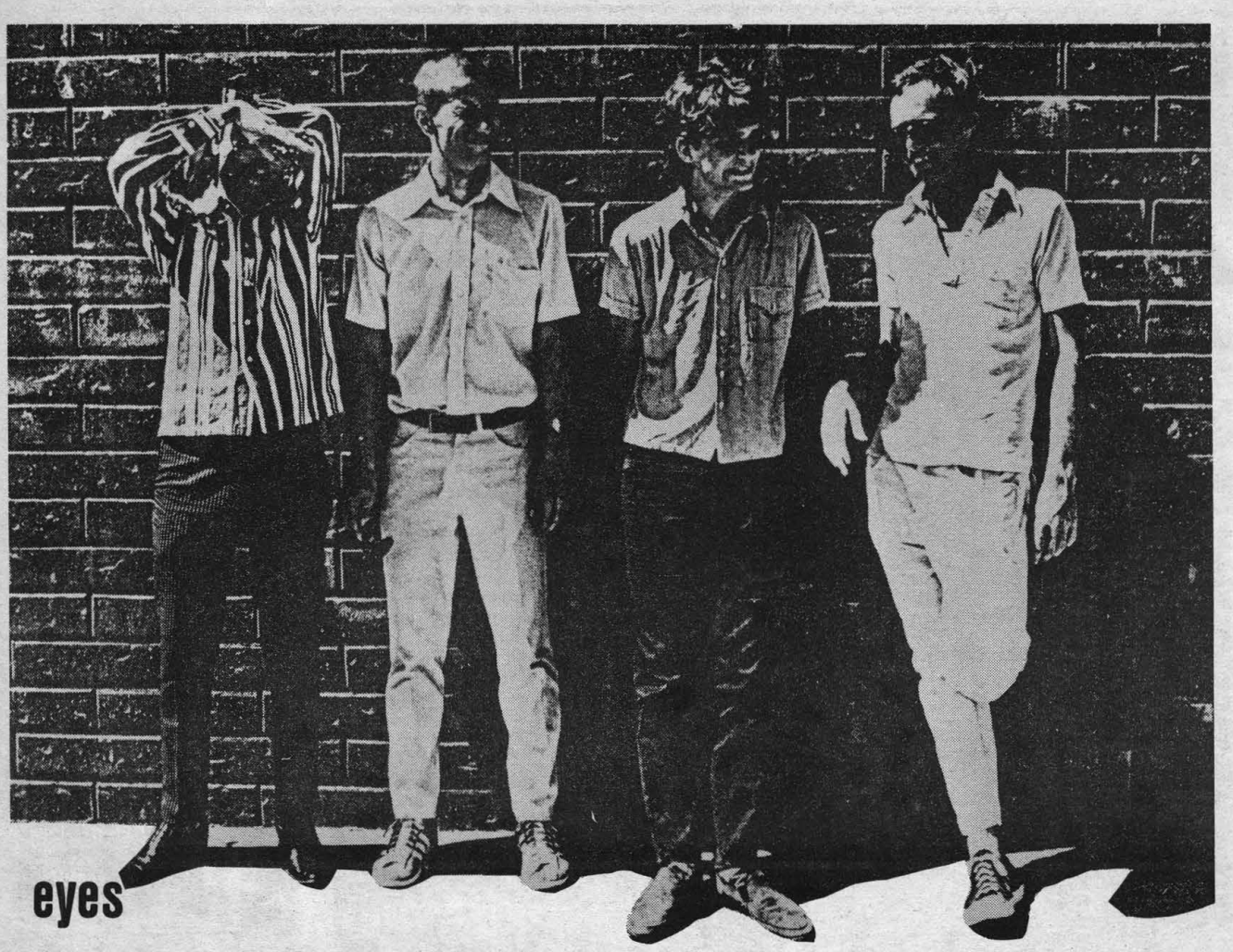


eyes

Slash: So where's Charlotte?!

Eyes: She's working as a mule for John Hewlett, hauling heroin and other drugs to and from England (in her underpants).

Slash: Well, you got rid of the sex appeal and you never get any gigs. Why don't you give up?

Eyes: We did.

(The phone rings. It is Chris [Noodles] Desjardins [the gardener] who announces that PUNK JUST DIED.)

Slash: Is it true that Stan Lee writes all of your songs?

Eyes: He never had an original thought in his life.

Slash: What makes you think that you have anything whatsoever to say to our jaded, trendyass art-damaged readership?

Eyes: We knew we'd have no problem getting in if we slagged famous people like the Dils (Chip 'n Tony), who, as you may recall, became the TRUE PUNK SPOKESMEN with the release of their latest message to the people by way of Cheech and Chong. A must see for every one who at one time or another thought of themselves as "Dils Army Material."

Slash: So how long has Posh Boy been your manager?

Eyes: Ahh, no, man, he's just like Rory Johnston is with X — he just lines us up with good gravy gigs out in the Valley. Why, we made $5 for one show recently!

Slash: How's your new single on WHAT? records doing?

Eyes: Greg Shaw said such nice things about it, he must never have heard it. [Everyone pauses to consider why Greg never shows his neck in public.]

Slash: So it was only natural that Chris Ashford would be a logical choice to join the band . . .

Eyes: No, he's just in charge of production.

Slash: James, we saw your wife beating you up in a well-known convenience store in East Hollywood — was it worth waiting till you got married?

Eyes: [Jimmy, good-naturedly] Yes, I wanted to save my butt for my wife.

Slash: Joe, is it true you used to be Geza Goatboy's gay lover?

[All of the Eyes are named Joe and this question proved to be quite confusing]

Slash: How'd the Fiorucci opening go?

Eyes: Great! We came out with a brand-new disco repertoire, complete with Vegas-style disco dancers in costume, right after they unplugged those has-beens The Screamers.

Slash: How'd you guys meet? What do you think of the current scene? What do you think of the Masque re-opening? What do you think of Slash going out of business? What are your influences? When are you going to play Pismo Beach again? Would you like to do a record for us?

Eyes: Next question.

Slash: Why do you call yourselves a joke band?

Eyes. To separate ourselves from the serious bands like X and the Go-Gos.

Slash: You guys should take a stronger stand, y'know, maybe a benefit concert.

Eyes: We just played a benefit for Fear last night but we didn't find out until after.

Slash: (to Joe Nanini) Joe, you seem to have played with every joke band in town. How's your self-esteem?

Eyes: It'll improve considerably when I get paid the $75 I was promised six months ago for the Plugz record on Slash records.

Slash: I heard you guys are going to do a single for Greg Shaw.

Eyes: Right. He said, "So what if I'm bankrupt, you know the groups always get paid!" And we believed every word. It should be out sometime in Fiscal Year 1981.

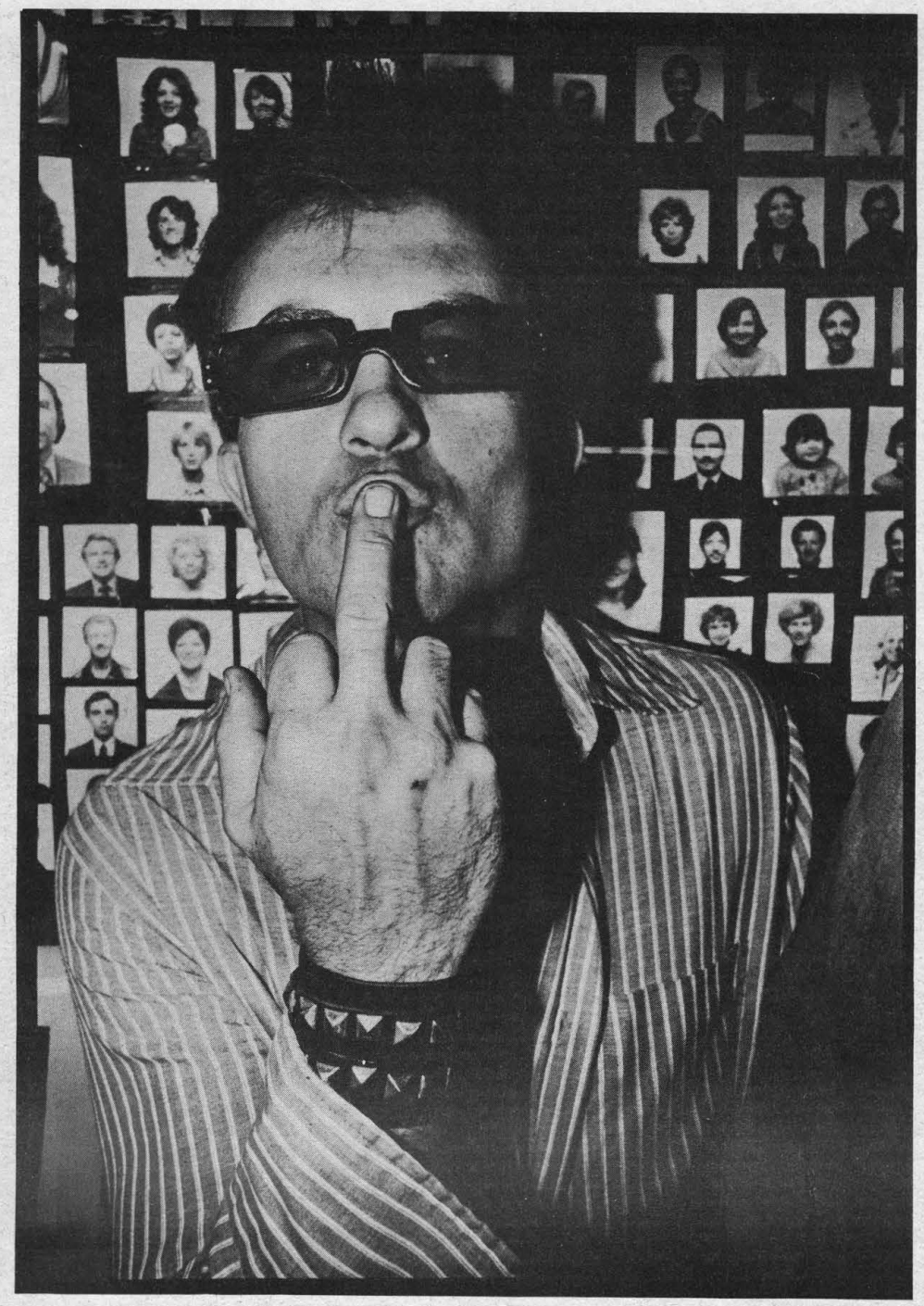
Slash. Well, since the Weirdos were signed to RADARANGE records in Iowa, and the Screamers have been asked to orchestrate "Sex Me" into videodisc form featuring KK as the 15-month-old boy, you guys seem to be the ONLY MAJOR BAND LEFT WITHOUT A MAJOR LABEL CONTRACT. WHY?

Eyes: Well, we spoke to Dangerhouse but they don't seem to be interested.

[Watch for the Eyes first single on Dangerhouse in mid-December.]

Slash: [to Joe Nanini] Joe, who's that woman who keeps giving you money?

Joe: Yo mama.



FEAR

(L.A. band with Lee Ving on vocals, Derf Scratch on bass, Spit Stix on drums, Allan Van Allan on guitar.)

Slash: You're a lot more resentful than most people, within a few minutes on stage you're insulting patriots and insulting Scientologists and EST people.

Lee: There's so much fucking bullshit, man, we're waking them up, there are people going to sleep through their lives, if they can but that EST bullshit and spend millions of dollars on Scientology . . .

Slash: You seem to be one of the only bands left that carry on the ideas that were . . .

Spit: We try to be very low key.

Allan: We're trying to develop an audience in the hippies, we want to get those mellow guys.

Slash: (ignoring him) I haven't seen beer can throwing for ages.

Allan: We actually encourage it because it's very refreshing.

Slash: It (the night at Bace's hall in Hollywood) was like the way it was a year and a half ago, everybody kind of mellowed out and then suddenly it was alive again.

Lee: We're interested to see what's going to happen with this because – you know – we won't shun the media but we won't chase it either, finally after fucking years and years you gotta hear something like you wanna hear. We're not gonna pull any punches, we're just gonna leave them all be.

Slash: I'm sure you realize you'll never get on on the radio.

Lee: We're on the radio already (everybody cracks up) . . . KROQ's been playing the first side of our single, the first verse of that is "My house smells just like the zoo, it'c chock full of shit and puke, crabs crawling on my balls, oh I'm so clean cut I just wanna fuck some slut,"and it's real plain.

Slash: Who writes your songs?

Lee: I wrote that one . . . I think the thing that the Sex Pistols did wake people up, if they don't wanna stay out there and hold the reins and do the job, other people will.

Slash: I really feel personally your single doesn't do you credit as far as . . .

Allan: Spit and I wasn't in the group.

Lee: . . . not making excuses but that was a different group, that was me and him (Derf) and the drummer, we were a trio.

Slash: Didn't you play at Larchmont Hall a long time ago?

Lee: Yeah, that was Johnny Backi (the drummer).

Derf: We had another guitarist for about a week that really gave it a transistor radio sound played at 100 decibels.

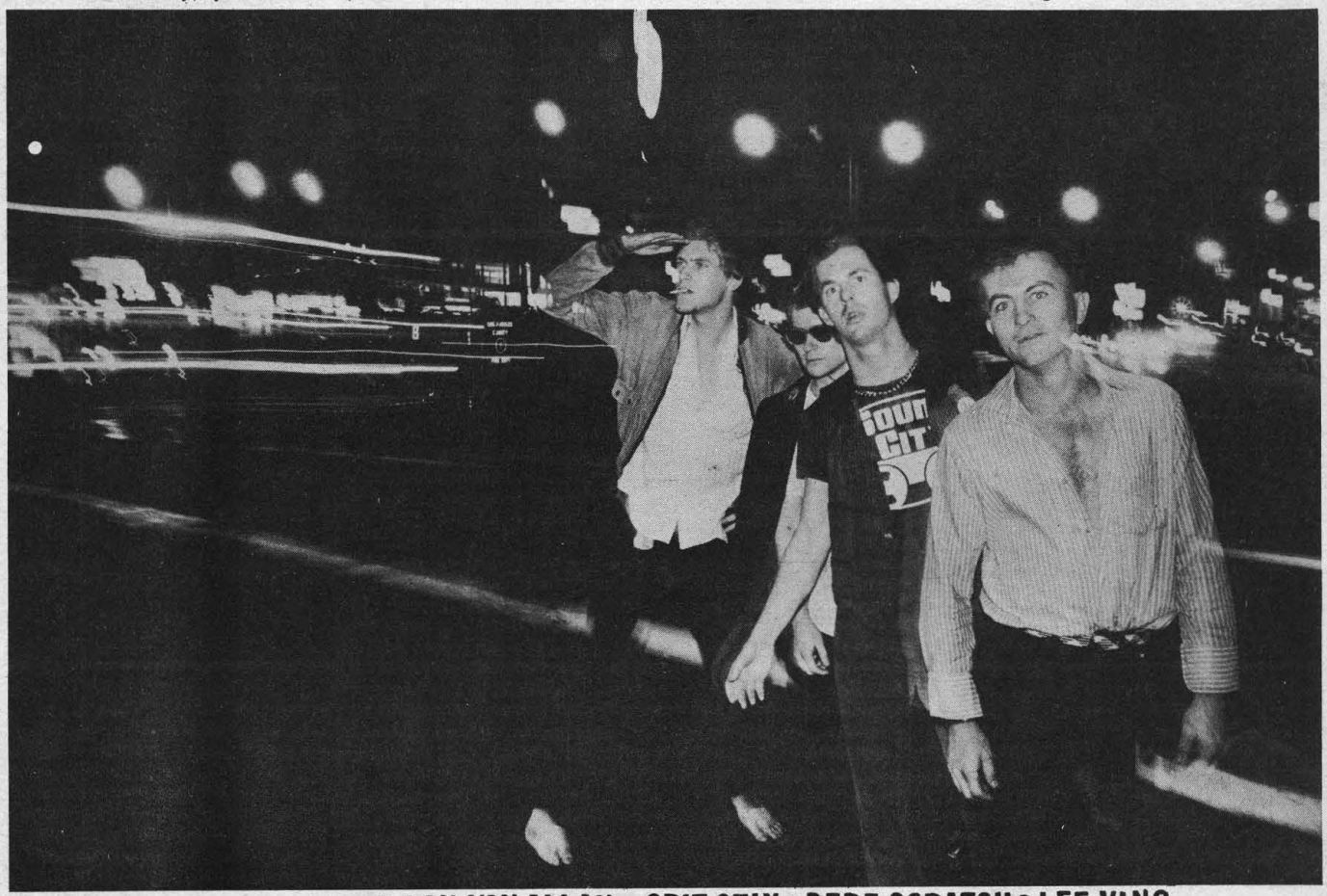
Lee: But we killed him.
Derf: We barbecued him.

Lee: He (Derf) wanted to go to Ralph's but I told him they put all this oclor and shit in the meat, so he just cut Bert up (inaudible ramblings from everyone) . . . there's some shit that needs to be said, there's trillions of dollars being wasted, thrown away and there's great people that could use exposure who never get it and nerds who get tons. There's something else out there besides Charlie's Angels.

Slash: Give us some names of great people who could use exposure.
Lee: Roland Kirk could've used exposure, he died recently. Mingus'll be next, there's a bunch of geniuses and they're all going to die in obscurity.

Slash: Mingus isn't exactly obscure is he?
Lee: Well compared to Donny Osmond.
Slash: What should we do about this scene?
Lee: Let's keep it alive, let's keep doing it.
Slash: (to Lee) What'd you do in Philadelphia?
Lee: Hub caps – we used to go up to people who park their car for a ball game. "Hey, mr., wash your car? 50 cents." They'd say, "no, that's ok." You'd say, "you sure?" "No, it's alright." They'd lock their car and go off to the ball game. They'd come back . . . all sorts of stuff used to happen to their car, 4 flat tires was not uncommon . . .
Spit: Sugar right in the carb, no kidding around.
Lee: So, this KROQ is turning out to be something nice. I called this son of a bitch one day, I said, "Man we just released a record and we'd like to do an unprecedented world premiere over-the-telephone radio release of the single. So over the telephone through the speaker over his thing out over the air. And pretty soon I hear him screaming into the telephone 'Stop! Stop!'
Slash: Did you talk to Rodney Bingenheimer?
Lee: He's an inpenetrable fucking marble fortress to us.
Spit: He loves us so much that he wants to save the world.
Lee: Man I woke that wimpy bastard up one morning, he said 'I live at suite number 2, blah blah . . . it's an apartment man, it's no suite. So all of a sudden I'm standing in his doorway, he's in his underwear, standing there looking at me . . . he's never played our records, probably never will. It's like Greg Shaw, you think, all of a sudden now I'm talking to a new wave person, I'm going to get a break here, you find you're running the same treadmill as you ran with Clive Davis or any of those people.

Slash: Do you guys have a manager?
Lee: I've been doing it.
Derf: We had a gig in San Francisco, our car blew up, most bands would go fuck it and go back to LA, we scraped another car together. The way we feel is there are no obstacles.
Slash: Do you guys feel like I do . . . the next thing you have to concentrate on is to really play a lot of gigs?
Lee: I spend all day on the phone winding up more of those if possible.
Slash: Because judging from last night's (Bace's hall) gig, this is really where you're gonna hit.
Lee: We've gotta keep playing those as much as possible. I've walked the streets of Hollywood with Brendan looking for places.
Slash: Brendan is one of your most fanatic supporters.
Spit: He's a good guy, right from gut reaction.
Derf: One thing I thought was interesting in the last Slash was commenting on how this thing is more like a cutthroat scene and we would like to see less of that.
Spit: Some more direct killing right?
Lee: The scene's tough enough as it is, everybody hates it so why not help a little if you can . . . (afterthought) well who gives a fuck anyway.
Derf: (sings) 'What a friend we have in Jesus, what a fucking cross to bear.'



ALLAN VAN ALLAN • SPIT STIX • DERF SCRATCH • LEE VING

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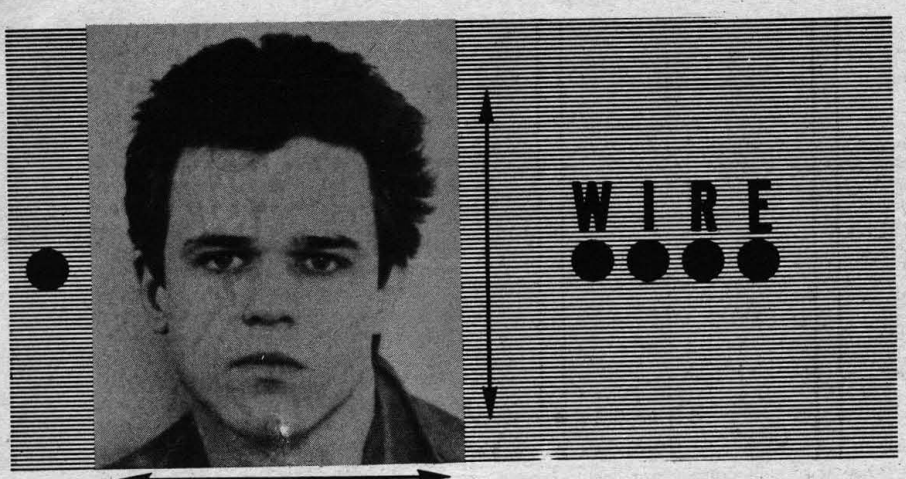

Graham Lewis — Bass player with Wire.

Graham: February '77 was when the band came together, we started playing our instruments in October '76 . . .

Slash: What incentive started the band?

Graham: It's the thing that everybody says . . . "it's what I've always wanted to do really.' I went to art college and I came out of there as a fashion designer. What I really wanted to do was be in a band.

Slash: You did meet the right type of people?

Graham: Obviously, we're still together, yeah.

Slash: The reception the first album received — it's been called cold, bleak . . . ?

Graham: We feel there's a certain amount of humor in it, I support humor can be cold and bleak as well, I think it's very objective, it's definitely not wimpish.

Slash: The music seems rather heavy and then the lyrics are kind of alluding to something, that 1984 feeling,something that could be nasty but you're not exactly sure what it's about.

Graham: Well I don't like pop music particularly, I don't like rock and roll music particularly, it's a lot more to do with the idea of doing it. We had twenty one songs, it came out I think pretty cohesively, we'd only done something like twelve gigs, been together six months, so obviously there were various restrictions. The lyrics, they're more like signposts, there's a lot more space to work within them, the songs that I wrote were just what I could see going around at the time in England, to a larger extent I think some of them did go outside and I think they're quite universal in that way.

Slash: I find myself humming to 'Saw you in a mag, kissing a man'.

Graham: That's a particularly ambiguous song, that was a combination of Bruce, Colin and I. Nobody can every remember who wrote which line.

Slash: I've read an interpretation somewhere which said it was obviously a song about homosexuality.

Graham: It's about ambiguous sexuality, it could allude to any sexual situation, it could be to dykes, to homosexuals, to straight people, or a combination of any of those because of the gender with which it was put together. The homosexual slant in it comes from the line 'I've got you in a cottage,' because a cottage is a gay toilet where people write their names on the wall.

Slash: What was the commercial reaction to the album?

Graham: Our audience increased. It paid for itself as far as I know, I don't know exactly how many it sold. It's more important to us that what we're doing is strong rather than it be sold.

Slash: I'd say on a certain level it was quite a success, it was written about an awful lot . . . are the singles going to be on your new album?

Graham: The most recent one won't be, "I Am the Fly" will be.

Slash: Is the group coming to L.A. in the next few months?

Graham: If all things go well we should be here midway through November, the rest of December probably.

Slash: What other type of bands are going to play with you on this tour?

Graham: I've no idea.

Slash: Is it totally up to the record company?

Graham: It's a confusing thing, because in England you relatively know what goes on, the record company trusts our attitude, we also have an agency, obviously, we liase with them, whereas our relationship with Capitol has been very short so far, as yet we don't really know what the situation is.

Slash: Can you choose bands?

Graham: There are the obvious restrictions, there are some bands that can go out on the road and others that can't. Touring's like everything else, it demands a certain organization, everybody has to do their bit in order that things continue. Even if you say to somebody 'Would you like to do this gig with us?' It becomes very confusing as to how serious people are. You have to have somebody who's reliable really.

Slash: What new groups in England would you say are probably going to be around for quite a while? I'm thinking of who will definitely make a dent in the history of the music, the Pistols did make a dent, although they came up with very little product. Do you see groups that maybe will develop into . . .

Graham: I don't really like groups, to be honest. When I left England a couple of weeks ago, we though things were fairly dismal. There are people who, in terms of commercial success, things are going well, Stranglers, the Buzzcocks, Howard Devoto's got very very strong push from Virgin. Devo seem to be doing well. That's in terms of album sales and popularity, I don't consider that to be a particularly strong criterion for considering whether they can make a dent or not. I think what David Bowie's doing at the moment is far more interesting than all those people put together, because it's new and it's new and it's challenging.

Slash: Could you make it by sticking to a formula?

Graham: Yeah, well if we produced an album just the same as the first one. This second album has got nothing to do with that one apart from the fact that it's the same band and it has the same people writing, but it's completely different in feeling and pace.

Slash: From what you say I suppose you don't really socialise with 'the scene'?

Graham: We've never really been part of the punk/new wave thing . . . we feel an affinity, but we're not really interested.

Slash: Would it mean more to you to have your single put on the 'regular' chart?

Graham: I 'spose . . . it's obviously satisfying when you reach a larger market — but I think the ultimate satisfaction is whether you think what you've done is true to what you can do. We feel pretty certain our second album will chart in England . . . we don't belong to any movement, we don't belong to anybody else; we don't feel any great responsibility to anybody apart from ourselves — if that sounds selfish, it is, but that's the only way you can remain true to people who listen to what you do, because otherwise you're conning them.

Slash: Don't you think of Bowie as a musician?

Graham: I think he's an artist, same as Brian Eno, in the sense that the idea is always stronger than the mechanics or the craftsmanship which is available to present that idea; which is why people continually move, because they're constantly looking to formulate that idea . . . not formulate, crystalize. . . it's just a case of whatever holds interest, which I think is the difference between being musicians . . . I know I can pay the rent in many other ways rather than be in a band. The band will last as long as it's strong enough, cohesive enough to keep itself together.

Slash: Do you (the band) live close to each other?

Graham: We don't overly socialise. . . it's very loose, everybody's got different things they're interested in, it's not a commune band.

Slash: Don't you rehearse a lot?

Graham: We rehearse a fair bit, when we first got the band together we used to rehearse 4 days a week, 8 hours a day, roughly, because we had to learn how to play. We wrote something like 17 songs in 3 weeks and we had to rehearse them together.

Slash: What's more important when you play live, the way you get your songs across, if it's true to the way you wanted to do them, or whether the audience loved it or not?

Graham: Whether we played well and whether we got across what we wanted to get across.

Slash: Do you find yourselves pulling away from what the audience expects of you?

Graham: Every time we've played it's been different because everybody feeds off, to an extent, what the audience feels, wherever you are the audiences are different. We try not to patronize the audience. We're not enticing people there to have a good time, get down with it, there's no communal singing or handclapping which is instigated by us, it's purely up to them.

Slash: Do you think there are just a few people in the audience who understand what you're doing?

Graham: I don't presume that.

Slash: What was different about New York?

Graham: We played differently, New York has a different beat, very continuous, very driving . . . In London it varies — they've seen it all now, a lot of them.

Slash: Would you say your audience on the whole is more sophisticated than the average rock music audience?

Graham: I dunno, we've got a wide variety of people who come to see us, heavy metal people, the inevitable punks . . .

Slash: How do you feel about your record company?

Graham: I can't really talk about Capitol, it's too early. In England there was a lot of suspicion about us when we first went there because they thought we were quite strange; we weren't particularly impressed that the drink was free and we could be taken out for meals. The relationship we've built up has been based on the fact that we've delivered every time we said we would. We felt it was possible to have a business relationship with a record company i.e. that they put records out which we produce with us having relative artistic control.

Slash: How do you rate yourselves and the others in the group, technically speaking, musically?

Graham: Competent for what we do . . . I don't think there'll ever be a virtuoso in the band. I don't touch a guitar between rehearsing and playing, never. I have a chord organ now and I can press the buttons and make chord noises, but it doesn't interest me.

Slash: Definitely not a possessed musician, huh?

Graham: No. Rob our drummer practices a lot because he has to, drummers need the exercise.

Slash: What do you think of the rock press? From Melody Maker to the fanzines? Do you read it?

Graham: Yeah, I read the press. In England they have more power than they should possess. It's a difficult situation because they've been very good to us so far. People fall in and out of favor with the press depending on the mood or whatever. Because you have 3 weekly papers (in England), there's a constant search for something new. The standard of writing I don't think on the whole is as high as, shall we say we found in New York. I don't know about here because I haven't really seen any papers from here. In New York people are very objective about what they write, in England they tend to be more subjective, it's likely to be filled with 'Golly gosh dot dot dot', whereas in New York you're liable to get slandered and people say 'Yeah, it's a great review, you got 4 column inches, 10 column inches' or whatever.

Slash: Do you think the fanzines fill a purpose?

Graham: The saddest thing about it was that generally after Sniffin Glue, most of them just jumped on the bandwagon and followed it through. Sniffin' Glue was like a one off situation because it was very strong and nobody'd written like it before. It's like everything else, once somebody's done something you're not shocked if you see it again. I think the third issue there were only 11 produced, it said 'This is a rare issue, burn it or rip it up' and it becomes even rarer. I think the fanzines did a worthy job in the beginning . . . . I think most of them have now gone to the banal.

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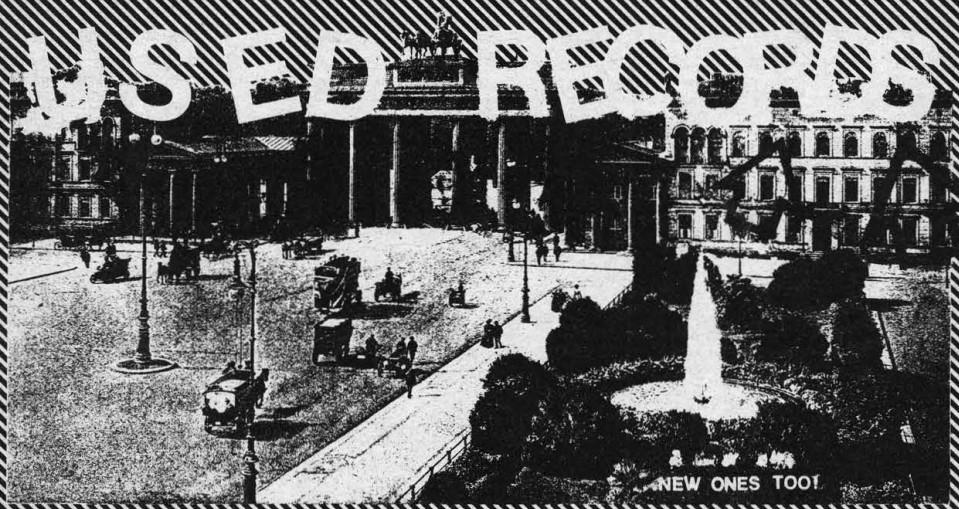


"HOLIDAYS in the SUN"

Steve Jones

Holidays (and some work) in the sun

Contrary to popular opinion, the Sex Pistols still exist. And probably will in one form or another until mighty creator Malcolm McLaren decides to dump the concept and put his scheming talents into another "project." You see, Malcolm owns the name of the Sex Pistols, and can pretty much use it as he wishes, and probably with whom he wishes (any volunteers out there??) So Ex-Pistol Johnny Rotten becomes John Lydon, a Pistol no more but still a pretty enigmatic character, Sid Vicious about to become a grotesque victim of the National Enquirer style of justice that prevails in this country, and Paul and Steve, the less visible (in terms of shock ratings) of the gang although the very nucleus of the famed Pistols sound (and the first comers in terms of historical a curacy) continue to work hand in hand (and tongue in cheek) with Malcolm Mac(hiavelli) Laren on a never ending series of outrageous and highly entertaining schemes. A while back Steve Jones arrived in Los Angeles, so we of course bugged the shit out of him for hours trying to get some information about the Famed Film in progress, the Future of the music, his Filosophy, his Fears, and he didn't even tell us to Fuck off. Except for the beginning most of the interview was done on the Venice beach one hot afternoon (hence the unusually brilliant title of this article) while the Malibu hills were routinely burning (vision of rich folks running back and forth between the pseudo irish cottage and the Mercedes carrying precious armloads of invaluable valuables) and the nearby life guard was routinely saving dumb shits who swam too far and ate too much.

THE FIRST MEETING - HARDLY OFF THE PLANE AND NO TRACE OF JET LAG - "WE'RE JUST THE MUGS IN THE BACKGROUND" - A POST CARD FROM THE SEA SIDE - NO ROYALTIES FOR BIGGSIE -

SLASH – Where's the rest of the gang? How come Paul isn't with you on holiday?

STEVE – He likes staying home and watching the telly. He's a boring cunt. And this is not a holiday. It's work, rest and play. It's a Mars bar (sorry, didn't get that one, Steve). Right now, I'm resting, and doing a bit of working. I might do a bit of playing in a minute.

SLASH – What's the work?

STEVE – Talking to you innit?! I come all the way out there, and here you are . . .

(He is right. Why can't I leave him alone, free to look for the perfect surfer girl*, free to live his life instead of having to thoughtfully reflect on it for the benefit of the few thousand who live off other people's thrills. Thanks for making me hate my "job" (some job! some paychecks!) for a second, smart ass kid!)

SLASH – and the others?

STEVE – Sid's in New York, and Johnny Rotten (Lydon for the rest of you) is with his new band . . .

SLASH – Have you heard them?

STEVE – I've heard lots of things about the band but I haven't HEARD anything.

SLASH – Have they played anywhere?

STEVE – Are you taping this? All right, I'll let loose then. (journalistic thrill up my spine) There's a show in England in Birmingham called Revolver, with Mickey Most, a right con man he is . . . they're trying to make it into a Ready Steady Go type of show, and they wanted Rotten and the group to play. So they sent a van down to pick them up, and what happened is Rotten and the others took the van and went to the seaside, went to Brighton with it. And they sent Mickey Most postcards! That's because you had to play live and Rotten was too paranoid and scared to do it. I learned that for a fact. I guess he has a single coming out . . .

SLASH – What about you, are you still with Virgin?

STEVE – Yeah. I hate them, they're all cunts.

SLASH – Have you tried to get another label?

STEVE – We can't, there's no way. Just can't get out of it, there's nothing we can do. But we'll still fuck them up, in whatever way. That record with Ronnie Biggs, they hate it. But the thing that pisses me off, it got to number 7, right, in the charts, right, it could have got to number 1, and the reason it didn't is Rotten said to Richard Branson (head of Virgin Records - Ed.), he said - if you promote this record, I don't want to have anything to do with your label. See, Branson is really keen on Rotten, he's gonna try to make Rotten the big star, the serious musician, all those bollocks, and we're just the mugs in the background! But the mugs in the background got a record out before he did. And a better record, I'm sure. So they did no promotion, you couldn't even buy the record in England (I didn't think of it at the time but Virgin DID send us a couple of copies of the single, so this seems to weaken the argument that they tried to suppress the record - Ed.) I went to two Virgin stores, the one in Marble Arch and the one in Notting Hill, and not one of them had the fuckin' record. And it's on their label, and they are chart stores (stores of which the sales figures are used in making up national charts - Ed.) as well. I said what's going on here? (brief vision of Jones raving and ranting, demanding to see HIS fuckin' product in the bins and terrifying employees and managers - a scene that would enliven anybody's shopping afternoon!) . . . it got to number 7 anyway, with nothing, no airplay . . . they won't play it because of Biggsie, he is a criminal, and ther's some law saying you can't promote them or something . . .

SLASH – No royalties for Biggsie then?

STEVE – The government takes it.

SLASH – So Biggs is not a Virgin artist yet?

STEVE – (amused by the tought) Of course he ain't. (thinks about it for a second) Well, he ain't signed yet!

SLASH – How did it come about, you and Biggs?

STEVE– When we split up in Los Angeles, the band was due to go to Brazil to play there, Biggs had some club there, one of Malcolm's fuckin' outrageous ideas it was, anyway when we split up I said – fuck this, I ain't going back to England. There's gonna be so many fuckin' questions . . . all that, so we flew there, me and Paul, we met Biggs, and he is such a fuckin' good geezer, he was game to do anything. (Not once did he have anything bad to say about Ronald Biggs, who seemed to be almost the only person that he totally liked and admired and about whom he never tired of talking – as if he had found the ideal . . . . father figure? Sheeeeet, did I think of that??!!) Have you seen the video? Well, I'll show it to you. He (Biggs) just likes a giggle, a laugh, you know what I mean? So we went in some fuckin' studio and the engineer and this other bloke couldn't speak a word of english, it took about an hour to sort it out, we got it down finally, all we wanted to do was get a rough tape, we didn't care what it sounded like, I was playing on this wanky old fuckin' banjo, and Paul was on this monkey drum kit, so we got Biggs' voice on it, took it back to London and added all the bits to it.

SLASH – What about the B side?

STEVE – That was done in France 'cause they were filming a scene there. I was in England and Malcolm said, you've gotta go, Sid needs you (as I'm writing this the news came on of Sid Vicious' arrest for murder of his girl friend in New York - Ed.) you gotta be there to give him confidence. I ended up doing it all, got him in the studio, put it on tape, brought it back, mixed it all up, got the violins on it, and now on the credits Malcolm put "a Matrixbest production"! It should be my fuckin' name! Malcolm didn't do nothing, Sid wouldn't have done it . . . that pissed me off a bit with Malcolm.

SLASH – Is it his usual method?

STEVE – Well, he's got a big ego, right . . . but I don't mind, really.

(We talk a bit about Malcolm's company. It is still called Glitterbest. Matrixbest is the name he uses for the film venture. Someone then suggests that we watch the premiere of Battlestar Galactica. Also, Steve has better things to do that night, one of them being a promised visit to Joan Jett, so that's that for tonight.)

PART TWO: ON THE BEACH WITH A FRESH TATTOO AND SOME PRICELESS TAPES - STEVE AS CAGNEY - PAUL'S GAY GANG BANG - A FILM WITHIN A FILM - FAMOUS AND STILL BORED - PUNK TAX EXILES, WITH A TWIST - BAD NEWS JOHNNY THUNDERS - THE FIFTH AVENGER? - FUCKING WHILE STANDING

SLASH – Are you going to play live while you're here?

STEVE – Johnny Thunders asked me to play with him but I ain't fuckin' playing with him, I'd just look like a cunt, him being a cunt is gonna make me look stupid. He's bad news. When you do smack it's fuckin' bad news, know what I mean.

(The night before Jones was at the Thunders concert at the Whisky but walked out before he was supposed to get on stage with the boys. That same night, someone who was with him found a burnt spoon in the men's room. We talk of New York, of Sid Vicious. We talk of Rotten.)

STEVE – I've only seen him once since we split up.

SLASH – Was he friendly?

STEVE – Not really.

SLASH – Was he ever?

STEVE – Oh yeah, he was all right at first. But when we got over here, fuckin' hell! Like a different person. You couldn't talk to him! He was on his high horse. And he was getting jealous 'cause Sid was getting all this publicity. That was funny. Sid didn't give a fuck what he was playing, and Rotten was getting pissed off at all the publicity Sid was getting for being like that . . .

SLASH – What exactly are you going to do with the Avengers while you're here?

STEVE– I want to produce a really good single. What this scene needs is better records. If the records get better, maybe the punks here will have a chance. There's never been a real punk hit here, has there? That's what it needs to make it work. It's all right to play gigs and all that, but you need good records. That's what I want to do with the Avengers.

SLASH – What songs of theirs?

STEVE – I don't know. I haven't heard their new ones. I'd like to stay longer and do a couple of tunes for them, but if the single works out I'll come back and do an album with them, write a couple of songs.

(We muse a while on the apparent impossibility to break thru to the american market . . .)

STEVE– It's a right drag that we did break up. If we had carried on it would have taken off.

SLASH – If it had to be done all over againas far as what happened to the Pistols, would you do it differently?

STEVE – Even if Rotten was a cunt, I would have carried on if we had been writing new songs, but when you're not writing any new songs, there ain't no point in carrying on.

SLASH – And now, you're writing a lot?

STEVE – Yea, it's fuckin' easy. But we're not very good at lyrics. That's what Rotten was good at, writing lyrics. Any tune I used to fuckin' play, he'd say I sounded like Black Sabbath! Musically he wouldn't listen, I'd say, fuck you, cunt, you're not listening.

SLASH – What do you think his music will sound like now?

STEVE – I dunno. I don't think he fuckin' knows either. I don't think he'll do reggae, I don't think he's that stupid.

SLASH – Even with someone called Jah Wobble in the band?

STEVE – He's just a joker, Jah Wobble. He can't play the bass.

A couple of days later, on the beach. Old Jones is seriously more tanned than I would have expected him to be (myth #54 of the pallid punk rocker down the drain!) but as willing to talk as ever. After initially worrying about the effect of the sun on his brand new tattoo (a panther head on his upper arm with STEVE written under it - rather painfully done the night before on Hollywood Blvd. for $19 – "I should have gone in pissed . . . ") and deciding that salt water might not be what his new decoration needs at the moment he lets himself be forced into more revelations about the Great Rock N Roll Swindle . . .

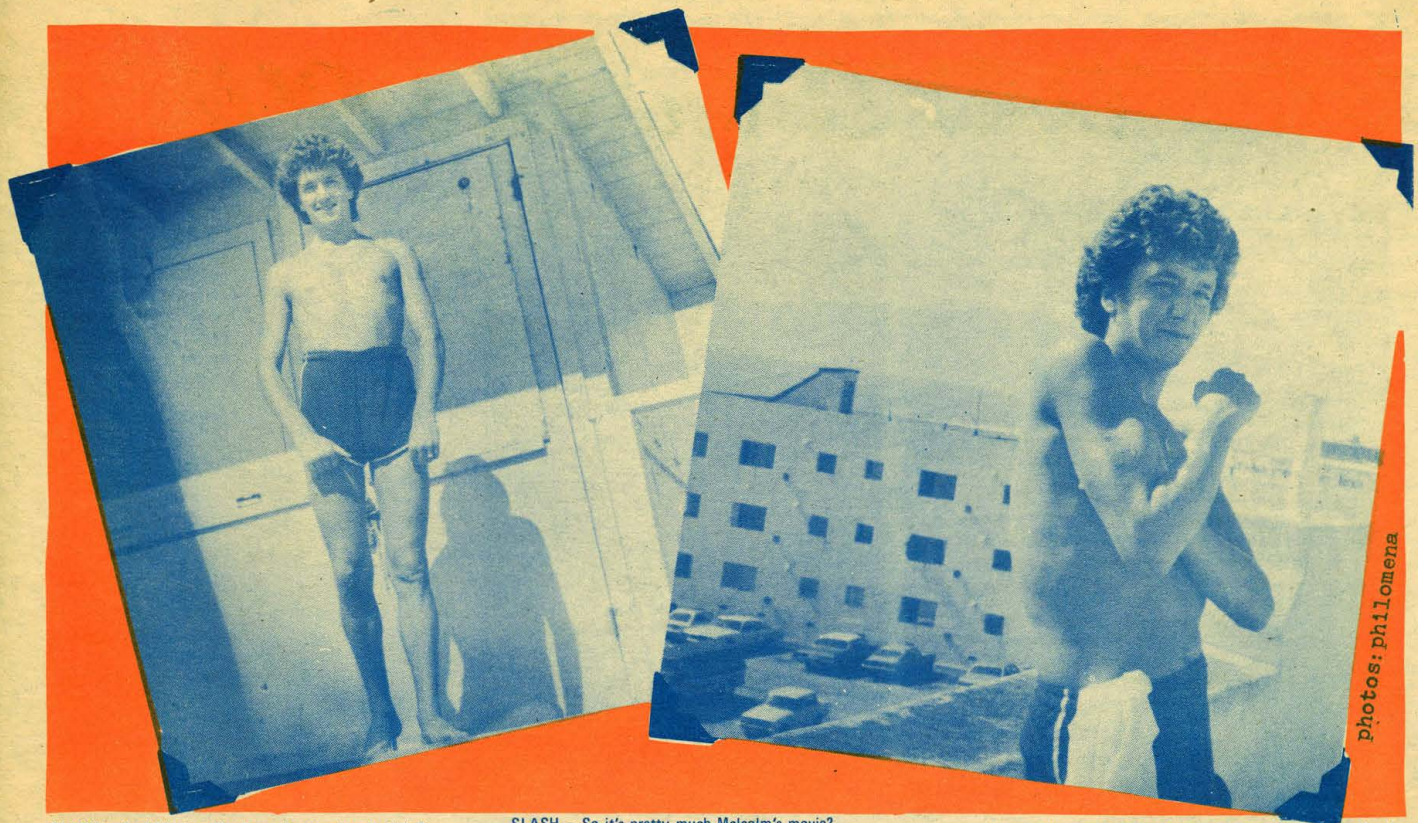
STEVE - . . . it should be out in the theaters in January. It's just about finished, not much more to do.

SLASH – Is it a musical?

STEVE – Yea, there's a double album soundtrack that comes with it. It has some early tapes of Rotten singing "Substitute."

SLASH – Is he playing himself in the movie?

STEVE – Yea, but not since we broke up. He hasn't done anything in it after that. He hates it, but he can't stop it. He can't do anything about it.



photos: phillomena

SLASH – And Virgin will release the soundtrack, right?

STEVE – Yea. I wish we could get off but we can't.

SLASH – How long will you be with them for?

STEVE (gloomily) – Oh fuck . . . for YEARS!

SLASH – Do you suppose the film will get released in the States as well?

STEVE – All depends how it goes down in England I suppose. We're contracted to Warner Brothers to make films, so if they say they like it they'll probably get it out and try to get some of their money back.

SLASH – Earlier you said Malcolm has a part in it . . . (Well, some of the greatest bass players I know can't play their machine either [that's where we lose once and for all the professional minded element of our readership. Goodbye] . Anyway, I'm bored with all this music talk. Almost as much as Steve. Earlier, he said what he missed most about touring were the birds after the gigs. Not that he's exactly starving these days).

STEVE – I got hold of a groupie last night at the Whisky. Fucked in the back of the place, in some alley. I like fucking girls standing up 'cause they still got their shoes on, and their legs are nice and muscley. And they do great french kissing, those american birds . . .

Well, what are YOU still sittin' here for, staring at this page wondering what kind of an ending this is? What do you want? Some immortal advice out of the Punk Gospel According to Saint Jones? A call to arms and rebeillion? His secret guitar techniques in five easy to follow diagrams? I mean, we just went thru some pretty heady stuff, you know. Got a glimpse of a pretty desperate situation there, with all this wild and young talent almost brought to a standstill by an increasingly complicated situation. Rotten/Lydon wants out but is stuck with the Pistols via the movie, Jones wants out of Virgin but is stuck via a contract, and god knows what McLaren wants. As Jones said, "Nobody understands McLaren". What will eventually come out of this rock n roll sitcom is anybody's guess. Maybe a great absurd movie, a few classic singles and some pocket money for a couple of cockney kids, or maybe just a lesson for us all. Then there's Sid and his new entanglement with U.S. Justice. That's one Pistol whose future is pretty certain. And that's not a very enviable position for a true punk rocker, knowing what tomorrow is going to be like.

*To do the interview, we promised Steve we would set him up with a surfer girl. So far, we have been unable to hold our side of the bargain.

STEVE – He's got a LOT in it (later I find out that McLaren's "part" includes singing and dancing some Danny Kaye numbers. Hey, could ANYONE make something like that up?) He wrote most of the script as well, that big fuckin' egomaniac!

SLASH – So it's pretty much Malcolm's movie?

STEVE – But it can't be done without me, that's why he is still nice to me!

SLASH – You wrote most of the music?

STEVE – Yeah. There's all kinds of different people singing . . First of all there's Sid singing "Come on Everybody" and something else by Eddie Cochran, he's on a motorbike when he does it, it's really funny, or when he's getting out of bed and looking in the mirror (cracks up) . . . it's REALLY funny. Then there's Paul singing one song and he's in a cot when he sings it . . . I haven't seen it edited yet, but even with a story on it (guess they shot without a real story line, like Godard, eh?) I still think it's gonna be funny.

SLASH – What's Biggs' part in it?

STEVE – He plays himself, and a punk rocker as well . . . have you seen the video? . . . well, you'll see what I mean. The film starts with me in this detective gear, right, breaking in Glitterbest offices, like Cagney stuff, you know. You see a silhouette outside, behind the window, breaking it with a gun – that's because in the story we're looking for McLaren now, since we broke up we can't find him, he fuckin' ran off with a lot of money and stuff – so later Johnny Rotten gets bumped off, Sid gets bumped off next, falls off his motorbike and kills himself, Paul gets fuckin' raped in the back of this fuckin' car by this gay group called the Blow Waves – Paul is really embarrassed about it now, these geezers really went over the top! There's a scene which I haven't done yet when I go into a cinema – apart from when I'm live on stage I'm a detective all the way thru – and I see the fuckin' film, I see bits of gigs, and I remember what it was like when I see 'em. It's . . . complicated, that's why we stopped. It gets to: what we gonna do next, so we want to get it all done so we know what to show.

SLASH – So there's live footage of the Pistols as a band?

STEVE– Yea, really early stuff, when we could hardly fuckin' play, blasting out all this crap real loud!

(Steve gets impatient with all this boring talk and asks me if I'd rather not listen to Biggs singing "Belsen was a Gas". Turns out he's got many cassettes in that plastic shopping bag of his, not only the Biggs number but some obscure Pistols highlights with Rotten singing a real knockout version of "Roadrunner" and other oldies, some of them possibly included in that double album deal mentioned above. Anyway we respectfully listen to Biggsie belting out a pretty decent rendition of Belsen while the sunbathers around are wondering whether we qualify as disturbers of the peace.)

STEVE – Me and Paul on the plane were thinking, wondering what he's gonna be like, is he going to be like a gangster, like you know you imagine him with some fuckin' bodyguards, a big racket . . . but he's just a normal geezer, he has got no money, he ain't got fuck all. He loves snortin' coke and he loves smoking grass, and he's game to do anything for a laugh. That's why he was so easy to have in the film. We'd dress him up . . . he told us he wrote all those fuckin' lyrics, all these poems while he was in prison, and we said – let's fuckin' make a record, eh? You write the lyrics and I'll write the fuckin' tunes . . .

SLASH – Do you have any other projects besides finishing the movie?

STEVE – I dunno. I am pretty fuckin' bored with everything, I really am. Especially the music scene, it's so shitty.

SLASH – What went wrong?

STEVE – The biggest thing that went wrong is when we fuckir broke up! No one knew what to do next.

SLASH – Couldn't you and Paul start another band?

STEVE – Could do, if we REALLY got bored. I just don't want the same fuckin' old thing again, know what I mean?

(Big pause. The ocean, the sand in the tape recorder and the beginning of a sunburn. The exclusive Pistols tape is replaced by some very unexclusive vintage Motown. Steve senses my lack of originality and comes to the rescue.)

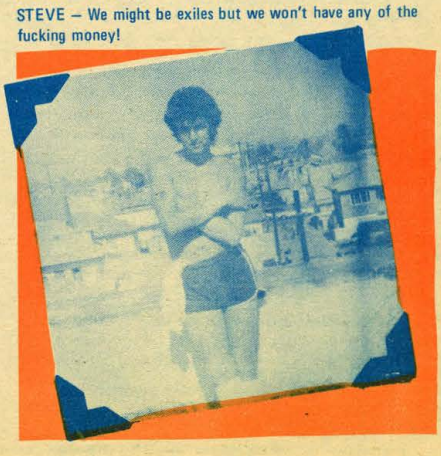
STEVE – Looks like I sold out, doesn't it? Sitting on a fuckin beach doing an interview!

SLASH – Well, are you rich?

STEVE – Most of the fuckin' dough we had has gone into this film. We hope the fuck it does do well, 'cause if it doesn't we might as well kill ourselves. The taxman will be after us, and if we ain't got the money he'll be after our fuckin' bollocks.

SLASH – And become the first punk tax exiles?

STEVE – We might be exiles but we won't have any of the fucking money!



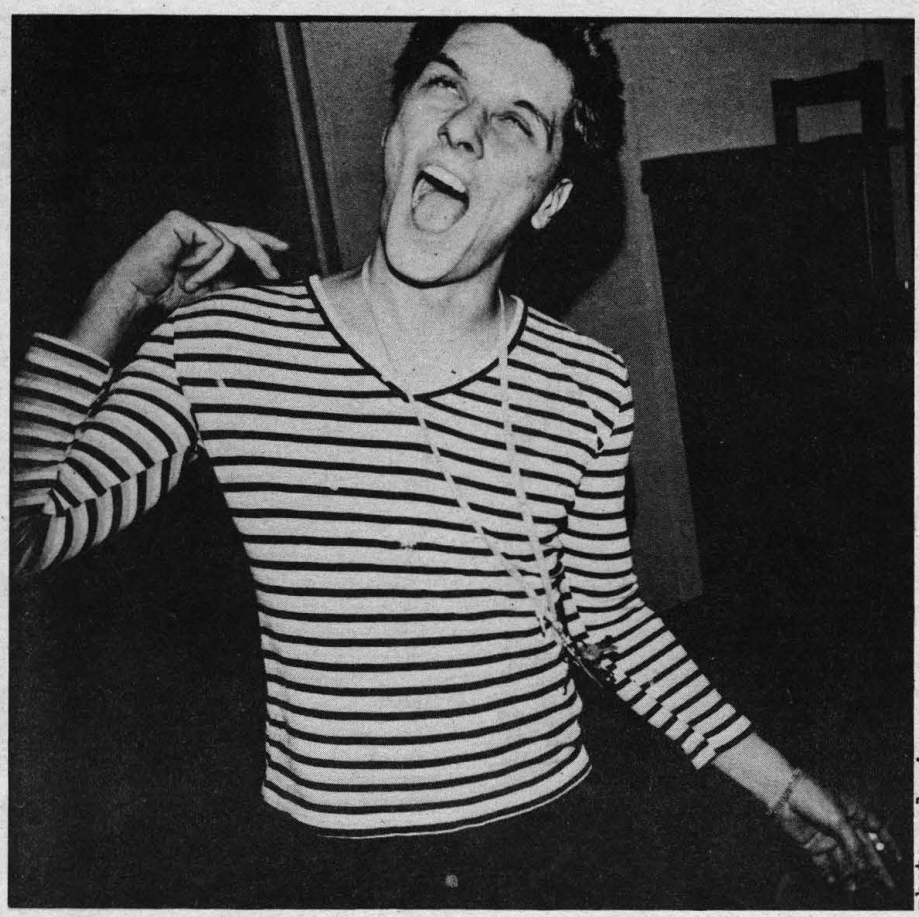


photo: melanie

GEZA-X

prince of the butt - pliers

by Sue Bee

Eccentric but brilliant, Geza X. is unquestionably the West Coast's top producer-engineer. Former guitarist with the Deadbeats, he now plans to spend more time producing records. "Let's put L.A. on the map!"; and developing his brainchild, The Jerrys. Originally an L.A. based secret society, the Jerrys have spread their tentacles throughout America and as far overseas as England and France. Now he has formed a new band (called "The Jerrys", naturally) to serve as a vehicle for his complex and controversial social theories, and promote a bizarre new sound he calls "X music".

This interview happened accidentally. Several of us had been getting drunk and talking for hours, and I noticed that Geza was in a (very unusual) serious and confidential mood— apparently gloomy about being kicked out of the Deadbeats so suddenly. Rather than miss such an elusive opportunity I borrowed a tape recorder and asked for a "truth or dare" type interview without the usual farts and butt-jokes. He said, "O.K., if you show me your tits . . . ."

Slash: Why did you leave the Deadbeats?
Geza: (laughs) Could you, uh, rephrase that question?
S: Why did you get kicked out of the Deadbeats?
G: Mmm. . . well, I guess they thought I wasn't right for the band. Also they got paranoid and thought that I was doing all these sneaky things behind their backs.
S: And then Pat Delaney quit, because he didn't agree?
G: Sort of, but I really shouldn't speak for him you know . . . he's pretty disenchanted with the whole thing.
S: Is he in your new band?
G: Well, I don't want to spoil this before its in full bloom, so don't print this but _____ _____ and some new ideas that will really surprise a lot of people, especially because we'll be recording and traveling almost immediately.
S: Those new ideas aren't all new, though. Didn't you develop some of them in Santa Maria, a couple of years ago?
G: God, how did you find out about **that**? I first moved there as a social experiment. It's a small town where you can evaluate the results in a hurry. I was using Santa Maria as a guinea pig to test out certain concepts. The results really startled me. What I didn't expect was that I met some really genius people who figured out exactly what I was doing and had similar ideas. We started a band that turned into a whole subculture.
S: What kind of music did you play there?
G: We invented a form of music called X Music. It's based on a very strong jungle beat with dissonant chords called triads. In the middle ages X chords were called "The Devil's Interval". Supposedly people would flee in terror when they heard it, and the catholic church suppressed it. Musicians were tortured and put to death for playing it. Pretty powerful noise, huh??
S: I'll say! And did you use X chords in Deadbeat songs?
G: Yeah, several of them have little sections in the key of X, but I haven't run across the devil yet (laughs).
S: You used to be in the Bags, too. Why did you leave them?
G: Joe Robot and I got kicked out for being too obnoxious. I like them, though. They're a really good band.
S: And you're producing their record now . . .
G: (smiles) yeah, it's nearly finished.
S: Did you ever have any pets?
G: Wha . . . ? (laughs) off the wall question of the year award. Well, I've had some pretty strage experiences with pets . . . I caught a lizard once that I used to catch flies for. I got so good at it that I could hit a fly in midair with a hairbrush at about twenty feet. So I had this pile of flies about four inches high but it wouldn't eat them and it died.
Then I had a colony of rats . . . my room was in the garage . . . and one of them used to climb right in the back of my amp whenever I played. One night it climbed inside my boot, and (laughing) I **grabbed** the boot like this — and put it in a box. It hated me and kept trying to bite me, but it wouldn't eat either. So it died.
The strangest one, it's almost unbelievable was this telepathic plant about nine feet high. See I used to piss out the back door of the garage and I was taking a **lot** of speed and acid at the time so my piss was full of chemicals, and one day I went outside to piss, and I swear to God there was this huge weird looking plant with these huge leaves that **wasn't there two days before!** My dad said it was so imposing looking that he couldn't cut it down for some reason — this enormous weed. So it kept growing and it started **bugging me.** My bed was on the other side of the wall from it, and I could feel its' presence. It's kind of hard to describe, but finally I had to move the bed to the other side of the room. I started to notice that it seemed like the plant was this giant antenna, magnifying every event that happened in the garage. And all the time I went to nurseries and all over the neighborhood to find another one like it, but there weren't any. I'd read that some plants are very sensitive so I tried hooking up an oscilloscope to it and ran wires inside so I could watch it. It definitely had an entirely different pattern than some other plants that I tried the scope on, but I watched that thig on and off for weeks, and couldn't ever figure out **what it was reacting to!** I finally speculated that its reactions were more like a cause than an effect. Where most plants react to stimuli, you know, this one was creating them — at least that's my guess . . . and then one day I noticed about fifteen feet away from this one, several other ones . . . where I hadn't been pissing . . . and they were identical in every detail **except they were only two inches high!** They never grew any bigger either. It's probably the strangest thing that's ever happened to me. About then I moved out and I wanted to take it with me, but when I came back to get it my mom had hired someone to cut it down . . .
S: Speaking of telepathy, I've heard rumors that you're a little telepathic yourself. People mention certain "knowing glances" . . .
G: (Knowing glance) That's pretty silly, isn't it? Let's talk about something else.
S: How long have you been engineering?
G: Well, I recorded funk, disco, gospel for about

three years. I was making $10 an hour but I was getting sucked into their phony world. I I finally had to quit, I hated their Porsche shallowness. I hated recording it their way (boom, chick booboom, chick . . .) not no more, buddy.
S: Do you see yourself as a new wave Phil Spector – a young millionaire genius?
G: Money doesn't motivate me much. I do so many favors for free, you know? Instead I want power and plenty of it so I can get on with some, uh, social projects.
S: Social projects?
G: Let's move on to something else.
S: Why is Half-Breed the only record you own?
G: (Laughs) Well it's the only record that I ever bought. A convention of engineers and producers voted it the worst record of 1973, or maybe it was DJs. . . . but everything on it is flawed: lyrics, drums, vocals. It's my bible.
S: How do you produce?
G: With my glands. Actually it's none of your business – but I break the rules again and again.
S: Like how?
G: I'd rather not advertise it, or everybody'll do it.
S: Something wrong?
G: I have to go wee-wee.

(Geza returns with a couple of other people, running around and giggling hysterically.)
S: Why are girls always kissing you?
G: I have the dick of a negro.
S: Are you a flirt?
G: I think I'm a slut (laughs).
S: Let's . . . how long have you been interested in electronics and science?
G: And sex?
S: Well . . .
G: No really, science has fascinated me since I was two years old. My father's a research scientist so I couldn't help it, actually. I used to make a beeline straight for the wall sockets. I was addicted to electric shocks.
S: Really?
G: Yeah, I got zapped every day for years! I'm surprised I don't have brain damage . . . or do I?
S: Hmm . . . what other technical projects are you working on?
G: Well, my friend Terry and I have been working for years on a radically new theory of gravitation. It describes gravity as a one way phase shift which is the result of the interaction of very high and very low frequencies which occur in nature. Any time two frequencies try to occupy the same space a "beat tone" is produced which is a type of phase shift. Any time you displace space and time, there is a change in energy. It's not an attraction between objects at all but a very slight "time shift" that's always trying to normalize itself.
S: Sounds pretty complicated.
G: Duh.
S: You're Jerry #1, aren't you? What does it take to be a Jerry?
G: You have to be totally crazy and totally sane. You have to be socially manipulative, highly intelligent, and have no shame. Few people fit that description.
S: How did it start?
G: Well Jehovah Robot used to tell me that I turned into Jerry Lewis when I was drunk enough – like a split personality. Awhile after that I started to notice that there were several people like that, and that they had other traits in common. So one day I appointed Spaz Jerry #2. And he and I hand-picked other Jerrys, one at a time.
S: How do you appoint Jerrys?
G: We have a long list of nominees and we observe them for months. We watch patiently because we don't want to be wrong when we appoint someone – it's really embarrassing and cruel to take someone's number back. So there's a lot of people who should be Jerrys but aren't because the opportunity hasn't come up yet . . .
S: What about girls?
G: I figured out that I couldn't come up with the right criteria to appoint girl Jerrys so I appointed five Jerryettes and told them to figure it out.
S; Who's Jerryette #1?
G: Trudie. She's capable and fair.
S: You actually have a lot to say. How come you act so silly most of the time. Is it a front?
G: Not really. I just believe that when it's time to work, you work, and when its time to play, you should play. I love to goof around and I'm not intimidated by repressive social standards. People in L.A. are actually very inhibited, you know. I think it's an act of kindness to give people the opportunity to be free, and I except the same tolerance from others.
S: Kindness, tolerance, freedom – do you really think those ideas work?
G: (pushes up nose) Oh, how trendy! You know, the new wave consists of the most sincere and intelligent people anywhere – the cream of the crop. And all this black humor and nihilistic crap is meant to make us a threat to the rest of society. But we ourselves shouldn't take it too seriously or we'll become as self-destructive and stereotyped and boring as the hippies did (large fart noise).
S: What are your plans for your new band?
G: We plan to remain months ahead of the new wave, and we'll seem a little inaccessible until people catch up with us. It's all part of a much larger plan.
S: What about this secret cult that worships noise and performs masturbation rituals – do the Jerrys have anything to do with that?
G: Oh, the Persuasionists? No, it's more like . . . (long silence) . . . actually, I don't know anything about it.
S: Anything else?
G: Smell kill fuck eat mommy.

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Above, Belinda GO-GO, going, going... photo: melanie

THE EXTREMES, THE GO-GO'S, THE BAGS AND THE ZEROS
At Club 88

Great price, great billing, great night, lousy sound system and lousy air ventilation. The Extremes were kinda good 'cept for the inaudible vocals. Can't say more until I see them under better sound conditions. The Go-Go's are still improving. By now one of the best of the 3rd generation bands. Their main objective now should be to stay out of Kim Fowley's claws. It is much to early for the kiss of death. The Bags were in splendid form, and the Zeros, now reduced to a trio, were magnificent. Why should there be a daytime anyway? It just gets in the way of the next night.

SIMPLETONES
and the GERMS
at the Rock Corporation

The elusive charm of Posh Boy's latest find totally eluded me. Entertainment punk for cocktail lounge, if there's a need for this especially bland type of mutation don't tell me about it. Bad news always comes soon enough. It was all largely compensated for by the Germs who that night must have played the longest set of their career. As the audience threatened to go into a collective fit of withdrawal every time the set came near a possible ending they stoically redid songs that had already been done 40 minutes earlier, adding variety by having guest drummers, handing the guitar to anyone willing to tickle it for a few minutes and alternatively stepping or falling offstage for a breather. The bewildered bikers at the bar shook their head in disbelief and the waitresses worried about getting up in the morning. A Germs audience does not like to call it quits early in the night. A Germs concert is like no other concert. A Germs live review is a perfectly impossible task. Either you were there and you were part of it or you were there and were appalled or you weren't there and are still totally in the dark. O well, a bit of mystery never hurts.

TALKING HEADS
at the Roxy

In New York, Talking Heads had Dillinger for their opening act. Here, they settled for a (very good) knife throwing artist. Somehow, I felt cheated. They played excellently but kept their distance from a very predictable audience of young professionals and full time dilettantes. Whether the quasi-mathematical dryness of their stage presence is a step forward in the progression of pop/rock music or not is not the point. Obviously, there is no other way for them to play their tunes and convey the enormously complex pseudo simplicity of what they are doing. Intellectuals have the right to boogie, and it is nice to see them do so without the up to now obligatory phone "get down/get funky" self conscious attitude that some have felt forced to adopt when dealing with such a common unsophisticated medium as rock n roll. What am I saying? (that's what Talking Heads music does to you, you lose perspective, you find yourself in unknown territory when from all appearances you should feel at home) Oh yes, got it: I sometimes felt that Talking Heads have settled for the discoid rockoid format to convey their definitely avant garde ideas on life and emotions for lack of any other easily usable and communicable medium. In other words, there was the feeling of a block, of a wall they kept bumping into and that would be there as long as they kept concentrating on their PLAYING IT RIGHT instead of INVENTING a new suitable vehicle. I think.

Kick

ZEROS/UPBEATS
at Glorietta Bay Park, Coronado
22 September

The Zeros say goodbye to hometown San Diego and they do it up right. A bargain ($1) and the place was a find: Fashionably decrepit military surplus building, adjacent waterfront park with handy/welcome playground, nicely isolated (an island of music within an island of land) if hard to find (and expensive, too — bridge tolls exceeded the price of admission).

The Upbeats: Very young, very good trio. No pretense, no posing, just energetic rock'n'roll (no other name for it). How come the young ones these days make it sound so easy?

The Zeros: They played everything they had and most better than ever. Power trio (no, not like that), streamlined all-out sound. Javier dressing and even playing ("Rancho Grande") the cowboy, Hector the usual supercool superpunk, Baba the suave new wave sophisticate who can send the sparks flying with his offstage disco moves. No, there's no band like the Zeros; they're leaving here but they're here to stay.

Suzi Substitute

M O V I E

UP IN SMOKE
Starring Cheech & Chong
Produced by Lou Adler

See it in 2000 AD on a triple bill with Easy Rider and Hair, for now forget it. It will be proof positive that the American Hippie smoked itself into extinction. Or catch it at the "Haight Ashbury Museum of Natural Hippie," along with those few survivors who haven't yet munchied themselves to death or died swallowing their own hair.

The story is complex: Two would-be musician potheads try to score. It's mostly bad sight gags, you'll find every dumb dope-related joke from inhaling a burning roach to sniffing a pile of Ajax. Stacy Keach who finally OD's on a pizza after breathing grass-laced truck exhaust wasn't even bad-good. Good actor, too bad. Tom Skerrit plays a koo-koo VietVet real good and a horsemouthed hanna-ed Jane Buzby was **great** as a long-gone doperchick. If the Keystone cops would have had shit, puke, piss and farts to work with they could have sailed thru upstaging Cheech and Chong.

Sample dialogue: "Hey, man. What's happening, men? Mellow out, man. This ain't shit, man. Far out, man." Holding your sides yet?

The film's only humor came when Keach showed some slides, classroom style. First, a TV. Then, various shots of a Mexican weed factory. He explains the TV is really made of weed — "fiberweed" — a blown-on fiberglas-like material. We see a fiberweed vehicle being manufactured, an army-green van with '56 Cadillac fenders and fins, possible the ugliest vehicle ever driven in public. Cheech and Chong drive the vehicle to perform at a "Rockfight" at the Roxy where they will, provided they can still walk, battle the bands. And from here we can only pray that Lou Adler (the producer), Paramount Pictures (the distributor) and the American public (the suckers) will learn a lesson. The Dils and the Whores perform **snatches** of songs, the Roxy audience (real life LA punks) goes "nuts". Then Cheech and Chong come on and do a song dressed in ballet outfits and Micket Mouse ears. They suck. They win! Now, who's kidding who?

Lou Adler is kidding himself. Next time, Lou-baby, give the Mexicans the trapdoor and make a movie about what the audience at the Roxy was cheering about. OK, man? . . . . Mellow.

Penelope

THE VISITORS, FEAR, THE MUTANTS AND THE DILS
At Bace's Hall

Let's concentrate on two groups, the Mutants and Fear. Read all about the Visitors in this issue's live Devo review and about the Dils in every past issue of Slash. When they do a bad set I'll eat my typewriter and join the moonies. The Mutants are from San Francisco or maybe Mars. They look like an assortment of oddballs and misfits thrown together by bad luck but their sound is surprisingly powerful and hard-core. And while the guys on the instruments take care of business the three singers go ape on the front line, pacing the length of the stage, shouting, dancing, being swallowed by an especially demented audience, resurfacing sometimes later in another section, clutching onto each other for support against the clawing mob but not losing a beat, turning their set into a strange game of how long can they last in those adverse conditions and winning. Quite a show. I suppose the reason the spectators went cannabilistic were the two girls who, although not quite the usual sex object type were looking especially defilable in their torn junk shop garments. The overweight doll in her little girl outfit certainly looked like a pervert's dream come true and then gone out of hand.

Also bringing the animal out in the drooling scum up front was that go go dancer in fishnets and not much else. Before the Mutants, Fear had elicited a rather different type of response from that same audience.

Much less playful than those lunatics, the last thing they wanted to do was give anyone a "good time." Contempt and anger is at the core of everything they do, and it soon gave their set a bizarre atmosphere that seemed to fluctuate from song to song. Some hated them passionately and were very intent on demonstrating it, throwing beer and later beer cans on the stage, throwing everything they could find until it looked like some pipe had ruptured somewhere, others just stared in fascination and growing admiration at such intense goings-on. The band itself seemed to really thrive on all this activity, relentlessly throwing song after song into the face of the beast, each one louder and harder and meaner than the one before. Combat rock for the next civil war. Even the national anthem got tortured and trampled. I don't think anyone had seen such a fierce explosion of rabid negativism in a long long time. They screamed and spat and fell in the beer and got shocks and carried on as if the bomb was going to be dropped that night and it was the last chance anybody had of shouting their feelings to the stupid world. They all looked tough and played the same, but singer guitar player Lee Ving deserves a honorable mention for his android wrestler looks (space mercenary with purple hair is another descriptive approximation) and his general stage aggressivity. Not someone you would want to pull the plug on. And, seeing the overall lack of energy the Los Angeles scene appears to be drifting into, pulling the plug on these guys would not only be risky, it would be criminal. The wimps will be left behind, but many will soon realize we should be glad to have Fear with us.

DEVO photo by Gary Pearlson

Q: ARE THEY NOT MEN?
A: THEY ARE EGO!
Devo, The Visitors, Dr. Jackets Starwood

Was it really possible that Devo had packed The Starwood full of willing sardines? Midwestern spudbrains . . . a "bigtime" concert draw? There were even scalpers outside – asking $20 A TICKET! Yessiree, something just had to be wrong . . .

It didn't take long to guess what it could be: all around me, milling like unemployed data processors, were herds of nerds in full regalia. Devo suits, Devo buttons, Devo shirts, Devo hats – the biggest proliferation of uniform idiocy since the Year of the Happy Face. Yes, Devo is really "in" this year, and for everyone's sake (especially Devo's), I hope its just a passing fad. They are one of the most important groups in America – but a marketable product?

I had just wedged my angular frame into the throng of nouveau-devotees, all crammed in front of a stage full of colored cardboard buildings, when a voice announced: "from Ohio, Dr. Jackets." Exactly that – one goon, from Ohio, named Dr. Jackets. Dr. Jackass is exactly the type of artsy-fartsy scum who threaten to turn a good joke (funk) into a bad one (junk). I've wasted enough space on this creep – the best part of his show was when someone threw a building into his mouth.

Despite the ridiculous changes for "de-vo, de-vo, de-vo," the Visitors launched straight into a barrage of heavy artillery tunes. They are new, and good. With the avalanche backbeat from David Drummer and comely Kira on bass, and the grim chordistics from stormtrooper Keef Meat, lead singer Spaz Attack whirled all over stage like a negro sailor on three days leave. A maladjusted Fred Astaire – one minute sh-sh-shuddering like he's urinating in a generator, the next suavely executing Bowiesque shuffles and demented disco kicks; running his flabbergasted face up n' down the bannister rails like a rabbit at a racetrack, and of course, doing his famous thrombotic leaps into the crowd. But the crowd, not wanting real meat. . .Good exposure for a new band, but the Visitors aren't meant to be filler for the likes of Devo.

The situation was this: the Disco Dump has a "lobby," a bar, and a dance floor, but 90% of the fans were vacu-formed within 25 feet of the stage; my stomach, empty since the previous night, was being very vocal in its desire to forget this article and leave immediately; who's gonna leave when it was nearly impossible to get in? After forty fun filled minutes, the lights finally dimmed. Was it . . . could it be . . . Devo? Nah, time to watch Devo's home movies. A "jocko homo" movie, a "Satisfaction" movie, and a "come back jonee" movie. All their big hits in living color. Highlights were: bowling cowboys, LA's favorite punks pogoing, and spaz spazzing (much to the audience's delight – where were they when it was live?) So witty and clever, I almost forgot my stomach was cannabilizing itself.

Devo came out, played their album, did an encore, and left.

It wasn't the first time I've seen Devo, nor was it the best. I was them at their first Mabuhay Gardens date (ate with them the next night), and I've seen them twice since. The first time they were mesmerizing – all dressed in white flight suits, Mark the singer having a huge foam rubber cock wrapped halfway around his back, doing the original mecho-pogo, and singing of the silliness of the species. The second time they were entertaining – with new booji-boy masks, schoolboy shorts and fresh songs. The audience, primed on their classic first single, was wild with laughter and approval. Not as devo as before, but devo enough to be my favority new band. So they found themselves in front of a full house of sardines, and I found myself a sardine in want of legs. See, this time they were interesting at best, and this time I was not interested at all.

They were Devo, but they weren't devo. Their whole philosophy was violated by the "conquering hero" slant of their performance. They were in too much control, too rehearsed, too safe, too contrived. Most of all, they were too goddamned serious. Apparently, not only do they now take humans seriously, but they take media hype and record sales seriously. Well, I didn't enjoy it much, but I sure can judge it. My verdict is guilty.

Being "devo" may get in the way of being successful. De-evolution has been replaced by "survival of the adjusted," and their first single may be more valuable than you think.

Will "get to the point" L'Amato

photos: melanie

FEARlessly facing frantic fans...

THE SATIN TONES, SEIZURE, THE PLUGZ and X on Hope St.

While the Screamers were mingling with the wealthy at Fiorucci's opening, some of us ventured in a slightly less fashionable part of town to catch another punk concert in another new location in another attempt to brighten another night. It was the usual slightly run down dance hall that mainly caters to special weekend events for minority groups like Mexican weddings that terminate in a knife fight and punk gigs that terminate in a beer fight. A perfect setting for the slightly run down music of the Satin Tones, those seedy entertainers in their moth eaten cocktail lounge outfits. Once upon a time, the Satin Tones looked around and all they saw in the music of their peers was relevance and anger. Not wanting to join that ever growing bandwagon, they opted for that neglected region of music land where nothing matters; background music, barmitzvah music, topless music, happy hour (2 drinks for the price of 1 until 6 pee aim) music, contented shit music. They quickly became very good at being bad. Nobody loved them, which meant they were successful. Nobody danced, everybody went to the bar and talked loudly while they played, which made club owners happy and gave bouncers time to go for a shit, on Hope St. they came to the hall in a Rolls, which made the Mexican kids hanging out side gawk and stare at such flamboyant success. Their "set" was as usual unreviewable and unmentionable, but more so. They are to the L.A. scene what Liberace is to the world of classical music, what Rod McKuen is to the world of poetry: an embarassing aberration that refuses to quit or a great put-on. I think their next engagement should be the Las Vegas airport, right next to the souvenir shop. They will go far (and if we're lucky stay there). The rest of the night was rather routine stuff, with a pretty good set by the Plugz (see other Plugz reviews for lyrical details and technical info) and a very good set by X (see other X reviews for technical details and lyrical info). New band in town Seizure started nice and strong and more or less fell apart halfway thru, apparently due to mechanical problems. Amusing ending note: while the mob pogoed its little heart out with X music a mysterious someone deposited a turd on the floor. It was immediately squished and pulverized by dozens of happy little dancing feet.

Kick

DEPARTING SCREAMERS AND EMERGING X AT THE WHISKEY-A-NO-GO

Part 1: see what bigotry gets me

Absolutely the first time I've ever seen band X and it won't be the last. After all the good press they've received from both the Objective Press (Slash) and the trash tabloids (LA Times), I will admit I was sure they couldn't be anything I'd be interested in. 'Nothing acceptable is acceptable' is my motto. Now I must make an x-ception for an x-ceptionally x-ceptable combo. The band with the variable name is one of the most powerful bands I've seen this summer and I'm sure they're more than that.

At first I was unconvinced by Exene, until it dawned on me that she wasn't there to convince anybody in any way. She don't give a hoot in hell if I like her, or my mom, or if the whole fucking audience gets up and goes to dinner. She knows its their loss, after all, and she's used to having fun alone. Da goil's a real doll – one of those plasticene troll dolls with the bruise-purple hair that everybody's sister had and gave away a long time ago. No fancy softshoe or hard-nippled jello for this urchin – no trendy patter or phoney smiles are needed. Tragic girl singing the black 'n blues to a deaf and disgusting world . . . no romance there, just truth. I didn't like her voice or moves but who cares? She's got the Attitude and that's what's needed, now.

Her ugly indifference is perfectly balanced by Billy Zoom's oral hygiene. If the 'lil imp werent a damned good guitarist, he could be selling Skippy peanut butter to the grandmas of America. How could such a nice boy produce such a multichord thunderstorm? Don't quote me, but I think it could be 'talent.' I wouldn't be surprised if he dabbles in Wayne Perkins or Bach.

The reason I liked X as much as I did is their battering rhythm section. My first impression is that is the best currently keeping beat in LA. Wringing the bass, voicebox and stage area for all they're worth, John Doe is the musical and visual eye of this cyclone – and he never blinks. Sledgehammers in wave-patterns were run-skip-jumping out of his bass like diarrhea out of a paraplegic – painfully yet effortlessly. An over-achiever who won't quit, he didn't even use a set list. But the star of the show was Don the Drummer.

Long, long time ago I gave a shy guy with an inverted Mohawk a ride home from a Germs rehearsal and I wondered what he was doing there in the first place. Now I know, out of Eyes, now in X, my shy Don sits back in the shadows humbly beating the hell out of any other 'power' drummer around. Awesome. No cop-out frills or tired rolls, just KA-BLAM. BLAM! BLAM! How his muscles keep from turning into throbbing cement blocks must be a trade secret. The sleeper of the year. For the next two months my favorite drummer.

Notable songs in X's set are all songs in X's set.

Part 2: The Screamers Farewell Cash-a-Thon

What more needs to be said? We thought it couldn't happen but we knew it must. The Screamers have escaped us at last, over the wall to bigger and better things) to greener pastures, no doubt – Ohio, Montreal, New York City. Back from whence they came, motoring the m medicine show from the City of Los Angeles to the Rotten Apple, they will return to us as heros or maybe not at all. Don't expect many letters, they've got quite a mission ahead. The innocent must be touched, the guilty must pay. There are full pickets and empty heads strung from shore to shore and it's there that the Screamers must go. Our pockets are empty, our heads are full – why be selfish? There's gonna be bigger vacuums that our heads to fill while they're gone. What more needs to be said? Oh, oh yes . . . the concert. Well, my mom came and she liked it. I'd say they're ready for the road.

L'Amato

SEIZURE, PLUGZ and CONTROLLERS at the Rock Corporation

Halfway thru their sound check, the Controllers walked off, followed by Tito of the Plugz. Seizure arrive just in time to turn around and go back to San Francisco. The rest of the Plugz pull up as the last customer is getting his money back. End of a perfectly ridiculous afternoon. Some days, NOTHING is worth the trouble. Punk rock, schmunk rock.

X, PLUGZ, FEAR
at No Magazine party

(Ringring-ring)
V: 6-6-6-1-9-8-4...
D: Shut up, V, you can't afford an answering service.
V: That's because Slash doesn't pay their writers.
D: Well TOO BAD, because one of us has to write up that party in Pasadena last night.
V: Party? what party?
D: You, know, the one where you got tied up in the loft and had chicken feathers glued all over you.
V: Oh, now I remember, the art swingers convention.
D: Look who's talking...
V: Whatever it was, it's not going to be me, you know how I hate to give a bad review.
D: Whaddya mean? Didn't you like X?
V: X is great. But that first band...
D: Fear? Kickboy thinks they're the greatest new band around. ...they're OK, they have a lot of energy...
V: So does Led Zeppelin.
D: Most of their songs sound the same, though.
V: Z-z-z-z-z-z.
D: What did you think of the Plugz?
V: Pretty good, I can't get too excited about them. I like that song about the bomb.
D: That's La Bamba, and I don't think they should do it anymore, but they have some good new songs. They're getting better every time I see them.
V: No one's better than X.
D: I like the way John Doe was swiveling his hips.
V: And the photographers at his feet were pretending they were in a scene from Blow-up.
D: They're lucky they didn't get their cameras smashed. Did you see all those fans pogoing into Exene and Billy Zoom? They almost wrecked Don Bonebrake's drums.
V: I was in the back watching Rod pelting Barry Plugz' dog with beer cans.
D: Did they get in a fight?
V: Almost... they shouldve called the ASPCA.
D: Yeah, for everyone there.

V/D

HEARTBREAKERS
at the Whiskey

Please believe me. If I'd been aware that at the precise moment the girl at the door was wrenching those five big ones from my sweaty palm I was filling the spoons of four pathetic, tired, self-abused men, I would have tightened my grip and bolted for the exit. My reflexes slowed. Late, too goddamned late! Too late for my five and about five years too late for these four jaded asses.

Sauntering through the mass of teased hair and platform shoes I secure a foothold amongst a crowd of people (?) who appear to not have pulled their heads out of their social quagmire since Rodneys' club shut down. Well, buster, the combination of these misguided souls plus the Whisk's infamous "our home is your home" open arms policy really set my teeth on edge.

The Pop! got the ball rolling. What can be said about a band that does "God Save the Queen"? Gene Autrey impaled on his saddle horn could have done a more inspired cover. The guitarist, who bears a striking resemblance to Howard Devoto, injected some savory bits and pieces into an otherwise comical set, which proved to be only lubrication for what was to follow.

The lights dim and here they come, the LAMF Heartbreakers: Johnny Thunder, Billy Rath, Walter Lure and Jerry Nolan's replacement (who was it anyway?). Might not be too bad (did I say that?) Tuning, lights on, yippee! The Heartbreakers.

(Sigh.) OK, so visually they're nothing to write home about. Even if Walter Lure still pencils his eyebrows on; he manages to come off like a thirty-year drag queen-circuit veteran. That shouldn't weigh on the musical scale, right? Right! Let's give 'em a chance. A-one, a-two, a-three, hit it guys!

Well, the music was there. All the components that comprise "rock" certainly exist. Thunder slams his unit, Lure looks ginchy (he can play, too), Rath keeps a steady bass throb, the drummer drums. Next song. Wait, they're saying something. Blubbering about the next song? Can't tell. Too slurred. (Why do they all keep doing opiated Rod Stewart impersonations? Hands on hips, palms out, mess up the hair. La-tee-da) Oh shit, another song about heroin. Complete with simulated mainline action. These guys are lower than a snakefart, I thought that neanderthal crap died with Lou Reed.

The rest of this sleepy set drones on, the audience claps, jumps a bit and pulls skin-tight leotards out of their collective butts. They make a good stab at reacting like you're supposed to when a "European" Band hits the stage. The redundancy and downright lethargy of this banal "rock" was getting just a wee bit, uh, putrid...

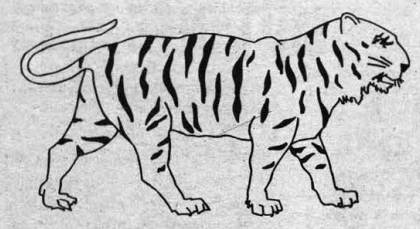
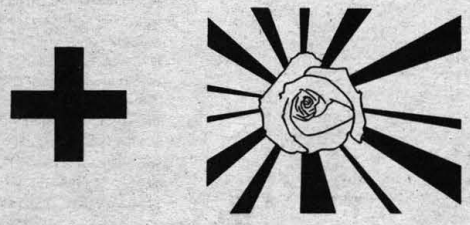
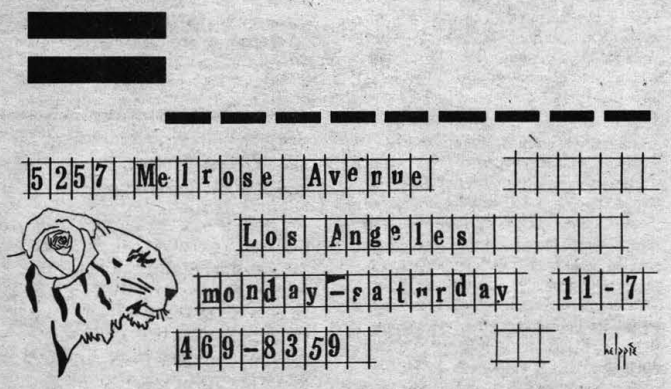
They pull off "Born to Lose" (great theme song) with all the force of grocery store muzak. Scratch their noses, rub their faces, slobber something sounding like "Gooo-nite, thansss..." and Hail Mary, its over. They were coming back for one more but I certainly had my fill, why spoil a good (?) thing. So I park it outside and watch as the crowd files past, non looking particularly ecstatic or amused. After just witnessing the carnage of potentially good music by the dreary old song 'n' dance theatrics of drug glorification, can you blame them? Yawn... oh, well... where did I put that "spike"... ???

Rick Jaffe

SKIN AND THE PLUGZ
at Madame Wong's

Strange location 'cept everybody's so blase by now they wouldn't bat an eyelid if the next concert took place in a massage parlor (come to think of it...) The Plugz had a neat little setup in the courtyard with a recording machine in a VW van and cables that run thru the kitchens all the way to the stage, they were tentatively attempting to capture their live music and use it for parts of their self-financed album, but unfortunately they had Skin as the opening band, and that was harder to swallow than stale egg rolls. Rock n roll like it used to be, a not very good voice on the singer and less stage presence than my mom. A bit more of this, lots more of that, less of everything and then twist it around and it could have been a fair approximation of the Jam on a bad night. But they stuck to their formula and it remained nothing on top of very little. Hard workers, too. I think they brought some friends along 'cos there was scattered applause. The Plugz played quite well after that but a bit on the stiff side, Barry and Charlie had sobered up for the occasion and it lacked the usual tight abandon. There was a second set, which meant Skin again. After more of that it was the Plugz again, who were ten times better and must have got more than a few solid moments for their LP, unless some pogo addict tripped on a cable and pulled the plug on them (this is NOT supposed to be one of my best puns). And they did "She electrifies me," which made it all worth it. After that we all deeply bowed to each other and retired to our Sampans.

Kick

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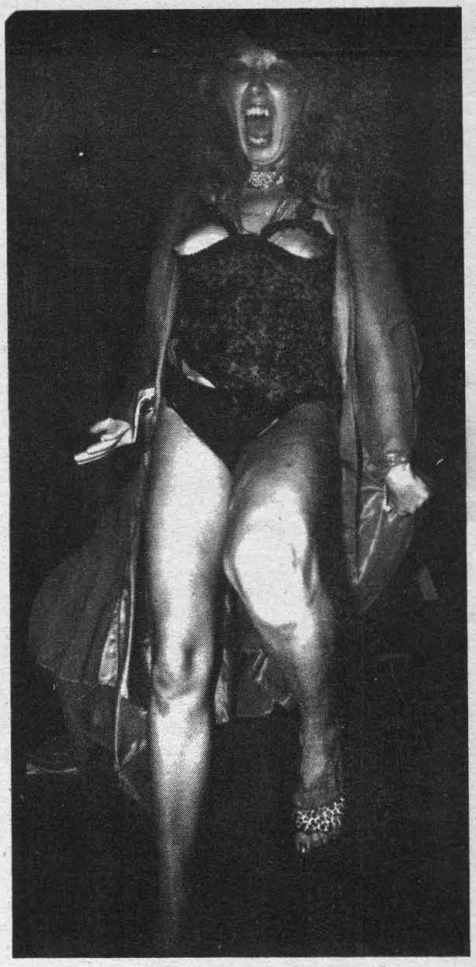

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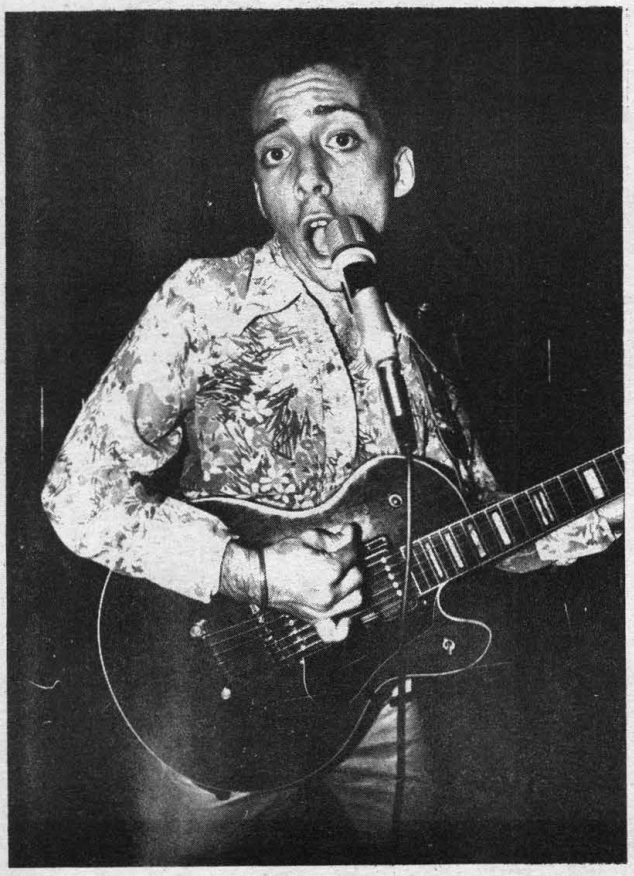
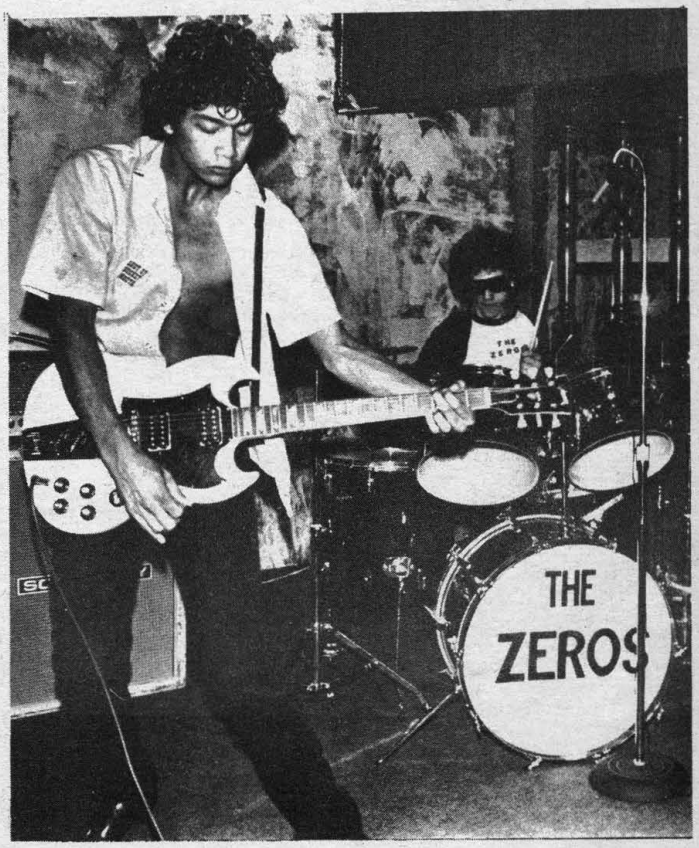


EXTREMES



7" seven Diameter vinyl

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS
(78 RPMs/Alternative Ulster)
Rigid Digits/Rough Trade import

I let out a low groan when I caught sight of what was scrawled on the back of the picture sleeve. More generalizing in cliches about our revolution, "our new Year." Then diamond hits vinyl and it's a whole other story. The attack isn't as savage as "Suspect Device" with the exception of the alternately screaming/harmonizing vocals. But the production and nasty cutting edges that explode out of nowhere in mid-song creep up on you, making this one of the best records out since their own last release.

Chris D.

AUGUSTUS PABLO AND ROCKERS ALL-STARS
(Pablo meets Mr. Bassie/Mr. Bassie Special)
Rough Trade import

THE greatest instrumental single in ages. A simple straightforward rhythmic tune with the inimitable Augustus Pablo weaving evocative western movie influenced keyboard lines around the effortless patterns of bass, drums and guitar. The dub side tastefully dissects the same tune, exposing parts of the understructure, bringing possible variations to the light, subtly switching the emphasis from melody to beat and meshing to two again before losing the atmosphere of the song. Totally obsessive reggae for the connaisseur.

Chatty Chatty Mouth

BUZZCOCKS
(Noise Annoys/Love you more)
United Artists import

"Love you more" is the Buzzcocks pushing their luck a bit too far and testing us to see if we'll swallow anything with the Buzzcocks trademark on it. We will not. They sense it, 'cos they literally stop in the middle of a chord. Exit silly love pop song with (as the connaisseurs say) "sixties sensibilities." "Noise annoys" first struck me as equally useless and empty until I realized the humor was in the music, all melodic then more metallic and grating (quite like the old Buzzcocks) and melodic again, while the silly chorus asks us if we've heard our mama say Noise annoys. Crash bang, noise again. And the mum pops back in the kid's room and tells him to turn it off. And the kid makes a face to her back, and sing sings knowingly to the Buzzcocks. Noise annoys, noise annoys. Well, it's good to see the punk brigade catering to the really young ones. And John Lydon/Rotten is going to do a narration of Peter and the Wolf for 1st graders.

Kicklittle Boy

MARS
(3E/11,000 Volts)
Rebel Records

"3E"is reminiscent of the Velvet Underground while still managing to sound original. The drums and bass are the most startling thing about this, guitar used more as a percussive instrument a la tin cans pounding repeatedly against each other at the speed of light. A dissonant slice of avant garde life that rocks anyway. "11,000 Volts", though, leaves me cold. Pere Ubu meets Lenny Kaye. I know it's a terrible thing to be compared to anyone in a negative way, especially when the influence is probably unintentional. But no matter how many times I listen to this song, I still hear a Patti Smith whine in the vocal that prohibits any further objectivity.

Chris D.

SEIZURE
(Front Line/Cuties Wrong Now)
Regressive Records

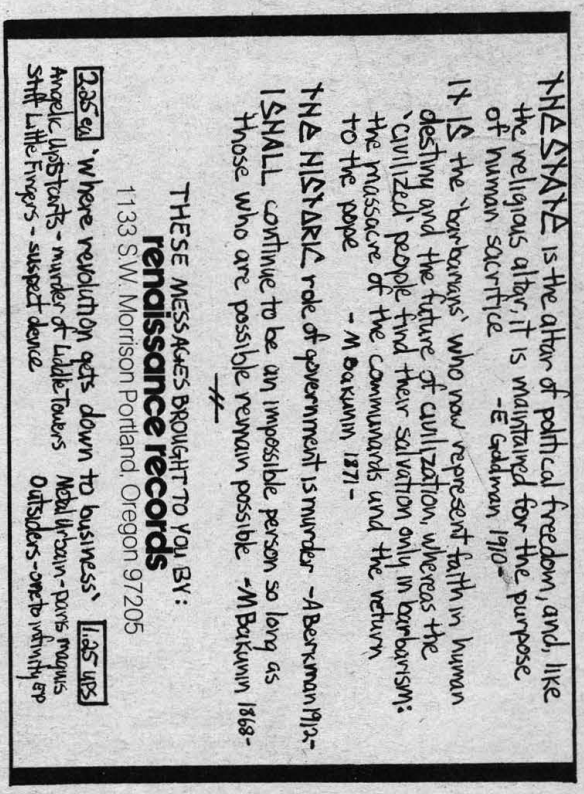
Seizure isn't worried about anything except smashing their instruments as hard as they can. They do it, and there's none of the "Profound" slickness that's crept into so many other "New Wavw" bands. Not that there isn't room for improvement in Seizure. Knowing when to hold back then let go full force would've helped both of these, knowing that the vocals aren't just unintelligible but barely audible would've added an extra bit of strength. But it's not a bad record. I listen to it and that's more than I can say for most of the other vinyl monstrosities loose these days.

Chris D.

TAPPER ZUKIE
(New Star/Living in the ghetto)
New Star records import

Little drum roll, a few bouncy keyboard notes to delineate the pitch and melody, the guitar to set the shyrhm with an impeccably dry backing, a few warming up mumblings to test the voice level, and Zukie and his Musical Intividators are on their way to another classic toasting track, the by now famous "New Star." Especially remarkable is the way Zukie goes into high gear after 40 seconds or so, initially sticking real close to the tune and rhythm, repeating the key phrases until he is ready to launch into his free form incantations, alternating accusations and admonitions while the backing band really rocks and cooks along the perfect groove, even doing a couple of sudden breaks that are immediately filled by miniature dub echo effects and Zukie's breathless vocals. "Give the youth man a chance, don't become a cop or an inspector or a superintendent in the armies of Babylon 'cos they're killers of the youth man . . . " I think the man is talking to all of us, ya know? Other side has the same type of odd frantic rhythm found on "Man from Bozrah" album, with the bass carrying most of the weight and some snatches of horn riffs thrown haphazardly in while Zukie races on and occasionally looking over his shoulder to see if the band is following, and occasionally posing to let them catch up, proving that as opposed to many talking artists he could, once given the initial push, carry on without any kinds of rhythm behind him.

Chatty Chatty Mouth



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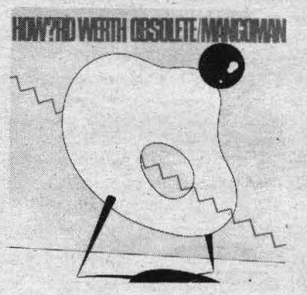
THE MISFITS
(Bullet/We are/Attitude/Hollywood Babylon)
Plan 9 Records

Fuck do I love this record. Lethal explosion of metal onslaught, with sentiments to match. Devastating attack of the possessed barbarians, frightening and truly inspiring at the same time. The only group in L.A. heading in that direction is Fear, whose record is in no way close to such clenched teeth brutality but whose live performance matches the Misfits' sound in powerful meanness. All 4 songs are pretty awesome but "Bullet" (a poetico-politico reflection on a certain historical incident in Dallas) and "Attitude" are spine chilling killers. This is the stuff the Dead Boys and other puppets wished they were made of. Dipshits beware, this music leaves stains on well balanced brains. Also note the exquisitely tasteful cover, a real liberal's delight.

Kick Face



HOWARD WERTH
(Obsolete/Mango Man)
Dangerhouse

Howard Werth will be unknown to our readers due to the highly uncomfortable position most of them have been in lately (head totally imbedded in soft pink rectum). Anyway, so you all know about him. Suffice it to say that Howard, in league with the self-servient scum at Dangerhouse, has created a novelty here: commercial-release quality material and production coupled with the best features of the new wave: simplicity and direction.

[Somewhere out in the display of human ostriches a quivering suggests that someone may be challenging our right to refer to Mr. Werth's single as "new-wave." Why he's rumored to be in his late 20s (making him younger than more than one local punk celeb we could mention). If you haven't learned the main lesson yet that it **doesn't matter** about that stuff, if you haven't grasped the essential zeitgeist yet, get your damn purple crewcut back up in your booty where it belongs until this review is over.]

Co-produced by that most consistent local talent, Mr. Pat Garrett/Rand McNally, Obsolete really resembles none of Howard's previous work that much — gone are the 24-track string arrangements and other gelatinous vestiges of overproduction. Say hello to Mr. Werth's convincing delivery of lyrics which invite an end to the age of studied jadedness and forced cynicism. Also good to hear Howard's unique guitar captured very basic and strong.

Over is Mango Man, which seems to my ears a bit more conventional. Mr. Werth himself claims it has the pushed-forward sound, rather than a laid-back one. Good drumming by Joe Nanini here.

The cover art is nothing short of monstrous. The graphic images (nod to Dave Allen) all seem devant chic, the presence of yesterday's trendiness giving a better perspective on our "modern culture." But there's no way to avoid becoming obsolete yourselves so try and make the best of it kids (you can take your heads out of your assholes now.)

Fuck Face

TANZ DER YOUTH
(Delay/I'm sorry, I'm sorry)
Radar import

Suport hook and nice layers on "Delay". A bit of a composite sound, with many hints of past stuff but nicely assimilated and standing quite firmly on its own. "I'm sorry" is better, a real big pop production that does not waste any time, real bouncy punchy modern music for people in a hurry. It's rather wholesome and more technically sophisticated than most singles in these pages but it's not in any way plastic or mass produced. Should be a hit on any chart with any trace of honesty in its compilation methods (given the bloody exposure, of course. But that's another story . . .)

Kick

MARIE ET LES GARCONS
(Attitudes/ReBop)
Spy Records

One small step for Marie et les Garcons and a giant step for french rock. Both sides perfect in their offbeat continental way, shades of Talking Heads but that's because

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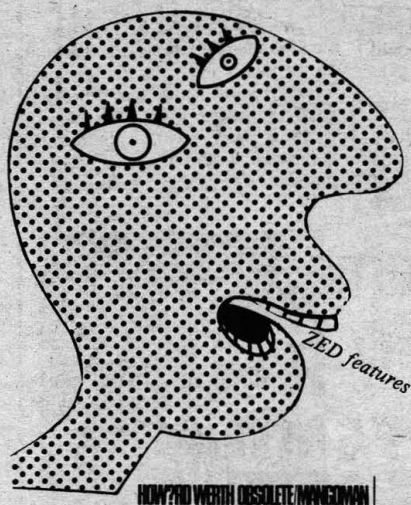

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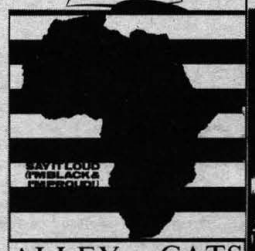

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when something genuinely new comes around the instinctive response is to look for comparisons. This is high class stuff, and should kick Plastic Bertrand off the temporary pedestal he's been occupying and send him back to dishwashing. If America is going to have one french tune on the hit parade every ten years, it should at least be the right one. But then again, "Dominique nique nique" wasn't exactly a pop breakthrough . . .
PS: This single also shows that ol' granddaddy Cale hasn't drunk himself into oblivion yet.

Kickfrog

SIOUXZEE AND THE BANSHEES
(Hong Kong Garden/Voices)
Polydor import

Judging from the few precious tapes of Siouxzee and the Banshees going around, Polydor (or the Banshees) played it kind of safe by choosing as the main song of this long awaited release one of the catchiest and easily memorable numbers, although not by a long shot one of the most unique ones. Don't misread me, I still think it is really a very good single, as different and attention grabbing as anything we've got from England in quite a while, but Siouxzee's amazing vocal antics are hardly explored at all, and neither is the oppressively murky atmosphere her band can achieve on some other cuts. B side depresses the living shit out of me 'cos there's not reason to fuck up such a major release with such turnoff material. It might work on some especially magical live night when the audience is yours no matter what you do but served suddenly on your plate in the morning with no preparation and no warning is fuckin' suicidal. Somebody's bound to throw up and keep a bitter taste in his mouth thru the day. One expected more than such an obvious reject. Even in an album such a mistake would make a bad impression. In a single, it's a crime.

Kick

NIPPLE ERECTORS
(Nervous Wreck/King of the Bop)
Soho records import

Perfect A side ("nervous wreck"). A tiny masterpiece,with super vocals super rhythm section super everything! a real hit that won't quit. "King of the Bop" is okay in its neo fifties fashion.

Kick

POET AND THE ROOTS
(It dread inna Inglan/Manfree)
Virgin import

This is such an important record I would like to pass it around for edification purposes, to show how political messages (not in the american sense of self serving propaganda) can be carried across with no loss of sould and music quality. Linton Kwesi Johnston is a black poet in Britain who is making waves with his wonderfully logical but pretty rare combination of political consciousness, militant stance and superb reggae music with whch he speaks his mind and the minds of others. On one side it starts like a newsreel soundtrack with demonstrators chanting for the liberation of George Lindo (a black man framed by the police for something he didn't do) then the impeccable reggae beat, steady and relentless as the demand for justice, Linton intones his accusation, with the calm and precision of the prosecutor for the masses. The music moves every part of you while your mind slowly understands a few things. And if you do not care for wrong imprisonments and other modern details buy this record anyway. It might change you in spite of yourself.

Chatty Mouth

RAY CAMPI & HIS ROCKABILLY REBELS
(Rockabilly Rebel/Teenage Boogie)
Rollin' Rock/Radar records

Austin's premiere Rockabilly survivor and company storm up a raging white fury with harmony guitars rolling recklessly, like runaway locomotives down Bop Street junction's track. Stompin' percussional clout, trademark bass slap and the beat is bigger than a Cadillac. The autobiographical and definitive Rockabilly statement, "Rockabilly Rebel" 's bitter amusement towards the Beach Blanket Bingo set summons the ominous gray ghose of paneled conference rooms as the bleached secretary takes the minues and corporate farces stain sweet music's satin sheets. Punk, per se, seizes no patent on disdain and alienation here. Crown of Thorns aside, Campi's vocal versatility luminously flows through determined growls, smooth country twanged harmonies, and semi-vibrato yelps in a raucous mini-medley of arresting directional shifts. This isn't campy nostalgia, it's the pure energy of contemporary Campi and that's roots revisited regally.

Flipside, Webb Pierce's "Teenage Boogie" features the vocal mastery of Rollin' Colin Winski set to a vibrant and bouncy boppin' beat. Between the Elvis imitators and Elvis emulators there is a space where some emit a sound akin to having a tray of ice cubes poured down one's back. Winski's harness on the Elvis influence filters into a distinctly separate identity of shivering shakes with a flexible range and superb phrasing that fills in all the right spaces. Both cuts are dramatically hard-driven inspirations. Although partially spawned on "raw hillbilly" don't let the C&W references dissuade you urbanites, there's no cowpies on these blue suede shoes.

Be-Boppin Bob Taylor

F-WORD
(Out there/Government official/ Shutdown)
F-Word/Posh Boy records

The live LP has been reduced to an EP, which luckily saves us from the Dirksen monologue and some of Dim Wanker's most self indulgent guitar babblings. What remains is still a VERY raw piece of vinyl, with the band sounding at times still in the dressing room while the singer has started without them. True to himself, Rick L Rick disdainfully delivers his fuck you up yours poetry with total disregard for pacing, dramatization and effect. Angry to be up there having to fuckin' perform for these wimps and wishing it was over. Which makes it very difficult to extract a product out of this tense situation. Even when he starts fine he loses interest halfway thru, which is the signal for Dim to freak out. On the Germs' moronic masterpiece "Shut down" he at last sounds at home: nothing to do but snarl "shutdown", stare at the boppin wimps, pace up and down and kick some chick with your dirty bare feet. If he had a watch he would probably check it now and then. Mister packaging Posh Boy had to land with this stubbornly unpackageable, unmarketable, unmanageable teenage problem. Rick L Rick is unique, but he don't care.

Kick

THE CONTROLLERS
(Suburban Suicide/Slow Boy/Do the Uganda)
Siamese Records

The Controllers are out of control: they can't stop putting out singles. No one is complaining; and this is the best to date, also the one that represents their present line-up. For latecomers,

vinylly

by Bo Clifford

Since I put these 45s on the SLASH chart last issue without writing about 'em I figure I'd better let 'em lead off this month.
OK UK:
One of the earliest new wave companies was started by Dave Goodman after he worked with the Pistols. "Justifiable Homicide" (R) on The Label features Dave and some of his friends; notably Cook and Jones (very busy guys these days) and Ian Woodcock of Eater. The result is a better Pistols single than that one with R. Biggs. The subject matter is a bit obscure for we Yanks but the musical punch is undeniable. Crisp guitars with even some sy...syns...synthewha? will have you wondering "Who killed Liddle?", too.
Originally released on a small independent (Rabid) and now picked up by the giant EMI, "Jilted John" by Jilted John is rapidly becoming smasheroo in England. It and its superior flip, "Going Steady," are two of the most real and human songs to emerge this year. Sounding variably like Freddie Garrity's younger brother or a more down-to-earth J. Richman, JJ manages to put into words the agony when you've been jilted and the exhileration when ya find that new girl! An important record that will make you feel good.
OK BC:
From Vancouver come No Fun with a debut EP (7 songs) on Werewolf/T-Shirts Records (true!) Though "Paisley Brain Bolts of the Mind" shows these guys to be acutely aware of some pending psychedelic revival, the real highlights – defined here as when No Fun manages to merge their best lyrics with their strongest playing – are "Fall For a Cliche" and "Now I Ain't Got No Face" (a great song about acid of another kind).
WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS: The Jam (UA), The Police (A&M), Rich Kids (EMI), Tubeway Army (Beggar's Banquet)
The Jam are at it again, i.e. makin' great singles. They cover a Kinks tune in their bright, punchy style and nearly make it their own. Hoy! The flip is even better and probably is a good indication of the type of material we can expect on the new LP. Te first new tunes from 999 since their album has the band apparently stuck in neutral. With exactly half of that debut on 45 (including "T.(M.O.)R.") they seem to be having trouble coming up with songs. Gone is the sped-up sound of their early records, and in its place is a more studied approach. Sometimes it works, as on "Feelin' . . ." which is a moody spacious number that takes a bow in the direction of reggae. "You Can't But Me" is a simple, loose-jointed rocker that sounds like it could have been cut better by almost anyone on Chiswick. I always stuck up for these guys, but it's getting harder.
The Police are not a big name yet, but on the basis of their three excellent singles, they deserve their shot! "Can't Stand Losing You" is, simply, the best merging of reggae with straight pop. A hook that'll kill ya, too! The B-side goofs around and finally takes shape as your "anti-factory" sheet-metal rock n roll. A fun(?) guitar solo and Klark Kent's muscular drumming are the high spots. Support the English Police.
The first five times I heard the new Rich Kids single I was wondering where they stole the riff. The next few spins I thought "Oh no! It's Boston!!" Then I forgot the riff and started paying attention to the nifty words; then I noticed the best drum track since the "real" Small Faces called it quits! And the awkward "Ghosts . . ." title (also the LP title) even became a hook! Another slow-to-catch 45 that will grow into a turntable must. "Only Arsenic" is almost better. Their album should be hot! Tubeway Army deserve an album, too. Their five tracks so far certainly show much potential. Their second 45 has three tunes perfecting their Buzzcocks/Adverts mesh to a fine art. And transcending it to sound a bit more like their own band. Beggars' Banquet should have everyone's support for giving bands like TA and the Lurkers a chance.
KETCHUP:
There's lots of other UK stuff that deserves to be mentioned before they get too old.
One of the finest reissue labels in the world, Charly, has found a fine new band in the Softies. Their "Suicide Pilot" is fun, roughhouse rock n roll somewhat like the Pirates or Bishops. The Island label serves up three platters: The Automatics "When the Tanks Roll Over Poland Again," an awful title for a fine rocker in the Hot Rods vein, whereas the Reaction more resemble the Jam. "I Can't Resist" is the sound of a young band on its way to being very hot. Ultravox return in slow motion with "Slow Motion" which sounds like something Eno could do with one eye closed and both legs broken.
Ozland's own Saints return with a likable, horn-filled Otis Redding tune "Security" on Harvest. The B-side is the really interesting track here; "All Times Through Paradise" sure sounds like Iggy meets the old Manfred Mann group (Ig have Mersey?) Sure an odd sound for the Saints. Speaking of odd, the feisty little independent Small Wonder presents Punishment of Luxury (or Punilux) doing "Pupper Life." Little bits of Devo, Eno, Stranglers, and just plain weirdness get squeezed into the Punilux sound. A cult band for sure . . . The Stadium Dogs' "Easy Beat/Android Love/Media Withdrawal" (Magnet): Suffice it to say it's funny, inventive, and manages to blend Dave "Baby" Cortez and Devo to no ill effect. The final Stukas single "Wash Machine Boogie/Motorbike" (Sonet) is mostly acoustic. They sound like a skiffle band! The nucleus of this band is now the Autographs. Finally Motorhead gave us "Louie Louie" done in the P. Revere and the Raiders way. The great song survives their sledgehammer attack.
Whew, more next time.

The WEIRDOS

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The FURYS

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it is Johnny Stingray on voice and bass, Kidd Spike on voice and guitar and Karla Mad Dog on drums and suntan (that's why they did the back cover in negative; her mug just wouldn't register). The Controllers are strict working class punkdom and are one day going to be discovered and worshipped by all the little losers infesting all the L.A. country "bad" neighborhoods. Definitely a band to go wild to with a Colt 45 in each back pocket. "Slow Boy" is fun and tight, "Do the Uganda" silly but a must for Controllers fans and "Suburban Suicide," with its slick medium tempo aimed at the groin and its killer riff that makes you hold an imaginary guitar while no one is watching might have more traditional youth elements suddenly very interested.

Kick Face

ANGELIC UPSTARTS
(The murder of Liddle Towers/ Police Oppression)
Rough Trade/Small Wonder records

A great cop-accusing single from a (here) unknown british band. Of course we don't know anything about this Liddle Towers business, all that remains is a pretty chilling indictment of the police and their ruthless ways. B side is more on the same topic, and it's also a pretty nifty song in the great wham bam tradition.

Kick

999
(Feeling Alright with the Crew/Titanic (My Over) Reaction/You Can't Buy Me)
United Artists import

A dub-sounding shriekalong with a boogie backbeat. Nick Cash's voice echoes in varying sobs, moans, and spinetingling wails from the bottom of some blackened pit. A drowned cat with the gift of human speech. Guitars splinter around bass/drum lines that twang without being boomy. This is their bid for stardom, accessibility to the masses and what's wrong with that if you can still come off sounding like this? "Overreaction" is a good song but was on the last album. "You Can't Buy Me" is from the same sessions and should have been included there. Against a brittle wall of sound, Nick cajoles, whispers, lectures at a breakneck pace on the subject of his incorruptibility. After surviving through his nervewracking range of inflections you come away convinced.

Chris D.

THE FLESHEATERS
(Disintegration Nation/Agony Shorthand/Radio Dies Screaming/ Twisted Road)
Upsetter records

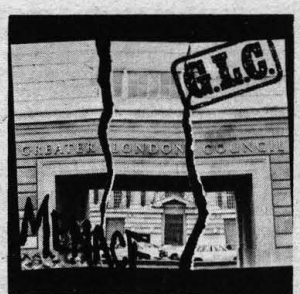
Strong cup of tea we got here. And no milk and sugar to sweeten the taste either. This is the sound of one man who has had a few glimpses into the final shiverings of good old society and doesn't like what he sees one bit while the rest of us mumble about the whole thing just going thru a bad phase. These songs almost smell of burnt flesh. Thank god for the included lyrics, Chris Desjardins' voice not being exactly the most crystal clear vehicle for communication: he shrieks, moans, stutters and growls but does not sing you his lyrics. He makes a past out of them and smears himself with it is more like it. The band supports him with everything they've got but you get the feeling they're sometimes wondering what's going on. Once you've deciphered the poetico visionary capsules you're halfway there. To sing along, you'll need a fair amount of twisted romantic madness cursing thru your OWN veins. This is strictly for people who lay awake all night thinking of holocausts and cities in ruins. Heady stuff to pogo to, my lovelies.

Kickboy

PRAG VEC
(Existential/Bits/Wolf/Cigarettes)
Spec Records import

One more british mutation somewhere on the left of Penetration and X Ray Spex and slightly on the right of Essential Logic. Meaning it's pretty odd and esoteric but it can cook nicely once you get over the edgy jazzy surface sound. The girl singer is quite amazing, putting a lot of fire into some of the most obtuse lyrics I've deciphered in a while. In "Cigarettes," she wails and rants about brands, sizes, tar levels with a conviction usually reserved for more normal subject matter. The surrealism of day to day living is affecting a growing number of bands, with in some cases some pretty strange results. Sure looks like the more curious elements of The Wave are venturing into certain challenging directions, taking us farther every day from the familiar rock n roll wasteland we've all grown up in. About time.

Kick



MENACE
(G.L.C./I'm Civilized)
Small Wonder import

Standard punkeroo noise. "G.L.C." is about the Greater London Council ("G.L.C., G.L.C., you're full of shit" – repeat) and I'm sure they've got reasons to feel the way they do. I still wish they'd be a bit more .... original about it. Don't think I mind the bluntness of the comment. I would like very much to hear our local toughies scream, "Chief Ed Davis, you're full of shit" or "Briggs, you're full of shit" along with their "walk like an egg" slogans. And I'd like to believe Menace live up to their name. But so far I'd say they are a rather localized menace.

Kick

FIELDING DARDEN
(Heartthrob City/Half Lives)
Rooting Star records

Don't ask me. Ol' Macko is usually in charge of this type of unrequested samples, but the fucker has deserted his post and can only be seen (never mind talked to) when the surrounding level of mind pollution is at its highest. Only thing I can say to this Fielding Darden character whose whining about needing a friend in Heartthrob City is don't look at me buster. I'm no Salvation Army.

Kick

SHOCK
(This Generation's On Vacation/ Spoiled/Overseas)
Impact records

In spite of a definite lack of acceptance on the part of the local scenesters Shock keep on keeping on, determined to force themselves unto the fickle taste makers or, if this proves impossible, bypass the snobby bunch and find an audience in the undecided thousands that have been eyeing punk with curiosity and indecision. With this single they just might come close to it. It's quite clean punchy and easy to relate to. I must add it does not take chances and it does not offend anyone, but we have experts for that don't we?

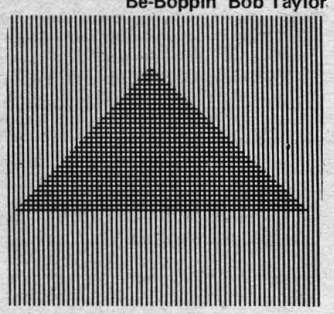
Kick

El Peas 12"

BLOWING UP A STORM
WHIRLWIND
Chiswick import

For lack of the trademark slap-bass technique purists may negate the authenticity of this Rockabilly clone although these greasy Teds do embrace a better part of the 50s sensibilities right down to the cover's cheesy graphics. Resplendently pompadoured in black leather and drape coat drag, Whirlwind do afford more speculation than their curious semi-orthopedic footwear. Saturated in Rockabilly cliches, the stereotyped hiccupy vocal nuances ricochet off the echoed guitar rhythms, recalling the likes of Johnny Burnette or Carl Perkins, but hardly paralleling the masters. The syrupy, misty-eyed ballads prove totally dispensable but they do excel on the upbeat material that comprises a majority of this LP. "Boppin' High School Baby" is a seizing highlight yet elsewhere there seem nagging overtones of restrain. These cats can bop but they're not real gone.

Be-Boppin' Bob Taylor



BEFORE AND AFTER SCIENCE
BRIAN ENO
Island import

There's this story, see, about three blind old men who are feeling an elephant and trying to describe it. Pitifully nearsighted as they are, they assume that the little section each feels is actually the whole elephant. So they boast: "Ah, it is long and twisty like a penis," or "No, it is short and stocky like a fireplug," or "Nah, yer both wrong, it's small and puckered like a rolled surgical glove." Obviously, the poor bastards show more about their own handicaps than the elephant in question. So what happens when we find the writers at this magazine groping about in elephant shit, and ignoring the elephant completely? We can't blame the elephant, that's for sure.

This is a review of a slightly aged elephant, crying for attention, and surrounded by frantic journalists up to their ears in elephant excrement.

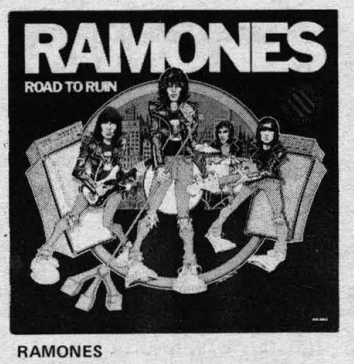
Everybody's heard of Eno by now, but relatively few have heard his music (post-Roxy Music). The old farts at Rolling Stone find him too "obtuse" to rate more than a paragraph, and the (supposedly) hep and aware key-pushers at this rag ignore him – even though he is one of the most influential figures to the very music they profess to be listening to. Thus, he's been underground so long that his hair is falling out by the clump: an "avant-garde artiste." But no longer! Enough of ignorance! If the old farts won't tell ya, then listen to me: Brian Eno is already the "next big thing"; Eno is the legitimate spearhead of the Sound of the Eighties (as exemplified by The Screamers, Devo, Residents, Kraftwerk, Fripp, etc.); Eno gets my vote for man of the year.

Why? Well, who else can you name who has responsible for a whole new Bowie tangent (Low/Heroes), started a humanistic record label (Obscure), produced two of the best albums of the year (Devo, Talking Heads), and put out a solo album, "Before and After Science," that is the most charming experiment in techno-pop yet committed? If it is also his most commercial album, I can hardly fault him for it: Christ sakes , let's give the man some credit!

Like Bowie's "Low," this album is surgically divided into starkly contrasting sides. Side One ("Before Science") sounds like drunk computers in a jungle clearing. Mutant disco patterns overlapping each other, tribal wars in syncopated precision – all interlaced with sci-fi washes and Eno's metallic voice singing of "The Blue Future." "Metal Waves," and the "Logistics of the Mystics." Side Two ("After Science") is an opiated cruise down the Rhine, slower than a heartbeat and lonely as a holiday in prison. The recurring images of metal, sound and water all weem to revolve around Eno's characters – but they are trapped by the tension-isolated and helpless, or jolly buffoons. A successful attempt at polyrhythmic pathos. Moves more than your feet.

Above all, Eno is human. He is no robot. Simple minded critics may find his work logical, mechanical or distant – but it is in this very aspect that he transcends the Kraftwerk player piano deadend. Eno has a unique sensibility, to be sure, but he has a distinct sensitivity as well. His work is always injected with bristling creativity, subtle wit, artistic sincerity and a natural flair for melody. Does a Brainiac have these attributes?? Even on this album – where Eno substitutes his earlier work's bizarre quirkiness for a sober attempt at perfection of technique – the result is always alive and involving. He tells you that no noise reduction techniques were used – yet the first thing that struck me was the ultra-clean production. For Eno, clean does not mean sterile. He is limited only by his ideas and not by an image. He is nearly unlimited. The old farts won't tell ya, listen to me.

William



RAMONES
Road to Ruin
Sire Records

Are they on that road? They're not as belligerent or as angry as they once were. Just try listening to this alongside their first album. It's not that there aren't some good songs. "I just want something to do", "Bad Brain" and especially "I wanted everything" stand up against anything else they've done. Too often, though, Road to Ruin sinks into ballads of lost love and pogo-monochording about tranquilizing drugs that barely worked the first time around let alone the fourth. They really don't care because there isn't any cohesiveness here at all, just a hodgepodge of apathetic memorabilia. I Like this. I listen to it, but I'm getting tired of it much faster than anything that came before it.

Chris D.

STARSHOOTER

French rock coming of age. No shit. Hardly any rancid boogit or out of tune heavy metal copy in this album. It's all sung in french so probably won't make much of a dent here, a shame really, it's got nifty songs about car accidents (the victim vividly described as having his brain oozing thru his bloody teeth), high school affairs, weekends where nothing happens, suicides, hard-ons that won't quit and girls that won't make out. And all this depressing information is joyfully sung and played at highway speed, one riff on top of the other, with no spectacular originality but very admirable energy.

Kick

WIRE
Chairs Missing
Harvest import

Less songs than on the first album, but don't deduct that it's all easy going and within everybody's grasp. Wire are not connected to many familiar daily feelings. Their sound may now and then remind you of rock n roll but believe me it's pure coincidence. Just listen to the words and tell me you feel at home. At times they also find themselves in the same surrealistic grounds Eno explored awhile back but, unlike the balding wizard they don't get playful or mischievious about it. I doubt there is much they find amusing or exciting. It would be so easy to accuse them of indulging in icy boring exercises 'cept that there is a definite cohesive solidity to everything they do, a slightly superior patience as if it was naturally up to us to comprehend what they do but they will not rush us. Or maybe they don't care at all. When we see them live we may see what is behind their diamond hard surface. Shit, times are strange. Who would have thought that one day I'd go to a concert to resolve a mystery?

Kick Face

RANKING TREVOR
In Fine Style
Virgin Front Line import

Rather uninspired collection of cuts by a DJ who seems to have trouble distinguishing between good material and third rate imitative garbage. The backing is all pretty bland and tired 'cept for a couple of tunes where the strength of the original piece shines thru and forces the musicians to put some life and fire in their playing. On those tunes, ("Chanting Home," using the Abyssinians' "Satta Massa Gana" melody, and especially "Natty and the Root Man," a snappy infectious track that gets you up bouncing around), Ranking Trevor is in perfect control and offers some fine easy toasting that would be first rate material for a single. And even the experts groaning about U-Roy plagiarism would end up enjoying it for its own merits. Unfortunately, the rest of the stuff is lame and short on invention. No passion, madness or even silliness to make it worth listening to again.

Chatty Chatty Mouth

STEEL PULSE
Hansworth Revolution
Mango records

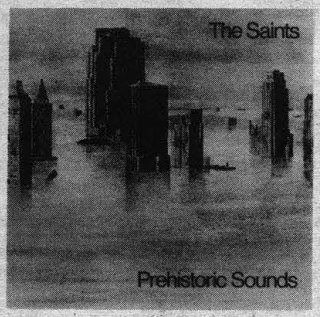
After their first stong single, Steel Pulse have produced (and overproduced) an album in which the faults may outweight the qualities. They have tried too hard to knock everybody dead, to win the critics and the roots facs to their side, and have run out of wind and of ideas in the process. It is understandable and not very unusual in some first albums, but it still prevents me from liking most of it as much as I would like to. Jah knows I have nothing against the Selassie/bible predictions/Elijah/let's smoke some herb pontifications (you learn to go with it as you go with the booming bass – you don't always listen to it but it would fall apart without it) but Steel Pulse lay it on a bit thick, and sometimes (that's where I stop dead in my tracks) it's thinly grafted on ordinary filler music with no real drive or fire to pull you thru the shaky wordy passage. Their songs are long and very lyric oriented, and not many end as excitingly as they start. Then there is the music, which constantly pulls on the pretty side and falls into mechanical stretches that could (and occasionally do) go on forever. And the vocals don't often come close to the strength of Ku Klux Klan (the single is on the album). They harmonize a lot and try various combinations but my heart remains uninvolved. I'm not even a die-hard purist: I like the flamenco guitar that opens one song. But when the original song mutates to 2 or 3 other possible tunes and they use tricks and other rhythm changes to justify the feeble results I get impatient. There is still the chance that live, Steel Pulse is another story. Will we ever know?

Chatty

CAN'T STAND THE REZILLOS
THE REZILLOS
Sire

Good driving music. Good radio music. Good to do the dishes to music. Good for a laugh music. Not good for much else music. It's all cheeky and in good fun, it's got a nice modern format that goes from hard core to Blondi-esque stuff, but nothing to get your teeth into. Just more vinyl product for the new wave bin. Their choice of material for the now obligatory revival segment each new group feels obliged to include in their package betrays this bunch's lack of substance: the abysmal "I like it" and the pedestrian "Glad All Over." Cute. Certain elements of this so called "new wave" are starting to bore me to tears, you know. Maybe it's time for a purge.

Kick



THE SAINTS
Prehistoric Sounds
Harvest import

I have only listened to this in its entirety twice but I already know that Australia is a place I will do my best to stay away from for the rest of my life. Any country that can do what it did to the morale and faith in life of these four lads must be a hell of an oppressingly depressive cesspool. Even the "upbeat" tunes are sinister little affairs that fool no one and celebrate nothing 'cept that there is nothing to celebrate. The joyful horn choruses turn into clanging steel-tasting attacks, the cliche guitar riffs of happier rock n roll days become cruel parodies reflecting the emptiness of our common pop culture, and Chris Bailey the distrustful paranoid sinus troubled boozer who heinously leads this ugly parade goes from temporary impersonations of Jagger, to Dylan, Van Morrison to Ray Davies only to fall back on his own miserable loveless personna on the two or three key songs. The odd album title must refer the various styles of the past used with chilling results on the majority of the cuts, but there are sprinkled throughout 2 or 3 numbers that owe nothing to no one, not that anyone would ever want to have anything to do with such suicidal mud. On "Brisbane," "The Prisoner," or "Church of Indifference" Bailey and the other cadavers fastidiously and methodically turn emptiness and meaninglessness into the only knowable reality. If you don't hear from me again it means I've listened to this album once too many and that I've gone to drink myself to death in a cold city where I know no one.

Kick Face

TREASURE DUB, VOL. 1
High Note records import

Blank cover with handwritten title, no musician credits, either you're a dub fanatic and you grab it with feverish hands at whatever cost or shrug your shoulders and decide on a more conventional easily identifiable product. No King Tubby freak out or Joe Gibbs' everything-but-the-kitchen-sink subtleties on this platter, just lazy ganja-laced little tunes with studio singers doing bits at random moments. Everything is very sketchy and apparently recorded with everybody involved laying on the floor or walking out to take a piss whether the session goes on, the ultimate music to take a nap to while your mind drifts to that hazy Ethiopian paradise where the grass is always green.

Chatty

DEVO - "Q: ARE WE NOT MEN? A: WE ARE DEVO!"
Warner Bros. LP
DEVO – WORKFORCE TO THE WORLD
Import bootleg LP

I can't seem to agree with myself about these two albums. It's another contradicting, damaged hate/love affair – but what plagues me more is the fact that no matter what I say, no matter what anyone says, Devo is doomed to stardom. They're on the radio as I write these words, there's no escaping. But they should be on the radio and on television and they should take their unique concept to every place possible: they've been at it for six years. Mostly in private, and when they did play in those formative years, it was mostly to hostile audiences, so I respect their intentions.

They're a great modern live unit, possible one of the best. The power and presence they've harnessed is close to being awesome. "Workforce" kind of typifies their general attitude. It's a fair-to-good Devo representation, but the steep prices being asked on the auction block make it an unnecessary one to own. Even though it far outdoes the $7.98 list studio LP, $12 and up is hardly worth it. I've heard infinitely better private tapes and there's another bootleg (this one, by the way, bears an indelible DEVO touch) of a Mabuhay performance that puts this to shame. There are some zesty moments here, though. "Smart Patrol/Mr. DNA" is a well-constructed epic with some intriguing electronics. "Gut Feeling" has a certain toe-tapping bliss and great hooks.

Other numbers appearing on the record are basically the same, but there's generally an exciting ragged feel making these import versions much more appealing. While "Workforce" is probably one of the best-recorded "bootlegs," it lacks the punch needed to make it really special. The in-between song pseudo-Cheech-Chong/Firesign stoned-out nonsense adds deadly boredom factor. I own this record but I wouldn't recommend dashing out to buy it . . . in fact, if you're not a fanatical Devotee I wouldn't recommend it at all.

The studio work on the Warner Bros. LP is so flat and dull (contrived?) that it puts me to sleep. OK, there are some interesting snatches here and there. It's just a little difficult to get past garish items (trinkets?) like "Come Back, Jonee," "Space Junk" (Van Der Graaf goes mod?), "Shrivel Up" or "Praying Hands." The latter works much better on the bootleg, the rest sound remarkably like some Tubes nightmare dribble. That's all we need, right? Depending on the mood, the case with much of their material, some of it is very persuasive. Like "Too Much Paranoias," which is positively menacing at times and lame at others, or the wimpy-love on "Sloppy." "Gut Feeling" still knocks me out but there's little difference between it and the other versions. But these are old songs for anyone who has seen Devo; if I had never heard them before, they would have fared better.

The question is: just how many miles does Devo intend to get from a few original ideas? Truthfully, how many times can you listen to "Jocko Homo?" (In a row? Please! Anything but that!) And Eno's production, while being tasteful and spare, is hardly the sparkling keenness he normally achieves. In a nutshell, this record is a profound disappointment. Since my initial curiosity wore off, I've hardly played it. I now think twice about shelling out cash on frivolous things like records by reputation.

Lively

BUZZCOCKS
Love Bites (UA)

This then is the Buzzcocks purest pop move, and yes, it works fine. Any approach to this album depends on whether you can take the fact that Pete Shelley enjoys writing and writes catchy and concise love songs. If you can, fine, if you can't, your loss, in the main.

Eleven tracks: two instrumentals, one Steve Diggle comp-and-sing, and eight Shelley originals. No Howard Devoto, no silly electronics, only two previously released cuts – the current single. Love songs to be sure, but still romantic realism: contemporary frankness and obsessions. Sometimes reminiscent of 1964 innocence, with 1966/early 1967 openness, but 1978 treatments: think about it a moment, no way 'Just Lust', say, would have been sung – it'd been covered by a code or smut, like 'Louie Louie' or 'Norwegian Wood'. A unitversal subject, and one that's been loved to death: the fact that Buzzcocks manage to inject new twists is impressive and has earned them, at a time when many were opting for kiddy aggression, a corner of the market all of their own. Some feelings, when you got bored with playing at having none.

The Shelley songs first: 'Real World' (i.e. wot is?) opens snappy, clean and confident, carrying on the mood of 'Fiction Romance' from side two of 'Kitchen'. The seams are immediately less obvious (so, indeed, throughout the album); the production differentiates the instruments -- none of the previous murkiness – and greater experience shows dividends. Very Buzzcocks in its breathlessness and opaque lyrics: 'I'm in love with the real world/it's mutual or so it seems/because only in the real world/do things happen like they do in my dreams . . . in the real world we both win when we play the same game.' Both sides of the 45 gain in stature somewhat in the context of the album: 'Ever fallen in love' still appears minor, as has been already pointed out, but 'Just Lust', at first seemingly throwaway, comes into its own as a tart and concise treatment of an age-old theme, with a fine solo and chaos ending. But: stinging slaps on both wrists for putting out both sides of the 45 again, even more so as the press release bleats about the release of the single being 'in complete contravention of both Buzzcocks policy in particular and new-wave policy in general.' If so, why do it? And what about 'Autonomy' in particular, and Devo and the Sex Pistols in general? Someone protests too much.

'16 Again' at last comes clean about the hankering after the ideal teenhood that permeates the whole industry (it actually wasn't that fun), while being nothing like its illustrious predecessor, 'Nothing Left' continues the Buzzcocks flirtation with the heavier side of things, thus avoiding any self-pity. They allow themselves room to relax, wind it down and up again. The 'Nothing left at all at all at all' refrain neatly plagiarises a Buzzcock cliche: elsewhere they mirror place '16 Again' at the end of side one and turn the old 'fashion is a passion' and 'surfing on a wave' numbers on their respective heads. They've yet to beat the Kinks at self-plagiarism but they're working at it . . . .

The best: 'ESP' uses to brilliant advantage the musical illusion which they hedged around using on the fade of 'Kitchen': a seemingly ever upwardly progressing riff which loops in the same place. After a while it gets to be totally hypnotic, as is no doubt the intention: it's impossible to tell whether its slowing down or speeding up, and the illusion played on your ears is only strengthened by the extended fade. 'Nostalgia' and 'Operator's Manual' are two nearly perfectly conceived and executed pop songs: the latter sporting a neat conceit ("Operator's manual/tells me what to do/when emotions blow a fuse . . .") and a lovely guitar figure, the former an irresistably yearning tune and perception lyrics: "a constant feeling of nostalgia yet to come". The magnum opus, 'Late for the Train' surprises by its granduer and sureness (John Maher's drumming in particular) while exposing Shelley's fetish for playing things backwards: it brings the album to a open-ended and forward-looking close. As the promotional button advises: ". . . . . think!"

The other instrumental, 'Walking Distance' kicks off side two in bright and breezy fashion: Steve Diggle's song 'Love is Lies', with its acoustic backing fulfills a similar function to Ringo's songs on the Fabs albums: another kind of tension. Vulnerable yet entirely believable. Neither are token: both fit the album as plays fine.

Buzzcocks appeal isn't easy to define: in sensational and thus conventional rock biz terms, they're actually quite boring. How to publicise them has always been a problem. They don't smash hotel rooms (at least not that we hear about), kill pigeons or get obviously or exotically wasted. In a business which thrives on stereotypes and gross caricatures – supply the names yourself – they avoid facile degradation, being humanist without being populist, innovative without being didactic. This, depending on your point of view is either a sign of weakness, a lack of image building on someone's part) indeed live they can be self-effacing to the point of almost not being there – or a sign of strength. In the light of the all-round quality of this album, take it to be the latter.

Niggling doubts remain as to whether the band, and Shelley in particular, will be able to stave off the increasing pressures of commerce and image – in their case already developing as "cute Northern beat-group" Peter and the Pacemaers – which their continuing success will bring, and whether they'll be able to retain the fragile balance that makes this album a success. Buzzcocks still the thorn beneath the rose but soon to be the rose on the chocolate box?

Jon Savage

PHOTO: PETER BRITTIN C/O SCIENCE HOLIDAY

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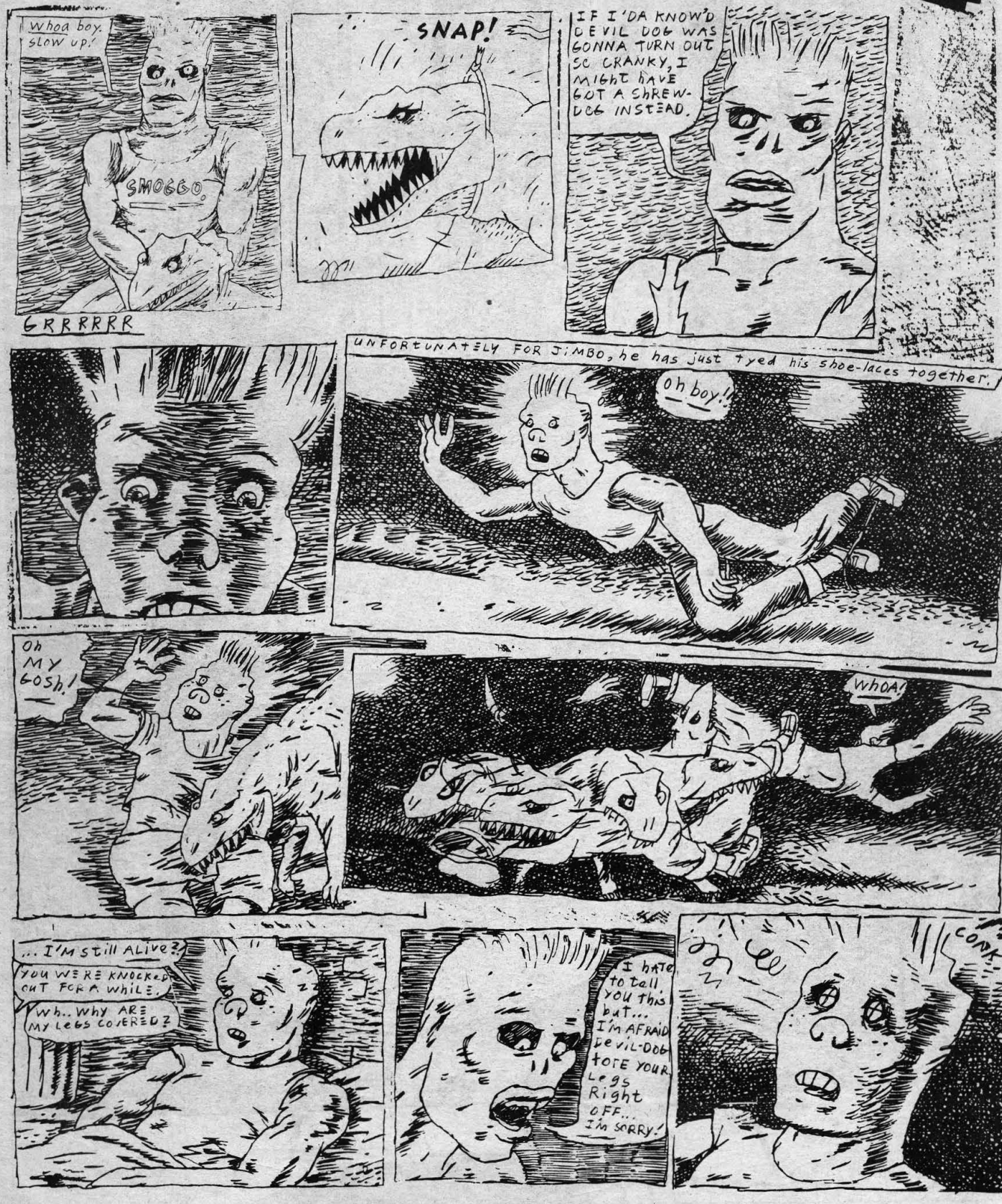
JIMBO

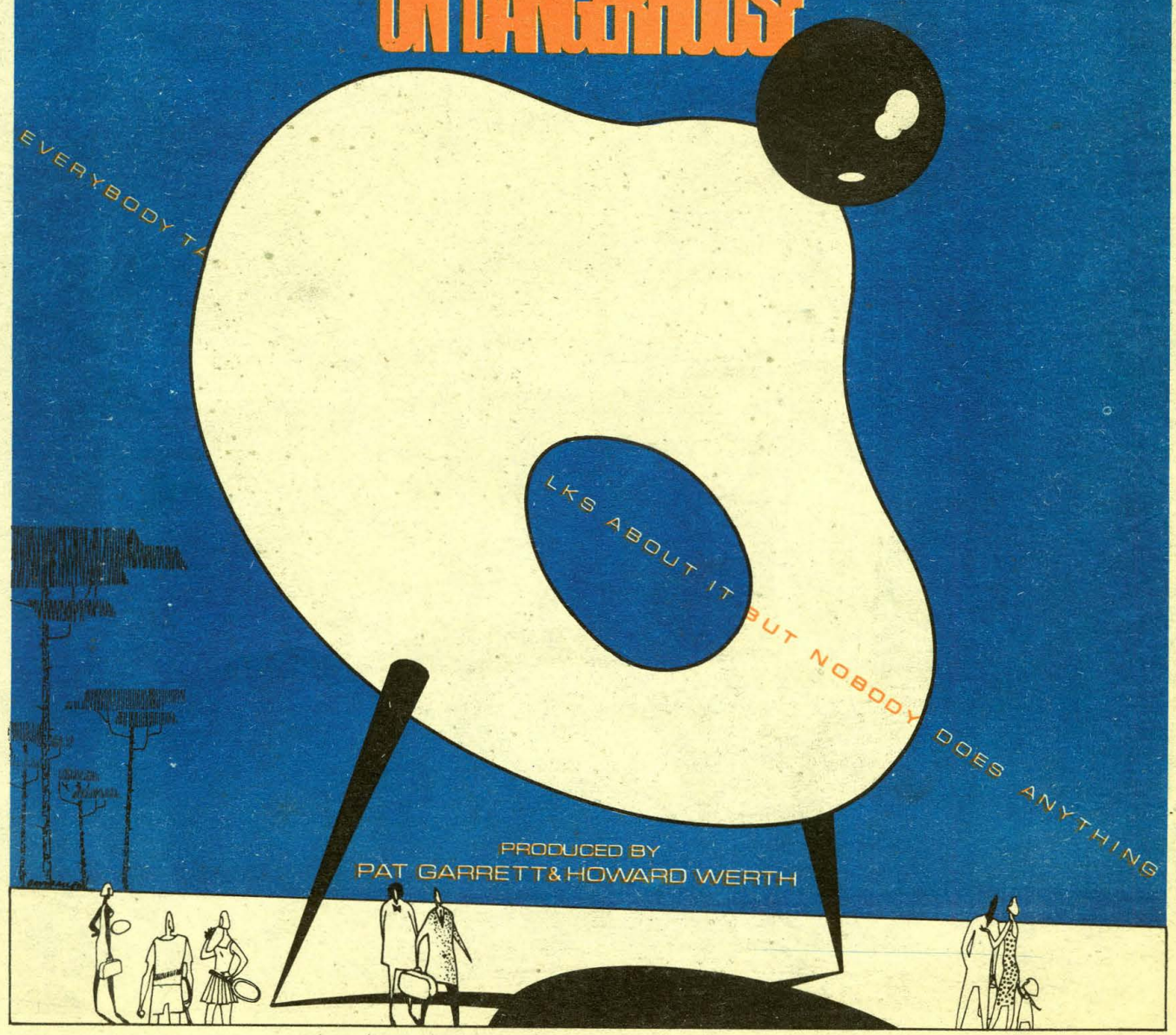
GARY PANTER



GET OBSOLETE

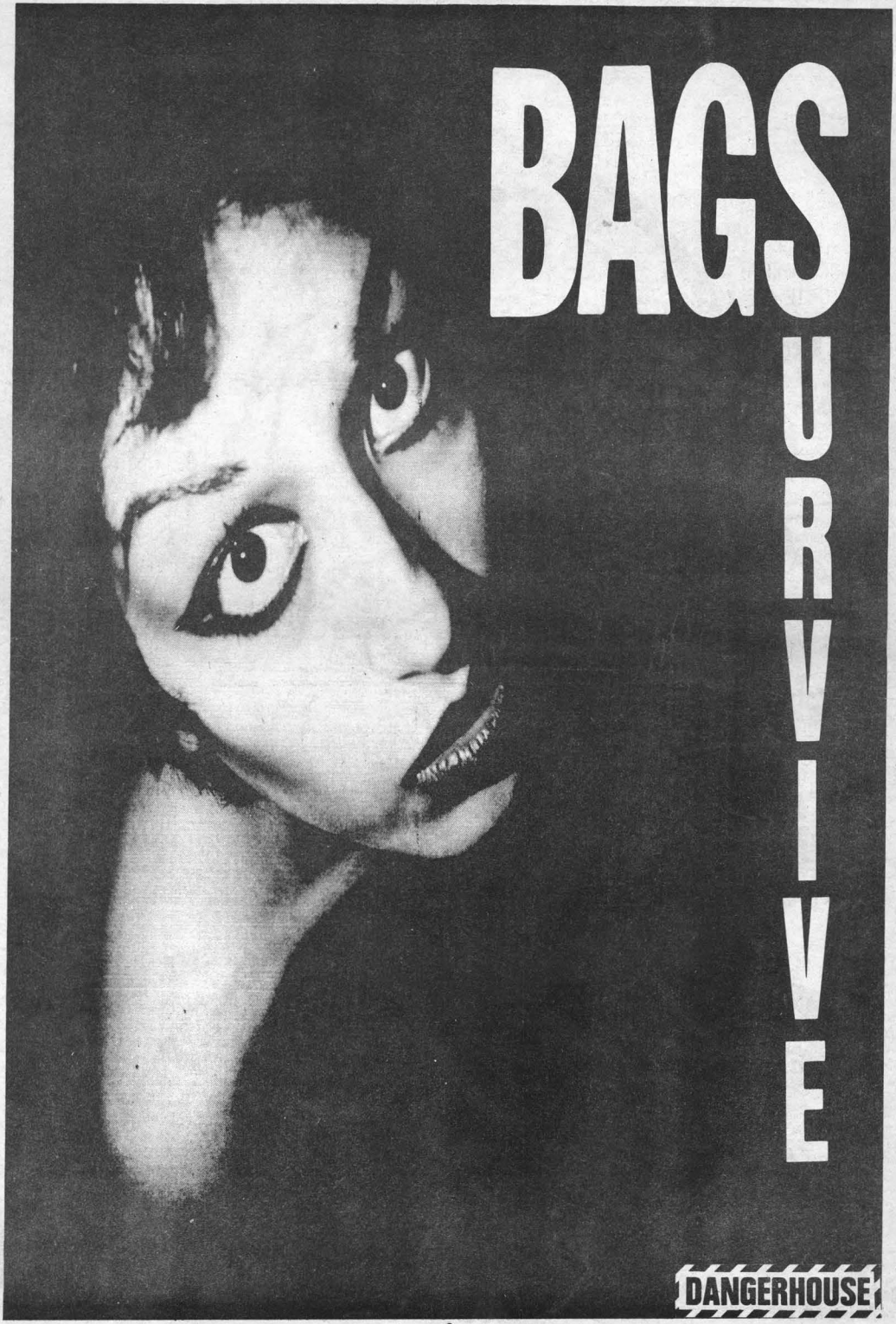
HOWARD WERTHS' 1ST SMASH

ON DANGERHOUSE



Slash

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 3 JANUARY 1979 ONE DOLLAR


BAGS
SURVIVIVE
DANGERHOUSE

Because of the current paper strike, this piss-colored stock was all our printer had. This issue is not to be construed as cheap, Yellow Journalism. Hopefully, everything will be all white next month...

Inside this colorful issue you'll find **LOCAL SHIT** on **PAGE 5,** the informative **READERS POLL RESULTS** on **PAGE 12,** an interesting **TALKING HEADS INTERVIEW** on **PAGE 14,** a look at the **GO-GO'S** ON **PAGE 17,** the life of **HOWARD WERTH** on **PAGE 20,** an expose on **MONTE CAZAZZA** on **PAGE 22,** thrilling **STAGED EVENTS** on **PAGE 24,** our always biased **RECORD REVIEWS** beginning on **PAGE 27,** the **ENTIRE YEAR OF 1979** on **PAGE 33,** and the heartwarming saga of **JIMBO** on **PAGE 35.**

ADVERTISING INFORMATION: (213) 654-2876

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION (AND RELATED TOPICS PERTAINING TO THE COMMERCIAL ASPECTS OF OUR LITTLE RAG).

We know all of you are conditioned to expect some ingenious little display ad telling you how wonderful you'd feel if you got back issues or subscribed, bought a record, bla, bla . . . but we're just gonna give it to you straight, so don't go looking for any pictures of Santa with the latest issue . . .

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Subscriptions received by January 15, 1979 can still be had for $5.00 per 12 issues. After that time, subscriptions will be $10.00. Maybe sometime in the future we'll offer special subscription rates, but don't count on it cause it's been costing us around $7.00 just to mail them. Present subscribers can renew for five bucks until March 1, 1979.

BACK ISSUES:

All of the previous issues are still available except the last one (Vol. 2, No. 2), which completely sold out. The rest can be had for $1.00 each, for as long as they last.

RECORDS:

We still have a few of both the GERMS and the PLUGZ singles around the office. They can still be had for $1.50 each, until our supplies are exhausted.

GIFT ITEMS:

We're sorry, but we've completely sold out of the very popular SLASH champagne coolers as well as the tie-dyed SLASH unisex caftans. You might be able to get a SLASH t-shirt if you send $6.00. We still haven't decided to print them yet & if we decide not to, we'll send your money back. (We are all very honest, just ask anybody.)

APOLOGY:

About the increased cover price: the plain truth is that it's purely a matter of survival. To all of you that scream, "you fucking capitalist creeps," we say sorry. We can't help it, we tried to ignore the fact we were losing money, we didn't want to do it, we're not greedy, but we had to, it's done. If you can't afford it, stand at the newsstand and read it.

COVER ART: JOHN VAN HAMERSVELD

Lacking An Editorial...

EULOGY

As has been reported Basho Macko is dead. His passing was duly noted in our Local Shit column two issues past. Since that time some rather pertinent details of his sudden demise have come to light. Several Law Enforcement Agencies and Basho's folks back home in Mordant Valley were responsible for attempting to suppress the sordid story.

As you may or may not remember the departed was an artiste of arrested development whose prose appeared in this paper. These flatulent outbursts of his popped up like accidents and were true clues to the key of his gaseous personality. Both he and his musings could raise a stink. They were vain and gullible to delusion. Basho was a liar and a cheat to his friends, a burden to his associates (US), and an absolute wretch to his partners in crime. Yet he claimed to have only the common good in mind.

We've no doubt he harbored none but the best of intentions but like many of his fellow do-gooders (i.e., Brendan, Black Randy, Screamers, Weirdos, Slash, et al) he was rewarded only with a loss of credibility. Like most people who try to advance the lot of mankind Basho hated most everything and everyone. This sewer outlook he had grew on himself. He regarded his well being with disdain and became subject to a compulsion for excitements. He went in for one sided violence, expensive narcotics and fancy gambling. He had nothing much to give anyone in return, his thrills were all obtained on credit. Some say Basho didn't know he'd staked his very life as collateral. He was certainly taken by surprise at the end.

Our crack team of investigative reporters uncovered the truth of his last hour through the usual means of bribery, coersion and guaranteed anonymity. According to our informants Basho did not just walk off that roof as was originally assumed. There was foul play. It went like this: Basho was sitting at home in his Roachberry Arms Hotel room thinking about Peter Pan. There was a knock at his grimy door. He answered and was not surprised to see his three best friends standing there. Basho had been beating these three unmercifully ever since he first decided they were his best friends. They enticed him to the roof with visions of a free ride. Once on the roof they made Basho's destination perfectly clear to him.

"But I get a check in the mail next Tuesday," were his last words. His plea was answered with a heave-ho. Never again will Basho worry about putting tomorrow off until the next day.

Only a fool would mourn his passing but the wise have already learned a lesson from his disastrous self serving. Black Randy has squared up to a legitimate Century City executive job. The Screamers are getting down to New York business realities and the Weirdos have become serious musicians. We at Slash have taken an even firmer position of responsibility for the things we say. Most important of all Brendan has proved himself a man true to his word and the Masque will grandly re-open in mid to late November. Our only regret is that Basho will not be there to chronicle history being made.

PUBLISHED & EDITED BY Steven Samiof & Melanie Nissen SENIOR EDITORS Claude Bessy & Philomena CONTRIBUTORS Gorilla Rose Will L'Amato Gary Panter David Brown Chris Desjardins Judith Bell Kerry Colonna David Allen Michael Toombs David Wiley Allan McDonell FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS Tony D. Jon Savage **All contents copyright 1978 by SLASH MAGAZINE BOX 48888 LOS ANGELES, CA 90048**

THE NEW **MIDNITE** SENSATION!

"glen or glenda–"

Which Is He?!

THE HUSH-HUSH WORLD OF TRANSVESTITES AND TRANSEXUALS AS "REVEALED" IN THIS 50'S CAMP CLASSIC!

(LEARN WHY THE "GLENDA" IN HIM DESIRED THAT WHITE ANGORA SWEATER MORE THAN THE "GLEN" IN HIM DESIRED THE GIRL WHO WAS WEARING THAT SWEATER!)

STARRING **BELA LUGOSI**

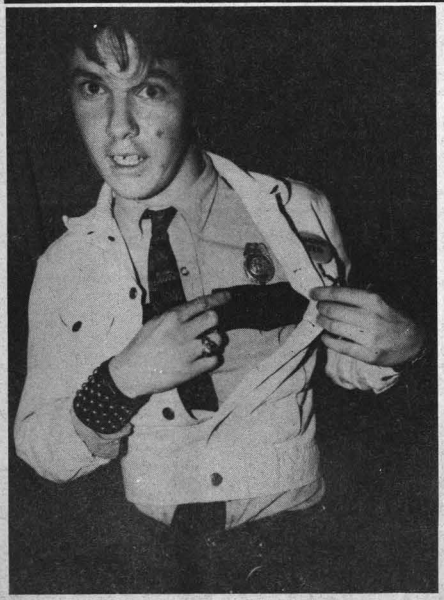
AS THE VAMPYRIC HOST!

FRIDAYS AT MIDNITE AT THE

PICFAIR

PICO AT FAIRFAX · 933-5609

local bull shit etc.



Darby Crash, special agent/Germs frontman.

"It will be a combination of Pink Flamingos, Warhol's Bad and . . . Salo, thrown in for good measure. It'll be made on the cheapest kind of film available, probably 8mm, each guy in the group has a lead part." "No, there's no title yet, the script is just in outline form." "We'll make it in pieces & then put the thing together when it looks done." In short, the world's most ambitious home movie is about to be made – starring the Germs, written by the Germs, produced by the Germs . . . and does it look like we're plugging the Germs?

Apology: We rarely make 'em but one goes out to Anya Phillips for not giving credit to her for the Lydia Lunch pic last issue. You can stop swearing now, Ms. Phillips.

Jane Drano.

Robert ex-Zero and David ex-Consumer have left their deluxe digs at the Canterbury (abandoned would be a better word). The building has the feel of a sinking ship . . . a jr. archeologist, sifting through the rubble chanced upon the following pieces of Go-Go history (the apartment having been leased to one Jane Drano): a Weirdos t-shirt, with four zippers stitched into a "W," a book of unused tickets to Disneyland, a Carol Doda postcard (topless), assorted strands of pearls, an unopened "Excita" prophylactic, an un-cashed check for $1 million, and some photobooth pictures of the ever changing Jane in an assortment of previous personnas . . . (you'd have rather seen the Doda postcard?) . . .

In case you're wondering why the general tone of SLASH is so mamby-pamby this month, it's because our beloved Kickboy Face is currently on a brief sojourn to the Continent. Actually, he was literally dragged out of LA by Claude & Philly (our senior editors) who pinched and saved to visit their homelands (France & England, respectively). From a recent letter, it sounds as if they are going to six concerts a night, interviewing every known (and unknown) band in existence by day, and are still finding enough time to vacation. They should be back soon though, as reportedly they're running out of money by supporting Kickboy's determined goal of trying at least two pints of every type of English beer (he'll make Guinness' if he does – the book, not the drink . . .) Standing in while they are away is Gorilla Rose (man about town, provocateur, Chairman of the Screamers fan club, etc.); has assumed their editorial responsibilities . . . thanx Mr. Rose . . .

Gorilla (left) & business associate.

Targets impromptu video show, Venice.

A tv show "Moden Music" is going to begin (tentatively) showing itself on theta cable/channel 3, in January. If you are interested in getting your band on the air, or have some great concepts, call Brad Friedman at 472-7023.

On another level of video jive, Randy (the black one) has been putting together a scheme to tape many LA locals. Depending on his mood, he's either gonna fourwall the results at a local theater, or take off and do the college circuit, exposing the rest of the country to some heavy (sights and) sounds.

Joe Reese of Target in SF gave a showing of some of his vidtapes in Venice recently. A small (but not necessarily select) audience milled around the room, while on screen the Cramps, Weirdos, Plugz, etc., proved the medium hotter than McLuhan ever dreamed.

SHIT

NO Magazine editors Mike & Bruce, in a state of elation, as they've finally gotten their 2nd controversial issue on the news racks. For a sample, send $1 to: Box 5704l L.A. 90057 (not for the squeamish)...

The inscrutable Madame Wong's will be barring her pagoda to a slew of nude wave groups from now on. Decision came about during the second set of the last Bags/X concert there, when the audience began throwing drinks, chairs and food as well as their own bodies around the club. Riot status was triggered by a local "fun loving" drummer. Cold-blooded coincidence: Billy Zoom's guitar was stolen the same evening (if you have any info about where Black Randy fenced Billy's guitar, please contact us . . .)

A band called the Next from . . . Texas? were in town recently. They were rehearsing at the Masque, scheduled to play Club 88, but somehow never made it to any public arena for debut. They have gone back to rattling the sagebrush down south, last we heard. . .

Photo: Albert Sanchez.

Rodney (w/fangs bared), explaining the length of his...(show?) to a beguiled Trixie & an appalled Trudie.

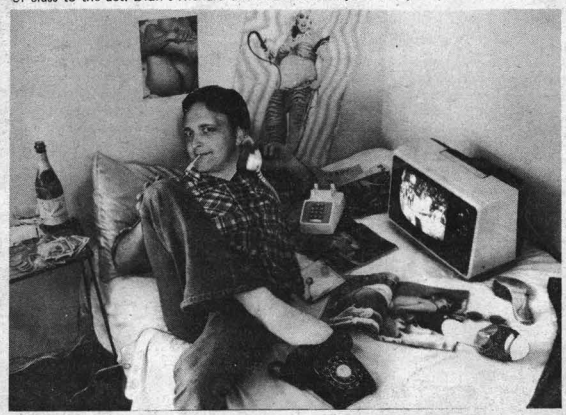
SHIT

The sorry shits at Dangerhouse report that (unh unh unh) their much blabbered about compilation album is to be released right after Xmas, to be called "Yes L.A." The uncharacteristically positive title represents, according to D. Brown (noted top dog on turd mtn.), "asphyxiation due to choking on too much big $ major label corporate nihilism – in early 70's certain unscrupulous entertainment cartels sold consistently shitty product by making the buyer feel real smart with truculent ad copy. Now they would like to sell us back our own music while making us feel 'vacant' (read: stupid). Who asked them anyway? Death to come-swallowing art-swinger no-istic rootypoots!" The album will be released first as a "totally limited edition" of a one-sided clear disc with silkscreening on the flip. It will be released as a standard 2-sided disc with another side of new stuff some time in early 1979. Other Dangerhouse projects (sure, Dave) include the Eyes' 1st actual record, to be TAQN/Topological Lies. Also: the 2nd Alley Cats' single and the long-awaited (arf arf) first album by Black Randy and his Metro Squad.

A ONE SIDED TELEPHONE CONVERSATION FROM BLACK RANDY TO AN EX-BLACKETTE (TO BE READ IN A SOULFUL WAY . . .)

Women like yourself are going to be called from all ranks of life, special rap sessions, special auditions, heavy discussions, and Koolaid with the Godfather, on the subject of the Blackettes. I want to be honest with you for a minute–I wept. There were four other new songs to do that I had written, but I was so broken up that you and ——— weren't up there. Broken up . . . that I was downstairs crying and couldn't remember any of the words to the songs – it was like I was on **Dust** or something and I want to repent totally. Oh good, I know you will, oh baby you're frightening me, but I've lost twenty pounds.

We were prepared to do a number of super Heavy songs, which are going to be on the album . . . we are the bitchenest band in LA, with Richard and now Pat Delaney – Pat fuckin' Delaney, god on that saxophone the Metro Squad is so hot. It's like we took the best elements of the bands that were bitchen in that era, like X and the Deadbeats, which have all become burnt out from the geeks and maniacs . . . David Brown is the king, a genius, he's transformed the New Wave from a candy bar trip to a hipper than hip . . . Everything was right that night. Dick Brain, he does have a certain way of presenting things to people, a certain side of things they might have ignored before, when they just saw me laying in a puddle of piss, Tuinal'ed out in the living room. He does bring a lot of class to the act. Didn't Richard and I do a bitchen job on **Hey Chip, Yeah Tony?**



I've made reservations at the Palo Lounge on Sunday for brunch. I'm so rich now, I'm going to be leasing a Cadillac soon, more new wave, and use it to help the class the Dils don't understand. All prostitutes riding in the back of my Cadillac – all prepared to fulfill the dreams of any man. There's going to be a Heavy brunette in the front seat too, so you know there's always going to be room in my ever-expanding groovy lifestyle, you understand. I know, I know you're hot, go mess around, go freak yourself off, go get on the couch and do it, roll off on the floor and ——— leave your shoes on, ok?

PLAY LIST

"What the ('buy me a meal & I'll list your record") Folks Around the Office are Listening To."

Brendan (Kickboy stand-in):
1) Theme From a Symphony – Ornette Coleman
2) I Wanna Have An Orgasm – Wall of Voodoo (tape)
3) Mr. Hal Negro at the Piano plays the Weirdos Live at the M asque Office (unrecorded)
4) Negative Trend (Demo Tape w/Rik L Rick)

D. Brown:
1) Black Haired Girl – Alley Cats (live)
2) Disco 3000 – Sun Ra (45 version)
3) latest Subway Sect single (so trendy I can't remember the name)
4) Beri-Beri – Kleenex (EP)

Bo Clifford –
1) I Just Don't Know – MC5
2) Wax Dolls – Fischer-Z
3) Damaged Goods – Gang of Four

Chris D.:
1) Separates – 999
2) Los Angeles – X
3) Urban Kids/No Flowers – Chelsea
4) Give Em Enough Rope) Clash
5) Tribe of the City – Cortinas

Gorilla:
1) Uptown Top Ranking – Althea & Donna
2) Midnight Express Soundtrack – Georgio Moroder
3) Lobster Rock – B52s
4) YMCA – Village People

Jimbo (who finally got a sound system):
1) The Light Pours out of Me – Magazine
2) Here I Come Constantinople – the Residents
3) Safe European Home – Clash
4) Holidays in the Sun – Sex Pistols
5) Santa Dog – the Residents

Melanie:
1) I Am the Fly – Wire
2) Wives in Orbit/Yik Yak – Red Crayola
3) Obsolete – Howard Werth
4) Public Image – Public Image Ltd.
5) Roxanne – the Police

Pleasant (P. stand in):
1) Domino – the Cramps
2) Voices – Siouxsie & the Banshees
3) Be Bop a Lula – Gene Vincent
4) Operator's Manual – Buzzcocks
5) Convicted – Levi & the Rockets

Stevie:
1) Thief in the Night – the Gladiators
2) Cheapskate – Clash
3) Alternative Ulster – Stiff Little Fingers
4) Survive – the Bags
5) I'm Not in Love – Talking Heads

V. :
1) Give Em Enough Rope – the Clash
2) Flesheaters EP
3) Sex Machine – James Brown

God's Word! This is the truth, or we'll never print another word about the notorious rathole: This is the latest reports, just 10 minutes from Brendan's mouth — Plans for constructing a fire exit onto Hollywood Blvd. have been approved by the city, contracting bids are out, and the Masque will reopen to the public when the exit is completed. The owners of the old CB De Mille building will pay for the job, but Brendan expects to foot the bill for other infractions (re-wiring, etc.), the club was originally shut down for. Possible some inside walls will be removed & the stage moved. News to make your pants flare: the world famous Whisky a Go Go (RIP) has been sold and will be converted into: A) a gay disco, B) a black disco, or C) a valley disco. They're not choosey. $$$. PS: The Ramones heard the club had been "changed" & are playing there because they have to (?). The Whisky called the Screamers in NY to play a date on their return, but they declined the booking. Screamers fans will have to wait, as they apparently aren't playing anywhere for a couple of months (R&R?). Speaking of not playing around, you won't see the Extreme on the "club circuit" for awhile. Michael Schwartz & gang are currently brainstorming on how to make the big dent without hauling all that equipment around, endlessly repeating their playlist to the same jaded faces.

Lobotomy (remember when we all wanted one) editrix Pleasant, has just returned to the coast after a whirlwind tour of the land where the sun rises, i.e. NY. She phoned in as soon as she hit the dirt, ecstatic over the news, sports, and weather she had cored out of her stay in the Big Apple. Hot dirt and personal exposes on Levi & the Rockets, the Blessed, Student Teachers, a recording session with the Clash, etc. But, she has been so busy resettling ("It took me two days, I couldn't find where they stored my bed") that it's not gonna hit the print until next issue. So hang on Lobotomates, a very Pleasant NY report is forthcoming.

SHIT

The Mau Maus . . . no news, no reviews. Just watch for the name. (Public service message).

A new label in town: Billy Star and Joanie? have formed Joke Records. The First release is the Middle Class doing "Out of Vogue" (no joke). It should be out as you read this.

Flipside is also on the stands, along with a special Flipside calendar. If you've never seen this vile 'zine that got voted Number One in our readers poll, you oughta send $2.25 for four issues to: 7245A Whittier Ave., Whittier, CA 90606.

SHIT

Slash threw a little illpromoted last minute concert as our deadline approached. The idea was to help finance this that you read. Turned out we (meaning us, the Go-Go's, Middle Class, Rhino 39. & the Red Army) walked away with carfare. We had a great time though, and just wanted to thank everyone including Billy Zoom & his PA, Paul Zacha and his volatile doormanship, Jimmy & his understated muscle, Jerome & his Park View Studios, & no thanks to the Mau-Maus whose grafitti in the men's room cost us our meager profit . . . oh well.

The concert was the last of the Go-Go's for awhile as Belinda is off the U.K.

Already the new "darlings" of the NY media, from all fronts comes the word that the Screamers will be "it" in 1979 . . . . remember where you heard it first.

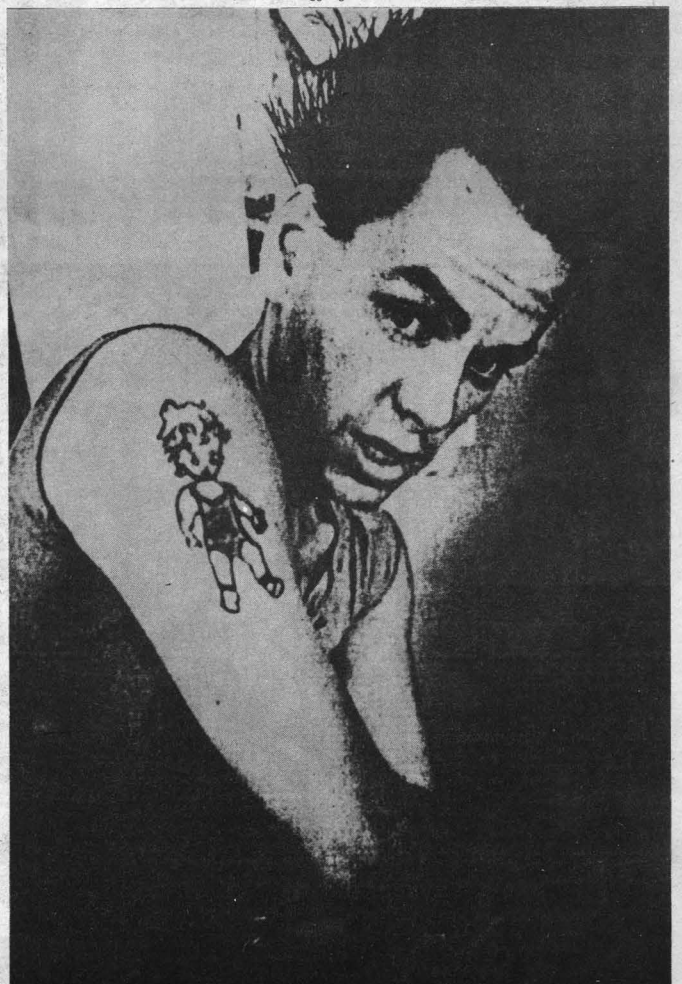
Paul Roessler, now the "OFFICIAL 4TH SCREAMER" has been recuperating through the tours by screaming through the streets on his bike — with the usual young partner snuggling close behind. But what makes this edible muffin different from the rest? She's his own sister Kira, who's now in the Visitors. Apparently semen is thicker than blood or water.

Miss Edie (of Desperate Living fame) at a recent Italian Franchise opening.

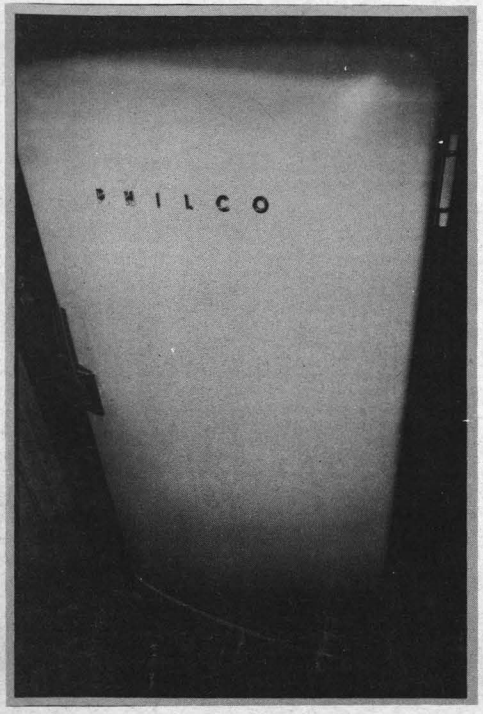
SHIT

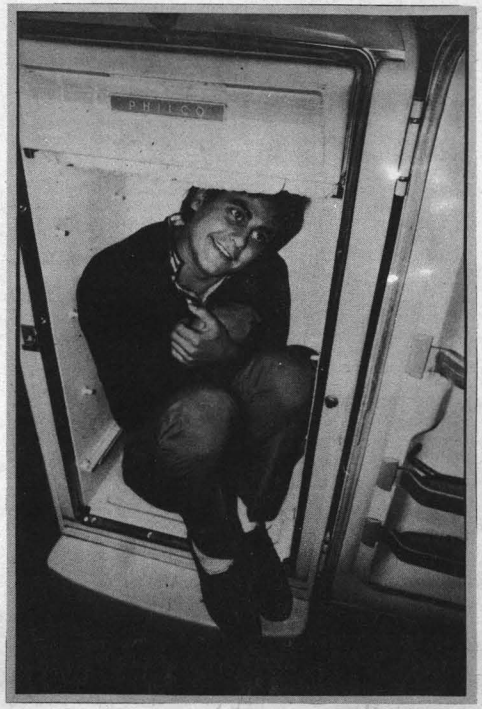
Local promoters have been doing such a ratshit job of putting on shows lately (it would seem) that the groups themselves are more & more being forced to set up their own gigs (ever try to take the $$ at the door while playing on stage at the same time) including the successful last-minute Bags/Black Randy fest at the Park View Studios (see Live Reviews). One of the more "fun" occasions this past month was the Eyes performance at Immaculate Heart College. The event, originally planned as a November Science Fair Dance was finally held, after some delay, in the college's cafeteria. Some heavy joke bands debuted that nite, namely the hysterical Wall of Voodoo (who feature overpowering rhythmic mutations heavily in their act) and Holly & the Italians. But the night was clearly a showcase for the "new" (6 months ago) Eyes and they played it to the hilt. The crowd was suspiciously well-behaved. Everybody who thought of themselves as somebody at one time or another seemed to be there. (Pause for rhetorical analysis: Why do groups like Eyes, Bags, Metro Squad, etc., bands with followings, have to lick English butt or else put on their own show every damn time they want to play?)

Speaking of English butt, which famous "new-wave" Inglish manager has been showing his deformities large and small to our old friends the Go-Gos (in a "production" context, that is)?



Tomata.





Tito, Plugz vocalist was obsessed with records. Not content with the recently completed LP, he took it upon himself to break the world record for time spent in a Philco. We are sorry to report he succeeded.

Switch Of the Month: The Weirdos are threatening to quit Nicky Beat.

"Bad Boy".

Winner of the "hardest working band in show business" award this month, goes to the Ramones. Discipline is the key word. So strict are they about punctuality, flubbing cues, missing chord changes, etc., that they fine each other from $5 to $35 for infractions. We've learned Dee Dee "Bad Boy" Ramone keeping true to form, has waxed up the most fines. . . Just so you know we know, the Ramones are in town to do more than play the Long Beach Arena with Black Sabbath. They are also working on a project about which one of our investigative reporters was sworn to secrecy. Fortunately another reporter who doesn't swear to anything has picked up the news that they (the Ramones) are starring in a Roger Corman (The Harder They Come, etc.) film tentatively titled "Rock n' Roll High School" . . . we'll have the full story next issue.

SHIT

Is X really going to sue Devo for dropping them off the bill twice, first at the Starwood, and then at Mabuhay's?

With an ambitious Texas tour in the making, the Bags are stuck with one little complication: transportation. As of this writing, their thumbs are still up. (any offers?)

Any readers that have become obsessed with shorter hair styles, should know about a little mag out of NY. The Razors Edge (Box 685 Palisades NY 10964) bills itself as "The voice of recreational haircutting," and deals in hair fetishes and bald women. It should arouse all you young shavers . . . Pure Kink Rating: 7.

The Posh One w/Rik L. Rick.

Rik L. Rick has finally left F-Word, joining Negative Trend in the process, as singer & co-songwriter. Rik is currently treading his bare feet along snowy London boulevards with Posh Boy, his perpetual benefactor. Seems they are trying to peddle master tapes of the Trends single "Meathouse/I Got the Power" to a British record company. Word has it the tape's hotter than anything done previously in either the F-Word or Neg Trend configurations.

We were holding this space for some news from the UK. None came, we were down to the wire, so here's a great pic of Joe Strummer for you to ponder...

photo: Mark Sangerman

LETTERS

Dear Slash:
All right, L'Amato, just a few words to let you know that your "review" of Devo at the Starwood was one of the most inept that I've read in quite awhile. Firstly, the opening act was not "Dr. Jackets," but General Jackett. And while I was not overly impressed by him, heither would I dismiss him as "artsy-fartsy scum." Point of information: he was a co-writer of "Sloppy" (doesn't anybody read their albums anymore?) Next, was it really necessary to let us know that you were hungry? I mean, who gives a shit? More inaccuracies: you said that "Devo played their album, did an encore, and left." In fact, they also played "Big Pussycat," "Mr. DNA," and some other non-album songs whose names I can't remember. Maybe some of that glue which was up your nose got into your ears, and you couldn't hear all the songs. You criticize them for their conquering hero attitude, but face it — the audience wanted to be conquered. And for my money, Devo not only conquered but destroyed me. Pausing in between songs about as long as the Ramones do, these guys maintained an incredibly high energy level throughout the set, which gave the songs added dimension compared with the album versions. This is something I would think you'd appreciate since you're probably the type who criticized Eno for overproducing . . . and finally, nobody likes a namedropper) do you think ANYONE gives ½ a fuck that you had dinner with them once? Next time, spend less time talking about yourself and devote more attention to the concert, and maybe you'll come out with an approximation of a review instead of a diary . . . get the point, L'Amato?

Hit Man

L'Amato replies:
I get it, I get it! Facts are facts, hipman, and you got me dead to rights. I've shirked my duty, let it be known. I should have taken note that the "doctor" was a "genera!" — these things are of vast importance to future historians. In my article I should have included a comprehensive checklist of each song Devo did — even timed them for extra accuracy. If I weren't so inept, I would have realized that Devo's dynamic pacing made it a thrilling evening for you, and that the crowd — like peasants in the Dark Ages — really wanted to be conquered, perhaps to gain a sense of belonging. I'm glad you were "blown away away" by Devo, hipman, and I can offer no excuse for my inaccuracy. I hope you can find it in you to forgive me — perhaps you could read the Wall Street Journal, until I can improve my memory & set the facts straight. Oh shit, your name was "hitman," right?

Slash,
Your so-called view with Lydia Lunch/ Teenage Jesus made me puke! I can't believe you'd print anything that alligator-face would have to say. It's all so unimportant (or is that impotent?). All that stuff about facelessness — she sure does need a new face! What was the most ho-hum though, was her mention of Exene. Now she's a real throw-up face who can't make sounds, until her pumpkin head becomes contorted. I can't stand her! So take a crawl Lydia — you are out to lunch.

Francine, Vicious Girl Gang

Dear Slash:
I read your "not knowing when to give up" speech, and want to say Please don't give up — charge three fucking dollars for your paper, but keep printing it! You are my lifeline — I live in fucking Massachusetts, what happens here? There's no Clash, Manic Panic, no Teenage Depression, you want me to lose my fucking mind?? Your magazine is great (and always on time). I have a subscription and would be happy to pay more. I see you had a 40 cent stamp on my envelope — how can you make any money charging fifty cents? I've finally figured out what I want to do with my life, be in a PUNK band! and your magazine understands my feelings, understands that it's not just foolishness! I don't know half the bands you're talking about, but the way they are written about, makes me interested! I'm going to England in June to see if I can get in a band. I'm not rich, but I'd pay more to get your paper . . . forget the two colors . . . just keep the great writers . . . anyway, good luck, I'll be at my P.O. box waiting, hoping to see you again.

Kim Longmore

Dear Kim:
You chump, you fool . . . just kidding. Thanks for the dollar, and good luck in the UK.

Slash

SHIT

photo: Melanie

Although now well on their way to becoming successful musicians, the De-Evolution boys haven't always had it easy. As these photos show, even they sometimes had to demean themselves to survive. Our source in Akron swears these pics are either, A) stills from an Ohio sex education film on the proper use of prophylactics or B) from an early Flynt publication, "SPUD HUNKS IN UNDERTHINGS." Are we not silly?

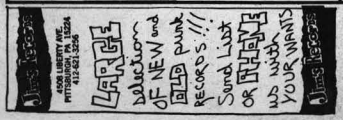
classified ads. $4.00

instructions

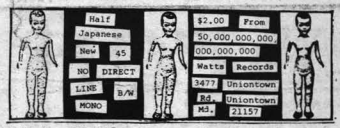
1. Take a piece of white paper and draw a rectangle 2 inches high and 6 inches long.
2. Draw, write, or type anything you want inside the rectangle (use *black* ink for good reproduction).
3. Put your ad in an envelope and mail it to us with the money.

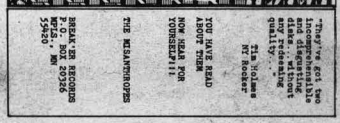
That's it. Ads will reproduce smaller (1 inch by 3 inches). If we receive your ad too late for the next issue, it will appear in the one after. Make sure your ad is the right size (2 × 6) or it won't fit, we won't use it, and we'll cash your fuckin' check anyway.

New SHOCK single- "We Were That Noise"+"Gone For Good" available now on Blue vinyl with Picture sleeve, DT-502. Send $2.00 ppd. to: Downtown Records, 6015 Sunset Blvd. #2. Hollywood,CA. 90028.



TALENTED WRITER-ARTIST WISHES TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHER PUNK DEVOTEES, WHO HAVE ACCESS TO PRINTING EQUIPMENT, ON STARTING NEW ZINE, INTELLECTUALLY EXCITING PUNK FANZINE. SOME POSSIBLE PROJECTS MIGHT INCLUDE PUNK 'ZAP' STYLE COMIX. THE APPROACH WOULD BE GRASS ROOTS - LETTING EVERYONE HAVE HIS SAY— AS OPPOSED TO LETTING SELF APPOINTED 'CRITICS' SPEAK FOR US. INTERESTED? THEN WRITE— CARL ALESSI, 26 SOUTH FRONT STREET, SAINT CLAIR, PA. 17970





DAVID WAY

1958 · 1978

with love, flyboys

THE RESULTS of the 1st SLASH-"yousaiditnotus" READERS POLL...

The Results. Decision makers & corporate heads have waited months and delayed policy making until today; the day of the results. And they poured in, from Encino to London. Almost all had individual touches from added questions to revealing confessions. And although no one took the suggestion for marking answers with hair grease literally, some looked as though they had been burnished over asphalt with a blunt instrument. These posed no problem as we've become junior cryptologists just reading the daily mail. The problem in making the final calculations was in the sheer number of respondents. The pocket calculator went through two sets of batteries & the twit that figured everything out went through two bottles of No-Doz. Still, we feel it was energy (yours as well as ours) well spent. In fact, one bit of advice was taken almost immediately: the author of the poll was left on the corner of 187th St. & Avalon at 2 a.m., night before last.

The Facts:

Half of you are not subscribers. The sexual makeup of the gang is 20% more male than female. (side note no. 1: a full 25% of you cleverly responded to question 2 (sex) with wonderfully imaginative answers like, "V, as in void", "I'm not sure", "Every five hours", etc. Draw your own conclusions.)

The average old fart that reads Slash is 21.57 years old (ages ranged from a young & tender 13, to a bristly 35).

The hair color question was predominately answered "normal", but 87 readers had "unnormal" colors (black & white, ruined, spikey, & the unquestioned favorite, pink).

And dare you think that Slash is a leisure class publication, a full 70% of you work (!) for a living, while only 10% mooch off mom & dad (7% none of your business, 5% welfare, 3% blackmail and/or pillage).

The favorite band questions brought no real surprises. The fave local combo slot is shared by the Screamers and the Weirdos. A four way tie for 2nd place goes to X-Alleycats-Dickies-Germs. It's obvious that most of the readers that responded were from L.A. Other regional bands that got a few votes were, The Neo Boys, the Vomit Kings, and an unusually popular combo, "We Don't Have A Name Yet".

As to the most hated Locals, The Quick won by a wide margin followed by the Dickies (who received an equal amount of fave votes). The Clash & the Pistols tied for 1st in the favorite in general category followed by Devo, the Ramones, and Elvis Costello. Predictable. The most hated band in general category results read like the cover of Creem. 1st Boston, 2nd Foreigner/Bee Gees, 3rd Grateful Dead/Eagles and 4th place was a tie between Ted Nugent and (honest) the Moscow Symphony). Half of you don't even bother to listen to radio. Those that do listen to the likes of KROQ, KSAN, WAHM, KUSC and other four letter words. Those of you that buy records spend the fuckin incredible amount of $40 a month. We figured you dropped maybe $5 or $10 but even when we double checked it came up 40 (our ad rates to record companies just went up!)

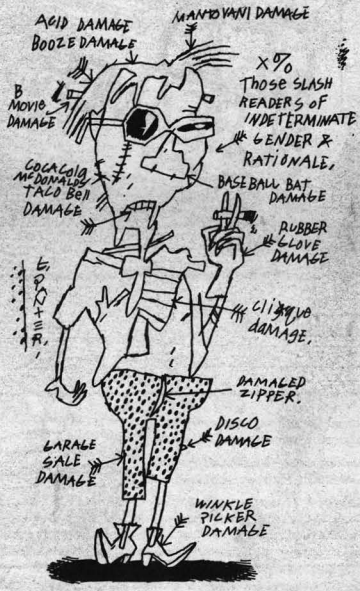
Your second (next to you know what) fave magazine is Creem followed by Trouser Press, N Y Rocker, Search & Destroy, and Back Door Man/Sounds tie for 6th. The most negative votes in any category went to Rolling Stone. Other greatly disliked magazines: Creem, Circus, BAM, and a few votes for "anything over 50 cents" (we lose a few readers this ish). Favorite fanzines read like a list. The leader in the race though was Flipside (there were a curiously large number of votes from Whittier), by a decent margin. Other contenders were, Upsetter, Kids Stuff, Punk, Poseur, Ripped & Torn, Starting Fires, Life in Hell, Artweek, Biff Bang Pow, and one called "Wet Young Pussies" (if this does indeed exist, please send sample copy to "horny" in care of this mag.)

The "winner" of the most hated fanzine award is, "too many to list" and/or "none", followed closely by Punk, Interview, BDM & Lobotomy. Questions 18 & 19 asked you for a brief description of your political leanings, and although most answers were pretty direct, there's no way to compile them all into a definitive "ism". A safe generalization to make as to which side of the fence "an average Slash reader" is on, would be the other side . . . A sampling of the statements: "Destroy/Conform", "Dump traditional economies for old bartering system – forget status quo – be creative", "Smash the corporate state", "Freedom" (popular), "Anarchy" (very popular), "Keep changing everything", "Enlightened self interest", "A generous capitalist", "Hatred as a way of life", "Carter & Hitler have only one ball", "Federalistic Socialism", "Still developing," etc. The overall tone was anti big government/corporation dominance, and for a more random approach to decision making (side note no. 2– only about 60% of male readers had any political beliefs, while all females responded in one way or another).

Question 20 asked you to describe yourself by checking appropriate boxes. The majority of you are nameless nobodies (never in Slash) and definitely not losing sleep over it. Surprisingly, there are more Art Farts in the ranks than Real Punks/Punkettes (these two facts have led to the renewal of the contracts with the 100 punks we regularly use in our photo spreads as well as a go-ahead on an upcoming feature; The Mark Rothko Band: the original NY sound). The rest of you are an assortment of wimps, rich kids, Black Randys (with the usual written apologies), et al.

A little knowledge still goes a long way (followed closely by off the deep end).

Numbers 23 & 24 concerning the how comes & why nots of our subscribers and non-subscribers was for our reference only. The fact that most of you non-subscribers will remain so because you think we're a bunch of lowlifes with ruthless addictions running a fly-by-night operation that might be gone before tomorrow's mail, forced us all to take a cold hard look at ourselves.



THE SLASH READER

As to the status of punk, it appears to be alive/hibernating and about to burst. Only 2 votes for "last year's thing" assures us we can ignore the continued obituaries. (Side note no. 3: there were a significant amount of questionnaires in which all boxes were checked in regards to this question & those only counted in the comfort they gave us, knowing we're not the only ones that are confused).

The Next Big Thing: another question where you were either really sincere or really kidding (aside from the "don't knows" and the "hard to tells"), as this random sampling portrays: "A mixing & developing of the revolutionary, decadent, and chic aspects of punk", "Women punkers who have street intellect & sensibilities", "Disco-punk", "Sadly, the same old thing", "Glitter 70's again in the 80's", "Individuality without superiority", "Bigger than a breadbox", "Edible singles", "Brian Eno", "Ritual mass suicide", & "Hopefully people will get off their asses & we won't need a next big thing"... The worst mortal sin seems to be owning both a destroy t-shirt & a mercedes convertible. Other highly disgusting habits are not pogoing and growing one's hair. Selling out came in 4th.

In the worst social affliction category, booze & drugs damage gets a high rating (yet on the question of favorite hangover, these same people could stock a bar with their answers). The damage theory got a lot of flak and so did Slash clique damage. An excellent write-in award goes to the reader who responded, "Barry Manilow". Suggestions to improve the club situation ranged from, "Get rid of the hippie bouncers" to, "Buy the Rock Corp." Most of you felt that "playing everywhere, schools, garages, etc." was the logical solution. One reader noted, "Communities used to get together and build their own churches".

The world's problems are just as easily solved. From charmingly simple solutions (buy a gun, mind your own business, everybody stay home) to the more complex (nationalize industry, seal off the U.S., make everyone wear Devo suits), you had an answer. Two clever thinkers offered "A universal suggestion box & a lot of gumption", or how about "Stop cutting down the rain forests in the Amazon, for starters".

If Slash raised its price to $2.50, we'd be dead. Even so, we don't feel so bad cause the next question (would you steal it from your friend) was designed to test your integrity. We're pleased to announce that collectively, you're a bunch of thieving assholes without an ounce of integrity.

According to the Slash readership, the enemy comes in many forms. It could be, "snotty cliques & those that think they or cool", or even, "capitalist bastards (and bitches) who deal in proven commodity Muzak, and have no interest in rock & roll, energy, fun, or rebellion". Other responses: "John Travolta", "my neighbot", "faggot rockers," and of course, "who else, Slash!"

If we're all so clever, how come we're not getting anywhere? One reader pointed to the 2nd law of thermodynamics. Most of you felt that we were getting somewhere. Still others moaned that we are "too clever", "stupid cunts", even, "lucky to have gotten this far."

You pretty much agree that Slash "is unable to find its way out of a paper bag". Otherwise, we're just plain uninteresting to career girls.

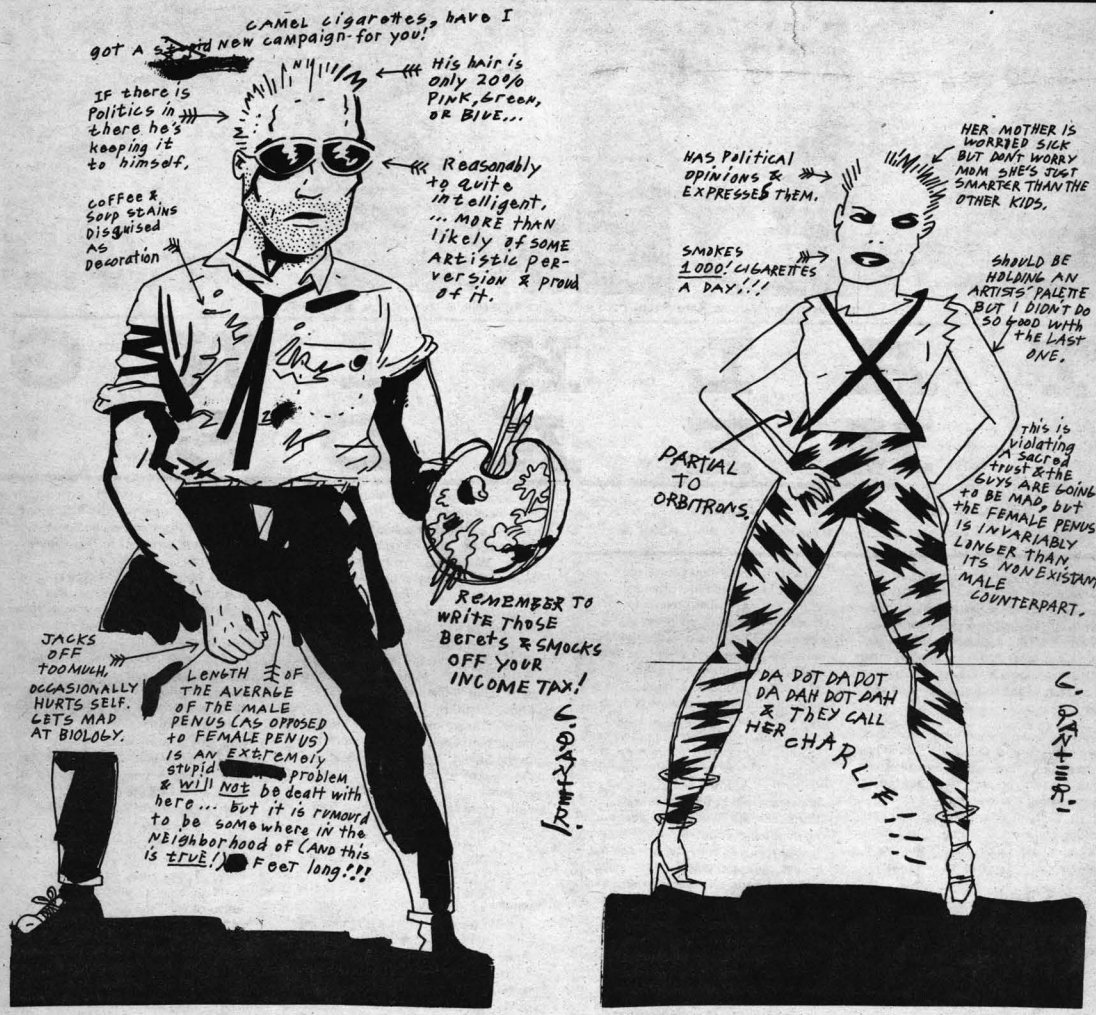
OK, we asked you to write a slogan that somehow captures the essence (smell?) of this rag. You failed miserably. A few choice examples below.

1. Jive Phonies
2. News for the Null Set
3. Everything you wanted to know about L.A., but were too jaded to ask
4. All the shit that hits the fan
5. Sodomize America
6. What's 50 cents between friends
7. All the news that's zits
8. Impertinent, imprudent & impotent
9. Don't think, buy!
10. L.A.M.F. (L.A. music fanzine)

Actually, a few were not bad, but we seriously doubt that any of you have a future on Madison Avenue.

As for the throwaway question (what's the use?) the answers fell somewhere between "there's no use" & "death is probably more boring". Number 40 asks you to supply us with an alternative name (in case of legal problems). One particularly hateful reader suggested, "Charmin (toilet paper . . .)". Another suggested title, "Sloosh, the magazine for city surfers" (a couple more: Rodifur, Throwaway, Squish, Skuzz, and Phenomenal Garbage).

Most Slash readers are either Happy Little Kids, or they knew society had it in for them



from the start. The rest of you don't know what went wrong. Plans for the future? Well most of you have something other in mind than the possibilities we suggested (sample: I plan to be as obnoxious as possible, Eat Lydia's Lunch). The next largest segment plans on forming their own little combos and they needn't worry about fans, for the 3rd most popular future endeavor listed was a life of random destruction of self and/or others (commonly referred to as concert goers). TV addicts and future record company execs share the fourth place spot, while matrimonial plans and janitorial duties at the Masque placed for fifth.

The most eagerly awaited bands are (in order), The Clash, Devo, Generation X, Pistols (reunion), Talking Heads, Buzzcocks, X Ray Spex & Siouxsie and the Banshees.

To gain a little perspective we asked for your opinions on the good & bad points of our little news sheet. On the good side you voted Local Shit and the record reviews into the top slot. The next spot went to Editorials & the Letters section. Jimbo & photos placed next, over Interviews & features. For everyone that hates the Local Shit section, you'll be tickled to note it came in tops on the shit heap. Climbing upward were record reviews & fuzzy pics. Closer to the base came "the crappy ink that gets all over your hands", our "redundant live reviews", and finally, our "black nigger perspective" & a "total lack of Direction " .... (watch it!)

The all time favorite cause championing long playing record album is absolutely "Never Mind the Bollocks". The number 2, 3 & 4 spots were, "Velvet Underground & Nico", "The Clash", & "The Ramones". Number 5 surprisingly was "I Fought the Law" by the Bobby Fuller Four.

On the big top 45's of all time you voted "Oh Bondage Up Yours" into the No. 1 spot with a bullet. "Anarchy In the UK" rated no. 2 and "I Got A Right" placed 3rd. There were no other stand outs in the singles race, although "Louie Louie" got mentioned a few times.

Extremely popular on the punk cliche front are safety pins, along with the phrases, "get a haircut", "kill the hippies", "no future", "boring old fart", "we mean in, Maaan", and about 20 different ways of expressing the emotionally charged "fuck you" or "fuck off".

Forging ahead with everyone's "favorites" (or as one reader who refused to respond to this section called it, Johnny Carson dialogue), we find that the favorite hippie cliches are "peace & love", "smoke dope", and "long hair" respectively. The fave music press cliche is any usage of the terminology "new wave". The Titanic was voted the most popular historic disaster. The Black Plague got a few votes as did Columbus discovering America. One reader brought up the incident when Rodney's hair caught on fire. Favorite diseases pulled a tie between Mongoloidism & Congenital Syphilis. Others were Hemophilia, Dwarfism, Firm Breasts, Epilepsy, Beauty and Buck Teeth.

Most of you favored a mild hangover. Other choices were, white wine, tequila, and yes, a love hangover (brother).

The top five mind shrinkers were, pot, acid, beer, black Russians, and speed. Nearly everything that takes you up or brings you down was mentioned, including pogoing.

Concert promoters take heed; the favorite show of all the punk rockahs is Saturday Nite Live. Those of you that hate TV, tied with Twilight Zone, Monty Python, America 2-Nite, The Prisoner, and Lou Grant.

Six out of ten Slash readers wait for night time by sleeping all day. This is confusing, for seven out of ten also work (an abundance of night jobs?). The rest of you fuck, eat, listen to records & read magazines (we're human too).

Ronald Biggs was mentioned more (in the favorite international criminal category), but Sid Vicious gets 1st place as everyone wrote, "everybody's gonna say Biggs, so I'm not." Biggs did place 2nd in a tie with John Lydon (Rotten). Idi Amin & Richard Nixon tied for 3rd. Junk food champs were Coca-Cola and the Ding Dong/Ho Ho type of pastry (pastry?) Hamburgers placed 3rd along side Winchell's Donuts.

Billy clubs seem to be the favorite tool in police brutality, although it's usage is one immersed in some extremely bizarre fantasies. One thoroughly pummelled reader responded, "any type is fine with me."

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Well, that's it. No way, you way? What about question 27, the one we slid by way back there, the one about desperately needed improvements in this magazine? And what about other stuff, like add-on questions & the rude remarks you turds wrote in the margins? Well??

Well, every compliment & vicious remark was considered. Many criticisms were (and will be) very constructive. We're gonna try to live up to all the aspirations (yours & ours) with the exception of one particularly offensive scumbag whose ranting mind perceived us selling all of you and ourselves even, down the river ... Listen, "brother", you think we're in this for our health? ..... As things turn out, we are.

Left to right: Jerry Harrison, Chris Frantz, David Byrne, Tina Weymouth as captured by D. Byrne, photographer.

TALKING HEADS

A CONVERSATION WITH TALKING HEADS

by William L'Amato

The Talking Heads returned to L.A. recently for four nights at the Roxy & a free concert at UCLA. Although on a hectic schedule, Chris Frantz "in a great mood" & on his "day off", invited us over for an interview. The other members of the band (notably David Byrne) moved in and out of the conversation (and the room).

Chris: I was wondering, since we're such an un-punk group, why Slash, which has such a punk image, would be interested in us? I guess you want to go beyond black leather and pretense?

Steve: Well, on a musical level, you're talking semantics, Slash has things in common with Talking Heads that we wouldn't with Ted Nugent or Cheap Trick.

Will: Your band is a lot more important to the things I see punk standing for than most groups that embrace the "punk label."

Chris: Yet, especially with recent events, we've made a special attempt with your readers to disassociate ourselves with "punk" . . . well, that's wrong . . . not the idea of punk, but the practical applications of it, especially in light of the Sid Vicious affair. Of course, he may or may not be guilty, but anyone who saw him would agree he's a pathetic person. As a musical thing, that's one thing, but as a style or fashion thing, I'm afraid we don't have a lot to do with punk.

Will: If you don't identify yourselves with it, you can still see how youre associated with it.

Chris: Yeah, because we've done many double bills with bands that identified with it - and in the early days there was only one club on the whole earth that would book us, CBGBs, which was synonomous with punk . . . we're not against it, we just feel punk is a bad description of what we do.

Will: I wasn't going to use the word punk in context of Talking Heads . . .

Chris: But it's important your readers know that. The kids should be more themselves and take more charge of the way they look, rather than just copy a bunch of English bands. Fashion is an exciting preoccupation (laughs) but . . . .

(Doorbell rings & David Byrne enters)

Will: Yet, being a writer for a so-called punk magazine, I find you relevant . . .

Chris: I believe you like us and all, but . . .

Will: I'm talking about relevance . . . cause I see far more challenge to . . . rather than just rehash sixties rock with seventies sentiment . . . I see the Talking Heads sound built more on musical trends of the 70s . . . disco and reggae. The beat that runs through your work is danceable. With a couple of exceptions, I don't see any of your stuff as even remotely rock 'n roll. I'm interested in new musical forms, or at least new ideas behind them, rather than, say, the Sex Pistols, who were important in that they made way . . .

Chris: The Sex Pistols made great music, no doubt about that. But we're bored with groups trying to copy them or the Ramones, Iggy, and Lou Reed . . . when there are so many bands who've already done it so well. That's what made us perform the way we do . . . .

David: Have you heard Johnny Rotten's new single? (This is David's first utterance, and an animated discussion about Public Image, Ltd. follows)

Chris: Last time we were in London, there was talk that the group (Public Image weren't as good as had been hoped. But that was months ago, and bands can make great strides in a few months . . . I've seen it happen (laughter).

Will: How did you like playing LA this time, as opposed to last? (silence)

Steve: (to David) I've heard you haven't said anything to the press in two years . . .

David: Um, well, it was exactly the same, except that we played more nights and we played outdoors. They looked a little younger, maybe the extra people are the younger people.

Chris: It was definitely a big improvement over the first time we came, at the Whiskey . . . . we were nervous and were getting all this "anti-New York" stuff. The whole atmosphere was like, "you guys better be good if you're from New York."

David: I really wasn't used to LA then, I'm a little more used to it now. I can drive around and not get lost.

Steve: Kind of a nice town, isn't it?

David: Yeah . . . I ate in the car today. (laughter)

(Doorbell rings & Tina Weymouth enters)

Steve: Is it a great feeling to hear two thousand people singing along to "Psycho Killer"?

David: It's kind of scary. It's real exciting, but also kind of crazy.

Steve: Will it make you more careful as to how you choose your lyrics?

David: No . . . I always think that a song has a good beat and chord changes that people like, and the people just learn the words.

Chris: Musically, it's one of our songs that's closest to mainstream rock n' roll

Will: Like "Pulled Up"?

Chris: Yeah, those two, kind of on the verge of heavy metal . . . not heavy metal, but people who grew up listening to the Stones, Yardbirds, or Beatles can kind of fit them into their frame of reference.

Will: More so than "Tentative Decisins" or "Warning Sign"?

Chris: Most easily accessible to a person who hasn't heard a lot of weird music, experimental or whatever . . . African music (laughs).

Will: Did you plan "Psycho Killer" as a single at a certain stage of its development?

David: Did we say "this song is going to be a single?" No. It just turned out to be in the front running of our popular songs, and people said we should release it as a single. So when we went to release a single, we thought everybody wants to hear this, so we'll release something different . . . because it was um, because of the subject matter.

Chris: That song was written way before the Son of Sam business in New York, but when it was recorded and ready to be released, it was at the height of it all. A lot of people would have thought, "who are these creeps, capitalizing on these brutal affairs." So, we released "Love Comes to Town." After it all calmed down, we released "Psycho Killer," because the record company would've released it anyway. It was on the radio a lot.

David: So now we're going to write a song about mass suicide. (laughter)

Will: I appreciate what I see as an honesty in your lyrics, that I haven't seen in many other people. I find it curious that "Psycho Killer" (looking at someone else), and "Take Me to the River" (written by someone else), were released as the singles.

David: They were singles because people liked them, and not because we set out to do songs people would like. That's the way it goes . . . we'd better watch out for that, otherwise we'll turn out like Linda Ronstadt, doing remakes.

Will: I was surprised to find "River" on the album.

Chris: Well, we'd been doing it for a long time, we used to do another Al Green song, too. Nobody told us to do a cover song, and if they had, it wouldn't have been an Al Green tune. They wouldn't have thought we could play one! We did it cause we liked it, and we wanted to show we were into other things beside what was going on in New York at that time.

Will: It's a nice cover.

Chris: Thank you. I just bought the Bryan Ferry version. . . it's good but much more like the original than ours. (talk ensues about Roxy Music's untimely demise)

Will: You are really popular in England, aren't you?

Chris: That's what we hear. But we don't sell as many records as a group like Abba, or even the Sex Pistols.

Will: I don't see many compromises in your music.

Chris: We don't have to, no one makes us. Our record company has a fairly good understanding of what we were into at the start, and there are certain things they wouldn't dare ask us to do. They know we would flip out and leave the label.

Steve: How are your relations with your label (Sire). They've ignored our existence since we published a Malcolm McLaren interview in which he made some strong statements against Seymour Stein.

David: It's a very funny interview, too.

Chris: McLaren isn't a person I particularly admire. Even Seymour Stein would admit that he (Stein) is not a perfect person, but he was one of the first people in the real record industry to give, not only our band, but a lot of bands their first break by recording them . . .

David: I think most of them (recording companies) go by the bottom line. If we can see where they're coming from, then they can see where we're coming from; that we're not going to make certain compromises. The only time I get annoyed is when they make a move that is just bad business. If they portray us as something we're not, it's going to mean less record sales for them. I only think people are buying us because of whatever integrity we have, and if that

gets diluted in their sales efforts, they're going to sell less records.

Will: I didn't notice any glossy campaign to promote you.

Chris: I've seen these billboards for Player; their advertisements are so sad. I mean, these poor guys are probably very successful, set for life (provided they stay alive), but what a mediocre campaign: four pretty boys, bending over and sucking their cheeks in. What is the history of music going to remember about Player?

Will: Who?

Steve: As a group you seem to have a certain aesthetic, your packaging, your sound, you have a "look" that is "Talking Heads." Would you compromise it all for a tacky ad campaign if it guaranteed more record sales?

Tina: We might have a tacky campaign, but it would only be for whatever statement we might want to make.

Will: Would you need it? I put a lot of hope on you, because I see you as a group who, without compromise, can break into a lot of markets. Pop, rock, disco . . . do you need a glossy approach?

David: I don't think so. If there's a song, and everyone likes it, they want to hear it. Remember that song, "Convoy"? I had never heard of the guy . . .

Will: Before or since.

David: Yeah. It wasn't any image thing. You had no idea what the guy looked like, and there was no real merchandising campaign. Radio just played it cause they thought it was a wacky song.

Will: But it was laden with gimmicks. I don't see you as using gimmicks, except as tools.

David: I don't mean we'd do songs like that. It's just that there are cases of people being successful without massive ad campaigns.

Will: I'm really intrigued by your lyrics. Do you see yourself as speaking for anyone but yourself?

David: When I first started writing, I hoped there would be others that shared my point of view and I assumed that meant they would also get excited about the songs, but I didn't count on it. I don't know what else those people like. It's a difficult position to be in. I feel at any moment I could write a song that no one could relate to.

Will: The thing that sets your lyrics apart for me is the personality that emerges. Maybe I've created it, but each song though complete in itself, allow a larger view to emerge out of their interrelations — a real personality expressing itself. I'm tired of lyrics that are clever in their words or at "sticking their tongue out," always geared for effects, rather than expressing, maybe a certain vision. I wonder if you ever regret having exposed yourself to a certain extent?

David: What do you mean . . . at UCLA?

Will: No, I mean the public in general, and certain things that are being said in the lyrics.

David: You mean, do I feel that people think of me as being a person with mental problems?

Will: No, no . . . more like coming from the heart . . . no, not that. . . .

Steve: Showing yourself as being too vulnerable . . . .

David: At first it bothered me a bit, because I thought I could have fun like the next person, but a lot of times when people would talk to me, they'd assume ahead of time that I had some odd quirks . . . or something (laughs) . . .

Chris: Just a few idiosyncrasies (laughter).

David: It's not so bad now. Now it's nice if I can turn off a few people, if they don't like it or feel that I'm odd. That I've distanced myself by exposing myself, that's OK, because I like to be alone a lot.

Will: Do you enjoy writing more than performing?

David: They're real different . . . if I work hard and get a song in shape I'll get real happy and treat myself to a dinner, I'll be in a good mood for a couple of days.

Will: Do you have enough new songs for another album?

David: No . I thought I could work on the road — I make notes and things, but not a whole bunch of songs. I'll have to take some time off.

Steve: Do you feel you have the "rock n' roll spirit"?

David: I think that's been gone for years . . . 15, 20 years . . .

Chris: Most of the bands that say they have it are faking it, going through the choreography that says, "this is rock n' roll."

David: It used to be innocent, the real old stuff like Little Richard . . . there weren't rock writers or trade papers, it was just, "have a wild time and make hep music." We have some of that spirit — we don't have a real preconceived idea of what we're doing, or what our music is, or who it's for . . .

Will: A lot of people label you an "art band" and dismiss you because of it. How does that strike you?

David: I find that one pretty distasteful, because I always thought of "art bands" as Yes and Genesis — based on classical music — the "serious" rock bands.

Will: I think most people see "art bands" as dabblers, or someone who has no real conviction to music other than a nifty project to work on.

David: I don't mind messing around, but I get really excited when we're playing, and that is my conviction. When I try to do something, I do it in our way, and I try to put my whole self in it.

Will: Do you see your album covers as pieces of art?

David: In the sense that all album covers are art, and billboards are art.

Will: Both covers seem to convey the Talking Heads essence: Simple facts put in a jarring way.

Chris: Originally, we wanted to have the map of the US on the cover, but the record company said we had to have an image of ourselves on it, so David got the idea for the polaroid mosaic thing.

David: When I did that, I still didn't want our faces on the front, but it came out real good so I said, "yeah, I like it, we'll put it on the front." I'm interested in the technical side of printing and the commercial art business, and I incorporated some of that into the covers. I had to work with the printers to get the day-glo on the first cover. On the first cover, I wanted those day-glo colors — because I walked by by a supermarket and noticed all the printing was day-glo. I looked at the Tide boxes and thought, "those are really great colors," and on detergent boxes! They wouldn't use an expensive process on those things. So I thought it would be great to use those colors, but the printer said, "man, we can't use those kinds of things, we can use bright colors, but that process is impossible." I was convinced it wasn't, so I started calling printers around the country. I phoned Nashville or someplace, and they said, "Oh. . . you want day-glo . . . that's a pretty Polish idea, we've done that before on all those polka records." (laughter)

Will: Do you see yourselves counter to the notion of a stage image, instead, with a "what I wear on the street, is what I wear on the stage" attitude?

David: We've always hoped that's the attitude we would have. I've always tried to wear normal clothes, but at first I went overboard — I wanted to look too normal. So I looked around NY and saw that everyone was wearing doubleknit pants and polyester clothes, and I thought I would get that . . .

Chris: Leisure suits . . . .

David: Yeah, and shoes like that — loafers like people wear. "The greatest number of people around here wear this, so I'll wear this and I'll have no 'image' ." But it didn't work out that way, because those kind of clothes are very hard to take care of. (Laughs)

Chris: When you put them in the dryer, they shrink up like Tiny Tears' clothes, we had to go for cotton. Also, those synthetics are really bad for b.o. (laughs).

Will: Are simplicity and economy important concepts to you . . . not just in music and lyrics, but on the whole?

David: Yeah, if something can be stated efficiently and simply, it can be a beautiful thing. It's a real cliche, but . . .

Chris: It's a cliche in the design world. Everybody's ideal is something that is totally simple, but cohesive and states the essence of whatever . . .

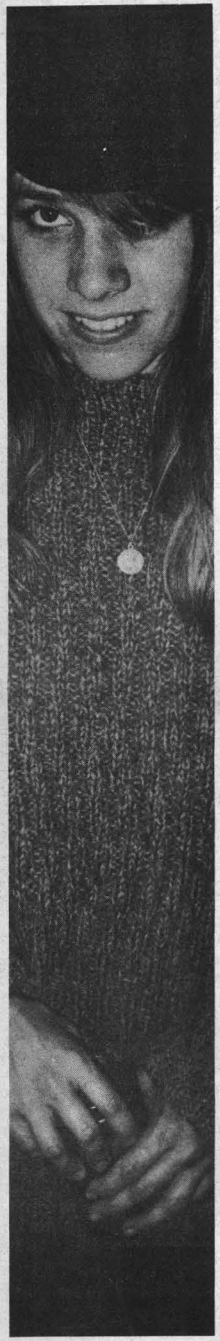
Will: Some got it and some don't.

Steve: In the future, if you become really successful and we're still basically "underground", will you let us have another interview?

David: If you're still printing.

Chris: Of course, we're more concerned with quality than quantity. ◉

THANK YOU FOR A GREAT 1978!
Zed Records



CHARLOTTE – Lead guitar

Eyes: green, ring size: 5, favorite color: white, hair: blonde, sex: female, IQ: 165, favorite fantasy: to be gang raped by 7 Misterogers clones while wearing my Kam Nelson mask and my first communion veil, attending my senior prom that I never got to go to.

ELISSA BELLO – Drums

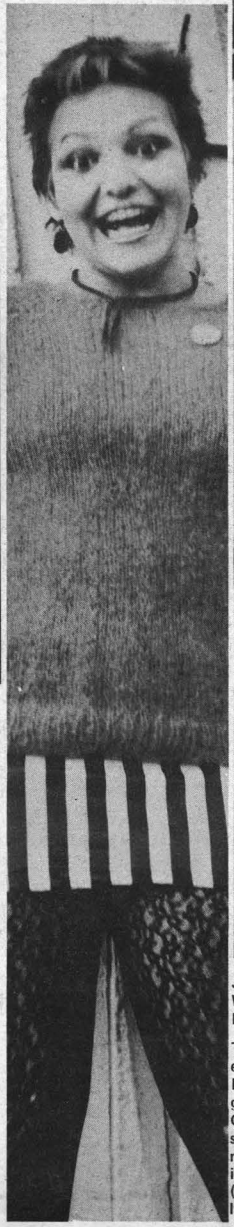
Ba fungu! Porko Faccia!
Va pisine, vada via!
Brutto beastia, stamingia butonna !!! Idiota, imbeccila, il suo bastardo! Coolo faccia, che brutto, polpette . . .
Ho mal di testa, ma, va bene, va bene.
You see, a longa time ago, I hadda to heave my homo town, scusi . . . my homa town of Buffalo, New Yorko to makea the big time in Hollywooda.
I meet this Signorina Margo Go, and a she tell me of bigga plan to have punkino musica. Sound real neato. Hey, parla lei Italiano??? Stupido Americano.
I wassa to be the drummer, becosa I likea to bang, dig? Ba fungolo.
Io mi chiamo Elissa Bello, or to be called Leasa Carr, si? I play chitarra too, and I likea to sing, I also makea the good sauce.
Hey what's a your trouble! You gotta sauce on my snare! My favorite drummers are Nickolo Beatini, and Madogga. And that is all you gonna hear from me, si?

BELINDA CARLISLE – Vocals

I was kicked out of a strict Southern Baptist home when I was 18 and came to Hollywood with hopes of being able to get involved with the music scene in some way.
After about a year, I met up with Margot, who mentioned that she wanted to start a band. She asked me if I would like to join, of course I didn't refuse – the Go-Go's was my dream come true.
I really enjoy being involved in the band -- I admit that I'm a bitch at practice, but I'm very serious about wanting people to think of the Go-Go's as a band that is musically good, not just a 'girl' band.
LUVS: huge sweatshirts, rabbit feet, Hollywood cemetary, Rosaries, penguins, Marquis de Sade, gin rummy, "Ever Fallen In Love" by the Buzzcocks, & margaritas.

MARGOT (alias, POPSICLE HEAD) – Bass

Having won the title of "Miss Potted Plant of West Los Angeles," I decided to move to Hollywood to be discovered.
Tired of sitting in Schwabs' day-in, day-out, I wandered into the Masque one boring evening.
The experience gave birth to the idea of joining forces with four other Hollywood nonhopefuls, to seek fame & fortune and kill boredom by forming the Go-Go's.



JANE MARIE-GENEVIEVE WIEDLIN · (a/k/a JANE DRANO) -- Rhythm guitar

Twenty years old, ex-Catholic, ex-cowgirl, ex-fashion designer. First picked up an electric guitar in May, when the Go-Go's were formed. I don't consider myself a musician as much as a song writer. Favorite song writer: Pete Shelley (Buzzcocks). Loves: Rockabilly, Beer, and Boys.

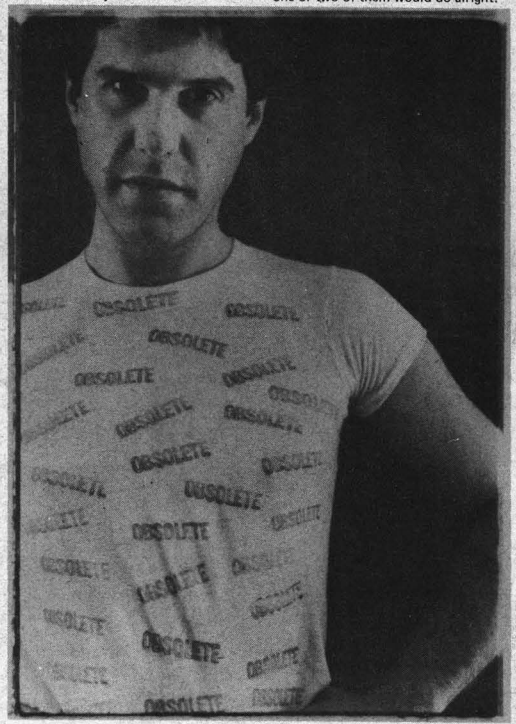
GO-GO'S

photo: Melania

HOWARD/WERTH

+HOWARD WERTH
=Interviewed by Jane Gaskill

=let's start with adolescence
+'oh it was a trying time' it was quite a good time actually, tho I didn't like school very much, I found it a bit pointless.
=Did you find anyone to skip school with?
+Occasionally, the teaching methods really bored me a lot, tho I guess I'm quite easily bored, unless something is up front in my face and puttin' on a whole show for me, y'know. It has to be a whole show – it can't be a one-level discussion. (getting up for cognac)
+just a tiny drop for me
=So obviously school didn't give you any music, BBC didn't give you any music– where did it come from?
+Radio Luxembourg did give me some
=Weren't they a pirate?
+No. Shows were sent out from London and broadcast in Luxembourg.
=Where were you then?
+In East London, a place called Wanstead 'which was a wonderful little town–my, I can picture it now!'
=What was the focal point among kids?
+The earliest point was pre-Mod. I can remember Teds when I was a little kid, gangs going 'round with bicycle chains, it seemed to center from the East End. Later the Mod thing came from there and a few small areas in London with this new feeling. These were mostly street kids, people from Mile End – The Mile End Boys were a scooter gang, and there was the Dagenham Boys who were from the Ford-built projects near the auto plant in Essex – it's like a whole Ford town. In fact a lot were coming from new towns, the ones built for the overflow of population in the 60s. Debden and Eastham also.
=New towns not too much different from L.A., perhaps, as far as soul-lessness.
+Yeah, to get 'new and better' housing, people who had been raised for generations in the center of London had to move out of town. But then the kids had a whole new set of visions because of it. The Mod thing's first beginnings, actually, were in 1958, as a sort of crossover from the "Italian Style" visually, the clothes. It was mainly around the East End. The Mods first were into a Trad phase and then Blue-Beat.
=How 'bout skiffle?
+Skiffle was earlier, about the time rock was first being played in Britain. Lonnie Donegan was the big star then; he also comes from Wanstead. In fact he used to live 'round the corner from my school and I used to get him up early in the morning to sign autographs and things. That's when I used to get up early in the morning.
=What was happening to you musically then?
+Well, visuals and sound were always my interest. I was listening to a lot of American R&B people, which you could only hear on Radio Luxembourg. My older brother was a big influence at that point, he used to buy a lot of old jukebox records from a few specialty import shops – a lot of obscure American singles, maybe got them from an American army base or something.
=Any sides you recall?
+I remember the first single my brother brought home was 'Young Blood' by the Coasters in 1956, about.
=That was a good song
+I remember seeing Screamin' Jay Hawkins, when I was a tiny kid, on TV, a snatch of 'I Put a Spell on You.'
=What about after primary school?
+I went to Walthamstow Arts, which is also in the East End. Ian Dury was there at the time, though I only vaguely remember him then. A lot of things opened up for me then, visually with the equipment and all. A really good time. Then I formed a band with a sax player called the Lloyd Alexander Blues Band – his middle name was Lloyd – mine was Alexander. That went three years, from a Ray Charles-James Brown-Fats Domino-with-smokestack-lightning-big city blues sound to a Tamla-Motown thing. It was all part-time.
=Where were you working then?
+My first job was designing covers at Pye Records. The first job I had there was to make up some gold discs that were to be presented to the Kinks. They were really cheap and nasty, y'know, a thin-thin coat of gold on one side and sort of brass showing thru on the other. Gold Letraset and stuff. They cost about 30 bob each in those days. Then I went to work for IPC Press and put out a magazine -- a three-colour newspaper actually that was a sort of 'Swinging London' publication, fashion and music, called "Intro." That was sort of the beginning of the psychedelic era. Where I was working was around the corner from St. Martin's Arts Lab and the Electric Garden in Covent Garden. I was still playing in that band then, and I was interested in what was going on, but I wasn't sort of suddenly wearing flowered trousers or anything (laughs).
=Good to hear, Howard!
+But everybody was! You should have seen the amount of flowered trousers about! But it was interestin'. There was the UFO club in Tottenham Court Road. I had an idea in the back of my head then and I finally started a group that became AUDIENCE. It was funky, and a bit bossa-nova briefly, as well, but it developed away from that . . .
=It sounded as if AUDIENCE came together rather quickly . . .
+Well, we began work on the album six weeks after we formed, with almost no equipment. But we were in the studio recording an album for Polydor.
=Were record companies more receptive then to new ideas and sounds?
+It seemed a policy then to get as many new things as possible because there were a lot of new things happening and they had the money to do it. And hopefully one or two of them would do alright.



photos: Kerry Colona

=The mud on the wall theory?
+Right
=Well, we pretty much know the story of AUDIENCE, it went to pretty good success in Europe and released albums here as well. After that you were invited to rehearse with the Doors, tho they were about to split anyway. What seeds did you take from your first project into the second?
+umm . . . I think I carried a lot of mistakes into my next project! (laughs) . . . it took me two times round to discover the original problems. I like to record, I like to write, I like to perform, but there is another side to it and I need other people to do that, 'cause I am just not interested. But it doesn't mean that I'm to be ripped-off or taken advantage of by anybody out there' – I know an asshole when I see one.
=If the Moonbeams got a lot of your mistakes, what new ideas did they get?
+I don't know, I think it lasted as long as it should have. A one-off project really.
=Was your relationship with your music changing?
+Yeah, I started to record another album after King Brilliant (editors note: king = British slang for "fucking")with Gus Dudgeon and a few musicians .... (snore) sorry about that!
=What then?
+King Brilliant took a long time but everyone was really happy with it. But then nothing happened. 'Oh, we're very proud of it . . . now let's go on to something else' and didn't try to sell it. Same thing with Rocket, here. I didn't have hold of the management side; I was virtually being managed by the record company – it was a very silly arrangement, really, but I went along with it. Very stupid, actually.
=It must have been a strange time for you – what were your observations then?
+Everything everybody was putting out seemed just a culmination of everything that had gone before. At the beginning of that album of mine, after King Brilliant, I was still into that big production number, but it just ended for me. That was at Rockfield Studios in Wales.
=Ah, Dave Edmunds. Was he involved?
+Yeah, he was around, but no, he wasn't involved. He was playing pingpong a lot – that was his only involvement.
=Influence through pingpong?
+Yeah, he was puttin' the pingpong on us. I began to have really strong mixed feelings about it – I was doing really slick, Little Feat type productions. **Mango Man,** which I recorded then, which you wouldn't recognize from the B-side version but I knew that music and those lyrics were coming. I heard the music I was doing as very slick and pleasing, but missing a whole new set of ingredients which was a new music for the new lyric direction.
=Reflecting more the visual environment?
+Yeah, they were lyrical versions of pictures I would have drawn otherwise. I always had a visual side to my lyrics, but now instead of describing changing events it was a changing picture. It's what Dave Brown would call early Art Damage.
=Define that.
+Well, it's someone locked onto the Art place, a constant visual. Actually, after that I got together with a friend in London, Laurence Daniels to design props and lights in that new art damage direction, an abstract set of images onstage. At this point I split from the record company, and I came over here. I don't know why I came here, I just flew over after a couple of days thought, just to check it out.
+and here I am two years later.
=What's your observation of what you've seen here, Punk and otherwise?
+Since I've been here, the Screamers and the Weirdos started, its been growing and getting healthier, although a lot of bitching seems to be part of the process, more than elsewhere, I think.
=You might revise that when you go to New York
+I suppose it makes creative tension somewhere along the line
=Where would you like to open your tour in LA?
+Park View Studios, Jerome's place, it's just the right size.
=Perhaps we can entice the Dangerhouse artists to do something with you as well– though a show of your own would be quite nice. I understand there will be more party-concerts there – one on 17 Dec. in fact. And we'll listen for your Dangerhouse single OBSOLETE
+Yeah, but you've got to request it. Our huge PR department is on the dole presently.

MONTE CAZAZZA

From Oakland to England, from obscurity to being "very widely unknown", Monte Cazazza has a past. One of our finest investigative reporters lays it bare...

HALLOWEEN 1978

Next record due for release from Industrial Records is from Monte Cazazza, a reculsive Oakland artist whose performances have vilated the sensibilities of indignant art critics, the entire acid damaged Bay Area avant garde and jaded art claques from Menlo Park to Venice (Italy). He's been described as a "brilliant monster," "art gangster," and "a real sick guy," but one thing is unanimous - his personal appearances really rile people up.

His detractors just don't seem to get the point. Genet says it best: "To escape the horror, bury yourself in it." Like other artists who are obsessed with violent images, Cazazza's early life was riddled with hideous events and accidents, including witnessing a necrophiliac in action. Rather than choke down those nightmares, he spat them back out at the world.

Cazazza's reputation was spawned at Oakland College of Arts and Crafts when for his first sculpture assignment he created a cement "waterfall" down the main stairway of the building, making it permanently impassable and got the boot on the second day of school.

His formal education completed, he passed quickly through a mutilated rubber doll period then disappeared among dark rumors of hospitals and jails. He resurfaced with a blatantly commercial attempt to woo the whims of the wealthy with tasteful pornographic collages of orchids sprouting penises at a San Francisco exhibit. He was contacted by an aging countess as a possible benefactress and lunched at her famous Oakland mansion while visions of dollar signs danced drunkenly around the plates. The Contessa died two weeks later.

Shortly thereafter in 1972 he achieved infamy when he was invited to attend an arts conference weekend-in-the-woods to share transcendental conversations on perspective and grant-writing while nest-

ling naint-spattered jeans in pine needles and toasting hand-dyed marshmallows for "S'Mores" in an ultimate artsy outdoorsy atmosphere. Cazazza arrived with an armed bodyguard and sprinkled arsenic into all the food. At lunch he dropped bricks with the word "Dada" painted on them on artistic feet. At dinner he burned a partially decomposed, maggot-infested cat at the table. His bodyguard blocked the exit, and several participants fell ill due to the stench. Photos and stories of this event were published as far away as Holland.

Genessis Porridge and Cosey Fanni Tutti of Throbbing Gristle read of Cazazza in Vile Magazine in 1974 when he was a classic Valentine's Day cover boy holding a dripping, bloody heart that looked torn out of his chest. The Gristle's and Cazazza's mutual fascination with pornography and fascism prompted the limeys to pay a call to California to view in person the 15' x 15' silver screw-together swastika Cazazza constructed which can be rapidly dismantled in case of police raids or guerrila JDL attacks.

Since their visit was at the height of the Gary Gilmore furor, they all photographed each other in blindfolds as though they were in front of a firing squad, complete with a real loaded gun pointed at their hearts to get better reactions. Postcards made of the photos were mailed immediately after Gilmore's execution to the warden of the Utah penitentiary and several newspapers. Over 6,000 T shirts with the same photo were sold in England, and a picture of one was on the front page of the Hong Kong Daily News. Their mock photo was mistakenly considered the official execution photo according to Porridge.

"His reputation is so nasty, he rarely leaves his house..."

T shirt sales financed Cazazza's 1977 trip to England where he was let loose in Industrial Records' studios with an engineer, a chainsaw, the innards of a piano which was played with hammers and violin bows, and other musical instruments. Ten songs were recorded with titles like P.S. (PLASTIC SURGERY), BUSTED KNEECAPS, F.F.A. (FIST FUCKERS OF AMERICA), HATE, TO MOM ON MOTHER'S DAY. A Cazazza single will be released in March.

Also soon for release from the Throbbing Gristle umbrella corporation is a movie in which Cazazza and a 14 year-old boy are electrocuted. Monte also appeared in Kerry Colonna's DECCA-DANCE movie in a suit he made out of rubber tubing and razor blades.

Cazazza edited a fanzine NITROUS OXIDE in 1971 (far preceding Sniffin' Glue). He co-edits WIDOWS AND ORPHAS, a color xerox picture magazine. He also gives slide shows and illustrated lectures on Siamese Twins that he researched in medical libraries.

But still his reputation is so nasty that he rarely leaves his house, although he did go out on Halloween dressed as Kearney, the trash bag murderer. He wore a cheap plastic mask and carried a green garbage bag filled with animal livers and hearts (like Hermann Nitsch) and a bloody mannequin head used by medical students for practice in giving mouth-to-mouth respiration. Definitely the life of the party.

Cazazza's pet money-making project for the future is futher exploration of "murder junkies" via a double bill of the stories of Edmund Kemper (a cannabilistic necrophiliac) and Dean Coryl, the Texas "candy man" whose brutal sex murders peaked at a chronic one-a-day habit until he had killed 27 teenage boys (before authorities stopped counting).

For artists who think their work is daring, Cazazza's is a double-dare. Those avant garde artists who use sex and violence as a chic intellectual playground for "art theory" are the first to head for the exits when confronted by Cazazza's work. His scientific expose of voyeuristic urges for sex and violence is no-holds-barred. And it is all done with a comic edge that amplifies the sounds of skeletons being yanked from the most repressed closets.

Cazazza never gives personal interviews. He bought a hot Ansa-phone and keeps it hooked up 24 hours a day. When he returned my call, I asked him if he wanted to make any statements for Slash. "NO, NO, NO," he said, "I don't need to talk, I don't need to make quotes. You see, I'm already VERY WIDELY UNKNOWN."

--J B

RECENT CAZAZZA PRODUCTS

Staged Events

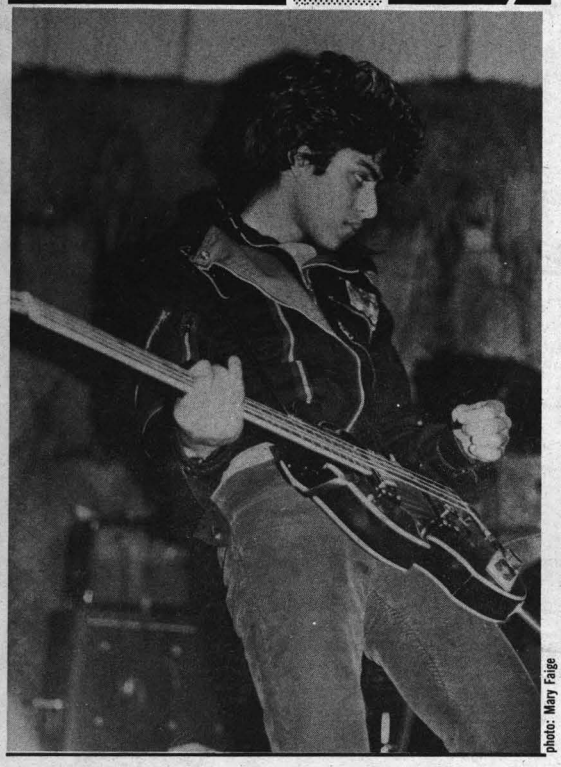


photo: Mary Faige

TALKING HEADS
DIRTY ANGELS
UCLA Campus, Nov. 19

I chronicle the following events not with an easy stomach but with a jaded sick fear, one that comes with expecting some thing to happen — then being smacked in the face with it. Afterwards, you think about it for awhile, shudder or do what you do, and eventually forget it. It's recalled later with rather nervous amusement in hushed conversations. It's not all that bad — you'll live — but questions are raised.

Outdoor affairs never did sit well with me, unless it's something really suited to the surroundings. Talking Heads are not the type of group to be performing to stadiums in the first place, the necessary delicate edge is certainly dissipated with space. Give the outdoor "concerts" back to the hardcore Allman Bros. fanatics.

I suppose Talking Heads are one of the prime new bands for public acceptance. Hope so; they're certainly one of my favorites. Live performance reveals them as impeccable musicians, tasteful but definitely mean; pop with an edge. Already they're a hit with the student set and others as well —

The ones with raised arms shooting imaginary guns into the air during "Psycho Killer" (rapidly turning into a "boogie — get down" number) loved them. The blond, barefooted bronzed surfers, disco dancing, grooved on them. Charlie, resident of 421 at the Canterbury, thought it was a great "concert." Tim Leary was there, has been a fan for awhile; he like them and was making his fatherly presence known. Those dancing in the mud, imported from Woodstock for the occasion, loved them. Approaching-30-year olds with little Jasons and Rachels and preRaphaelite-haired wives thought they were great. All the young punks, would-be punks and closet punks — an interesting melting pot of people I've never really seen at any other event — either liked or disliked them. Girls into abstract analysis liked them. Mechanics and scientists, boys who watch TV all day and night liked them.

Talking Heads are one of those bands that everyone should like. But boogie cretins? Disco dicks? Drug casualties? Love-ins? And the Dirty Angels, that abominable opening group? (They opened for Arthur Lee and Love at the Whisky later in the week.)

The potential is mindboggling, I inevitably think of an American Beatles. Is that so absurd? Maybe they're too "far out" (David Byrne's quietly insane outlook, his curdling wolf-screams) but when the MOR radio machine eventually gets behind them it will be all over.

And then those unavoidable questions: Is this some kind of ominous sign, an omen? Are we witnessing the beginning of another era? Are we slowly slipping into a pit that's already dug? IS IT REALLY STARTING ALL OVER?? The conclusions must be evaded forever.

Lively

THE DEATH REVUE
Orpheum Theater, 8816½ Sunset Blvd.

This is the same theater where The Germs made their world debut way back when, and though nothing could ever top that, I wasn't prepared for this embarrasing display of fifth grade skits.

We pushed and shoved our way to find a seat among the throng of 18 suckers who shelled out $5 each. A cast of six quasi-looking punks walked onto the stage speaking pig latin. The show is loosely held together concerning the activities of a death gang, but that's just an excuse to present the "talents" of each member in a series of sketches. One kid thinks he's the Artful Dodger complete with top hat and cockney accent. Another must have been discovered in that great Hollywood tradition — while sipping sodas at the counter of Arthur J's. Two of the guys somehow end up juggling, don't ask why. Then there's this dramatic disco dance to Bowie's Beauty and the Beast — what gall.

The skit called Happy Endings, about how in the future you will get to choose the way in which you die, was the best. And all through the play are running gags about sex and corpses, sex and blood, sex and violence, but they all seemed real innocent and stupid.

In the end one of the girls dies while another pours glitter over her head; how appropriate. That should be the show's epitaph. Let's don't do the Time Warp again.

Brad Dunning

THE LAST WOMAN
A film by Marco Ferreri

Too much sex and too much violence. Those are the things that will get a film an "X" rating from the MPAA Rating Board. However, if films continue in the same direction as Marco Fererri's "THE LAST WOMAN," the MPAA will have to concoct a new category: "DOUBLE X." And what after that? Just think, someday we may get to see movies rated "X TO THE FIFTIETH POWER"! Imagine how HOT and BLOODY they will be!!

"THE LAST WOMAN" (presently at the Picfair, French with English subtitles) is the unpoetic story of Gerard (played by Gerard Depardieu) and how he had to sacrifice the only thing he had going in life: fucking. Well, let's be fair. He did have a few other things in the works: he was fat, sloppy, creepy, and generally a pig. But he didn't have to give those things up. Just the fucking.

Gerard is a prototype. A modern-day media-blitzed man who has no future and acknowledges no past. He lives only for NOW. He can't find justification for much more than eating, fucking, sleeping or jacking-off. He eats with his hands from a skillet or a can and walks around the house all day nude, playing with himself. Halfway through the film a question began to plague my ming: "Why do I like this guy so much?" The answer is because for once we have a character that is not ashamed and neurotic about being selfish and indulgent. Also because Ferreri's leading man is such a brilliant departure from all those breathtakingly handsome, socially perfect Romeos most French flix shove in your face. A real breath of fresh air. Gerard lives with his one year old son in an apartment building which greatly resembles the one in "A CLOCKWORK ORANGE," and very well may be. One day Gerard lucks out and an unbelievably beautiful woman (played by Ornelle Muti) moves in with them. She loves them both dearly and rapidly falls into this domestic, devoted housewife kind of a thing. Very unbecoming for such an unbelievably beautiful woman.

What Ferreri creates is a starkly realistic typical modern-day FAMILY. Three people slammed together between the tomblike walls of a giant condominium, all selfishly fulfilling very primal needs. Baby needs attention, mommie needs to be domestic, daddy needs to fuck a lot. (Guess who gets the best deal.) Like many family situations, it does get unpleasant. It becomes an abrasive, irritating environment, the dynamics of which are powered by the game "who can hurt who the most?" Whenever they get bored they fuck or eat or argue or stab each other with sharp instruments. Nothing fatal, just little drippy wounds which Gerard forces the unbelievably beautiful woman to lick clean. Needless to say, it's not your basic Barbra Streisand—Ryan O'Neal type relationship, but it is a little easier to relate to.

The L.A. Times called the film the "ultimate feminist film." Despite this and the title, the film has nothing to do with women. It's about a man who is stuck in an all or nothing mind trap and chooses to take nothing. The climax is a sex and violence combo that you'll just have to write home and tell Mom about.

Penelope

BAGS, MIDDLE CLASS, EXTREME
Club 88

Not that the evening was a "wet blanket" — but insufficient advertising, resulting in a small turnout, plus one perplexed band, one frantic band and one tenacious (and partially shitfaced) band, left this somber turd in a state of suspended animation.

With zero hour came the Extreme and their synthesizer-laced songs. Each number met with little more than cordial applause. These poor guys are sincerely trying to pull something off. What that something is, though, thoroughly eludes me. (I'm not too sure they know either.)

Next ... the Middle Class, after more than two months absence, made it clear that their obscurity certainly didn't fritter away their aggressiveness or their velocity. Still hurling out those rapid-fire songs that hit you like a sputtering burp gun, they managed to upend and trample a previously complacent crowd. 'Insurgence' and 'You Belong' really tore a few new assholes amongst the "masses!" Their energy is a much needed and missing entity in the vortex of this scene. (Loose lips say they're headed for the studio soon. Keep your ears open.)

The Bags, even on their most deplorable night, can still manage to walk away smelling like a rose. (How do they do that?) This night wasn't all that bad, actually it was fair, pretty, okay, not bad and most of the crowd sort of "grooved out." Except Alice "they call it puppy-love" Bag. She expressed her discontent by introducing a new dance titled "The Map." Ask her to show it to you sometime. (Bring your own sharp object.)

The music had a tinge of alcohol on its hot breath, but that didn't dull the edge of "Violence Girl" and "Cities." "Survive" (A side of their long awaited single) really knocks my socks off. Terry's drumming had to have been the best I've heard in a coons age. He hardly gets the credit he deserves, matter-of-fact none of the group get the credit they deserve. They've come a long way since their incognito bag drag and hopefully with the release of their single (on Dangerhouse) some rightful notability will fall on them. "We WILL Bury You!!" Fucking great!!!

Matt

ROCKABILLY REBELS
at the Whisky

Ray Campi circa 1956; Rockabilly innovator/purist rambles down rockin' road paved by Bill Haley and Elvis. Rockabilly's popularity short-lived and overshadowed by major label hype of Brian Hyland types – categorical term not included in Webster's – color him obscure.

Rollin' Rock Records rejuvenation circa '72; honky tonk veteran Campi graduates from monthly Palomino gigs to Hollywood gin mills, UK tour-and-back having left distinct, indelible impressions.

With a series of career pitfalls behind him, it finally seemed as though Campi, and his band, the Rockabilly Rebels, had made a major breakthrough signing onto the Radar roster, with an album in the can and a promotional 35-date tour opening for Dr. Feelgood in the UK – till Ray contacted hepatitis.

His daily fix, a health-taxing, workaholic dosage of maintaining his school teacher straight role by day and relentlessly catering to the Rockabilly jones that has governed the better part of his 44 year existence. Consequently the UK tour was cancelled, devotions' dream lay in limbo as Campi convalesced and the band kept their chops up playing a few dates up north, in Newport Beach, and Madame Wong's, with roadie Mike standing in. Of the numerous Campi shows witnessed, this last Whisky gig was particularly significant as a testament to his commendable stamina and perserverence. Not to be shrouded by the tragic legacy that previously shattered Rockabilly exponents, Campi recovered prior to the physician's prescribed date, making his stage return with a vengeance.

The Wednesday one-night stand proved a sizeable draw, with Rockabilly rhythms rumbling like a '59 Caddy sans muffler. Stagefront, gyrating bodies summoned sock-hop imagery. The Rebels always drive themselves to a feverish pitch, spontaneously feeding off the audience energy, and engulfing the room – the only band I've ever seen that consistently has even the bartenders and waitresses boppin' out.

Campi's funky old bass-fiddle had been renovated with blinking lights and a Confederate flag painted onto a white background for some Dixie flash as he leaned and swayed while ascending the instrument, pummeling in slap-bass style with an aggression that would turn the average hand to hamburger. The Rebels presence was immediate with Colin Winski's well-timed, rubber-legged hip-swivelling, the music executed with uncompromising urgency "as if the guitar's resonators were gallon of bucket lead." (–Johnny Cash.) Requests were shouted from the crowd and it was apparent that the band of Campi proteges shared the exuberance of playing with the high priest of the Rockabilly sacrament once again.

photo: Melanie

Diplomatically well paced, featured musical segments were passed between Winski, Campi, and Jumpin' Jerry Sikorski while Kevin Fennel and drummer Steve Clark held down the foundation. But Campi's maniacally driven countenance, after his frustrating period of inactivity, was an intensely prominent element of this raw and raucous performance. Securely locked in his passion, Rockabilly's familiar grim reaper has been evaded as Ray Campi keeps rockin', and rockin', and rockin'....

–Be Boppin' Bob Taylor

BLACK RANDY AND THE METRO SQUAD AT PARK VIEW HALL

Angel or devil? Saint or insane? Ask anyone in the audience, and you'll get no two answers alike. Most people can't even decide if he's black or not. A wildly pogoing gang of Mexican jumping beans who'd never even heard of Massa Randy before agreed he was "one crazy mutha" but were unsure about the color of his skin.

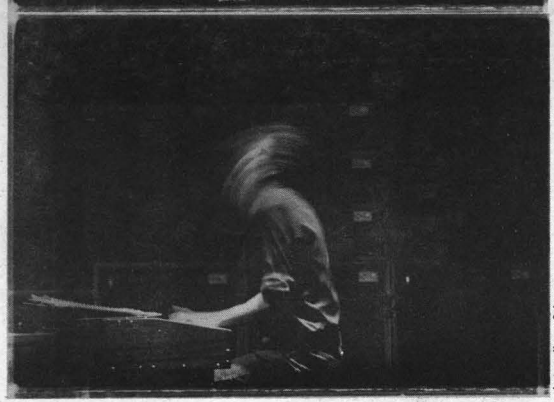
The set began with the Metro Squad doing an electronic skiffle while Randy and his M.C., Dick Brain, did a dialogue, each taking the role of one of the Dil brothers having a conversation. "Hey Chip!" "Yeah, Tony?" "Didja bring along the Chairman Mao's Little Red Book?"

Then the Godfather took the stage accompanied by a large inflatable dog with two dorsal holes (for #1 and #2) and a knotted up thing that might have been a sex organ. Randy loved it a lot and kissed it and tangoed with it between all his swinging new songs (I SLEPT IN AN ARCADE is great) as well as his hit recordings IDI AMIN, I WANNA BE A NARK, I'M BLACK AND I'M PROUD. The band sounded like they had been actually **practicing** at those rasta/prayer/liquor/family feud/kool-aid parties they call "rehearsals." And speaking of kool-aid, the Blackettes arrived as "police women" with a sparkletts jug of "Guyana Colada" which they passed out in paper cups to the audience while BR sang his new Jim Jones tune, so new in fact, he read the lyrics from a spiral notebook.

Another highlight of the set was a soul-wrenching rendition of KOWALSKI'S DEAD, referring to the UXA member who OD'd, and done to the tune of "Freddie's Dead", another iced junkie from "Superfly." When Randy does those high-pitched "ooo-oo-oo-oo, that's what I said, Ko-wal-ski's dead," he sounds like he was brought up singing in the church choir and pushing dope in Watts all his life.

The Metro Squad still consists of a beatnik (Bob Dead) and some guys in sleazy pimp hats (P. Garrett, J. Ramirez) on guitar and bass; the debonair record exec David Brown playing brilliant fractured melodies on electric organ: that evil-eyed cross between Al Pacino? Bruce Lee? on drums (Joe Nanini); and dashing Mr. Brain to warm up the audience and pump them into a frenzy for the entrance of the hardest working man and kinkiest mind on the chitlin circuit – BLACK RANDY.

Urethra Franklin



photos: Kerry Colonna

HALLOWEEN AT THE HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL

with The Germs, The MauMaus, The GoGos, & the Satin Tones

Arriving, I was told of a party in Mau Mau Rick Wilder's private suite upstairs. I followed my peroxide guide to the next floor and walked into inebriated territory. Some tropical spy thriller went thru tired motions on the color TV amidst overturned French Provincial chairs. I had to step over the chocolate layer cake that lay upside down on the carpet to have a few words with X's Exene. Meanwhile, Rick, in a bloody surgeon's apron, attempted to herd over-anxious partygoers back down to the mezzanine level where the GoGos were about ready to go on. Kickboy, caught trying to liberate a bottle of Mumm's, was reprimanded by Rick and good-naturedly ground his heels into the icing beneath him. We were finally coerced into the stairwell, then the foyer where Dusted hippies mingled uneasily with punks. The GoGos took the stage. Well, I can say that I've heard them, but I still can't say that I've seen them, the band being totally obscured by a wall fo sweaty, haphazardly costumed bodies. They sound strong and professional, but I've absolutely no idea what their songs are about.

Back in the foyer, a bare-chested longhair, feeling somehow alienated, grabbed the nearest available person to use as a punching bag. Exene was in the wrong place at the wrong time and got a right cross to the jaw. Alice Bag stepped into the breach. It was at about this time that the gentleman started kicking. In seconds, there was a mangled, unidentifiable mess on the floor. John Doe, Rod MauMau, and Terry Bag heaved the he-man into a just arriving elevator occupied by a sedate middle-aged couple and their daughter. The doors closed and a problem was solved.

Up next were the MauMaus, surprising everyone with their jarringly profane intensity. With the exception of the Germs, X and possibly the Flesh Eaters one of the angriest bands in recent memory. Security man Tiny, sporting a fashionable goatee, waded into the melee more than once before the roaring set came to a stop.

Some shuffled out through the debris only to be harangued over the mike by Kickboy for leaving before the Germs could perform. By the sheer eloquence of his audience-baiting, at least a hundred people chose to remain through the cold war of numbed nerves between those who wanted the Germs to play (diehard fans, me included) and those who didn't (namely one obnoxiously drunk Englishman who looked like Keith Moon's big brother and had supposedly helped Rick Wilder rent the facilities).

The Germs finally launched their barrage with "Circle One." Immediately someone jumped onstage on top of Darby, bashing him in the face. The festivities came to a halt again while the assailant was dealt with. Tiny made terse announcements of the LAPD waiting outside in the lobby for rowdy punk rockers. The P.A. plug was pulled and more fights erupted, but the Germs played on, Darby singing into a beer can, then leaping atop a speaker to beat his reflection senseless (in one of the floor-to-ceiling mirrors). His cries of "burn the place down" could barely be heard over the din. In anti-climax, Tiny retook the stage, instructing everyone that the party was definitely over this time. Several disgruntled Arabs (the hotel owners) looked on with barely repressed hatred as the convention of vandals filed out.

A well-known bass player for a very popular LA-based group (who didn't play this night) forcefully applied one of his bootheels to a mirror in the back of the room, then swiftly made his exit. The evening ended at the Masque, Black Randy explaining how he had thrown a TV set out a 9th floor window as well as set fire to several hotel rooms.

Half-Cocked

MONITORS & NON

Skid Row

We parked across from the police department and walked across the street This is SKID ROW with those guys that thustle and bustle real slow. We're standing in this alley with a bunch of nuts: the young intelligent kind and the old drunk kind and I say, "Is this it? Where's the NEW NIGHTCLUB?" No one bothers to even look at me like I'm stupid, they're as confused as I am. We all climb upstairs, like a bunch of jerks, and end up in these empty rooms that look like shit and I think, "Great! This doghouse makes the MASQUE look like HEAVEN!" We intelligent drunk young-people watch MONITOR, also WORLD IMITATION in another medium, set up. Several bums, sorry! winos, sorry alcoholics have wandered up with us and stand around with their hands in their pockets (it's real cold but I've seen bums do this a lot on TV even when it's warm) MONITOR starts and finishes real quick. I like these guys a lot so I'd like 'em if they couldn't do nothing, but they can! Real POP real listenable, real Bernard Herman. (Micheal, one of them, was wearing a I WAS AT JONESTOWN button, before I forget.) Anyway so we stood around some more, giggles and snickers at the big nothing, cause it was getting real funny. So the punchline is NON comes on and kills everyone in the place with most horrible noise you ever heard . . . and they just sit there and pick lint. GOD, it was funny, everyone holding their ears and screaming and laughing and the winos ran off to not think it over. At the end there were 12 of us idiots left. My ears rang all night and all day and all . . .

–Panter

PHILIP GLASS ENSEMBLE

The Roxy, 11/15/78

Cal Arts College, 11/17/78

Philip Glass writes and plays eternal music. A round-trip ticket of gutsy emotion and lithe beauty. Music of a thousand lost birds, prurient tolling bells, of the shadow line. Music that crushes tradition while embracing it. It's every melody you've ever heard, everything that's happened in your life. Music that giggles and sobs, is reverent but discontented.

The Roxy is not the ideal situation for something so cerebral. In fact, it bordered on sinful. Cocktails somehow don't mix and neither does the atmosphere they promote there. I found it extremely difficult to maintain a level of concentration sitting cafeteria-style and trying to ignore clinking glasses, barroom chatter and ". . .another gin and tonic." The performances were marred by technical problems, too, stemming from volume.

The technician, Kurt Munckasi, is an integral part of the proceedings. By adjusting levels he brings certain instruments to the foreground, allowing each player to "solo." When it's right, it is as near perfect as live music can be. Every instrument is treated as an equal part of the presentation. At the Roxy, Iris Hiskey's voice was mixed so loud that at times it was unbearably shrill; at the same time the other instruments were too soft and the delicate balance was disturbed.

At Cal Arts College, in an unannounced afternoon performance, everything was right. So right that nothing else in the entire world mattered for that painfully brief 90 minutes. This is escapist music and, if you let it, it will hook you every time. Much of it has a drifting quality of 18th century chamber music or some ethnic musics (Balinese or African, for instance). A droning, persistent pulse is the backbone; from that springs insanely heroic tightrope energy. A lifetime of words is heard. None are spoken.

Naturally, music so precise requires a unique proficiency – no slouching – and utmost concentration. This **unit** is one of the tightest ever. Each member is plainly a virtuoso: the unparalleled reed and flute work of Richard Peck, Dickie Landry and Jon Gibson, Iris Hiskey's virtually flawless angelic soprano and the essential breath – the keyboards – manipulated by Michael Reisman and the composer, Philip Glass. An excellent example of a functioning, vibrant **unit**.

For these performances the ensemble chose three pieces from Glass' 1976 collaboration with playwright Robert Wilson, "Einstein On the Beach," an epic multimedia opera that originally lasted close to four hours. "Lucinda's Dance" (for minimalist dancer Lucinda Childs, a principal character in the production) was striking in its interwoven simple melodies and a combination of "The Train" and "The Spaceship" astounding in its shifting atonal/melodic blend. The latter had certain moments that literally sent shivers up my spine, moments of intense beauty that wiped any previous thought from the brain.

I'm still breathless.

Highlights from "Einstein . . ." are expected to be released shortly in a 4-disc set. Meanwhile, if you're interested in this kind of music (which initially can be repetitive and grating) some recommended composers and works are Steve Reich's "Music for 18 Musicians," Terry Riley's "In C," either of the Fripp and Eno communions and any of Glass' recordings.

Lively

7" seven Diameter vinyl

THE USERS
(Kicks in Style/D.O.A.)
Warped records import

It's amazing what can happen in the short span of a year. Here is one of the most noticeable contradictions. When it came out, "In Love With Today" was one of the strongest, all stops out, no time wasted records around. Even now there's a tremendous punch to it. However, this one is not in the same boat. The singer has a similar delivery, the band has energy, but the performances somehow come off tired. No wrath is exercised here. No intriguing musical ideas to overcome the general feeling of lethargy. The singer gets one good line in on the B side and that's it. An OK record, but unnecessary.

Chris D.

ELVIS COSTELLO
(Tiny Steps/Radio, Radio)
Radar records

It's finally happened: an Elvis Costello record I like. I actually listen to it. Emotion wrung out like a wet washrag instead of the usual limp posturing. "Tiny Steps" is so good I haven't listened to the "Radio, Radio" side more than once.

Chris D.

PENETRATION
(Life's a Gamble/VIP's)
Virgin records import

It's as if the "Firing Squad" single never existed. 60's instincts prevail with killer pyrotechnics that date somewhere in the next decade. Pauline comes off the nod long enough to apply a very gentle, though thoroughly damaging sledgehammer to anyone listening. Her voice is equipped with a calm, clear-eyed kind of wisdom that's usually found in someone released from a mental institution (who should never have been inside in the first place.)

Chris D.

PUBLIC IMAGE LTD.
(Public Image/The Cowboy Song)
Virgin records import

Johnny Lydon barks hello in a questioning repetition, experimenting in this sonic tunnel of a recording studio to see how well he can be heard. In answer, a swirling blast of guitar/synthesizer tangles and untangles around his white-sheet-of-noise voice. You've heard all the other stories about punk rock disintegration, media hype, sibling rivalry, and inflated ego from the likes of Malcolm M. and Steve J. Whether they told the truth, half-truth or it was bald-faced, lying, self-serving masturbation, you finally get to hear the other side of ths coin. Even though the mix is thicker than mud, Johnny's voice, half-buried compared to its previous Sex Pistols brimstone majesty, the screaming indictment here is as vitriolic a testament as yet set down on any pulp, celluloid or vinyl. "Cowboy Song" is a big disappointment, a dissonant in-joke throwaway that is even more of a letdown once the impact of the other side really hits you.

Chris D.

PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY
(Puppet Life/Small Eight)
Small Wonder Records

Intellectual hard rockers with punk damage. Sometimes they sound like a cross between Emerson, Lake, Palmer and the Sex Pistols, if you can imagine such a thing, with the ELP sympathies winning out more often than not.

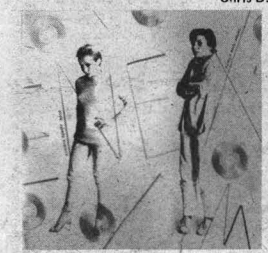
Half-Cocked

ACTION TIME VISION

ALTERNATIVE TV
(Action Time Vision/Another Coke)
Deptford Fun City records import

For those of you who didn't want to risk the bad pressing of ATV's album (a problem which has since supposedly been rectified, at least in the UK) here's a 45 with the best cut, "Action Time Vision." "Another Coke" is new, a live bit of blues confession in which Mark Perry confronts the audience with his asexual nerosis (spawned by homo-masturbatory threats in school, problems with his girl, etc.) that has made him "Tired of livin' . . ." Not too charming until you've heard it several times. it picks up an electrical shock along the way which, despite all its self-indulgence, is mysteriously hypnotic.

Chris D.



KLEENEX
(Hedi's Head/Beri-Beri/Nice/Ain't You)
BAHP Record Dist. (Zurich)

Insect invaders from a very ordered Germanic universe that've learned to sing like blonde, blue-eyed girls. It could be Abba if they had the metallic guts to pull off a phenomenon like this. But it isn't. It's four women with a sense of humor, a lot of repetitious pop hooks up their sleeves, and the intuition of how to rock.

Half-Cocked

CHINA STREET
(Rock Against Racism/Dubbage)
EMI records import

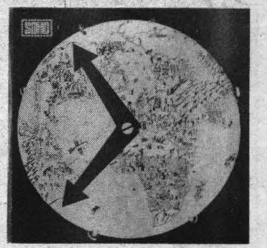
Simpering unimaginative ditty (and dub version) masquerading as social action. Some vague idea exists here equating sentimentality and collective self-pity with justice for all. What China Street has done, either intentionally or unwittingly, is become a voice-box for a stilted constipated entity known as Rock against Racism. I'm not calling to task their good intentions (as the saying goes "the road to hell is paved with . . ."). They've obviously enlightened numbers of people. RAR just too flagrantly recalls the self-righteous radicals of the 60s who are now striking their matches on the behinds of us niggers everywhere. All in all, worse than Tom Robinson. Listen to the Clash who know how to do it right.

Half-Cocked

CHELSEA
(Urban Kids/No Flowers)
Step Forward records import

Chelsea's ideas are derivative, but what isn't. It's all in the treatment. What you get served up here is a double-fisted thrashing replete with enough expanded hooks to also satisfy today's well-groomed popular music enthusiasts. Thundering fables about dissolution in the big city tumble out of Gene October's mouth colored with a baroque authority that make these the stuff of which tear-jerkers are made. This is the kind of record you play before you go to bed so none of the day's frustrations will result in nightmares, the kind of record you play when you get up in the morning so you'll decide to go to work instead of putting that revolver to your head. A complete record, really catchy with no dilution of fury or power.

Chris D.



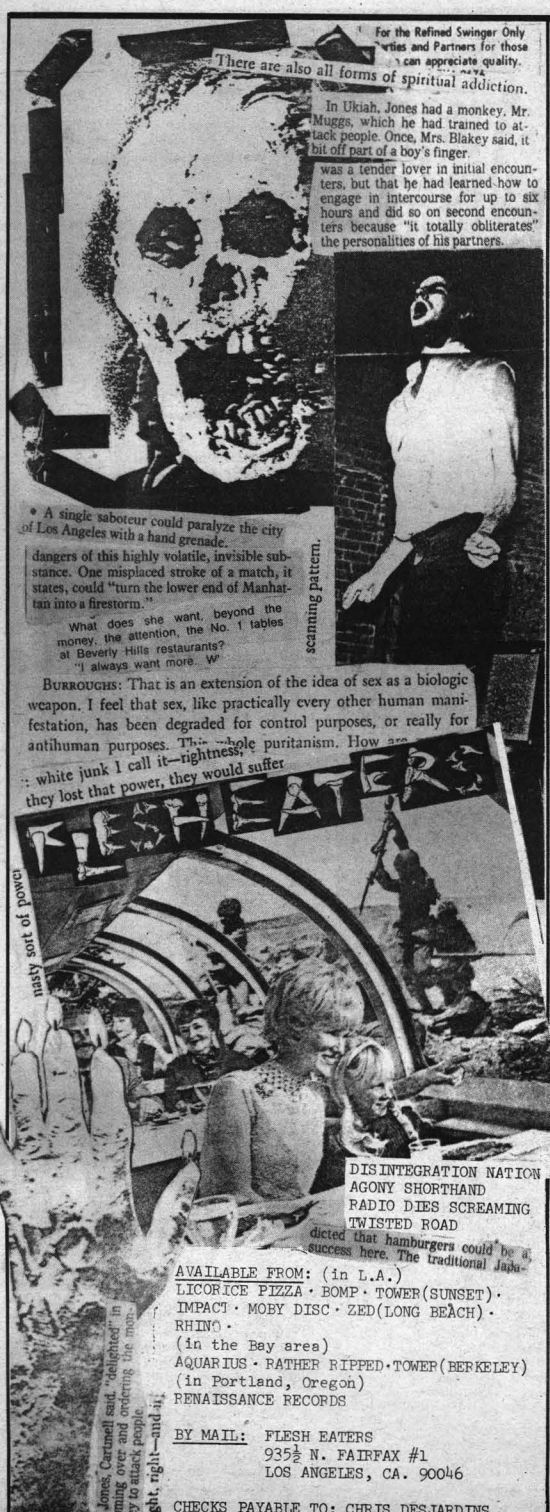
THE NIPS
(All the Time in the World/Private Eye)
Soho records import

Formerly the Nipple Erectors. Two funny chaotic pieces of rock 'n roll, greatly influenced by 50's rockabilly rhythms. "Time in the World" sound like its from one of the first Stones albums and reminds you that there was **something** truly wonderful about that group at a certain point in time. There's a nice, timeless feel to these – like the best of Gene Vincent/Eddie Cochran, although not as strong a set of personalities seem to be guiding their overall sound and image.

Chris D.

THEORETICAL GIRLS
(You Got Me/U S Millie)
Theoretical Records.

"You got me" is a sheet metal press gradually overheating, overloading, finally going out of control with additional little bits of tense horror movie organ to emphasize the dramatic points. Much more



impressive for this type of music than a lot of the NO N.Y. album. "U.S. Millie" has a few snatches of French Revolutionary piano. It also has snatches of a nausea producing vocal that sounds like the Quick imitating John Cale giving me grave doubts about Theoretical Girls.

Half-Cocked

DNA
(You & You/Little Ants)
Medical records

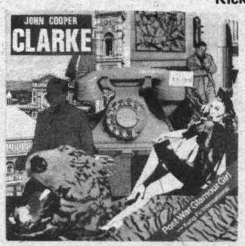
Medical records? Do I detect some profound significance here? I guess it is a cleansing experience, this naked chronicle, this glimpse of the final curtain, this after-the-disaster-has-struck-limbo, this hint at last music. DNA are messengers. Visionaries. Should I lay it on thicker? They're simply the best, worst, gloomiest, kookiest, the most appropriate yet. Given certain situations they're downright unwholesome, along the lines of John Cage or something equally abrasive. Genuinely testy, try "You & You" on Mom & Dad sometime. Unadventurous souls steer clear.

Lively

CABARET VOLTAIRE
(Talkover/Here she comes now/ Do the Mussolini/The set up)
Rough Trade import

Are we not punks? We are tape loops. I know there's more to the new electronic wave of groups and individuals like Throbbing Gristle, the Normal and now Cabaret Voltaire (how far can you go with this rage for uncommercial names?) than studio gimmicks and layers of repetitive noises arranged in patterns to somewhat resemble normal music but it's getting fuckin' hard to tell who's inspired and who's just testing his new tape circuits. In the States, only Suicide so far has gone the way of the machines, and they have somehow retained all the sex and violence of the man made stuff, using the new language to transcribe very old emotions. In France, Metal Urbain has mechanized itself for social purposes, and the anger and sarcasm are still very human. In England, they appear to aim for a serious conversion from flesh and bones to circuitry and wirings. The only tune on this E.P. that, given the chance, can really get you, is the Velvets' "Here she comes now" off "White Light, White Heat" album. Of course they thoroughly reconstruct it but there's something in the perverse elusiveness of the original that translates beautifully in their humanoid approach. The 3 other "songs" are dry and oppressive, and their undeniable appeal say more about the looming dead end of ALL popular music than all the vociferous tunes of the punks with their negative romanticism. If I'm wrong, we then must be watching the birth of the new Pink Floyd, and that thought is even less appealing.

Kick



JOHN COOPER CLARKE
(Post war glamour girl/Kung Fu International)
CBS import

Another single from that loony unknown quantity John Cooper Clarke, the man with the gift for the dadaist early Dylan lyrics and the slightly mad visions. "Post war glamour girl" is quite pleasant and catchy and also totally 100 per cent nonsense, the other side is a live short spoken "poem." it's all quite offbeat and puzzling and eccentric and sure to bring any reviewer, this one included, at a total loss for words. Which is bound to delight the Clarke character and keep him raving for a while longer. Which is the way it should be. I think I like him.

Kick

BETTE BRIGHT AND THE ILLUMINATIONS
(My Boyfriend's Back/Hold On, I'm Coming)
Radar import

Ex chanteuse with Deaf School Bette goes solo. Fine. 'Cept she goes solo in the wrong direction. Doing two cover versions of old standards for her initial first steps isn't my idea of a step forward. Especially when they are done very respectfully close to the originals. Rather unnecessary. Comes in the usual tasty Radar packaging.

Kick

STRANGLERS
(Walk on By/Old Codger/Tank)
United Artists import

I keep hoping that these guys' geniune hostility is one day going to translate itself into a mother of a vicious tune that every resentful reject in the world could hum while attending to this particular devious ways of surviving, some kind of formidable scum anthem to make all the nice people shudder every time they turn on the radio, maybe a new "peaches" with a more challenging target than the first one . . . and instead there they go fishing out a Burt Bacharach ditty and giving it the "Light my fire" treatment. Shit, if this is challenging, it must be so at the tenth degree. Doesn't even have the open contempt for the original of Sid's "My way" or the absurd feeling of the Cuban Heels' "Downtown." The song is pretty much left intact (when it would be such great fun desecrating — it being such a symbol of vacuous cocktail lounge consciousness) 'cept for the obligatory keyboards filling (just like custard inside a stale pastry — a nice surprize for a second and nausea within a minute). Other side has some funky number with a harp which must be the result of the Stranglers running into an old pal from their pub days and deciding to give the geezer a nice push into fame and "Tank", a rather predictable piece off the album. There's also a twist on the cover, with Cornwell's being replaced by a lady of the black persuasion. The length of this rather negative review shows that I still care more about the Stranglers than I'm aware of. Maybe it is just one of those obligatory releases demanded by record companies who haven't understood that it's better to lay low for a while than keeping new product on the shelves at any cost.

Kick (bound now to get the Jon Savage treatment any day from Jean Jacques)

THIS IS JUST A

BIG YOUTH

SPACE FILLER.

VINYLLY
by BO CLIFFORD

BIG NAMES DEPT.:
X RAY SPEX goes melodic? You bet! "Germ Free Adolescents" (EMI) shows a very different side of the Spexters and people are raving about Poly actually (gasp!) "singing." Personally I'm not sure whether it's good or bad, but I do miss their special brand of thrash-bang. While we're in that area of the alphabet, XTC return to form with "Are you Receiving ME" (Virgin). Both sides of this superior 45 are not on their new lp. Value for money and one of their best, too. The RAMONES "Don't Come Close" with their new single. Seriously, it sounds much better on a single than buried on their album, "Road to Ruin" (Sire). Commercial potential abounds and it's about time they scored chart-wise. After too long an absence the ADVERTS return with "Television's Over" (RCA). Their good song sense is still intact and their new drummer really pushes the rest of the band. They've all really improved their musical abilities and it looks like the layoff did them good. The DICKIES (well, they're a big name in LA anyway) have their third UK single released and again it includes a song from their US 10" (you'll have to guess which one). The A-side "Give it Back" (w, A&M) is a familiar song for locals, but it sure ain't their best. Not as funny or interesting; okay guys 3 out of 6 is none too good. You can do better. And those DEVO's have all kind of new singles: 1. the terrific "Come Back Jonee" (grey, Virgin), 2. 'Satisfaction" from the lp (US Warner Bros.) and 3. the jaunty versions of "Satisfaction" and "Jocko Homo" from NBC's Saturday Night Live (an enterprising bootleg on Poot Records). Number 3 is great, with a lot of energy, making the spuds sound almost animated. Number 2 does feature an edited "Uncontrollable Urge" on the bee and number 1 you should have already, so read on...

CHECKIN THE TAGS DEPT.:
Radar Records (a truly innovative label) shows their respect for roots by releasing the 13th FLOOR ELEVATORS' "You're Gonna Miss Me" (g) and a new single by RED CRAYOLA called "Wives in Orbit" (r). More International Artists stuff is expected and should be encouraged. On a simpler (saner) note the YACHTS "Look Back in Love" (bl) is a fine modern pop song done with snap and punch. Good stuff.

Rough Trade has been busy with its own label and several co-label releases notably with Radar and Small Wonder. SPIZZOIL with "6000 Crazy" (RT) have come up with a unique approach; how many other guitar/kazoo duos are there? It's good to see somebody try something new even though the results are not too encouraging. "The Murder of Liddle Towers" by ANGELIC UPSTARTS (RT/Small Wonder) is an intense finger-pointer that's even more direct than the Dave Goodman single (which has the same subject matter). An important record hampered by a plodding performance. STIFF LITTLE FINGERS return with "78 RPM"; not quite up to their first one, but better than most. Excitement, commitment, believability. Qualities lacking in too many records. "Hysterie Connective" by METAL URBAIN (RT/Radar) is more French yammering set to noise with a beat. Lots o' people like it, but it's not nearly as tough sounding as their last.

Stiff Records prevents . . .er, presents WAZMO NARIZ. A reissue of "Tele-tele-telephone" with a new tune on the flip. For those with off-center tastes or metabolism problems. He is a snappy dresser, though. WRECKLESS ERIC is back. "Take the Cash" is a bit of advice from a man who knows. More good humour from the world's most relaxed Stiff. Inspiration to many (?), MICKEY JUPP makes his Stiff single debut with "Old Rock n Roller." Obviously feeling the song, MJ turns in a Class A performance of British R&B, makin' ya feel great for three minutes, but not really makin' a deposit in the ol' memory bank.

BUBBLING:
Quickly now, "Moderne Man" by M(DoltØ) has been getting a lot of hype, but it still sounds like the Cars on an off night. CHINA STREET after doing it all themselves the first time are now signed to EMI. "Rock Against Racism" is good reggae with commitment stamped in the grooves. No further description needed. SQUEEZE try again with "Goodbye Girl" (A&M). However, the dread machines win out and it's goodbye Squeeze. The fancy, op-art sleeve is the gimmick used by the DAZZLERS on their debut. "Phonies" (Charisma) sounds kinda like—wait for it—the Pleasers doing Buzzcocks songs. There, I've said it, now you figure it out. On a brighter note, two later period Damned members re-surface in EDGE. "Macho Man" (Albion) has a surprisingly understated style that grows stronger with repeated plays. A new band, GYRO, have made a real odd one called "Central Detention Centre" (Rabid). The story of a night in the slammer is told in a rushed manner makes you really feel the kid's bewilderment. A nice little record. Dependable CHELSEA give us "Urban Kids" (Step Forward), their third single. Straight ahead punkisms with Gene October his usual determined self. The AUTOGRAPHS (ex-Stukas) remember glitter in "While I'm Still Young" (RAK). It sounds just like Chinnichap stuff and, yes, it's a lot of fun.

CREME:
Finally the faves of the month. GANG OF FOUR have come out of nowhere with "Damaged Goods" (Fast). A tense, grinding kind of sound that has everything clanging at all the right moments. Real edgy and razor sharp; threatening to explode at any time. The two tunes on the flip are also very strong. A last minute arrival by FISCHER-Z is the great "Wax Dolls" (US). A lot of influences are audible, but I tend to ignore them and just enjoy the exuberance of the band. Very fresh and alive with a nice crisp production. A most promising debut.

The MC5 (yes!) have their very first record re-released. "I Just Don't Know" (AMG) clearly outstrips anything else on this page for raw energy and manic performance. An amazing 45 that practically demands to be played.

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(Editors note: It seems like everybody & his brother wanted to review the No New York lp this month, so here's six cents worth instead of the usual 2 . . . I can't figure out why everyone wanted to say something about it, it didn't do that much for me . . . although I did like a couple of cuts . . . oh well, never mind.)

"NO NEW YORK"
CONTORTIONS/TEENAGE JESUS & THE JERKS/MARS/DNA
(Produced by ENO)
Antilles records

At $5.99 you can find a cheaper and more luxurious punishment for your ears. That's what at least half of this amounts to. The other half is pretty lovable in its frantic, nervous, nail-biting way. But it all depends on your taste. If you're already predisposed to experimental avant garde art school stuff anyhow, this may be a very smooth, slick package from the capital of word association pretension and neo-nihilistic dissonance. It even rocks occasionally which is something you **can't** say for most of said style (see Lux Interior's related comments in Cramps interview SLASH No. 12 Vol. 1). One thing that many bands like this don't realize is that electric guitars, synthesizers, etc., already have a dissonant element by their very nature. So dissonance piled on dissonance gets a little tiresome especially when the song patterns are neither planned out nor random — just some nether twilight in between. That's not true of everything. The Contortions' "Dish it Out," "Flip Your Face," Teenage Jesus' "Burning Rubber," little snatches here and there of Mars, and nearly all of DNA turn fatally contagious the third or fourth time around, ranging from James Brown initiation rites to Screamers/Eno pop. I would trade all of this, though, for a new single by the Cramps.

Chris D.

NO NEW YORK

(yawn) . . . mmm . . . what a nice day. The sun is lounging like a golden dumpling in a rich broth of blue soup. Clouds skate along the Pacific sea breeze like powder puffs of the angels. The birdies chirp "greetings" to the blonde little children as they play their carefree games in the perimeters of their lawns. In the Santa Monica Mountains, spread like sunday comics, I can see cars filled with daddies, commuting to their jobs. My neighbors new tv set is playing Dialing for Dollars. Lucky Market's wairing for the next commercial break. After a hearty breakfast, let's stroll down to the beach. Visit with the neighbors or . . . wait . . . there's this disc, black plastic disc . . . spirals inward, inward . . . round, round, round. . . what's that . . . sound, gritty sand. . . loud, killing. . . the birds . . .singing. . .the children's playing . . . sound playing round, angularities. . . bursts out of speakers, commands . . . vomit green with leaking red, colored separation. . .building, buildings turn cold . . . hot hot love, I can't leave . . . Hell, wait for night times . . . the buildings turn hot . . .bars and clubs, bars and clubs . . .sax agonies, contortions in sliding alleyways . . .trash strikes, bottles and cans . . .walls post no bills . . . padlocked closets . . . mars boys & girls . . . horn sounds, the cars race past . . . they yelling, we confront . . . be-bop be-bop . . . so, what's a little time . . . no sky above . . . machine growls, parents/machines . . . locked out, locked in . . . memories, pains . . . excape streets and electric brains . . . sizzle, shock shock shock shock . . . god, I had no idea . . .

Will L'Amato

"NO NEW YORK"

Up at 8 am, groggy and in pain, putting on No New York is a shocker — not unlike having to sit down to breakfast in the studio commissary with the pinheads, dwarfs and armless wonders from "Freaks." But after saying hello, splitting a biscuit and giving each side a good triple listen, all is copasetic.

If there were ever four groups seriously trying harder to be experimental, different, anti-music, flippantly postured, rhythmically chaotic, vocally strident, cultishly self-absorbed, or can't-play-won't-learn-let's approach the instruments differentsly — these are them. And the one man to put them all together conceptually on an album is Brian Eno. The four cuts from each group are loaded with Eno trademarks. In fact, Brian Eno is easily the Phil Spector of the 70s. Instead of the "Wall of Sound Orchestra" we have the "Wall of Tapedeck Tricks."

Easily the most commercially dynamic group on this album, the Contortions just may be Eno, split six ways, and minus the poetic subtleties. Their music is brutal, thrashing, haunted and compelling as an alien encounter. Opening side 1, "Dish it Out" and "Flip your Face" are real "turn it up" radio contenders.

The Teenage Jesus cuts are four variations on a forced attempt at sustained suspense in arrangement, chalkboard screech vocalizing and epileptic drumming. The Lydia Lunch Bunch did a more cohesive job with this particular kit on their "Orphans" single.

Mars' material seems more naturally inspired (mad birds, shrieking winds, falling rocks, etc.) than the rest, but in such close company is rather ho-hum experimentally. Yoko Ono seems to be the grandmother of Mars.

DNA has the threat, authority and musical presence one comes to expect from a fourth generation CBGB band. Their music comes off second best in impact of the four groups, and you'll swear "Not Moving" is an unhammered Devo outtake.

If you are a collector of rare musical malaise, art school damage Eno treats or psychotic, urban jungle chants, this is the album for you. Your feet will be tapping, your body will twitch, but only your brain will be dancing. And if I spent $40 a month on records like the rest of you do, No New York would be on my list.

Gorilla

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ALBUMS

"GIVE 'EM ENOUGH ROPE"
THE CLASH
Epic records

Immediately "Safe European Home" and "Guns on the Roof" strike you as being the best songs. Since they have those instantly recognizable hooks, punches, and pieces of melody that grab most people right off, even the more jaded amongst us, maybe that's why they come at the beginning of each side . . . to insure your attention for at least the first three minutes. Because initially this sounds like a very superficial album. I entertained identical thoughts about the debut Clash album, too, until I'd heard it four or five times and found myself beyond the point of no return.

It just takes a little while for you to figure out what the hell is going on. Even songs like "Julie's in the Drug Squad," which I didn't like, are creeping back up on me, insinuating their way into my subconscious until tiny bits of off-key melody here – and jangling direction changes there – have me by the throat. The feeling of being in the midst of a really nasty dogfight **isn't** there, though, as it was on the previous record.

At first glance, things are more coherent, sensible, logical. But it's the logic of someone who, just having had the shit kicked out of them for what they know to be right, sit and think things out, then jump back into the fray again, fists jabbing, fur flying, shouting, "Yeah, I **knew** I was right the first time!"

Chris D.

"SEPARATES"
999
United Artists Records import

999 write a bible of consumptive love and violent death then shred their own myths, hopes and fears to ribbons before your very eyes. Guy Days spins out guitar cliches from the Beatles to Creedence Clearwater, stands them on their heads into filthy maelstroms of sound that always climax in someone getting their feelings hurt. Nick Cash's voice goes from documentary-like detachment to irrational obsession, sneering sarcasm to an iron-hided romance in the space of a breath. The cynic locked in a perpetual death duel with the idealist, the idealist coming out on top (I think). Martin Rushent gives the band a fuller, richer sound than the last album comparable to Chris Thomas' Pistols work. While pretending to conform to rock 'n roll limits, 999 throws an acid poison in the face of accepted standards and goes them one better.

Chris D.

"TRUE ROMANCES"
THE CORTINAS
CBS Records Import

Between first and second listenings I went from abject disappointment to total elation. Now the feeling's somewhere in between. No way does that raw, irreverent feel come through on this as it did on their first two singles. "Defiant Pose" may have been a peak as far as a compromise between intensity and musical sophistication. This record has its compensations -(it'd better, I listen to it enough). At his best, Jeremy Valentine's voice has a sinuous sexual power that snakes around the occasionally laid-back music and gets across a desperate confusion about modern life in general, sex and love in particular. And when he's clear-headed, rational (though still "in love"), his words carry a bite that cuts clean thru to the bone. The band's learned to play, and, though there's a slight depletion of energy, it's to their advantage. The Cortinas are the only group I know of that can take R&B rhythms and integrate them successfully into punk. Some of these tunes ("Don't wanna get involved," "Radio Rape," "Tribe of the City," Further Education," "I'll keep my distance") cook in the most danceable sense of the word.

Half-Cocked

YES L.A.
(Alley Cats, Bags, Black Randy, Eyes, Germs, X)
Dangerhouse records

Haven't heard too much from the punk-outs at Dangerhouse lately. It would seem as if they were calmly biding their time, waiting for all of the other comers and goers to fall flat on their faces compilation-wise before releasing this, the only real testimonial to the diversity and power of L.A.'s music. And I, for one, think the title is appropriate because this scene is something to be proud of, not merely jaded by.

The album starts off with a mercilessly loud cut of "We Don't Need the English" by the Bags, one of the most underrated local bands of all time. The mix is sort of vague and bludgeony, but thanks to the intensity of the Bags' performance the message still comes across, we don't need the English, but we might find things for them to do to keep them **occupied** (like buying and listening to this record) so they won't get into trouble like the degenerates they are. Boss twangy guitar, Alice the amazon bitches the point home, and its a real strong opening cut in anybody's language.

Cut 2 is the Eyes' Disneyland (some of the cuts, besides being performed by L.A. bands, deal with geographical and/or sociological landmarks of Southern California) and it's sort of a stricture postcard, a realistic view of the memorable attractions of Disneyland (like the parking lot) which is a true reference point for so many grown-up children here in L.A. Joe Ramirez sounds more rodent-like than ever, and the overall results are so catchy that Disneyland gets buried in your subconscious real deep the way pop songs are supposed to do. The Eyes sound convincingly non-punk, like they don't take themselves too awfully seriously.

The next cut is for me the most satisfying, Too Much Junk by the Alley Cats. The Cats, as always, leave no slack in the line for the entire song, Dianne Chai on vocals sounding better than ever, Randy Stodola's jangling constant structure guitar, and John McCarthy's crisp discipline. It's too bad that a lot of larger bands can't make music as taut and powerful as these very real, humble performers do. Too fucking bad for them.

An ominously long silence follows, which is punctuated by Bob Dead's guttural guitar making a snide slide into one of the silliest songs ever performed, Down at the Laundrymat by Black Randy & his Metrosquad. Great grunge, sounds like Trouble at the Cup-vintage MSquad, at their crudest. The spontaneity, as well as the very live, atmospheric recording makes for an enriching message from the urban cultural front.

X are up next, with Los Angeles (vut else?) The band sounds hot (it never sounds otherwise with Jean D'Eau and magnificent Don Bonebrake churning away), the recording is adequate if a bit quirky (just like the 45) and the end result is you either love X or you don't, although some claim that the true spirit of X is not to be found on vinyl at all (at least not for now) but only in their live frenzies. The lyrics are sorta "not suitable for radio airplay" but believable. This cut by X stands out from the rest of the album just like X stand out – they deserve to be judged on their own terms. I like the way they blend funky sounding homebuilt electronics with very unpredictable and "different" (decidedly) vocalizing.

The final cut on the album is the Germs' immortal "No God" which evidently has been remixed from the original issue on Slash. It sure sounds great, what the hell else can you say about this performance at this point except that it's a classic, and provides some much-needed chaos to end the Dangerhouse sampler.

So that's it – Dangerhouse has seen fit to release it first in a collector's edition with silkscreening on the flip, making it a one-sided album for the time being. A very short, loud album, just the way I like 'em.

Arthur Swinger

Coming Next Issue: A special report, packed with interviews and observations direct from England. The details (via a collect phone call) are a bit sketchy, but you can expect some great stuff. Also next month, we're starting a new feature, The Readers Charts. So drop us a line and let us know what all you big spenders are listening to...

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slash

CLEAR VINYL DISC
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Too Much Junk
BAGS
We Don't Need the English
BLACK RANDY
Down at the Laundrymat
EYES
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STRIKING 'ARTY' DESIGN
X
Los Angeles
YES L.A.
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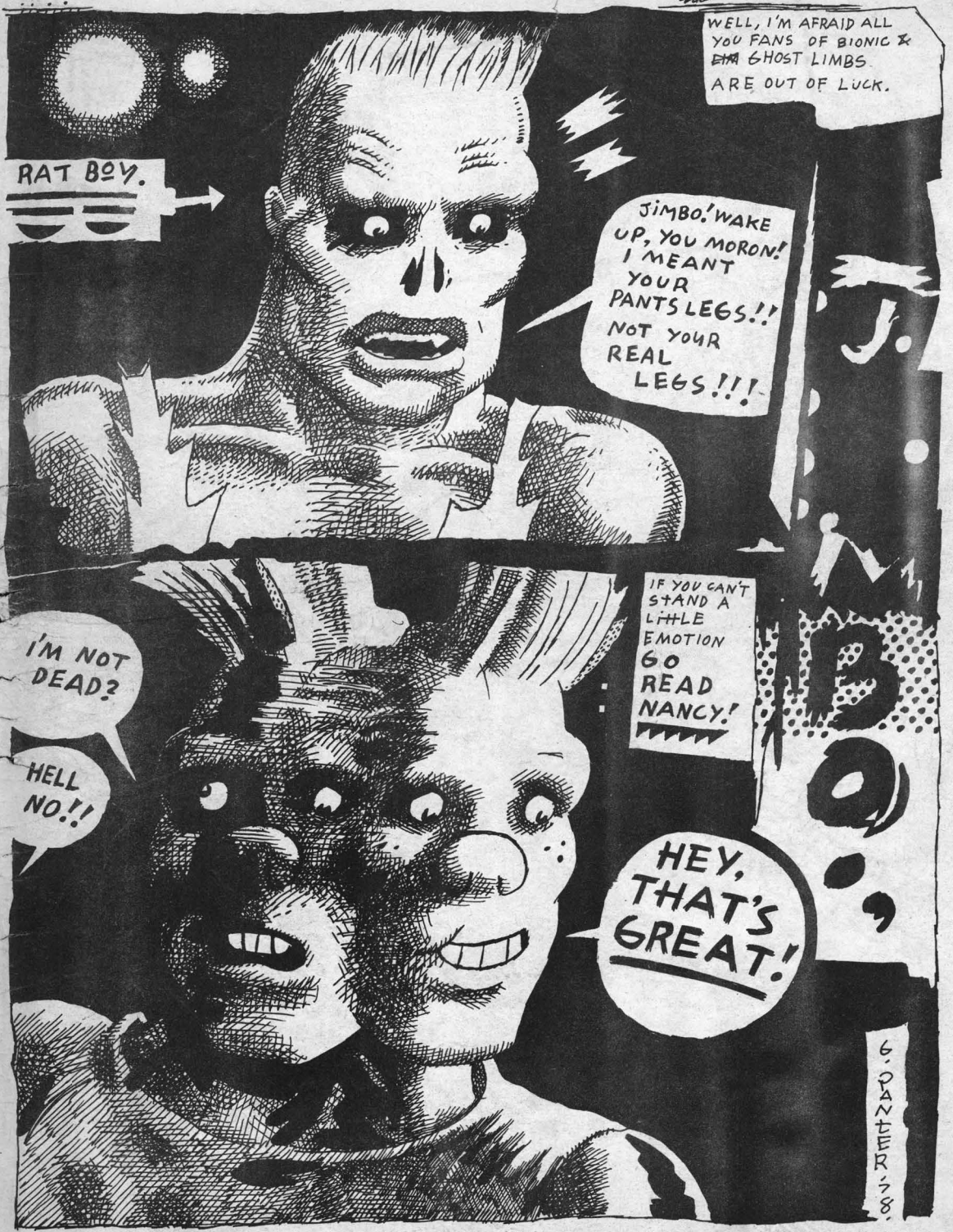
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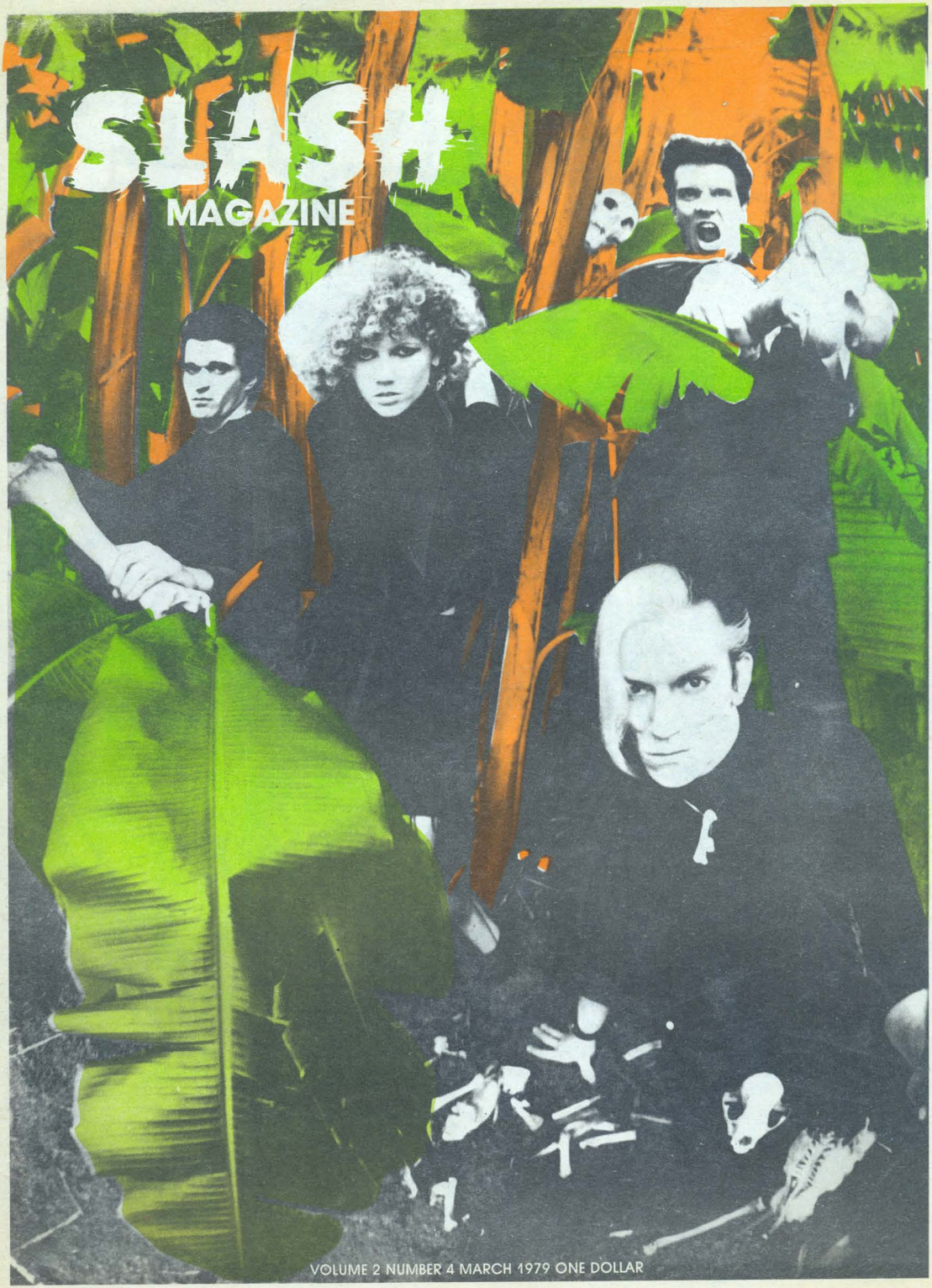

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WOT'S INSIDE? Plenty. We got a load of info on the London scene. Interviews with **CHELSEA** and **STIFF LITTLE FINGERS** and **PRAG VEC.** We got a bit on the **CLASH** here and there. For all you midnight movie goers there's a lovely piece on **JOHN WATERS.** Closer to home, we've got interviews with the **DEAD KENNEDYS** and L.A.'s own **EXTREMES.** We got **JIMBO** getting skinny while the paper gets fatter. There's always the usual stuff, **LOCAL SHIT,** a lengthy **STAGED EVENTS** section, our oft quoted **RECORD REVIEWS** and even more. Oh, we forgot to number the pages...

IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE (APRIL), YOU WILL FIND SOMETHING ABOUT METAL URBAIN AND THEIR RECENT BREAK UP, A CONVERSATION WITH PENETRATION, EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE FALL (ON STAGE, IN THE RECORDING STUDIO - WITH A CRITICAL LOOK AT THE RESULTING "LIVE AT THE WITCHES TRIAL" ALBUM- OVER A FEW PINTS IN A PUB), AN INTERVIEW WITH LEVI AND THE ROCKATS, AN AFTERNOON WITH THE POLICE IN DISNEYLAND, THE STORY BEHIND THE RAMONES' R' N R' MOVIE, A LOOK AT RHINO 39, A MEETING OF THE MINDS WITH SUBWAY SECT'S VIC GODARD, ANOTHER INTERVIEW WITH U.X.A., PLUS THE USUAL SHITLOAD OF SINGLES, ALBUMS(INCLUDING CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH'S LATEST GIANT REGGAE VINYL UPDATE), CONCERTS, REVEALING PICTURES, TYPOGRAPHICAL BOO BOOS, UNPENABLE STANDS AND VISIONARY PREDICTIONS THAT MAKE IT ALL WORTH IT TO BE ALIVE AND ABLE TO READ THIS RAG WHEN ALL THE UNINFORMED ZOMBIES ARE GOING NUMB FROM HITTING THEIR HEADS ON THEIR KITCHEN WALLS ASKING WHAT'S GOING ON TO THEIR INDIFFERENT APPLIANCES. ALSO COMING, L.A. MUSIC GENEALOGICAL CHART.

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H.O.L.A. PUNKS!

That's how some of the letters we've been receiving from, of all places, Brazil, usually start. And if you think that Brazilian new music fans must be pretty isolated and cut off from what's going on, think again. The recent trip to London a couple of us recently took and have documented all over this issue showed us that L.A. might as well be Brazilia, so unaware most of us still are of the REAL possibilities of the music and the life we all profess to believe in. We found groups, individual artists, independent record outfits, publications that not only survived in the limited sense the most enterprising amongst us angeleno future makers have had to settle for but actually could grow, develop new concepts, find room and funds to experiment, to consolidate, to fuckin' CREATE without having nightmares about the unemployment office. In other words, it's working over there, and we thought you should have a look at it. It will work here one day, the limeys will flock to have a closer look at our thriving parallel scene and we'll all have nice complex theories to lay on them as to why it took so long for so much talent to impose itself. Until then, we must express our appreciation to Prag Vec, Chelsea, Penetration, The Fall, Stiff Little Fingers, UK Subs, Mark Perry, Nick and everyone at Step Forward, Chris at Polydor, Vic Godard, Bernard Rhodes Geoff and everyone at Rough Trade, Nick Kimberley, Sue CatWoman, Lisa and Julie at Virgin, Jill and Eric at Phoenix, Ian Flooks, Teddy at the Moonlight, Graham of Wire, Judith at Radar, Chris Jelley, Kat, Mark Williams, Michele, Chiswick, Lightning, Beggars' Banquet and all the others without whom this report would have all the depth and insight of a Time magazine study. And being able to compile a list of true friends is a nice change for an outfit that most often finds itself driven to publish endless enumerations of enemies, most of them not even worthy of the publicity.

But far from us to forget that after all, our roots, our hopes and our fears are firmly based in America, 1979. So what better way to symbolize it than by having the one and only Cramps on the cover, the group most likely to capture the imagination of modern american youth if modern american youth (and record companies) can still pride themselves on possessing an imagination. And please no "what about L.A.?" routine. The Cramps are as much L.A. as they are N.Y., their inspiration is more Hollywood than Bowery and we should all know that the new music knows no frontiers, neighborhood spirit or clique warfare. Take a look at the cover and go home babbling about having seen the future. Speaking of the future, there is somewhere in these pages a list of the April issue's contents. Yet what REALLY matters to us is what's coming AFTER that, it's the potential behind the realities, the message between the lines, the scream behind the laugh and the laugh behind the lies, it's what you and us are going to find out if we don't get eaten first. ALL WE KNOW IS THAT THINGS WILL NEVER BE THE SAME, EVER.

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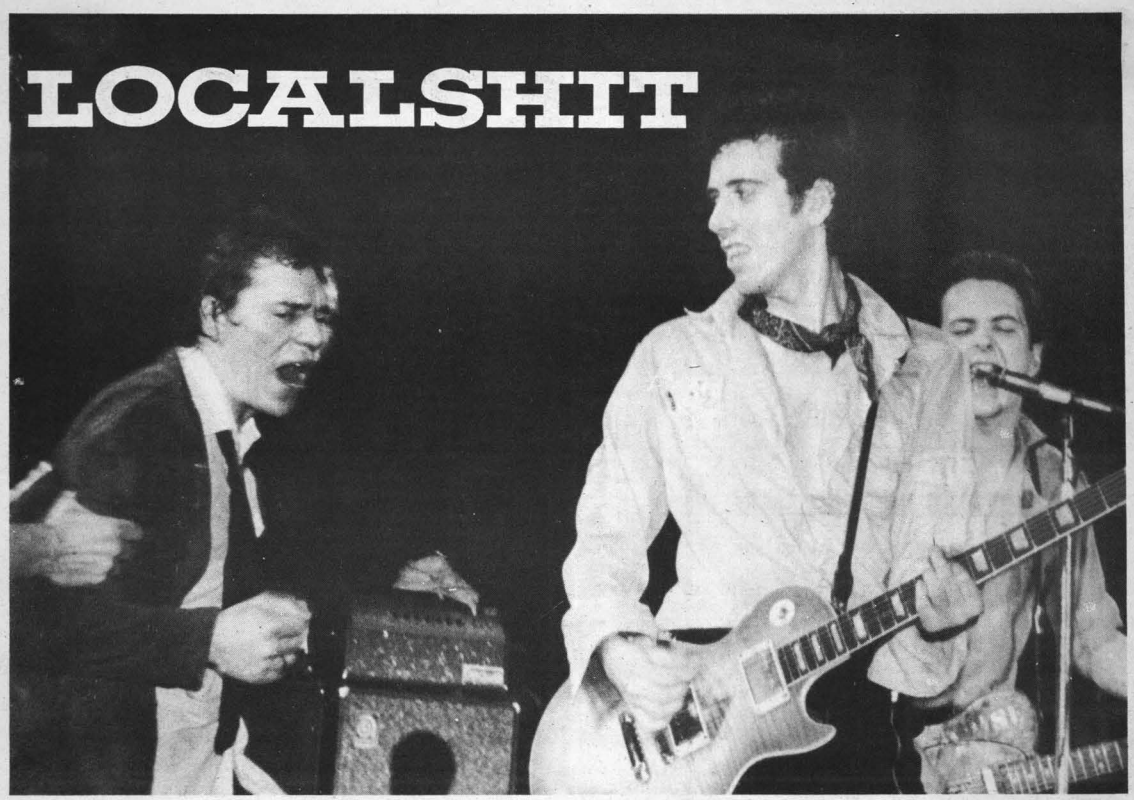
LOCALSHIT



Mick Jones smiles knowingly as formerly unsung hero Kickboy Face is pulled from the stage by rival A&R executives. For his rousing rendition of "White Riot", he got a thorough pummeling and a six album contract.

photo: Gary Pearlson

Once again the Masque closed under outside pressure, just as it seemed on the verge of widespread success. Rumors have been circulating about the imminent opening of a new wave oriented concert place in West L.A., but nothing was confirmed since. Meanwhile Brendan Mullen (whose latest Masque/J. Ruby production with Cramps, Dead Boys and many others was held exactly a year after the Elks Lodge marathon benefit) announces the imminent start of the structural work needed for the old Masque to reopen.

Once the last obstacle (something to do with parking requirements) is overcome the actual work may begin, and this is only "a matter of weeks." In the meantime there are plans for "travelling" concerts here and there under the indestructible Masque banner, so sit tight, keep an eye out for the traditional telephone pole announcements and don't watch too much tv . . . San Francisco's very own Red Rockers the Dils appeared slightly less enthusiastic about being on the same bill with the Clash after someone in charge of the Clash's dirty work reduced their guest list for the Santa Monica Civic show (around 3000 spectators) from ten admissions to five!. Considering the size of the crowd, this is one of the most ruthless insensitive displays of contempt we have ever been made aware of in music biz matters. Next night at the Masque, John Silvers was still so shaken over the whole dirty business he could hardly say anything, just shake his head in disbelief! . . . We didn't even have the heart to get on his case about the decidedly non-proletarian admission prices of the event ($7.50) and ask him how they could justify their apparent change of policy (weeks earlier the Dils had made quite a fuss about the 4 dollars charge at the Masque gig where they were headlining). This week it is the Boomtown Rats' turn to charge a lovely seven bucks fifty for their show at the Cocoanut Grove (????) but we never expected a stand on principles from that bunch. And, still . . . speaking of the Dils, one big "Up yours, pal" to Tony Kinman who in the latest Flipside proves once again to our dismay that when the revolution comes it's gonna be highly advisable to walk around with a wall permanently attached to one's back, stabbings being likely to occur in the most trusted company. If being boring and stupid is the curse of "thirty year old people," you are the lucky one that won't have to have to wait that long to fulfill both conditions, dear Tony. It sure is boring to hear you criticize everything and everyone not absolutely in line with your dogmas and wishful thinking and it sure is stupid to throw that "spokesman" bit in our direction. You're the one with spokesman and public speech fantasies, old boy; We just say what we think and feel, and some people sometimes agree. Many don't, which so far has never led us to suicidal depths. For the last time, this "spokesman" reputation is about as relevant and worth considering as the "urine-stained communists" label you were generously granted on the Rhino compilation package featuring one of your hymns. It's all media manipulation and packaging, a slick little shortcut to the comprende centers of your beloved masses. So stop whining about imaginary evils, or next time we see you we'll start sniffing you up and down to find if after all there is any truth to the album cover quote.

Fleetwood Mac versus the Rotters: the Rotters' (Nigel Nitro, Phester Swollen, Rip Chord and Johnny Condom) tasty novelty tune, "Sit on my Face, Stevie Nicks" was irrevocably banned from KROQ programs after representatives from the Fleetwood Mac conglomerate made indignant calls to the station, threatening to sue anyone vaguely responsible for playing the harmless love song on the airwaves. Something about it being insulting to someone who is a "great artist and a lady" (the boy wouldn't want her to sit there if she was no lady, now would he??). Anyway the matter seemed resolved until record stores in various parts of town were asked to pull the single out of the bins, off the shelves and strike them off their list of available product. Once again the spokesmen or lawyers in charge of the intimidation campaign mentioned swift legal action would follow if the stores did not comply with their request. All stores did save a couple of stubborn independent vinyl shacks who would rather ban all Fleetwood Mac product anyway. Morality of the tale:

Fleetwood Mac have to be THE greediest bunch of muzak hacks on the scene, having the guts to not only grab all the money they can wallow in, all the tin trophies they can stack on their desks

but now demand also politeness and respect for all quarters. Instead of relying on such conservative methods as lawyers, why don't they put the Rotters back in their place by recording a vengeful song about the insolent upstarts? It would make the charts as usual, and the Rotters would have to spend the rest of their cheesy lives telephoning record stores all over the globe and demanding immediate withdrawal.

The Extremes will be on a CBS TV movie to be shown in late spring. In the science fiction in which they appear under their own name will be two live songs from their repertoire plus another one in a different segment. Another project in which they might become involved in is a Ralph Bakshi production about the history of rock n roll. The Extremes as part of the history of rock??? Those other media junkies the Screamers are busy doing 16 track tape recordings of two new songs, adding strings to their basic sound and juggling with other complexities. Geza is somewhat involved, but "the new member of the group is a machine", says one of the secretive band members . . . The Contollers have temporarily got off the gig circuit, working on new material before playing again, although Mad Dog is not exactly keeping a low profile at other bands' concerts. . .

The Visitors have become the Monsters and are still reluctant to announce any date for their long awaited official debut. Speaking of monsters, a small group of very imposing looking girls (definitely no match for the scrawny rest of the in crowd) have spread terror and paranoia amongst the ranks in a very short period of time. They seem to go under the collective appellation of "the monsters," have been accused of slashing Germs' manager Nicole's four tires after a Masque night and indiscriminately punching innocent youngsters. Vengeance and retaliation are in the air. (This was a public service) . . . Slash's own mythical creature man about the bathroom Jimbo will soon appear in a (sit tight and don't gasp) Fiorucci window display, providing he does not stumble and crashes through the glass plate. What he will be doing there is anybody's guess, the idiot is free to go where he pleases, all we ask is that he does not come back in these pages wearing something too silly. . . Cable TV has now a regular monthly program on Channel 3 called "Modern Music," 1st show at the end of January featured Sex Pistols concert footage and local band the Brainiacs, the second show in the first days of March had performances by the Screamers, Bob Marley and Talking Heads, in other words this is NOT just a stupid tv approach the people in charge are committed and know what's good, all local bands interested in appearing should contact the director via the station . . . .

Little Cripples have in the course of a few weeks become the Cripples, Curtain, the Strict Ids and are now I.D.S. . . . the Mau Mau's have added playing live concerts to their list of fun activities which mainly consisted up to now in writing their name and their threats on every flat surface available in L.A. (including Linda Ronstadt's ass on a Sunset Strip billboard) and ingesting every substance in the book. They organized a suitably sleazy anti-Valentine's Day party at the old Masque and were magnificent. So were the Bags and Strict Ids who played that night. And they added the necessary raunch to the latest Slash benefit at the Vanguard Gallery, where they played along with the Strict Ids, X, and a last minute addition called Auto Da Fe. Indeed a very special night (we made a bit of money, and that's pretty special), thanx to the bands, to Billy, to the Vanguard and to my parole officer for not showing up.

Local Smut K K. LOOK OUT! Someone's bought some polish for the Cutest Mug in Town Crown and his name is Crazy Smut. It seems that every kitty around is altering her birth certificate to read Birthplace: Memphis so she can have some serious credentials to touch bass with this Rockat.

SPORTS COLUMN

It's New Year's Eve! The countdown has begun! Tonite is the annual Rubber Gloves Boxing Match live by the seaside in Venice, and everybody's punch drunk! For those of you who have just joined us here at ringside, here's the lowdown on the prematch entertainment, the Alley Cats, that musical muscle from Torrance. This whole checkered mass of nouveau rude, welfare debonaires, blondes, punkettes and blueheads are in the Cat's corner! Pass another glass of bubbly!

Music soothes the savage breast, and tonite this vast mob can attest to that. The Alley Cats had just laced on their version of "Under My Thumb" when a ferocious human ball of beach blubber who was preparing to squash two swaggering leather queens suddenly switched from Golden Gloves to Golden Gate and began waving his arms like palm fronds in the breeze as if he were at a love-in. He stood in front of bassist/singer Diane and began pounding his chest and pointing in me-Tarzan, you-Jane pantomime. Sorry, no Tarzan looked as out of shape as this Abominable Beachboy—and no Jane ever matched Diane's stage animus, vocals spewing out from beneath that Alley-Oop hairdo, those primeval basslines all supported by those Jung-girl limbs. And that Randy is no welterweight either, one more round of Jailhouse Rock and the whole mob would've been down for the count!

Another can of Plain Wrap beer for the announcer! I see some sparring near the center of the ring! Three members of the Blob Squad are challenging everyone. They await their quarry guzzling straight Silk 'N Satin, speaking of which here's a lovely lady approaching the arena . . . ROUND 1-+$*&†+$($/&()+@ I beg your pardon! These bruisers fight dirty! ROUND 2-Here comes a Slash editor! And it's an uppercut to the right eye! He jumps to the platform and tries to shut them out! He boots them in the head, but they keep coming! ROUND 3-Now it's John Doe of X! He tries to exist thru the scuffle and gets a right cross to the eye, a flurry to the jaw! Where are the referees? I see the glint of a blade! ROUND 4-I hear sirens! Here come the black-and-whites! The Vile Vikings are now challenging the LAPD! Gun vs. knife! Scissors cuts paper, paper covers rock! Let's rock! It's 12 o'clock! Happy New Year! 1979! Auld Lang Syne! Old Dogs Die!

V

Chris D's (of the Flesheaters) record label Upsetter Records will be releasing a compilation album featuring X, the Germs, the Flesheaters, Middle Class, and Monte Cazazza sometime in April. . . . After Joan Jett's part for Sid Vicious at her apartment near the Whisky, John Doe was the victim of a psychotic maniac who attacked him after trying to run over several party-goers in his car. With John temporarily down, the lunatic pushed Pat Delaney over a wall and began choking a female bystander. At this point his gang shouted "Not the GIRLS!" pulled the rabid dog/man into a sedan and zoomed away. This was John Doe's second bloodletting of the month (see Alley Cats review). . . A note from our cultural attache: Sam Fuller's sixties explotation movies, "The Naked Kiss" and "Shock Corridor" will show at the Nuart on March 26. These are not "Art" films. Finally a tip of the hat to Back Door Man, the opinionated ancestor to a lot of new music sheets, as Phast Phreddie and his gang had to call it quits after years of passionate fighting for real music and real life. Too much work, too little money, how long can you play the holy fool for? As the song goes, "the little girls understand," but their daddies are holding the checkbook. So long Back Door Man. Good night everyone.

PLAYLIST

("the second most influential music nominations next to the Grammy Awards." –Time Magazine)

BO CLIFFORD
1) What Do You Want Me to Do – Pointed Sticks
2) Kid with the Replaceable Head – Richard Hell
3) Love Affair – Nervus Rex
4) JJ180 demos

CHRIS D.
1) True Romances – Cortinas LP
2) Johnny Hit and Run Pauline – X (tape)
3) Manimal – Germs (tape)
4) Meathouse – Negative Trend (45)
5) Above Suspicion) Middle Class (tape)

KICKBOY
1) Haile Unlikely by the Electric Dread – Jah Wobble/ Don Letts
2) Where Were You – The Mekons
3) Prag VEC EP
4) Rebellious Jukebox – The Fall (tape)
5) The Radio Story – Alternative TV

MELANIE
1) Domino – Cramps
2) Down in the Tube Station at Midnight – the Jam
3) Yes L.A.

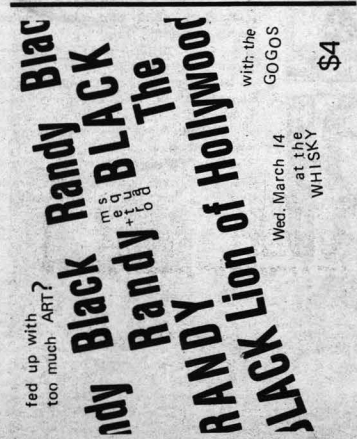
PEA
1) Crash 'n Burn – Jane Aris (tape)
2) Big in Japan – Big in Japan
3) Modern Dance – Pere Ubu
4) Public Image – LP
5) Different Story – Subway Sect

STEVE
1) Outdoor Miner – Wire
2) Talking Heads '77
3) Los Angeles – X
4) Rock n Roll Swindle – Sex Pistols

V
1) Our love Passed Out on the Couch – X (tape)
2) Strange Notes – Germs (tape)
3) Annalisa – Public Image
4) True Romances – Cortinas LP
5) Mother Popcorn – James Brown LP
6) Pony Dress – Flesheaters (tape)

WILL L'AMATO
1) Sheer Unpretentious Genius, Vol. 1-11
2) Mr. Song and Dance Face – The Monsters
3) Helter Skelter - Siouxsee and the Banshees

Note to all of you passive dorks: the promised readers' chart cannot appear until you all decide to let us know what singles (10) and what albums (10 or less) you are listening to. Deadline for April issue is March 20th.



THE LETTERS SECTION: spite, hate, insight, dogma, illiteracy, fast cars, criticism, optimism, personal problems, religion, advise and even a bit of terse language. (terse?)

Dear Kickboy:

I went to the Whisky on Nov. 11 – the WEIRDOS were were great! But on the way home, my girlfriend Lorna started crying – she's been having problems – she said that she finally realized that what is wrong with the world is that only some of the people in it have souls. . . Do you have any idea what this means? Anyway, I was sorry to see her sad . . . That, and the fact that she'd only gotten out of an asylum two days before really made me want to fuck her – she's a nice girl – she really cares about people. (It's really great to make it with a girl who's just gotten out – I used to make it a point to go out with these girls.)

Unfortunately, we couldn't go to my room right away because her little brother had come with us and I had to take him home. He's 13, and he plays in a band. All night he kept saying that "these days, people's strongest feelings are not necessarily their most profound – that is the major failing of our age." His favorite band is TELEVISION.

Later on, we got stopped on Sunset by a Beverly Hills cop – he said he knew I was drunk, but he didn't write me a ticket. (I got on his good side – I know how to make people like me.) He insisted that there was nothing personal in his stopping me, and he said that he'd let me go if I listened to a story about safety. So he told how, a week before, at this very spot on Sunset, a rich guy had crashed his Turbo-Porsche, and decapitated his girlfriend. The cop said he'd been the first to get there, and he showed me where there was still some blood on the curb. (At least he said it was blood – it didn't look like anything to me, but then, I guess I've never seen blood on a curb before anyway.) We talked about the Turbo-Porsche for awhile, and he told me that he hadn't always been a cop, and then he let me go. Well, by this time it was pretty late.

My question to you Kickboy, is, did I have a good time, or was this just another fucked Saturday night?

Red,
Red
(Talking Heads Rule)

Dear Red:

You are an idiot. You missed salvation by a fraction of an inch, 'cos the so-called cop was obviously no other than THE SAVIOR, Our Lord J.C., Best Dressed Chicken in Town and Fisherman of poor souls like yours. That's what you get for soaking up juice and hanging around with nutzo girls and their nihilistic kid brothers. From now on you better kneel in front of every cop that stops you, just in case.

Enlightened Kick

Dear Slash:

two weeks ago I picked up your November issue in London, and what do I find inside but a review of an Eno record that begins with an unimaginative retelling of a stupid parable, continues by claiming that all the reasons everyone hates Eno's powerless, indulgent, formalist crap are simply not valid and ends with two completely meaningless sentences. And what else do I

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2. Draw, write, or type anything you want inside the rectangle (use *black* ink for good reproduction).
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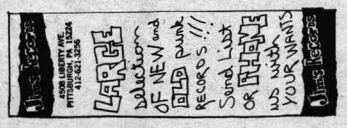
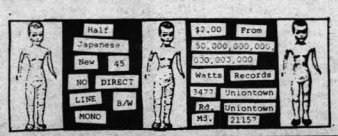
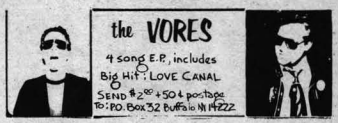
That's it. Ads will reproduce smaller (1 inch by 3 inches). If we receive your ad too late for the next issue, it will appear in the one after. Make sure your ad is the right size (2 × 6) or it won't fit, we won't use it, and we'll cash your fuckin' check anyway.

RIPPED OFF AT LAST MASQUE: CAMERA CASE WITH STUFF. I NEED IT, YOU DONT. $50.00 - LAD, 399-8623 OR MESSAGE 399-7613, OR CALL SLASH







find but an incredibly long review of a Buzzcocks album, full of jerk-off interpretation and cowardly rationalization? . . . And I read some of Kickboy's reviews (a hero of mine, y'know) and I WASN'T SURE IF HE LIKE THE RECORDS AND SHOWS OR NOT.

Maybe all this waffling, blubbering, stammering and general uncertainty is necessary. Maybe you want to integrate yourself into the corrupt moneymaking machine by taking the same serious, reverent attitude towards the bands that the rest of the rock press takes toward conventional musos . . . I just think you're changing, and I don't like it . . . watch, it Slash, because that machine I mentioned is greased by the guts of the creative people who get too close to it when they try to change something about it, add to it or even destroy it. It can't be changed, it can't be destroyed. It's too big, too powerful and too well-guarded by the lice who make such enormous profits by shoving garbage up the noses of a public too dumb to smell it. If one wants to do something significant and effective and worthwhile, one should always work outside, with contempt for the dirty, despicable machine that can soil and corrupt without one's even knowing it. . . . Watch your step. A wrong one and you might find your sensitive parts all bloody and mushy on some executive's plush gold carpet.

Your friend,

Steve Sikkin

Steve:

fanx for the uplifting letter. And for worrying about our purity so much. I mean it. But what has that got to do with a Buzzcocks or Eno review you couldn't stomach? The poor unpaid idealists who write for Slash (yours truly included) couldn't care less about being reverent, respectful or well behaved. They say what they belive, and if it's about the music that interests some of us or all of us in it goes unless someone can do it better. If the guy loves Eno and can say why, good. Praising Eno is not exactly licking the music establishment's ass, is it? And if you think it's playing footsies with a record company, think again. I've never seen an ad for an Eno album ever, nor do I expect to see one in the future. As to your complaint about what you label our "general uncertainty," sorry pal, we can't always immediately know what's what, these are confusing times and you're lucky if you're forever sure of your tastes and your opinions. Or perhaps you're not. Finally, don't worry about where our bloody parts are going to end up: we seem to have a built-in system that automatically prevents us from coming even near temptation, we've tested it and it works. This is one rag that can't be soiled or corrupted without the whole staff screaming bloody rape at the first sign of treason. As I said, it's built-in.

Kick

Slash:

Just because boredom, disgust, and outrage are punk cliches of the highest order doesn't mean they're not accurate representations of what's still going on. All the young punks say "If I hear another song about boredom, I'll puke." Well, puke away, kids, cause boredom's still around and won't go away just because you've decided that it's outmoded terminology.

All you smug little mollusks who have managed to transcend boredom, disgust, and that agitated gut-collapse feeling that is a symptom of the former, what's yer secret? New hairdresser? New religion? I gotta know. Because now you're too good to pogo, you're above frenzy, everything about you is controlled, Hitler was an OK guy, and it's real cool to just stand there in a leather jacket and simulate catatonia.

Well FUCK YEEW, wangs, since when has punk been cool? I don't wanna be involved with cool. Cool is a young corporate executive with sandy hair tinted glasses, an MG, and who gets a hardon at the mention of the word "disco." Cool is what the real world aims for. Cool makes me sick. The real world (sic!) makes me sick.

So much to say, it's screaming to get out. And here I am, trying to be articulate. Utter disgust. I'm writing to Slash when I should be screaming, how fucking pathetic. (But who else cares to listen.)

Shit, I'm sick of trying, sick of agitating, sick of screaming. I wanna sit down, and give up. No, not really. I want the future. But all I get is tomorrow, same old crap. The future stays away. It's probably just a nasty lie designed to keep me functional.

Thank you, Slash, and L.A. you make it a lot easier. People say L.A.'s bad, but they should try where I live.

Selma Genitalia
San Diego

P.S. Obviously a fake name; who would name their kid that?

To Whom Etc.

I'd like to know how come you guys always write about the same people all the time and don't mention a lot of bands in this town. Is the "scene" that small? Or is it just a matter of the right clique?

Well, maybe I'm just confused but I thought that one of the reasons for a rag like Slash was to get out the news that established music mags ignored.

I think that all new bands (now I'm not talking about Rolling Stones clones, or Ted Nugent soundalikes), but new L.A. bands that are straining against the new wave borders, whatever these may be/ busting the seams should at least get a comment positive or negative broaden the sound arena.

I'm bored with the Germs . . . and Fear.

Same to You,

The Perfect Master

P.S. Holly and the Italians aren't a joke band.

Hey,

we don't write about the same people all the time. The same people are playing all the time so we write about them (subtle, eh?) and about the others not same people who have the guts to pop up and show their mugs and what they can do (check this issue and apologize). You give us variety, we give you variety. You start a band, we do you in. Don't call us we'll call you. Anyway, Fear are bored with perfect masters, and Darby Crash has no time for you 'cos HE is the Perfect Master.

The right clique

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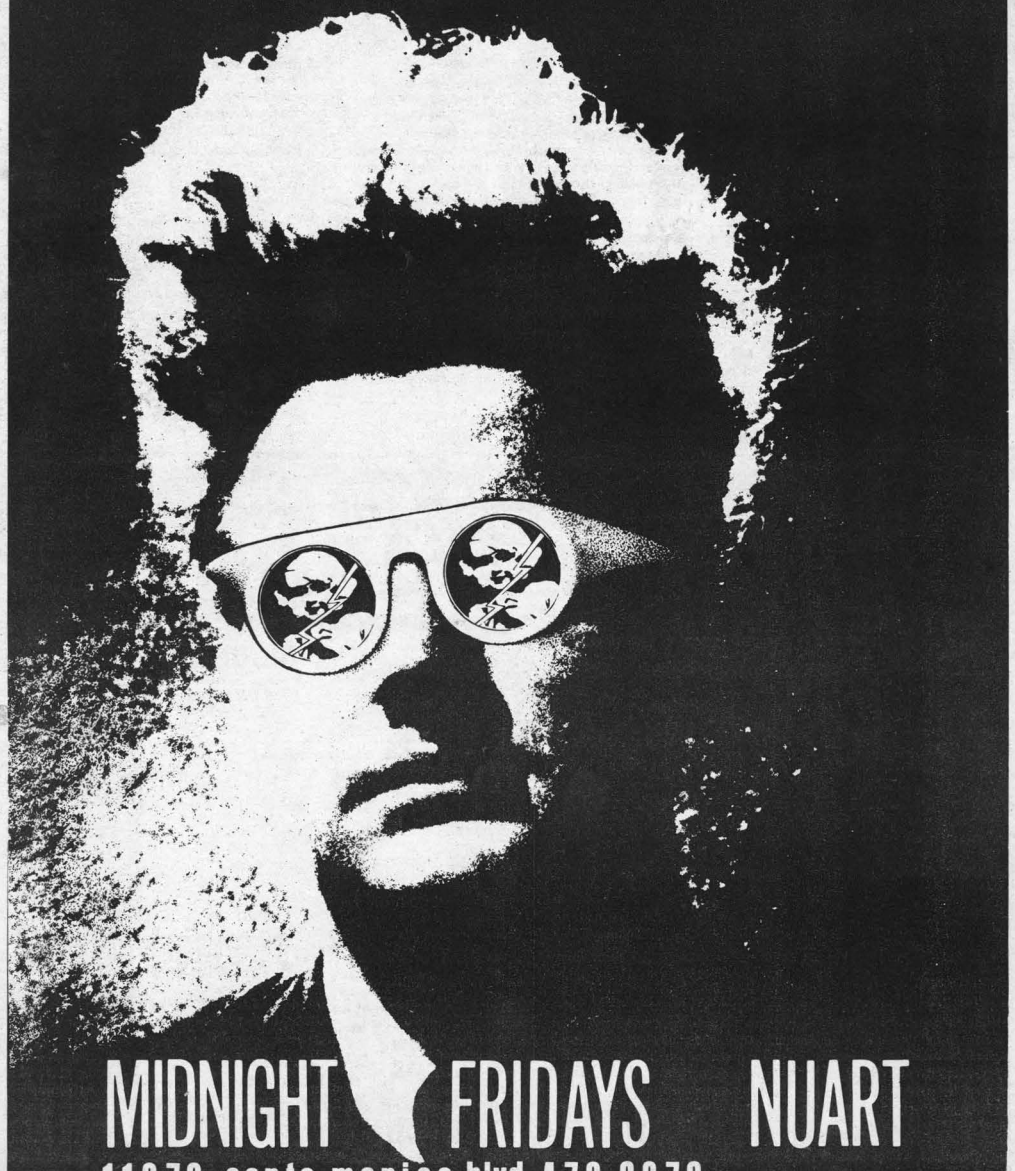

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EXTREMES

ICONOCLAST

An interview with EXTREMES
by Dave Street and Josiphine Sin

EXTREMES are four maniacal minds in the corner of a room simultaneously shouting extremely urgent theories of the world. From this apparent chaos somehow comes prolific communication, as revealed in the following interview, which was conducted by long distance telephone on January 1, 1979.

EXTREMES

Mark Stern (M.S.) — Percussion
Shawn Stern)S.S.) — Guitar, saxophone, vocals
Maicol Schwartz — Guitar, acoustic sound effects, vocals
Russell Jessum (R.J.) — Keyboards, synthesizer, bass, tapes, vocals

STREET: So, what's so extreme about you?
MAICOL: Everything and nothing. We're not asking to be held to having to be extreme. The Screamers don't scream. We're trying to show people how many extre extremes there are in life. Anyway, it's an invalid question.
M.S.: Our music is the result of four extremely distinct and often conflicting points of view.
S.S.: When you look at the history of mankind, it's been to avoid the extremes. Civilization denies people having too many extreme experiences. I want them to have more.
R.J.: The most worthwhile experiences in life lie at the extremes of human existence. We create music and lyrics that challenge the audience, compelling them to participate and react.
STREET: So you're making music with an intended purpose?
R.J.: There are no elements in my songs that don't have a definite purpose. When you write a song, the most important thing is that the whole thing works together towards achieving a purpose.
MAICOL: I disagree with that. For me, one of the thrills of playing my instrument is not knowing what I want and finding it.
R.J.: But if you know what you want, you can achieve more.
STREET: Are you saying that music should be manipulative?
R.J.: Well, I think nothing better could happen than if a band with the selling power of KISS would turn around and start playing punk rock and espousing NEW theories. If they did, one tenth of the eight to fourteen year old population of the United States would also listen to it.
MAICOL: But it wouldn't be an intelligent awakening. It wouldn't be honest.
STREET: How did the band meet?
M.S. I met Russel parachuting.
S.S. When my brother and I first came here from Canada we saw this guy on the beach and were amazed by his technique. We became friends and formed a band.
MAICOL: Our hands and fingers have done much of the talking. Actually, we're just getting to know one another.
STREET: What about your influences?
MAICOL: Actually, my influences are all dead. Egon Schiele, Harry Crosby, Bob Dylan.
S.S.: In no particular order, I would say everything. I like all music. Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Marx, Kierkegaard, Camus, Nietzsche, Pinter, Albee.
R.J.: How about Eisenstein, Cage, Kant, Stravinsky, Abbie Hoffman? Well, actually, I guess it could be reduced to the plight of man.
STREET: Are you driven towards commercial success?
S.S.: I'm not for it at all. I just want a chance to express myself creatively. I don't care how much money I make. I want the infinite opportunity to keep making records To have an AM hit would be fun, though; a spoof on the whole AM system.
MS.: We're doing something we believe in. We can't fight from outside. Obviously, we gotta get into the music world. Still, if we didn't make much money, to me it's not a big deal.
R.J.: I'm all for it.
STREET: Do you consider yourselves extremely sexual, as performers?
MAICOL: Yes, in a non-sexual way. I feel like an animal onstage and like a man in the bathroom.
STREET: How about using sex to get ahead in your career?
MAICOL: I'll go as far as I need sexually.
STREET: Do you think entertainers should use sex to succeed?
MAICOL: Sure, they should. If they have the one hundred percent desire to succeed, if they have a goal to achieve and they've dedicated themselves totally to it, then it's a little self-defeating not to use sex.
STREET: Have you ever had the opportunity?
MAICOL: No, but there's one local influential person who I'd like to put in the position of seducing and having photographs taken and publically blackmailing.
STREET: What about the local scene?
S.S.: Although I've only been in Los Angeles for a relatively short period, the musical ability I've seen here is amazing.
MAICOL: It's gotten a bit unimaginative, which is what motivated me to pick up my guitar after a three year vacation.
STREET: What does the future hold for the Extremes?
S.S.: That's up to us.
R.J.: Not really. It depends on the myriad of forces out there which could affect our lives at any moment: cosmic rays, proton bombs, heart attacks, meteorites, etc.
STREET: Some closing philosophical wisdom?
MAICOL: There are as many extremes in life as there are situations.

THE END

P.S. — Since this interview, the EXTREMES have been filming sequences for a CBS-TV movie to be shown next spring.

THE DICKIES ARE BIG AND GETTING SMALLER.

Yes, folks, those zanies from L.A., who are in the Top 15 on the British charts, have arrived! Among other things, they're being called "the Chipmunks of the '80s." And their American debut album, "The Incredible Shrinking Dickies" comes in yellow vinyl, not to be confused with a banana.

"THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING DICKIES" ON A&M RECORDS & TAPES

Produced by John Hewlett, Magna Artists: Ron Rainey

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Sure, you expected the usual four page exclusive interview. Well, sorry but these days you gotta be from Newsweek to get a few minutes with "The World's Greatest Rock and Roll Band". Still, considering the circumstances we humbly offer:

CLASH Press Conference

The following are rough quotes from the CLASH press conference held in a conventioneer room following the concert. Due to overzealous security, SLASH was allowed only 2 representatives and, as last minute substitutes we didn't have tape recorder or camera. These remarks were scribbled in ballpoint pen on the back of the CBS Epic CLASH Fact Sheet which gave such useful information as the population of England and the correct spellings of the band members' names.

The following remarks are **not** verbatim. . .

+AREN'T PRESS CONFERENCES SAD?
(Jones) You mean **depressed** conferences?

+HOW DO YOU LIKE AMERICA?
Lovely...we don't like tellyvision...but there seems to be a healthy scene everywhere we've been. We're coming back in June.

+WHO WILL PRODUCE YOUR NEXT ALBUM?
We are.

+DID PATTI SMITH GIVE YOU MONEY TO GET STARTED?
(Simonon) 3 quid to get me shoes repaired.

+ARE YOU PLANNING TO FILL THE GAP LEFT BY THE SEX PISTOLS?
What gap?

+HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BEING STARS?
We can still walk the streets in London. We avoid the big pop star bit. We'd never play in big stadiums ... garage band ...we still stand by all that stuff . . . we periodically feel just as suicidal.

+DO YOU WANT SUCCESS?
We want to be the best band in the world.

+HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR RECORD COMPANY?
I wish they'd fucking leave us alone. They don't know what we're about. I wish they'd stop putting out ads for us with the Statue of Liberty all bundled up in bits of rope.

+WHAT'S YOUR NEXT SINGLE GOING TO BE?
A cover of "I Fought the Law" by the Bobby Fuller Four.

+WHAT DO THINK OF THE CRITICISM THAT PEOPLE CAN'T HEAR THE WORDS IN YOUR RECORDS?
(Strummer) Well, you know 'The medium is the message'? We like to SLOBBER the message.

+WHAT KIND OF POLITICS ARE YOU INTO?
Personal politics.

+WHEN'S YOUR NEXT GIG FOR ROCK AGAINST RACISM?
Never. The shows are not together, bad sound, bad organization.

+ARE AMERICAN FANS VICTIMS OF THE SAME REPRESSION AS ENGLISH FANS?
There are lots of angry people here in America.

+WHAT ENGLISH BANDS DO YOU LIKE?
The Slits, Subway Sect.

+WHAT DO YOU THINK OF PEOPLE WHO REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE NEW MUSIC?
(Jones) They're prematurely senile. Maybe they think Kiss, Foreigner and all that are what they want. After all, they've already got a Mick Jones . . and when we're blown out, you'll have somebody else.

+WHAT ABOUT REGGAE MUSIC?
It's a big thing in England. In Jamaica, it's turning into disco.

+WHY DID YOU HAVE BO DIDDLEY ON THE BILL? SHOULDN'T YOU GIVE A CHANCE TO THE LOCAL BANDS IN AREAS YOU PLAY IN?
We like Bo Diddley's music . . . but sure, we think local bands deserve a chance, that's why we had the Dils. Others deserve it too, like the GERMS . . (Much applause here as Lorna Doom had just been allowed into the press conference after totally disrupting it by banging on the windows outside)

+CAN'T YOU BETTER CONTROL SECURITY, SOUND, ETC?
In England we've got our own security, our own sound man. We brought along our own lighting man and our own DJ. We like to put together a good show.
(Referring to the incident of a SLASH editor getting beaten up by security)
Strummer: We never said it was going to be a utopia. Rock and roll is played on enemy ground. You can go on about getting the shit kicked out of you, you can talk about the bloke who got murdered by security guards in England, but we've stopped much more (violence) than you can imagine.
(Referring to the incident at the Azteca Club in North Hollywood when the Dils played and the LAPD riot squad jumped on stage to try to stop the show because they thought the pogoers were fighting)
Jones: That was one of the stories I took home. I said, you ain't seen nothing until you've seen the guys on stage with the machine guns.

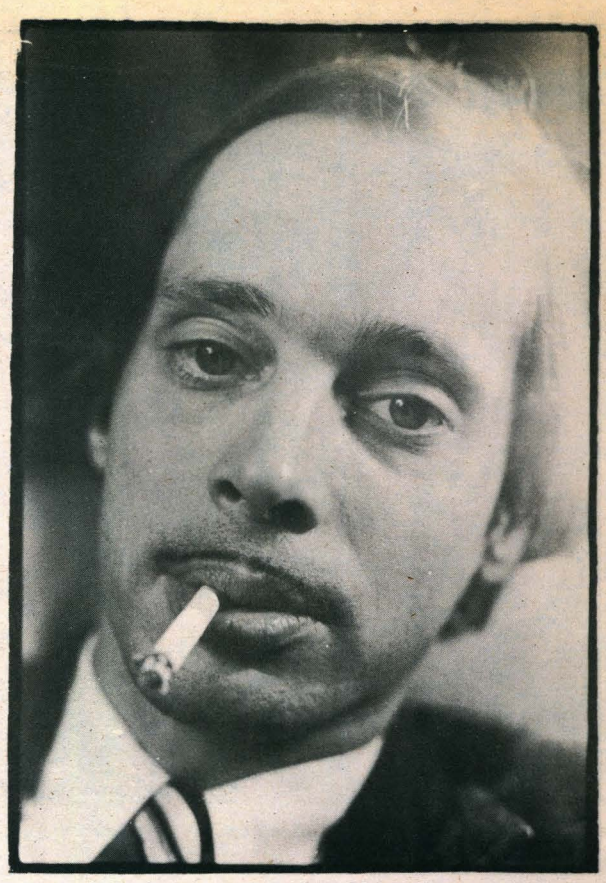
+DO YOU THINK WE'RE LOSING THE BATTLE?
(Strummer) Sometimes I do. But sometimes you've got to wake up in the morning and think, we're gonna WIN the bloody battle.

-JB

BEAUTIFULLY HIDEOUS:

JOHN WATERS

Writer, director John Waters exposes the groundwork for producing discord in film entertainment.
Interviewed on January 30, 1979 by Kerry Colonna, Judith Bell, and John Doe.



"I try to find a look in a character which stylizes my 'Subjective Beauty' contrary to what most people find hideous or grotesque."

WATERS: Did you read about this 16-year-old girl sniper? She's so incredible.

SLASH: She said she did it to brighten up her day.

W: SHE REALLY DID! Her father gave her the gun for Christmas. Could you imagine opening up a magnum underneath the Christmas tree? She really lived out everyone's fantasy, killing the school principal.

S: What motivates you to make films?

W: I've always been movie crazed, ever since I was a kid; but what motivates me is to make people laugh in portraying my sense of humor. I was a puppeteer when I was 9. When I performed at birthday parties the other kids would start crying, and the parents would stop hiring me. But I made a lot of money at it until I was 11 or 12.

S: What kind of films do you find funny?

W: So much of the comedy I admire is not supposed to be funny. "The Other Side of Midnight" was one of the funniest films I've seen recently. I think Russ Meyer is real funny; he makes me laugh a lot. I liked Tobe Hooper's "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" and "Eaten Alive." Oh, and David Lynch: "Eraserhead."

S: Is there any one film you enjoyed making more than the others?

W: Not really. None of them were that much fun since they were all such hard work on such a small budget. I probably was under the least amount of pressure making "Multiple Maniacs" since there were no contracts. That was the year of Woodstock, and my idea of fun was never sitting in the mud with illegitimate children, looking at Joan Baez. That was probably the most violent movie I made. Even though we were all real outcasts, we had a good time.

S: What kind of music do you listen to?

W: Opera and movie soundtracks. I like seeing the punk stuff live, but I'm too nervous to listen to it at home. Except while I'm cleaning; I can really clean well . . . I went to a punk place in San Francisco last week, really insane; a club for the deaf; a lunatic crowd.

S: I know someone who went there who understood sign language. In the women's lounge the deaf women were saying, "It's so nice of these people from the retarded club to come and entertain us."

W: Right, and still, I saw some deaf people dancing! But something I saw in a Baltimore art museum which really shocked me was an entire tour of blind people. I couldn't believe it; I thought, what the fuck are they doing? They were just walking around blindly.

S: Is there any stylistic element in your films you use to distinguish yourself from other directors?

W: I try to find a look in a character which stylizes my 'subjective beauty,' contrary to what most people find hideous or grotesque. When people ask me why I use such hideous characters, I feel that these people must be envious of my friends. I believe that beauty is an image that you cannot forget. If you turn your head to take a second look at someone, then that person has beauty. Crazy people write to me all the time asking me to put them in my films. I want my cast to be, not normal, but together enough to play a crazy person, not be one. Crazy people are not dependable. To make a movie you have to be up at 6 a.m., sometimes filming until 2 in the morning, and it's hard work. Someone who is kind of nuts can foul up the whole thing. A lot of people don't realize that most of the characters in my films don't look like that in real life. Mink Stole is a receptionist for Harpers' Magazine in New York, and she obviously could not hold that job looking like Connie Marble (Pink Flamingos). It's not exactly what Harper's is looning for.

Divine doesn't go in drag all the time. His casual dress is work clothes, but he does look sort of like a crazed monk in real life. He has to shave a lot in his line of work, and I've seen him with a five o'clock shadow, from head to toe.

S: Do people approach you asking for a role?

W: Yes, of course they do; they always have. The guy with the dancing asshole from "Pink Flamingos" just arrived at my door one day saying, "I have something I think you might be interested in." He showed me his act, and I said, "Shit, a star is born."

S: How much improvisation do you allow in your films?

W: None. Well, maybe a line or two, but for the most part the scripts are carefully written and thoroughly rehearsed.

S: How do you cast your films?

W: Well, I found Jean Hill for "Desperate Living" by putting an ad in the newspaper asking for a 200 lb. black woman. Every night a herd of these enormous women would come to my door, and my neighbors would be saying, "Oh my God, what's he into now?" After screen tests none of them really worked out, but one of them told me of a 400 lb. substitute teacher for the Baltimore school system (Jean Hill) who had a lot of acting experience in plays. Her principal came to the film's opening and gave Jean a promotion.

S: Do you have any trouble while making a film from local authorities or neighbors?

W: I've lived in the same apartment in Baltimore for many years. All the old ladies who live on my floor have come to see my films; to find new gossip for themselves. Someone once called the police after hearing a lot of screaming during one of our rehearsals, th thinking a murder was taking place. The doorman rushed in, with gun ready . . . but we've always gotten pretty good cooperation. There's a scene in "Female Trouble" that was shot below Times Square where we even had police protection.

The warden of a Maryland city prison allowed us to film there, stating that he loved my films. I couldn't believe it; he allowed us to film Divine in drag being carried through the main prison corridor in an electric chair, and then invited me to come back and show the movie.

Remember in "Female Trouble" when Divine says, "I blew Arthur Bremer?" We were afraid he was in the audience in the prison where the film was shown. His diary is pretty good (Arthur Bremer's).

S: Do you have any plans for your next film?

W: Yes, it's written. It's called "Polyester" and takes place in a suburb. It's like "Father Knows Best" going beserk. I was trying to get Troy Donahue, but his agent won't let him be in it. So now I'm trying to get Fabian.

S: What stars would you most like to work with?

W: Victor Mature and Anita Ekberg.

S: Do you think Fabian will go for it?

W: I don't think any of them will go for it. But I'm going to try. I think the contrast would be interesting.

S: Will Liz Renay be in it?

W: No. I love Liz, but once is enough. She's a real exhibitionist, she should be a stripper. She even does an act with her daughter who flipped out. She has wonderful stories of the mafia.

S: A Mafia clubowner where she was doing her strip act shot her boyfriend in her dressing room a few years ago.

W: Yeah, she told me that story.

S: What will the film be about?

W: It's about suburbia and an alcoholic housewife. Ed Edith plays a person who is so deluded that she still thinks she's a debutante, with everything mono-

grammed from head to toe; yarn in her hair and speaking French, but badly. But I don't want to go into it any more because I think it's bad luck to talk about a movie too far ahead of time.

S: Have you seen Edith's punk band Edie and the Eggs?

W: That's so funny. Edith doesn't really know what this whole punk thing is, she just thinks it's fun. A lot of people think she's really mentally retarded, but she's just a sweet old lady.

S: Do you produce your own films?

W: Yes. But it's getting much more complicated because more money involves more contracts and lawyers, which are necessary, but it bleeds the fun out of it. The main thing is to get an audience, because you'll never make another movie if you don't. I never believe the guy who says, "Oh, I don't care if anybody comes to see it" because he never has a decent response when I ask him, "Then why do you make movies?" You have to make money to keep going on because it's so ridiculously expensive.

S: Are you maintaining a low budget on this film as you have in the past?

W: This film will cost more. About $160,000. I want to shoot in 35mm, while in the past I shot in 16mm and blew the film up to 35.

S: Do you have financial backers?

W: Yes. With "Pink Flamingos" I simply borrowed $12,000. I made "Female Trouble" from the profits of "Pink Flamingos." With "Desperate Living" I ran an ad to find backers. But it's always difficult to find backers, since none of them I've found are ever rich enough to turn over one large sum. So I find several people who are willing to take the same risk.

S: Is the foreign market very big for you?

W: It has just started to be. I went to a very chic French resort where I was introduced by Pierre Salinger to a crowd with Gloria Swanson and other celebrities in evening gowns and tuxedos laughing about the skid-marks on their underpants.

S: It seems that as long as a person makes enough money to enable him to live off his work, it doesn't matter what the hell he does; he still can gain public respect.

W: That's true; or, if you stick to anything long enough. The longer you stick to one thing without drastically changing, then the greater the chance for making it work for you.

S: Did "Pink Flamingos" do well in France?

W: "Pink Flamingos" didn't do that well in France. England was no problem. Oddly enough, Australia has all five of my movies playing. But it was a bit too much for France when it opened. It got good reviews, funny reviews, like "Marx Bros. Flush the Toilet," or "Charles Manson Meets Walt Disney." People complained about the censorship. You see, it's easy to produce an X-rated movie in France if it's French. If it's not, you must pay a prohibitive tax that would be equal to the cost of the film. It's their nationalist means of protecting themselves.

S: Do you have any political persuasions?

W: I voted for Ford. I didn't want hillbillies in the White House; when Rosalynn Carter said she wanted to bring square-dancing to the White House, I decided that Ford was the only choice. I was looking forward to watching Betty Ford's facelift operations and addiction withdrawals. Gerald seemed too dumb to lie, and I thought it would be different to have someone honest in office for a change. But things are looking up since I read recently that Chip Carter stated in an interview that Divine was his favorite movie star. I was hoping to get the White House for a location, but when my distributor tried, he was told that Chip Carter didn't live there any more.

S: I heard you got shit from a lot of women's groups. Do you get any feedback from religious groups or any hate mail?

W: No. I get weird mail and people mail me shit. I've shown my films at colleges; one time, some students wrote "Welcome" with shit on my hotel door. I didn't know what to say to the maid.

S: In an earlier interview you said that your parents encouraged you to work making films, but you discouraged them from seeing them . . .

W: They came to see them up until "Mondo Trasho," and they walked out on that during the scene where one character is sucking another's feet. My mother asked me, "How did you think of that? There's no such thing as that!" They finally told me that they will come to my movies only if I want them to. They go to, maybe, one film a year, "Silver Streak," or something. Why put them through anymore agony? It only upsets them. They're very conservative people. My uncle was the Undersecretary of the Interior for Nixon, and while my parents arrived at the inauguration in limousines, I was throwing horseshit at the guests. So there is a gap.

S: Would you like people to be more like yourself?

W: I'd like people to be more open, objective than they are. But if everybody in the world were like the people I know, it would be very dull; there would be nothing to react to. I could never wish that my parents would sit around in dog collars, smoking angel dust. That would be horror.

S: Have you ever been arrested?

W: Oh yeah. I used to get arrested quite often as a teenager for drinking under age at drive-in movies. I remember one time I was in court when the Judge complained that one of the girls in my car was seen urinating outside of the window.

I got busted for conspiracy to commit indecent exposure when I made "Mondo Trasho." There was a nude scene at an exterior location that was observed by a cop. When he called for reinforcements we tried to escape in a red Eldorado convertible. We were caught in front of the Rex movie theater which is the one dirty-movie theater in Baltimore.But that's basically it, because I've never been arrested for anything serious. Divine was arrested for murder; of course she didn't do it and was released three days later. I like going to trials. I went to Manson, Patty Hearst, Watergate, Sid Vicious. You have to wait in lines a lot, but it's worth it!

S: You went to the Patty Hearst trial? Did you use that in any of your work?

W: I think "Female Trouble" is the film about trials. That includes all my expericnes with the subject. So I don't want to use that motif again. I saw Patty Hearst later. I liked the trial. It was a real circus, but personally I think that I would have voted guilty also because I didn't find her believable, and she snitched on everybody. She could be brainwashed by anyone: her parents, Steven Weed, SLA, Lee Bailey, and now Bernard Shaw, the cop she's marrying. But I think she should be out of jail. I'm not for anybody being in jail.

S: How much was Charles Manson on your mind when you made "Pink Flamingos"?

W: Oh, Charlie's always on my mind. He was on my mind before I'd ever heard of him in "Multiple Maniacs." The plot portrayed Divine as the murderer of Sharon Tate before they apprehended Manson. Charlie was caught before I finished the film, so I had to change the end. When the film was completed I went to Manson's trials, and visited Tex Watson in jail over a period of eight years. I'm not condoning people for going out and committing murder; however, they wanted to scare the world, and they did. If you're going to be bad, really be bad!

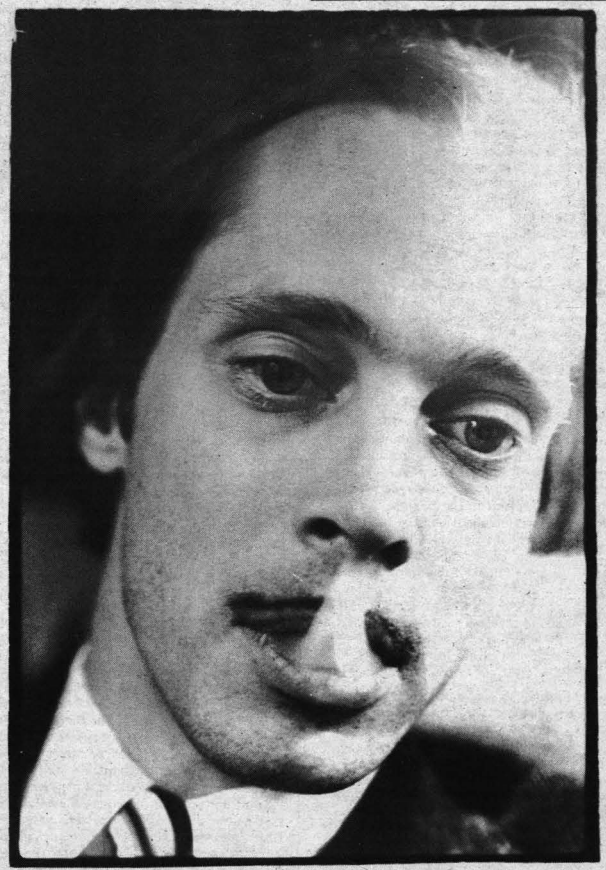
S: What is the worst thing you've ever done?

W: I wouldn't tell a magazine. ◉

Films by John Waters:

The Roman Candles	**(1965)**
Eat Your Makeup	**(1967)**
Mondo Trasho	**(1969)**
Multiple Maniacs	**(1971)**
Pink Flamingos	**(1973)**
Female Trouble	**(1975)**
Desperate Living	**(1977)**

Pink Flamingos plays midnight Saturdays at NUART Theatre in West Los Angeles.

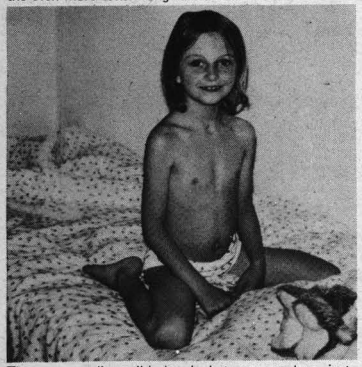


"I could never wish that my parents would sit around in dog collars, smoking angel dust. That would be horror." **photos: Kerry Colonna**

"I FEEL MYSTERIOUS TODAY", a quick look at some people and bands who are not exactly twisting again like we did last summer...

"Gothic Gristle", the first and final report from Throbbing G.

The Crypt is some sort of neo-medieval basement located right under a church. Very atmospheric, with stone pillars and arches, damp floor and gothic shadows resulting from a rather haphazard style of lighting. In a far-off corner of this subterranean labyrinth there is the bar, in another far off corner there is the stage. Well, a section that has been arbitrarily picked as "stage." It is packed floor to ceiling with instruments and machinery. Scattered among the hardware there appears to be what normals on the surface call a "band." Some are sitting with their back to the audience and torturing their gadgets, one is pacing the cluttered space like a claustrophobic mental patient with a case of amnesia, occasionally using a microphone to convey unintelligible messages, then flashing a blinding and bulky floodlight right in the closest faces of the audience. If it is an audience. For tonight the catacombs are packed with a strange mob in long dark raincoats, gaunt pale faces and doomed expressions. Very avant thinking underground types, with only here and there the token decked out spikey punkeroo and the even more token long-haired mustached observer.



There are no discernible breaks between numbers, just sudden silence before the next electronic onslaught, and there is no reaction from the attentive zombies watching, no applause, heckling or usual rock n roll feedback. In other corners of this archetypal underground hideout bodies are crouched on the floor (it must be pointed out that the stage visibility is near zero, with the arches the low ceilings the nonexistent lighting and the paralyzed mass of mournful watchers blocking from view ninety percent of the mysterious ceremony), gazing at the opposite wall, soaking in the echoing wafts of sound that eventually reach them or pondering on the meaning of life at eighteen. A lot more boys than girls except in the entrance hallway (which must mean something . . . maybe.)

After a disjointed shriekingly aggressive audio cocktail the band pulls the plug on itself. End of the Throbbing Gristle set (who else did you think it was?). Singer apprentice magician Genesis P. Orridge screams repeatedly about "not having played it loud enough," half at the audience half at himself. After a few hesitant seconds, loud cold applause. More like the abrupt end of an experiment than the finale of a rock show. And I still haven't managed to get one little glimpse of the other players' faces. One could have been a girl. Now Throbbing Gristle have returned to their hidden bunker to plot their next guerilla move against conventional music formats and who knows when and where they'll strike again. There will be painful withdrawal agonies for their somber introverted followers. I walk out numb and shivering and partially thrilled at knowing what crawls under the mindless playgrounds of top twenty charts and limited picture disk editions.◉

Wire, and the "art of doomsday dancing."

Quite a while back I wrote a silly little "review" of Wire's "Chairs Missing" where after looking for easy meanings and instantly likeable aspects and finding none (oh the shame) I wondered if the mystery of the band would be solved after seeing them perform the stuff live. Two live performances later I must admit that Wire music is in a class of its own and certainly does not deserve the kind of quick superficial evaluations us typewriter hacks have a tendency to lay on some of the more adventurous sounds we try to wrestle with. Twice: once at a horrible joint called the Venue (tables, food, waitresses, a posh decadent showcase warehouse with the atmosphere of a train station waiting room) and once at the Marquee (a less horrible place with a ventilation problem, piss beer and wall to wall spikey head regulars) this austere bunch literally mesmerized me for the entire duration of their show. Whether stuck on an enormous stage like the Venue's and facing the place's apathetic crowd, or cramped on the Marquee's raised platform and facing the not at all apathetic black leather masses bouncing off each other like amphetamine pinballs, they carefully, methodically built wall after wall of dark oppressive sound textures, reletlessly adding ominous touches like Lewis' maniacal howlings or Newman's robotic gestures to the laminated steel understructures of their rhythms. And yes, suddnely, obviously, the words made sense. They were the only possible expression left, they were conveying the feelings and thoughts that will be commonplace when Wire's music becomes the norm. At the Venue, the sterility of the environment was saved (or enhanced, hence transcended) by a unique lighting effect that consisted of thin light and dark stripes enveloping the five performers (they added their producer on keyboards for the show) and the mood was glacial, clinical and spooky. At the Marquee no special lighting, the atmosphere was thick and sweaty, and the mood was nervous, chaotic, and spooky. Wire is not a fun band, a party band, a one two three four band (even though they can be faster than most headbanging virtuouso outfits). Wire is a doomsday machine, and we all know THAT will catch up with everyone, eventually. But nowadays it has become perfectly normal to DANCE to doomsday music. We've come a long way, baby.◉

The (Kick) Boy Looks At Johnny.

So has John Rotten/Lydon. In spite of a decidedly mixed reaction to the Public Image album the little fucker remains at the center of the cyclone, more infuriating and more admirable than ever. And although many cogniscenti (assholes who know better than you and I) called his Christmas Day and Boxing Day (Day after Xmas) shows at the Rainbow (London's version of the Palladium with a touch of Chinese Grauman) a stone cold disappointment, it in fact was a great way to terminate one year and start a new one. Public Image are NOT the Sex Pistols, they're moving along nicely thank you, the only tune from the past they condescended to perform was "Belsen Was a Gaz," with drastically changed lyrics. They opened with "Theme," minus Johnny, just Walker and Levine drumming and guitaring while Jah Wobble sat on a chair concentrating on his bass runs. The plaid boywonder with the burning eyes popped on, and they played every song off the album, encoring with a second rendition of "Public Image," either because they simply had no other material or they thought it was a nice one to disappear with. Rotten got mad at the fighting faithfuls below, outstared everyone and sang with demonic intensity. The band played with the same pseudo-simplistic approach that makes the album such a hard pill (not bad, eh?) to swallow for the not very adventurous ones in charge of aesthetic weathercasting, all guitars bass drums mingling in an uncool manner, not unlike nerves rubbing against each other. The awesomeness of the music is less immediate than the "Bollocks" stuff, but I believe that within a few months it might prove itself to be a lot more damaging and rewarding. Less rewarding were the opening acts, even Linton Kwesei Johnson (Poet less the Roots) who mostly read his militant verses to a background of taped music. One would think there would be enough musically inclined brethren to support him in the flesh. Not AT ALL rewarding were the security stormtroopers (all decked out in brand new Public Image T-shirts) indiscriminately thumping the bondage hoards at the slightest sign of unruly behavior. Very bad news for any band's public image, most of all one that prides itself on not playing the game.◉

Unusual, Unknown, and Ubscure.

To round up this chapter on the more unusual combos on the London live circuit (besides the ones covered in the Preg Vec report, the Fall [in next issue] and the countless ones that either didnot play during those two months or that we were not fast enough to catch) I must member Gang of Four (seen in Croydon with Penetration) the Bank of Dresden and the Vincent Units (the second one a variation of the first one, caught one night at the Acklam Hall.) Gang of Four are really challenging, not quite fitting into any mold or any category. Their music and their stage presence is full of sudden surprises, you think they're going to go in one direction and wham, something else comes out. At the Penetration gig this seemed to cause some problems with the audience who that night must not have been in an experimental mood. Bank of Dresden are an obscure outfit that played one night with Ex-Slits' drummer Palmolive's new band, The Raincoats at the ever challenging Acklam Hall. The Raincoats are nothing to write home about (kind of an English Backstage Pass in the early days) but Bank of Dresden have, besides a superb name, a rather unusual appeal. They do a stunning rendition of an old Marlene Dietrich song that made me dream of Berlin for the next two nights. German reggae with very soulful saxophone? Hard to describe, believe me. The show had opened with Vincent Units, a band whose female lead singer (bass player with the Bank of Dresden) sat on a stool, wrapped in a black leather coat and cap, and sang raspy hypnotic songs. The Bank of Dresden's Germanic pre-WWII leanings must be her doing.◉

"1, 2, 3, 4, ON THE POGO FLOOR", or, good music never goes out of style...

Now everybody stop worrying, the headbanging style of music so dear to our drunken sped-up hearts is still alive and well over there. Old champions like Sham 69 and newer ones like the Edge or the UK Subs pack them in every day of the week for the ritual panting ear torturing neck dislocating collective bath. The Edge, an indirect offshoot of the later Damned (formed by guitarist Lu and Scabies replacement Jon Moss – the old Damned/Doomed having now reformed minus soloist Bryan James with the original line up 'cept the Captain is on guitar and ex-Saints Alisdair Ward is on vocals – anyway those were the news two months ago) is one of the busiest groups on the London circuit. When I saw them at the Nashville (crammed wall to wall with rowdy, less than sophisticated fans) they tore the place and half of my head apart. Louder than shit, fast and brutal, like methedrine overamped Stranglers on a destructive weekend binge. Their sound is ugly, the guitar riffs and the keyboard stabs can make your eyeballs pop out and your chest ache but it is more precise and clever than your imploring brain thinks at first. They look like youth correction facilities inmates, future major record companies will probably do everything in their power to keep their mugs off the record cover.

U.K. Subs appeared to have one of the biggest and most fanatically dedicated followings among the masses of street punkdom. Graffiti everywhere, badges on 2 leather jackets out of 3 cruising the sidewalks, they are one band who could change their name to "Street Credibility" without feeling pretentious about it. The fans follow them from gig to gig, know every word and every note by heart and are on a first term basis with every band member (those were the days, eh, Mick, Paul, Joe and Topper??). I first caught them in a seedy pub venue in the suburbs, real life audience one third spikeroos one third skinheads one third assorted greasers, teds and other rockers, and before the first song was over all cultural differences were obliterated, the great unwashed rabble had found its voice and its very own music, at least until closing time. The Subs' music is direct and simple, the themes immediate and realist (one of their hits is called "Living in a Car"). Their singer is never seen without a shapeless dirty raincoat which he probably sleeps, screws and falls in the gutter in. One of the boys, he does not mind sharing his mike and his stage position with the would be Subs up front who love harmonizing or simply hollering and growling during the numerous encores, and at their second show in the posing palace, the Music Machine, they outnumbered the security meatheads so overwhelmingly that it suddenly looked as if there were going to be more people on stage than on the floor. The music may slightly suffer from this confusion but the exhilerating breaking down of barriers and taboos in the midst of everyday regimented "fun times" sweeps such delicate considerations completely aside. Naive on paper, vital if you were there. In that first pub gig they were supported by the Dole (truly an untrendy name for late 78) who sounded okay in an unspectacular crash bang manner, good girl singer unintelligible lyrics your average opening band whether it be Los Angeles or London, another one that may one day find their uniqueness and separate itself from the pack or monotonize themselves into oblivion.

Another band with a growing following (and the advantage of a decent contract with the ever-present Virgin records) is the Members whose single "Sound of the Suburbs" is reputed to be one of the most sizzling vinyl slabs of today. Many people with different tastes and needs had suggested they might qualify for my list of England's most exciting new bands. I was told tales of unique blendings of punk and reggae, I became almost convinced and missed an interesting sounding show at the Marquee to see them at that ever busy Nashville, and spent the rest of the evening wondering what everyone saw that I didn't. The reggae inputs were diffuse and dubious, the rock stuff was predictable and confused, a sound that tried to grab you or stick to you but failed to reach your body or your heart. The sardines up front lapped it up, how I hate to feel left out. Perhaps it was something I had eaten, fish and chips soaked in grease or doner kebab with a generous percentage of cat food. Perhaps I will soon eat my words and pant over their Virgin product. Nobody's perfect.◉

photo: Philomena

"I went to a fight, and a Sham 69 broke out."

And now, a few notes from the Clockwork Orange soundtrack (which is how their rallies start these days), an explosion of spotlights, here they are you little brutes, Sham 69, the band with a reputation almost as impeccable as Attila and his lovable Huns. After a disastrous gig at the Electric Ballroom where British reggae old timers the Cimarons cancelled because of afternoon brutality to their jah loving persons the Sham top brass of the Sham army stubbornly tried again at the Rainbow, as headliners for a benefit for One Parent Family, a good cause that could not fail to win Jimmy Pursey's approval, the one man in English youthdom right now that as an insatiable appetite for old types of causes, the more the better, I'll just have to do my 57th interview of the week to clarify it all. Attendance was way below top capacity, which local observers explained to me as the price Sham are paying these days for being unwillingly (?) patronized by rabid packs of desperately misguided kids with shaved domes and big ugly shoes. And at first there didn't seem to be anything dangerous or disgraceful about the little hairless groups that milled in the hallways or tried to extract spare change from unimpressed punks. Other bondage boys and girls could be seen fraternizing with the bullet heads, who look to be a bit short on their supply of female companions, and the repeated warnings I had been given to stay away unless I thrived on getting my head kicked in felt grossly overblown and alarmist. Ten minutes into the Sham set (who sounded real fine, much more grabbing than on record, a powerful straight punk rock group with a neat variety of easy danceable singable tunes and a totally likable skinny kid on forceful singing; a clown that has the time of his life up there and will do any crazy thing that comes to his head just to entertain and please his fans) the warnings I had ignored began to make sense, it was true after all, the curse of Sham 69 was only too real. Small fighting units of adrenalined skins were combing the outskirts of the dance floor, yelling the lyrics as if they were the Lord's Prayer, grabbing one small member of THEIR group and pounding the rhythm into his back and chest while the newly elected human drumkit/punching bag screamed in ecstasy at this choice treatment and sang along with the rest. The ones that collapsed were half-heartedly kicked then picked up, I knew that any second this growing orgy of almost mock violence would logically graduate to the infinitely more satisfying real thing. This was just a warm-up, a psychic ritualistic enacting of soon to come festivities. At the first gap between two songs the great unifying mantra of England's teenage urban rejects boomed thru the hall, sending shivers down my spine, so magically evocative of unexplainable horrors, so instinctively suggestive of madness and terrifying helplessness:

The Cimarons and Sham, bit of an army 'innit?

Sieg Heil, Sieg Heil, complete with the extended arm salute as seen on old newsreels depicting idiotic faceless human ants doing the unmentionable to each other. But the nazi salute was performed with a jerky shiny-eyed pogo, giving it the necessary contemporary touch. Pursey, who had seen it all before in his short but charged career glared at the troops, ignored it for another few minutes and then courageously grabbed his destiny by the neck. He exploded after the rampaging proletarian brigades knocked lone non-shaven dancers off their feet and dashed around chased by (and sometimes chasing) hard breathing security goons who had started to add their own style of physical self-expression to the rapidly disintegrating liberal benefit. Fearless Jimmy spat in disgust, moaned about the Xmas spirit not being present in this assembly, swore his unending devotion to the cause of unloved youth, asked if this was the way to thank him for his untiring defense of their misunderstood needs, threw his orange juice on the ground, and under deafening chants of "British Movement" and other maligned philosophical slogans announed he would now do one song for the fucking British Movement. Instant orgasm for the troops, nirvana, Bliss-out. Then daring Jimmy adds that he will also do a song for the Communists. Stunned with disbelief, the mob gasps and roars like a wounded mammoth. Treason, blasphemy, burn the idol. It must hurt them to have been tricked and rejected, and some anonymous bodies are going to be punished for it. So, while the P.A. blasts "If the Kids are United," there is a bloodthirsty hunt in the darkness. Girls are carried bleeding thru the dyed hair to the side of the stage, threatening shapes run thru the dwindling ranks of pogoing music lovers, bouncers corner snarling skins ready to fight back until mangled to a pulp or their mates stage a diversion, and when the song is over the mess has reached appalling proportions. No one applauds or cheers, the fighting hardly slows down and Pursey is about to cry. His army has gone bonkers, a total mutiny ("you ugly lying rich rock star" screeches a skin girl on stage right) anyone else would pack up and leave. But Pursey (amazing how his three pals trustingly leave the decisions to him. They are watching the atrocities with the detachment of Vietnam vets, knowing that old James will make it turn out all right Such faith!) is determined to re-win all those sweet little hearts and show them why they should love him, if not listen to him. So, song after song (done with more passion and intensity than anyone could imagine) hit after hit ("Borstal Breakout", "Hurry Up Harry," etc.) Sham 69 give everything they have, the skinheads give all they can to whoever runs into their path, the security try to do their bit of giving, and here and there stunned crumpled kids are giving all the blood they've got to spare to the floor of the Rainbow. Yes, Sham more or less regained the lost worshippers, the applause returned, (they came back for their first encore not having been asked to) everyone headed for the doors where the police reinforcements were letting their hungry looking crowd control German shepherds have nibbles of skinhead bums and thighs, the whole sweaty shivering horde of bullies and victims was escorted to the subway entrace at a rapid jog, shoved down the bleak tunnels to be sucked back to their grey neighborhoods, left free to do their youthful tricks to stray punks, shy Pakistani clerks and stoned Jamaicans on the Brixton line. I was intact, yet more shattered than after a good beating.◉

"NO FUTURE", or how could you let us down after all those Promises, Promises...

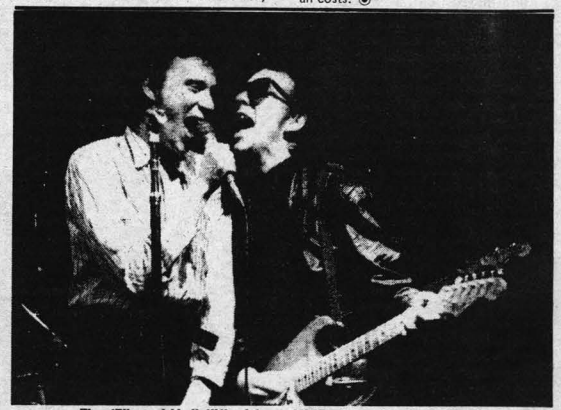
This sad paragraph was necessary in order to deal as swiftly and painlessly as possible with two or three bands whose reputation and relative fame appears, on the strength of one or two concerts, to have been fabricated by very clever or very stupid rock journalists. Of course it's not all that simple, bands have ups and downs, no group consistently bad could pass as good for very long, or could they? Let-down number 1 was Generation X, who once upon a time gave us a pretty good couple of poppy singles and an album that did not age too well. Still, their credentials were impressive, they looked sharp and the girls loved Billy. On the stage of the Electric Ballroom, Billy ol' boy had obviously decided that the being-loved-by-the-nubiles business was the only thing worth combing one's hair for. So now the Idol (a name like this might get pretty embarassing when obscurity is the final result) sports the COOLEST, HIPPEST, MOST GONE hairdo in all Britain (a dazzling combo of ted/punk/surfer boy that must take three architects every morning), a collection of stage poses to make the front row swoon and the older crowd mutter "wild youth" in admiration (real cute teen leader stuff with outstretched arms and fingers pointing to the next milk bar), and a backing band of longish hair little guitar heroes with picturesque military coats (aren't we mod today?) who cough up heavy metal riff after heavy metal riff, play painful notes that show very expressively on their faces and make sure to remain a nice two feet behind the blond sculpture on lame vocals, anonymously building little Billy's pedestal, a job is a job. The old favorites sounded sloppy and meaningless, the new ones ('cept perhaps King Rocker) don't even exist. I knew Gen X was not going to be a revelation, but I expected some good time modern pop for the teens to dance the night away. All I got is an underage Tom Jones as alive as a bubble gum mag letter section. Good old Chelsea (special guests of the stars) blew them away in 15 seconds flat, laying some nifty solid tunes on the stiff trendies pointedly ignoring them, which goes to show you who can be daft and totally lacking in taste anywhere. Poseurs of the world, unite and go and play on the freeway!

Nothing else after or before hurt as bad as Gen X, there were two main contenders, but they were no way as abysmal and full of shit. They may even be pretty good, they just bored me to tears. Tears at the Hope and Anchor when the Jolt played there, and tears at (where else) the Nashville when the Soft Boys did. The Hope and Anchor has had its share of exciting nights (so I've been told), but not that night. The Jolt immediately made it obvious that they are content sitting in the middle of that enormous grab bag of thrills and yawns called new wave, whatever. All nice and cozy amongst dozens of other tedious combos who, just like them, endlessly churn out copies of variations of tunes that didn't sound that new ten years ago. Pop ground eight hundred and seventy four, you got exactly 2 minutes to get to the charts. Sorry, over, back to private parties and youth clubs. A pedestrian unimaginative sound that tries so hard to be exciting and "fresh." Like the Jam with no balls or fire. The Soft Boys try lots of tricks, they have energy but it's annoying 'cos it's pointless, I could detect none of the vague sophistication of the singles ("Wading thru a ventilator" was pretty hard to take in a live context), just bits and pieces in search of a tune. If they want to be anglepoise lamps, let them. Before we go on, remember that all these proudly subjective opinions are the product of one brain, and not one in perfect condition either. I know other Slashers who might have loved Gen X (I doubt it) or the Soft Boys and hated Public Image or Wire. Do not hesitate to loudly disagree.

Dread at the controls...

Reggae and its offshoots are bigger than ever, and the once unlikely reggae-punk merging has been a rather heart warming half success: half of reggae concert audiences is now routinely strictly punk, and the jamaican beat's influence on new white music is still on the rise. Costello, Jah Wobble, ATV, Members, Police, the list is endless. But half-success 'cos the Jamaicans are not exactly storming the gates at punk gigs, and of course the music is certainly not about to be influenced by punk sound. So, besides the couple of token tip of the hat in some titles or lyrics (Marley, Dillinger, Eastwood), the brethren remains blissfully unaffected by white noise. They condescend to mingle with the native urban kids at special gatherings, shows of unity and protest marches but the organizers are white liberals, not militant rastamen. How the street punks so easily adopted reggae and its mysteries is still a puzzle. (But not as much as the presence of admittedly racist skinheads at some reggae gigs, loving every note of the music.) Anyway, they were all there for the two big ja concerts of late 78, Dillinger and Tapper Zukie. Pink spiked mops and dreadlocks, red green and gold and black leather, a visual feast of alternative styles, and never mind the obvious tirade about black and white togetherness, both groups have very few ties with the main populace, it's only the tightening up of the fringes' ranks, not heaven on earth! Hatred and ignorance still rule the lands, thank you. Dillinger, the bionic dreadlock who rides a CB200. The man with the pajama outfits and the cool delivery played the Rainbow, with his teen dj protege Clint Eastwood opening the bill. A truly roots show, which if you haven't seen one is as remote from the likes of Pete Tosh as Pete Tosh is from Johnny Nash. A bass sound to knock your feelings out, guitars that scratch your skin and dry pointed drum beat to get the feet moving. After the typical lengthy introduction by a very natty MC too stoned on the herb to make much sense, building up the tension or just goofing off depending on your patience a skinny youth with sleek gear and half a mile long ethiopian scarf round the waist came bopping on, moving about the stage like a bouncing ball with legs. One of the newest "toasters" on the Jamaican front, Clint Eastwood (if you like a name, take it mon) eased his way into one of his biggest hits, "Premo Ballerina." Talking in that syncopated medium tempo manner started by Dillinger, the kid literally whipped you into instant fascination and helpless skanking of the hips. Effortless in control of this voice, of his rhythm, he swayed and hopped thru that number like one of the old veterans. Two more tunes followed, and the spell was not broken. Tight fluid dj stuff at its best. Then suddenly he was off, leaving us with a classy 15 minute performance on our memory. After more nonsense from the MC and some fine instrumental bits Lester Bullocks aka Dillinger strutted on, loud and confident. Most of his better tunes were performed (with the audience reciting along even the most obscure patois jive) pretty close to the original recordings, with that distinctive voice of his turning the silliest verses and the most hocus pocus philosophical gems into instant poetry and profound wisdom, yet something was missing, as if the man was faithfully going thru the motions, having left his fire and soul backstage before the show. Most people present didn't or pretended not to, notice but I kept thinking of Clint Eastwood and knew that HE was the one with the power, at least for this show. Jamaican performers reach their peak quite quickly (not really so, it's just that we start hearing about them ages after they've been on the scene) and perhaps Dillinger has run dry like others before him (Big Youth being the most striking example) and will regularly grace us with less and less exciting albums until the final fadeout. It's a bit presumptuous to predict such gloom on the impression of one performance, he may just have had a bad headache. Clint Eastwood joined Dillinger for the encore and was well on his way to steeling the show right there and then (better voice and his dancing is more mesmerizing) but Dillinger stepped right in front of him, making it clear that at the back of the stage next to the drum kit was good enough for the little upstart!

A couple of weeks later, once again at the Rainbow, the very special Tapper Zukie made one of his rare British appearances, and almost lived up to the hazy myth the man had become in my head. Before the show colleague Virgin star John Lydon had been seen in the hall, looking ever so much like a streamlined Quaker who got up on the wrong foot. First the Zukie backing band the Intividators played a rich soulful series of tunes that moved everything inside you and made you think you had reached Heaven, or at least Zion. Trombone player Vic Gordon (I think) sent shivers up and down my spine and the rest of me everytime one of his careful melody snatches would lodge itself between the razor sharp guitar punctuations. After awhile Tapper Zukie danced on stage like a slowed down dervish walking on eggs, wearing a bizarre tail cost of red, green and gold material and a wide brimmed hat of the same origin. Can't remember what he started with but it was one of the biggies, the crowd roared and danced while Zukie eased himself into the proper rhythm, never stopping his awkwardly elegant swaying across the front. Jamaican artists all seem to naturally find the perfect manner in which to move to their own sounds, and watching them can strangely help in perceiving new subtleties and hidden patterns unnoticed in a home listening situation. Like adding texture to a flat painting. The show moved smoothly along with all the great tunes off the albums, Zukie danced in a more and more trance like manner as the evening progressed, eventually crouching into a immobile pose like a mystic taking the big dive into the Oneness and doing a silly but beautiful rasta chant of the Lord's Prayer or some similar nonsense. As opposed to Dillinger and other fast talking wise guys who don't seem overly concerned with Jah's moods and feelings, Zukie is most certainly a committed righteous believer and does not separate his work from his faith. Hence the very pious last section of the show, forcing the white heathen part of the audience to go in neutral while alien religious rituals were enacted. A while before Tapper the prophet had made the tactical mistake of solemnly consulting the audience as to whether everyone here and everyone in the world wanted love and peace, certainly believing in his pure heart that the answer was obvious, and got the jolt of his life when sizeable segments of the bondage persuasion shouted a very determined "NO!" He gave up at the third attempt, and seemed a saddened man until the end. But, all cosmic matters aside, Tapper Zukie remains one of the top kings in the toasting/dub talking field. It had been one of those concerts to file directly in the brain memory bank labelled, "Top Shit, protect at all costs."◉



The 'El' and Hell (lifted from NME pic: Roberta Bailey)

...And then there is always the square peg-round hole dilemma.

To end this concert going extravaganza there is one gig to be mentioned, one that due to the nature of the performers and the gig itself could not be fitted into one of the above categories, the Elvis Costello and the Attractions week-long show at the Dominion. Yep, a whole week, packed to the rafters every night (pretty imposing place too) a real show of strength and popularity for the angry one. First on the bill was John Cooper Clarke, who kind of looks like Dylan but whose speeded urban street wit connects with the ups and downs of everyday life with a truth and precision the Malibu recluse couldn't buy for all the mansions overlooking the Pacific. Clarke is not a comedian, nor a poet, nor a story teller, he is a distorting mirror, a television receiver that only works for the bad programs. His chopped breathless monologues (performed while nervously flailing his arms, and generally behaving like a nervous wreck) can sound like offbeat lunatic gushes of unrelated thoughts and words, and they also can be more visual and precise than pictures or films. Something he did called Beagley Street was as evocative and gripping as a thick convoluted novel on the same subject. After Clarke another loner tried to grab back the attention he once garnered: Richard Hell (and the faceless Void Oids), now on Costello's label Radar, on Costello's tour, but evidently not very much on Costello's fans' list of priorities. It was a valiant try, but the hugeness of the theater (from where I was I couldn't tell which one was Hell!) and the indifference of the spectators (hard to avoid in a place with dance floor just a sea of seats with ushers to get you there!) sank the set to its fizzing out conclusion. After a long wait the Attractions came, played some loud and clear intro number while the El made his way to the mike (small but with the presence and remoteness of a philarmonic maestro). They were off like a well oiled Marine drill team (Armed Forces!), the sound was excellent, every note, every drum roll, every intonation was detectable, Elvis going from old to new songs with the same tenseness, the same determination to get the best out of each tune. Halfway thru a fancy lights system took everything to another level, enhancing the already awesome cohesiveness of what was taking place but detracting from the more immediate identifiable element of the songs, punctuating the obvious in great flashes of blinding flak, dwarfing the players to the importance of hazy silhouettes. Only when a single pool of red light enveloped the defiant figure of Costello and his guitar did it become an integral part. Elvis expressed some discontent with the passivity of the crowd (sitting in their little rows spellbound and busy quietly worshipping) and shortly after ended the set. Twenty minutes later large groups were still demanding an encore, stomping begging pleading but Elvis did not give in, no meek easy going performer he. The man knows what he wants, nothing else will do.

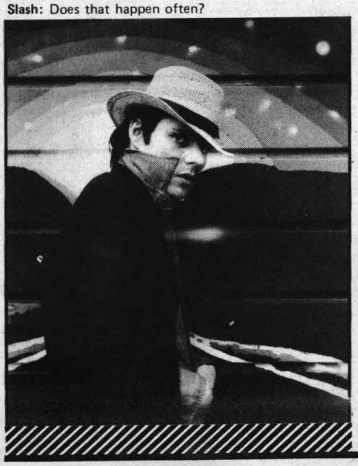
Mick Face

Chelsea

CHELSEA: Gene October — vocals, Chris Bashford — drums, Dave Martin — guitar, James Dean — guitar, Jeff Miles — bass

Interviewed at Step Forward Records. Dave Martin was absent, he'd cut his hand and had to get stitches.

Slash: You have a new lineup since Chelsea started a couple of years ago, right?
Chelsea: Right, right.
Slash: What happened in the last 2 years?
Chelsea: Really one wasn't too bothered at the time to get a permanent thing, it was just, let's go and have a good time now, tonight, if it don't last next week, so what, we'll get some more mates and other musicians in on the band as well. Originally I (Gene) had a couple of Gen X in the band and then it changed and I got another lineup and recorded 'Right to Work' which we put out the beginning of '77 and that moved onto another lineup which did 'High Rise Living.' It's very funny 'cos the same lineup has never recorded and we've got 3 records out.
Slash: How do you feel about your present lineup?
Gene: I like it, we all get on very very well. It's a very democratic band now, before it was just me saying 'You do this...' , 'you do that ...' .
Slash: How long has this band been together?
Chelsea: About 9 months, although Chris has just joined us about a month ago.
Slash: You just released 'Urban Kids,' right?
Chelsea: Yeah. We're going to do an album.
Slash: Will it be on this label?
Chelsea: That's subject to discussion. I mean, Step Forward is a great little company for an unknown band, a band that just wants to get a record out, but when a band gets to a situation where they're beginning to hit off — they get to a certain level — then this record company tends to cease there because it's not geared, it just can't no way take you that step further, can't give you that push or that backing. Bands on Polydor like the Banshees, Sham, the Jam, any of those bands with those major record companies, they do have the money and the media access to push you further. It's not because one feels that they gotta have more money, it's just that your product suffers, we sometimes cant afford to do gigs, we need a PA don't we? We need some lights, we need a van to get there, we gotta have a meal that day, it'll come to about 150 quid. No band here has got a PA . . . if you're with a big record company you possible can get your own PA. It's very difficult because once a band actually does records, then the public expect the same quality and the band likes to try and come up with the same quality . . . we've had a lot of problems recently with fighting, puts the dampers on it.
Slash: Does that happen often?
Chelsea: Not really, it started happening, discounting yesterday, the past 3 gigs before that.
Slash: Does that happen often?



Chelsea: It's the music. Sham 69 have the same problem, it's depressing music, it gets people going, it really does, especially as we're starting to attract a sort of skinhead following as well and they're notoriously violent .
Slash: Your look is definitely more and more different from the hardcore audience.
Chelsea: The bands have always been like the trend-setters . . . statements in different directions, y'know. 2 years ago, anyone that wasn't a punk was very sort of frightened and dubious about going to a punk gig. I think that's all worn off now, you get heads, you get blacks, you get skinheads, you get rockers . . .
Slash: If there was some heavy fight that just wouldn't stop, would you try to stop it?
Chelsea: Gene tried at the Marquee, we stopped the song short and Gene tried to cool them down . . . there's not a lot you can do. I wouldn't really over-build this thing up because it's really not that bad . . . but it's really strange when you're trying to sing a song and there's someone getting his head kicked in.
Slash: If it got really bad would you stop playing?
Chelsea: Yeah, well we have done a couple of times ... it's never really that violent.
Slash: To go back to that album project . . . do you have pretty much all the songs written? D'you know what's going to go on it?
Chelsea: We know about 8 songs that are going to go on it but we want about 12.

Slash: Give us the titles of the ones you know.

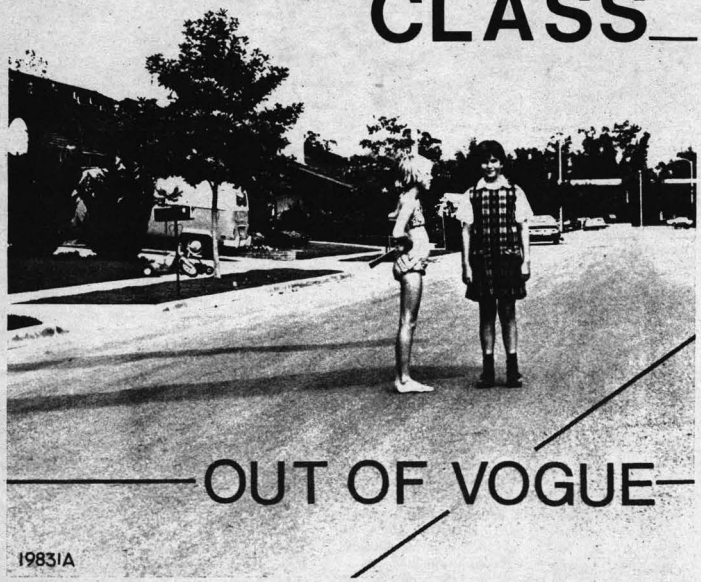
Chelsea: Two Old Men, Trouble is the Day, Decide, I'm on Fire, Come On . . .

Slash: When will it be out?
Chelsea: Late January, Early Feb.
Slash: So you don't plan to put any of the singles on it?
Chelsea: No, no . . . This is actually a problem, it's not a problem, it's a very interesting situation, Chelsea are playing gigs . . . people obviously can't sing along to us because its all new stuff right? And this is why really we want to get an album out, because kids want to hear you do something that they know. Right to Work alwyas goes down a storm because it's well known, they've got the record, they know the lyrics . . . (pause) We're definitely looking forward to going to the States, wish they'd get rid of all those tables and chairs though.
Slash: Strange audience I've heard in New York.
Chelsea: How can you sit down to rock n roll?
Slash: It's a shame you can't make LA this time because there's definitely a good audience there, they move a lot.
Chelsea: There's a possibility that if it goes well in New York and Boston that we'll stay over for another coupla weeks.
Slash: How d'you feel about the way the whole scene has evolved in the past 2 years . . . suddenly everybody is playing the big venues . . .?
Chelsea: I think it was obvious that was going to happen, people pretended it wouldn't. A lot of bands m made themselves look really fuckin' stupid by pretending, like the Pistols, the Rainbow at Christmas, two twenty-five (pounds) to get in, I really hate that. They talk about selling out and not selling out . . . 'cos basically if you've got 5,000 people who want to see a 5,000 seat venue, it's very wrong I think (Gene) to play a 500 venue and a lot of people can't get in. Although it's very hard to get a good atmosphere . . . (disagreements ensue between band members).
Slash: How about 3 nights at a 500 seater venue?
Chelsea: (some agree, some don't) . . . you'd probably get the same people every night . . .
Slash: Which bands do you find yourselves relating to? The Cortinas were at one time on the same level as you, when people talked of Chelsea they'd talk of the Cortinas.
Chelsea: The thing with the Cortinas was that we toured with them and released a record on the same label at more or less the same time — they were a really good band. There's noone we particularly relate to — I mean if you're a band you don't relate, do you? You've gotta be original.
Slash: But there must be some kind of music coming out nowadays that you feel closer to than others.
Chelsea: Oh, yeah . . . I can relate more to the Clash than to say Siouxsie and the Banshees. Basically, we're not writing 3-chord stuff anymore, there's lots of melody and changes in the songs now.
Slash: Would you say there is a brand new type of band coming out right now?
Chelsea: I think after Christmas there's gonna be another wave.
Slash: How do you feel about the music press in England?
Chelsea: They've got lots of young kids working for them who don't realize the responsibility they've got 'cos the press in England has got really the power to make or break a band and they've got some really bad journalists. If you get a lot of press and you've never played a town before, you can go straight in and do a big gig, whereas if you've had none at all, you have to start at the bottom and prove that you're a good band . . . (Ed: I don't know what happened to our tape here, sorry everybody but I couldn't hear a fucking thing) . . .
Slash: D'you manage to make enough money off Chelsea to survive?
Chelsea: I think we pay for the gigs. We don't have to work because we get a retainer, we get 20 quid each a week, it does limit you . . . you learn how to live cheaply . . . if we go out we can get into most places for nothing because we know the people and that sort of thing. We're getting paid for what we would do for nothing anyway.
Slash: Did you work before?
Gene: I never worked.
Slash: How did you live then?
Gene: Bit o' modelling. I used to hang around the King's Road a lot. Film extra work I used to do as well; I was in that Jubilee thing, that was crap, a load of shit. A few bands got good exposure like Adam and the Ants and Chelsea.
Slash: Yeah, I was going to ask you about that, I bought the album . . . a strange Adam and Ants song, electronic stuff.
Chelsea: Talking about Adam and the Ants, nobody really understands what the guy's trying to say or his interpretation of his music . . . but it's there, it's together y'know, it sounds okey doke. It's typical of the press, if they don't understand something, they always say, "Well, I don't wanna put it down.' Yet if it's hip to stick your neck out and slag something off, they will do.

THE MIDDLE CLASS

JOKE RECORDS ®

THE MIDDLE CLASS



OUT OF VOGUE

1983IA

DEBUT 45 ← r.p.m.

OUT OF VOGUE
YOU BELONG

SITUATIONS
INSURGENCE

DRUMS : BRUCE ATTA
BASS : MIKE PATTON
GUITAR: MIKE A.
VOCALS: JEFF A.

photo: Philomena

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS

Lead guitar and vocals – Jake Burns
Vocals, bass – Ali McMordie
Rhythm guitar, vocals – Henry Cluney
The band was looking for a new drummer and planning to do a tour in England at the beginning of this year. We interviewed the band at Rough Trade Records.

Slash: Since this is an American paper you might have to explain a lot about the situation in Ireland and all that. . . As a group you sing about Ireland – what's happening over there right now? What are your songs about?

SLF: The song called Alternative Ulster says there is trouble going on and Belfast is not the fun place to live, but you can still have fun; it says get an alternative ulster, do it yourself, go out and find your own fun, make whatever you wanna do and do that.

Slash: What's the youth scene over there like? Are there a lot of rock 'n' roll bands?

SLF: There's a lot of us started up fairly recently . . . there's only one, maybe two places to play. Very few groups frow anywhere else come over.

Slash: Are you considered a political band back there?

SLF: It just seems natural what we're doing. That's probably the reason Alternative Ulster didn't get famous; BBC wouldn't play us.

Slash: Because of the message?

SLF: We can only assume it's because of the lyrics, which is ludicrous because the thing sold about 45,000 copies or something.

Slash: D'you think there's some kind of subtle political censorship?

SLF: I would imagine so. They'll never own up to it; they'll give us all sorts of excuses. They'll say it's badly produced, the introduction's too long . . .

Slash: What about the first single, did that get played at all?

SLF: Again only John Peel played it.

Slash: You just finished an album for Rough Trade didn't you?

SLF: Yep.

Slash: With your old drummer?

SLF: Yeah.

Slash: Are all the songs pretty much in the same vein as the 2 singles?

SLF: There's not much Belfast music, we're trying to get away from that, about 5 songs out of 12 are Belfast. Musically most of the songs are like the 2 singles.

Slash: Are you living here permanently?

SLF: (laughs) Sleeping on people's floors.

"They say they got control of you, but that's a lie y'know"

- Alternative Ulster.

Slash: Do you think the kids in Belfast are thinking, "here they go, hitting the big time?"

SLF: We went back on the Tom Robinson tour, we were playing Belfast and we were really scared because we though the kids were goin' "Oh fuck, here they are, big pop stars" . . . it was incredible. When we walked on we couldn't play a note for about 2 minutes because you couldn't've heard with all the people standin' on their seats and cheering. It was really good.

Slash: Local boys make good, huh? Do you think that that's given a lot of incentive to kids over there to do it anyway, not worry about not being in London?

SLF: First we used to get letters saying 'It must be great in London,' but now we get 'I'm startin' a band.'

Slash: Are there record companies over there?

SLF: Just Good Vibrations.

Slash: There's a fanzine called Alternative Ulster isn't there?

SLF: Yeah.

Slash: Did you have anything to do with it?

SLF: We knew them fairly well. They wanted to give away a free flexi-disc with the next copy of their fanzine and we'd just written the first single (they asked another band to do it for them, but they said they couldn't do it). They asked us if we'd play Suspect Device on it and we said we'd sort of got that lined up for a single, we'll write a song for you, so we wrote Alternative Ulster. It was gonna be the people from Good Vibrations who were gonna finance it, I don't know what happened and the whole thing just fell through and actually we thought it was a pretty good song so we kept it in the set. Then we came over to do demo tapes for Island. Island have actually turned us down, but the tape was brough along here (Rough Trade) one night . . .

Slash: Rigid Digits (the label of their first single) was your own label which you financed yourselves?

SLF: Yeah. It started off as a demo, we recorded 500 ... we were going – we'll never get rid of 500 records. Then all the shops started ordering more and more. We had to make the sleeves for it ourselves. We'd be up at 7 in the morning to go to work, work through 'til about 5 at night, went over to Gordon's flat, be there 'til about half seven at night, start working on the sleeves, we'd finish those about 3 in the morning, back up at 7 again for work...we were wrecked by the end of the week.

Slash: About how many did you sell?

SLF: 20,000.

Slash: That's really good...so the 2 songs of the first single are gonna be on the album?

SLF: Yeah. The first two've been re-recorded and Alternative Ulster is straight on it.

Slash: How long has the band been together?

SLF: About 1½ years.

Slash: What were you doing before? Were you in other bands?

SLF: There weren't really bands as that played places... it was fun for something to do at the weekend, you know, get your guitar to it and play, but there was never anything really serious.

Slash: How did you come to be doing that tour with Tom Robinson?

SLF: It was Tom Robinson's idea. There was another band s'posed to be on the tour but something happened...we were sittin' back in Belfast and we looked at Sounds and it said 'Will somebody from Stiff Little Fingers please get in touch because Tom Robinson wanted us to go on tour with them!

Slash: Do you think touring with Tom Robinson is going to label you even more as a political band?

SLF: It all depends on what you class as politics. Basically all we're singing about is what it was for us, everyday life...and everything we are going to sing about in the future will just be everyday life...If you consider what happens to you from day to day politics, well then we are a political band, but we're not party political in any sense. It seems we'll stop singing about Belfast because now we don't live there.

Slash: Are there songs about London on the album?

SLF: They're not really **about** London...there are definitely some songs that aren't Belfast songs.

Slash: Who writes the songs?

SLF: Everybody. Our manager Gordon helps us out with words sometimes because he's a journalist, his business is words.

Slash: Are there any plans to go outside the UK in the future?

SLF: No, nothing certain.

Slash: Blowing their minds, in New York, break up in San Francisco?

SLF: At the moment we're in middle season with a record company here, hoping they'll send us to America in September.

Slash: You can't say who it is?

SLF: No.

Slash: You should come to LA, they seem to be more open for new bands than New York.

SLF: We thought that about London when we were in Belfast. The audiences aren't funny over here ... they stand there as if they've seen it all before ... at the Electric Ballroom, the last gig we did, there were 4 or 5 skinheads down in the front looking really bored, we thought fuck, we're really dying a death here and we walked off. We must've been off for five minutes and our drummer went backstage and heard the noise from the hall and stuck his head in, everybody was stampin' their feet and whistling for us to come back on.

Slash: Are there any skinheads in Belfast?

SLF: No, not really, there's not much of anything in Belfast, there's too much to fight about without that.

Slash: Are you able to make a living off your music by now?

SLF: Oh yeah, just.

Slash: Is it more expensive here than it is back home, living?

SLF: Oh yes. Back home you can get a house almost, for about 5 or 6 quid a week ... There's a lot more to do here, every night you've got at least half a dozen bands to choose from, in Belfast you're lucky to get one a week.

Slash: What happens when you go out late at night over there?

SLF: You don't. Nine o'clock you come in and you don't go out after that. If you do go out you go out in a car. If you do walk about you're going to get gangs coming over starting fighting. It's not worth it, there's nowhere to go, everything stops about 6 o'clock in Belfast.

Slash: It must be hard for young people to have a culture of their own.

SLF: That's what's so good about these bands starting up ... it's not all bad. Though I can't imagine anybody from London coming to stay in Belfast for a couple of months and enjoying themselves. After the TRB tour, when we came over the border, the soldiers stopped us. My first reaction was, was I startin' to get scared? It's fucking crazy because I'd only been away from the place for about a month. Then as we came closer to the centre, we saw all the barricades and the army moving about. I think that was the only time I felt sort of happy and realized I was home when I saw all the search barriers and things up. None of us can remember what it was like before the barricades, it started when we were about 10 years old.

Slash: How long do you think it's going to go on?

SLF: I don't think it'll ever stop.

Slash: Does that make you feel different from English kids who've never known this type of situation?

SLF: Sometimes it can make them laughable. The policemen back in Ireland have submachineguns ... and they think they've got it tough here.

Slash: Is there any trace of the National Front in Ireland?

SLF: They tried for a while . . . I'm sure they'll try again.

Slash: Do you think things might change because of the youth, if they do get together more and talk about things . . . you know?

SLF: In Belfast it's the people older that are causing the trouble and they're not going to let anybody change it. Ian Hunter said in his book, the only way to stop the trouble in Ireland is to take a whole generation of kids as they were born away from their parents, until their parents had died and then put them back in Ireland, and he's right. My girlfriend's grandmother (they're really fuckin' rich which is odd . . but never mind), claims she can smell catholics down the road, it's just inbuilt in them.

Slash: Do you think that one of the reasons you got in a rock 'n' roll band was to get out of this pattern of thinking?

SLF: Maybe not the pattern of thinking, but certainly to get out of Belfast. When you're into rock 'n' roll, it doesn't matter what religion you are, you're only playing music, you're not going about thumping people or starting fights. I reckon that if we all had machine guns we could maybe get 10 people to listen to us for an hour, but because we've all got guitars we can get 4 or 5 hundred people to listen to us for hours on end.

Slash: Has this whole new wave thing really helped as far as getting there faster; getting a record out and all that?

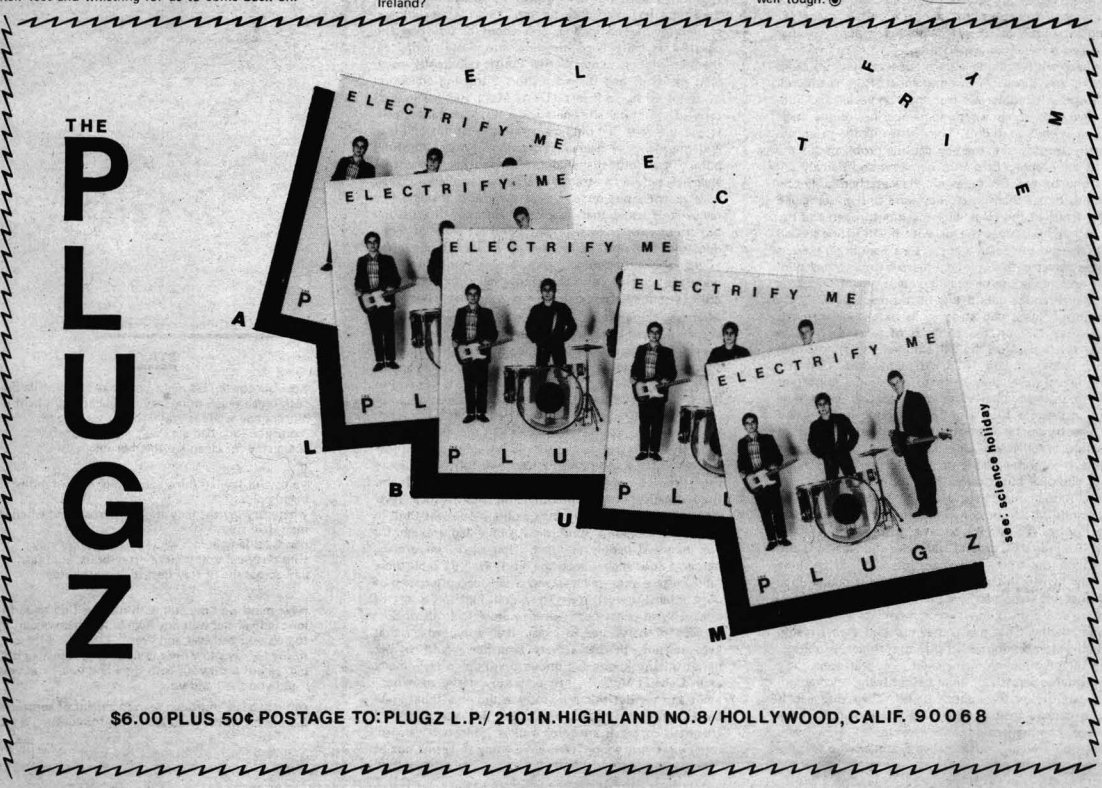
SLF: Mm hmm, nobody put out records on their own two or three years ago.

Slash: Do you think the trend is here to stay? Are there going to be independent singles from now on?

SLF: It's reached the stage where bands seem to put out one, maybe two singles on their own label, and just hope that a big company picks them up. I don't know of any bands, really, that have stayed with small labels.

Slash: Do you think eventually you're going to end up with a major label?

SLF: Yep. The only thing that's annoying is that you **have** to do that. We've got to live, we can't live on people's floors for the rest of our lives. If they (the record company) decide they don't like anything, well tough. ◉



COURAGEOUSLY ATTEMPTING THE FINAL SEPARATION FROM THE SEVENTIES.

Courageously attempting the final separation from the seventies.

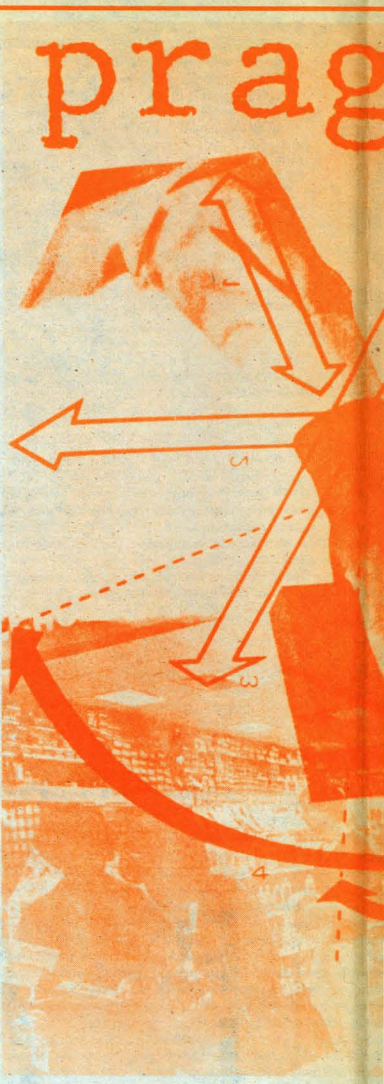
Prag VEC

In concert (with Stadium Dogs, Sounder, Cabaret Voltaire, Scritti Politti, Red Crayola) and at home in a tower block overlooking the Westway.

Mid-November at the Nashville (a London pub with an adjacent concert hall, low admission price and great beer): three bands on the bill, amongst them Prag VEC (VEC in capital letters, don't argue), a mysterious combo that's been high on my list of aesthetic priorities for a month or so ever since they released on their own Spec label a uniquely modern sounding EP that grows on you faster than a tumor on a chain smoker's lung. 4 offbeat jazzed up punky tunes (3 actually, one is a supercool frenchoid narration, a mood piece for young international riffraff) with a female voice that makes one shiver. High expectations.

But there ain't nothing about openers Stadium Dogs to make you shiver. A shrug at most. Run of the mill rock band with ludicrous frontman on vocals and idiotic antics. No songs worth remembering, and a stage act you wish you didn't. They also indulge in an abnormally lengthy set, thereby causing problems for the rest of the evening. Prag VEC come on and fiercely unleash one of the EP tunes on the detached audience. It sounds better than on record, and I find myself glued to the front of the stage with my mouth open and my feet twitching. Besides the girl with the ill fitting second hand rags and the voice that can slice your brain there is a guitar player with a minimal haircut (intellectual skinhead) and no nonsense manners, a shy gentle looking bass player and a blond kid on drums. Obviously no thoughts of image and stage looks have gone into this outfit, they rely on the strength of what they do to impose themselves on the half-satiated half still waiting general public of late 1978. As many other members of the latest wave, they seem to have more important things to achieve than visual outrage. Call it the new music proletariat look and forget about it. Musically they are trying for a relatively complicated fusion of dynamics, intelligence and aggressivity. Thunes that become memorable not thru a facile predictable hook line or gimmick but because the sheer intensity and conviction in their playing and singing force the bleeding little things unto your consciousness. If you don't know what I mean it's simply because there are not many bands like Prag VEC around and we're still all sitting and waiting for the next easily digestible ditty to be flung our way by the hit making machines. Of course Prag VEC does not always achieve the desired level, some passages are still a bit bumpy, some moments a bit confusing and chaotic. That night, they stopped their already-throbbing-after-5-minutes set due to technical problems, lost a bit of momentum, reached high gear again for a nicely intense stretch of time before being unceremoniously cut off by the control board. They shrugged it off and packed their gear, leaving the audience on the verge of comprehension and acceptance. They were replaced by a creaky outfit called Sounder who sent me boogieing to the bar.

A couple of weeks later Prag VEC were headlining (or playing last) at the Acklam Hall, a run down type of youth hall under an elevated freeway section off Portobello Road (right where the Notting Hill riots started and the Clash discovered the white riot concept.) Also playing that night were a few underground heavies like Cabaret Voltaire, Scritti Politti and England's latest resurrection from american prehistoric days, the Red Crayola (or what's left of them). Cabaret Voltaire gloomily toyed with their electronic machinery, somberly sang and mumbled of mysterious matters and stubbornly kept the same position on stage throughout the entire less than cheerful set. It was interesting and at times quite compeling, and about as uplifting and cheerful as early Nico crawling thru those mental cathedrals of hers. Later Scritti Politti reluctantly occupied the stage and played a short intriguing collection of songs with Beefheart (Trout Mask Replica period) type of structural shiftiness and elusive hesitant vocals. It was the very first public performance of this odd trio, and there was an overall impression of music carefully pulling itself out of the void, creating itself element by element before a strangely attentive audience. They have recently put out on their own label a single (see review this issue) that deserves them a lot of attention but is not exactly what potential hits are made of. For a duo (that Thompson character on vocals and guitar and a hyperactive drumming maniac behind him) Red Crayola made a lot of noise but simply failed to interest me after 3 minutes. Everyone else appeared to really enjoy what was going on, so I just stood there feeling left out and stupid until Prag VEC brought me back self-confidence. They sounded even tighter than at the Nashville, coming almost close to perfection without losing any of their music's fire and passion. Only towards the end of the set did Sue's voice start showing some strain after some especially intense singing. They didn't quite reach that peak they seemed to be heading for, and I had to wait two weeks or so before my suspicions were confirmed and I could honestly say to anyone who would listen that this was one of the greatest new bands this tired decade has been graced with. The mystical revelation in question took place at the Moonlight Club in West Hampstead, a small cozy venue big enough for two hundred people at most. That night, on a stage hardly a foot higher than the florr, Prag VEC blew me (and quite a few others) away with song after song of pure intense modernity. (They even had some sort of pocket synthesizer perched on a stool in front of Sue, a piece of hardware no bigger than a typewriter that kept startling the othrs every time Sue would get her hands on the knobs. No undue devotion to technology as in Cabaret Voltaire, just a healthy desire to experiment and try out things.) This was the music that I had been waiting for the past few years, this was the feeling I wanted to get from every fuckin' concert I went to, these were the people who were going to get us out of



The Prag VEC sing along section:

STAY

1

Stay our love in his night you cake stay awhile brass lay
seen break reach thing stay me ahead night light bed that
clothes day while is you'll longer you big lay
Your you long bed stay lay, smile front stay
them stay for clean lay the morning

2

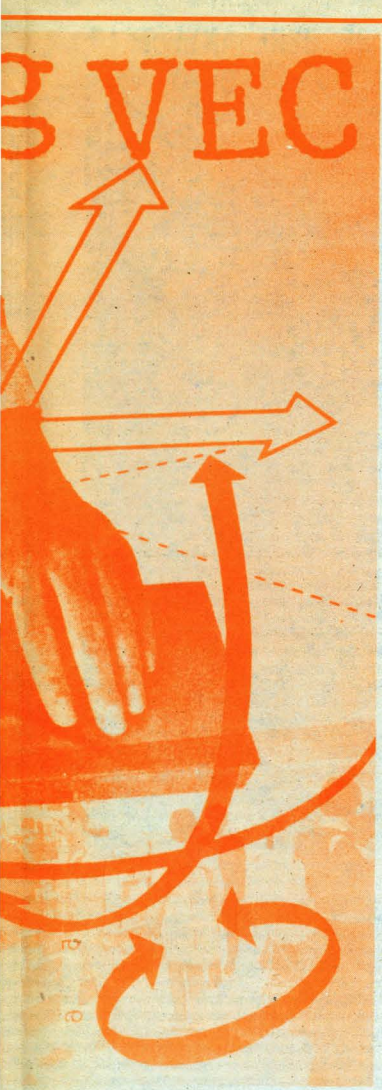
your your lay lay shine across night, his standing longer
begin colors
whatevery lay the lady the too across you, when stay see
man shall stay
hands let lady across while can lady why stay
Him dirty eat you your lay stay brass, are brass to his to
any across the of stay best the lay you stay

3

Have mind wait my still with of your I make and I'll
long lady ahead walt any awhile for them one in the big
to he's you bed ever and ever . . .
In the lay lay show my my in oh my, it see big brass men
big see but until your is to the I and you I and you, to the
I and you the I and you.

(this song is a thorough rearrangement of someone else's famous hit of the past. No prizes for guessing right.)

("Cigarettes" is on t



photos: Philomena

CIGARETTES

1
I can sit about and talk about the kind of fags we smoke
there's plain and tipped of different sorts
low tar middle tar and high and high and i
we can smoke them long or short fat or thin till we die

CHORUS
and I'm only in frustration and not in charge of vision
who would like the part the bullshit about the art

2
and don't forget the menthol though they're not so common now
and what about the different kinds of filter tipped
that's corked or ordinary, there's regal and kingsize

CHORUS . . . . dum dum dum dum dum . . .

3
There's extra and there's cheap price there's white and yellow black & brown
there're the foreign ones and there's the french ones
do you smoke them with their named ends upside down

CHORUS . . . dum dum dum dum . . .

Repeat 1st verse

just greedy with good natures that cover up the failures
your logic circuits coiled just another well oiled machine

s on the first EP)

the musical deadend that is looming ahead. How many bands have you seen lately that has given you such faith in the future?

At 3 in the morning Prag VEC talked to us in their tower block apartment overlooking one of the bleaker sections of London nightscape after taking their gear out of Acklam Hall. After an especially exciting live gig there was something maddening about the architectural atrocities that highly paid bastards had decided was good enough for the masses to live in: hundreds of identical cubicles stacked on top of one another with a few grey colored littered elevator shafts connecting them to the surface, rooms all alike with no storage space, an awkward little hallway, a prison like bathroom, dead colors on the walls. The two bands members who "live" there (Sue and John) have not tried to make it "home." Instruments and cases are piled up everywhere, the kitchen has been left in its soulless state, the lightbulbs dangle from bare ceilings. In the bedroom, a revolving bookstore rack is overflowing with sci-fi paperbacks. We ate the sorry hamburger patties and miniature buns they had been given as partial payment for that night's gig and talked while the cold wind blew against the windows.

(Members of the band are: Sue, who sings and writes all of the lyrics — Sue is from Dublin, Ireland. On guitar and support vocals John, Nick on drums and Dave on bass. They have been together since the beginning of March 1978.)

Slash: How many times have you played since March?
PV: About 20.
Slash: Before Prag VEC some of you were in the Derelicts, right?
PV: Me and John.
Slash: Which I've read somewhere described as Trotsky . . . er . . .
PV: Debatably Trotskyite. It took a long time to explain that. It's all Julie Birchill's fault, she came to see us in her non-political days and since then she's been politicized. She said something about me (Sue) rocking like a bitch and gave a full description of the clothes I was wearing and said something about it being a pity that I didn't show more of myself and now she's slagging off the Stranglers for being sexist.
Slash: What does Prag VEC mean?
PV: I'll tell you, Prag VEC means . . . you're full of foolishness . . . in Polish.
Slash: Does it?
PV: (laughs). It's the name of our central computer, it's to do with . . . it's these modern integrated circuits they use . . . (more giggles).
Slash: It's an interesting sounding name . . . Eastern European . . . futuristic . . . anyway, how did the recording of the EP come about?
PV: We did it ourselves. Al who was there tonight, he works for Honest John's (record store) and he encouraged us to get a record out and said he'd lend us the money. At first he said he's lend us all of it and he ended up lending us about a quarter of it. Nick and Dave put some money in, Rough Trade helped us out as well.
Slash: Did it cost a lot?
PV: 800 quid for 2,000.
Slash: How long have you been writing?
Sue: Since the end of the Derelicts. Well, I wrote one song when I was with the Derelicts.
Slash: Where did you learn your French?
Sue: At school and in France, mostly in France.
Slash: It sounds like you learned it from Godard movies, 'cos that's exactly the way Anna Karina speaks French.
Sue: I didn't learn my French from Godard movies. (laughs).
Slash: How strong are your connections with rock n roll?
PV: We used to play rock n roll in the last band, used to do Lou Reed numbers and Chuck Berry, but they're all other people's stuff and it's pretty rooted in tradition. There are a lot of other influences, jazzier things and poppier things, our music's a bit of everything.
Slash: Do you see yourselves as part of a certain cult?
PV: I (John) thought tonight would turn out to be like that, but I'm a bit disappointed. I think the music is quite startling in a way . . . but after today I don't know, it's just another 'rock-star-vying-for-the-best-spot' number you know.
Slash: Did you have trouble with the last song tonight?
Sue: Yeah, I couldn't breathe properly. That Cigarette is a particularly racey number. I hate doing it at the beginning 'cos it wears me out and I can't do it at the end 'cos . . .
Slash: You're worn out? (Sue laughs.) You haven't played out of London yet have you?
PV: Yes we have. We're playing in Manchester on the 1st of December.
Slash: Do you get a choice as far as who's on the bill with you?
PV: You saw it at the Nashville . . .
Slash: You did approach a few major companies right? With no luck?
PV: Virgin said we were too progressive. It doesn't matter what we play, what we sound like. They took one look at us and said . . . mm, 3 guys, woman singing, click click, Pauline, Penetration. They didn't listen to the tape.
Slash: It's the image, right?
PV: We don't have the same image as Penetration anyway. I'm very two-minded about record companies anyway, I mean you've managed to get this far without anybody, the longer you can do it the better really.
Slash: Do you find it frustrating to see some bands being able to make a living from playing?
PV: It's very frustrating, but if you're working you're having contact with other people besides music business people and that's the last thing you want to do if you're writing or you're an artist, becuase they're not the people that you're writing for, that you want to communicate with.
Slash: What d' you think's more important in the long run, doing what you want to do ahd having the freedom to do it or sticking to what you believe in and just saying 'No way' . . . I mean would you rather be a frustrated artist or a satisfied artist?
PV: The thing is that we've accumulated an awful lot of stuff in the last year. We've got a lot of ideas anyway, so it would be very nice if somebody said here's 5,000 pounds or here's 20,000 pounds, do what you want to do for the next six months and then we could do that, six months would be over and then we could start afresh again.
Slash: And if they didn't like it they would say you don't get anymore money, right? It's done with boks . . . maybe it's the name Prag VEC, they don't know how to package it . . .
PV: I think they'll think of a way . . . I mean, we come ready packaged.
Slash: So since the Clash's 1st album was the sound of the Westway in '76, is Prag VEC the sound of the Westway in '78?
PV: Definitely . . . they weren't the sound of the Westway in '76, we know Joe Strummer from a little longer back than the Clash, he didn't live within the sound of the Westway, he lived a few hundred yards down the road, not like this.
Slash: D'you have any idea how the single's doing?
PV: Well, we pressed 2,000 and they've all gone . . . it's been released about 3 weeks.
Slash: That's good. You're going to press more, right?
PV: One day, when they get round to it, we'll have some more records. They're not very easy people to deal with. The music business is so antiquated when it comes to the actual pressing of the record, I couldn't believe it. They had about 4 automatic machines that press two records at a time and all the rest are done by hand, so you have these guys standing at the machine right? And a squidge of vinyl comes out and they take it out and they put a label down and they put the lump of vinyl on the machine, put another label in, press the button, pick the record up, add another squidge of vinyl and then they take off the waste vinyl. I mean all the glamor of the music business just disappears when you see that. All immigrant labor, the lowest wage. This is what keeps the superstars in their cocaine. Gary (the guy who promoted the gig tonight) he had a wonderful job, he worked for Decca, pretty good quality control, he had to do an 8 hour shift listening to one Moody Blues album over and over again.
Slash: (after hearing a thundering rumblinb noise that runs through the building) What's that?
PV: A train.
Slash: How's life on Westway?
PV: It's OK, we haven't heard a crash tonight. You get used to it. Where Wendy (a friend in the room with us) lives it's a bit like this only the whole thing's on its side. They have these sort of tunnels with all the front doors coming out of the tunnels. There's terrible echoes in the tunnels.
Slash: Where is that?
PV: Just over the road.
Slash: I know he (Nick) is a cook (he'd cooked the hamburgers) but what are your jobs?
PV: (John) Part-time book salesman. (Dave) Geologist. (Sue) You can't print this.

"WE ARE DEAD KENNEDYS, NOBODY ASKED FOR US, BUT WE'RE HERE ANYWAY!"

photo: Melanie

D E A D

K E N N E D Y S

photo: Philomena

The Dead Kennedys are from San Francisco. They are Ray Valium on guitar, Klaus Fluoride on bass and vocals, 6025 on other guitar, Bruce Slesinger on drums and Jello Biafra on vocals (and theories). Everyone was present, especially Biafra.

Slash: How often do you play San Francisco?
DK: Sometimes as much as 4, 5 times a month, sometimes as little as 2 or 1.
Slash: How long has the group been together?
DK: Technically we've been together since July. Bruce joined a week before our first gig...I (Biafra) was wandering around trying to get in bands and couldn't and then I saw an ad: 'Guitarist wants people for new wave band' and so I called Ray and we hit it off really well immediately, it started from there.
Slash: Have you had any bad raps because of the so-called bad taste of the name of your band?
DK: Oh yes, even Dirk Dirksen (Mabuhay manager) at times said he thought we were in real bad taste, but he let us play on the 22nd of November, the 15th anniversary of John's assasination. The Mabuhay only got 3 bomb threats the night we played.

Slash: Would you say you're a kind of anti-liberal band?

DK: Not really, no, anti-complacency mainly.
Slash: Tell us what 'California Uber Alles' is about.

DK: it's about, essentially, complacency of the people who came out of the sixties and were dull then, but became set in their ways now; some of whom are just sitting back waiting for someone to tell them what to do, whether it be Jim Jones or Jesus Christ or what have you. First I began looking around wondering what kind of religious leader might fill the role of being able to pull it all together and take over the country or what have you and none of them seemed to have quite enough just yet both the power base and support of people who pull strings. Then I noticed one guy working his way up through the American political system itself, coming out of the '60s as he has, has both an angle of this kind of way to achieve power and plus the following of a lot of the old hippies, saying he's the man who should be president etc. etc. And judging from what I've read Jerry Brown seems to have the same kind of lust for power that people like Nixon, Jim Jones and Hitler and others had. Some people have charged that Nixon was planning a total takeover of the country during the bicentennial. But I don't think Nixon could've ever done it because he's just so flakey and immature. Brown has this eerie control, this total lack of mistakes and blunders.

Slash: Do you think the new music and attitude that some people have is going to stop all that?

DK: So far I think we've gotten a few people to think about this and a few other things, but the music is going to have to spread.

Slash: What's the club situation in San Francisco now?

DK: The Mabuhay is in trouble and I want to see it survive simply because from what I've heard about down here after the Whisky kicked out the punk bands, the scene just kind of splintered, there wasn't as much communication or organization and the bands are getting bored and the people are getting bored and there's not much energy happening. What's happened with the Mabuhay is, there was a police raid 2 days after Diane Feinstein took over as mayor. (I don't know if there was a connection or not but I wouldn't be at all surprised. Like she's hired 250 extra cops, one leather bar has lost their license and 2 others have been raided and street musicians are having a tough time.) Ness at this point faces a possible 18 month jail sentence for letting minors into the club and selling them drinks. I keep wondering why they don't institute a hand stamp system. So now more than half the punk audience, a lot of the lively ones are real young and can't get in any more. But instead of blaming the police or Mayor Feinstein or whatever, they all blame Dirk Dirksen. So the young people are cooking their own goose by picketing the Mabuhay in revenge for them getting kicked out, rather than laying low for a couple of months like they did during the last police raid. Some new clubs are opening up, I hope they last before the police clamp down on them too. I think finally the punk audiences are learning if they want to save their places to play, they've gotta at least take some semblance of good care of them. I've noticed outside the new Masque that there hasn't been a whole lot of spray painting outside the place which is good.

Slash: It takes a few clubs to close down before they get the point.

DK: I (Biafra) like to trash things too, but I wake up the day after, I go – shit, noone can play here anymore. You should be trashing things like Bank of America and MacDonalds. It was really amazing when we played this club in Berkeley that got closed down afterwards, found out that the guy putting on the show didn't intend to pay anybody, the spray painting began and people spray painted 'I hate the rich' on Ma and Pa's liquor store and completely ignored the Wells Fargo Bank down the street. (Pause, thinking of question) D'you guys have any demo tapes?

Slash: Yes we've got some really good tapes but we don't have a label.

DK: (laughs) What happened was, we recorded them and then eventually we got a mix that we liked and the producer didn't like, so he decided we'd gone against his authority as producer (as he put it) and he's blocking the release of the thing as a single.

Slash: Who is this lovely producer?

DK: Let's call it-'name withheld to protect the guilty.'

Slash: Which songs did you do?

DK: We recorded 5 and we were planning on at least 3. The 3 would be California Uber Alles, Kill the Furor and Straight A's.

Slash: How many songs do you have?

DK: Four hundred and fifty something...(laughs) we follow the Martin Mull school of song writing, keeping in shape by writing 30 or 40 songs a day, we've only played a few of them live however.

Slash: If the bands signed up with big record companies do you think it would diffuse some of the meaning, some of the anger?

DK: I think some people feel that way about the Clash.

Slash: D'you think your name would be an obstacle to being signed with Warner Bros?

DK: We've been told both ways by people, some people say 'you ain't never gonna get signed with a name like that' and other people have said it'll have such instant disease appeal that some company might want to take a chance, just like Warner Bros. eventually did with Alice Cooper.

Slash: Are you going to play other towns in the next few weeks?

DK: I think it's very important for punk bands to consider playing small towns. We don't have anything lined up, we'd like to tour more, but we can't afford it.

Slash: What do you think of the politics of the new wave? Is it going to go beyond the music?

DK: Well of course a lot of us hope so. A lot of the way people are controlled in the country is by positive reinforcement fun. The reason a lot of people got political in the '60s was 'cause it became a fad, people decided, hey politics is fun, and then unfortunately they didn't have a coherent philosophy so the whole political movement kind of went down the drain after the Vietnam war was over, because that was where the main concentration of the fad was . . .

Slash: Do you think it's coherent, what the new wave is talking, or screaming about?

DK: Well it depends on the band. Creative complaining is one of my favorite things to do. But at the same time I think you can only be real dogmatic and moralistic for so long. People sooner or later should be convinced that brining down the government and anarchy in general is fun and as soon as a lot of Americans see the word fun flashing on and off, they'll go 'Oh I want to be an anarchist too.'

Slash: What's your message to Los Angeles?

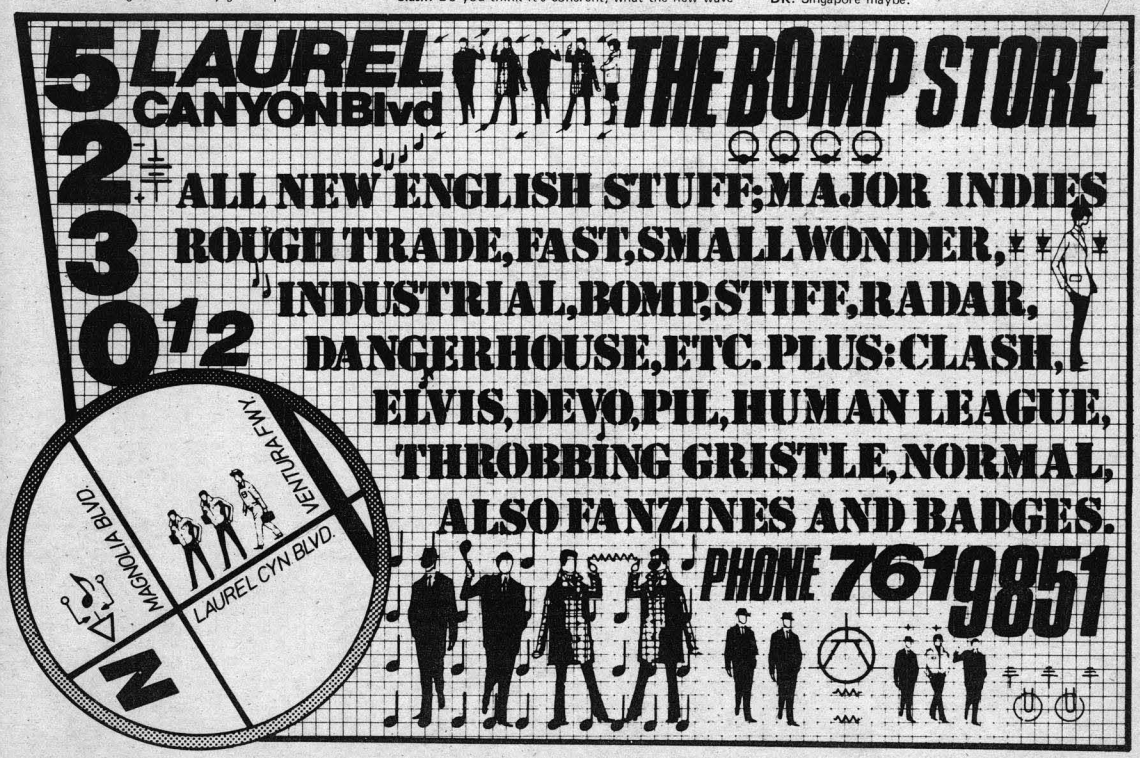
DK: Let's see . . . oh I know . . . here we are, Readers Digest fans, the latest update of the serial on current vacant strangers . . . one I'd never heard of before that I was flipped over was Edward Gein, he was a Wisconsin farmer in the 1950's, known for his ready smile. Trouble is, he wanted to be a woman, so what does he do? He kidnaps 15 of them over a period of several years, takes them home and skins them alive, so he could wear their dried out skins under his clothes. Then he mounted their faces on masks and hung them up in one room of his house. When police raided his house they found that his silverware was hand-carved out of human bones, and he had an entire freezer full of human organs that he'd been living off! He was committed to a mental institution. He might well be out now. There was another guy, his name was Samuel Nash who had an interesting quote about why he murdered a 10-year old kid: 'There he was, his whole life was in front of him – fun, nothing but fun, I never have any fun so why should he? Besides, I've never killed a kid before.' It's amazing what American society drives people to. At least in Malaysia, some of the tribes there have an outlet for this (at least they used to before Western, quote unquote civilization crept in) was that if you really felt frustrated you could run through the village with a kinfe hacking as many people as possible before they hacked you . . . Message: whatever you do don't turn mellow. More heavy messages . . .we're all vacant strangers, there's who lives inside all of us . . . um. Dead Kennedy's – political stone-fish with a sense of humor. You know what a stone-fish is don't you?

Slash: No.

DK: If you step on one they squirt poison into your feet.

Slash: Where do you find them?

DK: Singapore maybe.



Staged Events

SCHIZOS, THE STRICT IDS, NEGATIVE TREND AND THE MUTANTS AT THE OTHER MASQUE

The night the Masque bit the dust. Too late for the Schizos, got there just in time for the Strict Ids' first official L.A. gig. The right side of the PA speakers was dead, everyone knew it but nothing could be done. The mood was grim. Nevertheless the Ids started their unique set with as much fury as they could squeeze into what remained of the sound system, assaulting the lethargic audience with their successive waves of grating teeth clenching sound barrages, pounding their ominous nasty beat into our skulls with cold, calculated precision. And in spite of the technical inadequacies one could detect underlying currents to the main frontal noise wall, like Alex' muted guitar layers or Tom's complementary parallel beat that make some of the songs hypnotizing in a way an upfront all out attack could never achieve. If you brain is going to get hit and not soothed, it likes it better if the violence is multiple and rich. It will ask for more. Singer Mike has not yet given a thought to lame matters like audience rapport and image building, too bent on expulsing from his mind the shrieking tumult that lives inside. Not everyone manages to look like they're being exorcised while singing, not everyone will understand that some things just can't be said any other way. After only 3 shows the Strict Ids are already in a class of their own, obviously not very dependent on trends or fun time seekers for their survival. Are you satisfied with YOUR daily music?

After that the shit hit the fan, the evening crumbled away in various dissatisfied moments tied together by stretches of uptight restlessness. Minutes after Negative Trend started the new PA (theoretically a major improvement that would leave us breathless in awe) fizzled out and left us breathless in disgust. Negative Trend (not an easygoing bunch under the best conditions) were fuming in frustration, unable to continue what had begun as a sizzling onslaught of savage rhythms and blood curdling vocals. Rik stared at the dead mike with genuine malevolence, Will the coiled bass player was pacing the stage to let off steam, the audience was jeering, finally they gave it another try with another mike, half way thru the next song it also died, Rik stopped a bit later, a nasty smile on his face. They stormed off stage, amateur technicians fiddled with the machinery, the band was persuaded to give it another try, so with all the fury they are capable of they did. They didn't make it very far, wham goes the sound. All in all Negative Trend must have given up, unplugged and come back on to get the fucking show going about 3 or 4 times. I lost track. During one song Will flew at some troublemaker below like a human missile, still clutching his bass. They exhorted the crowd to show more violence than the token traces they had shown so far, a couple of kamikaze kids happily complied, at some point the drum kit collapsed, blood was dripping down Will's head, Rik hung himself with the mike chord, the dark side of things had taken over the joine. Yet in spite of the most disjointed, uncontrollable show they probably have ever been forced into there reamined glimpses of great spooky power in the Trend's music and presence. Sometimes slower than most of the bands on the circuit, sometimes harsher and more aggressive than it is usually allowed even in underground dives they had something mythical and legendary about them, like hidden links with other desperate outlaws burning up with hatred and hopelessness, they could have been lone gunslingers or suicidal anarchists, they're in a punk band due to circumstances and don't you forget it. Their music and their words are just one way to relieve the tension that they carry, and most likely a quite unsatisfactory one. It's only rock n roll, and for a few more demanding types it's just not quite enough.

photo: Kerry Colonna

In spite of the technical catastrophes past and most certainly to come the Mutants invaded the stage with not a care in the world, blasting away on all fronts and determined to pull this show out of the pit, sound or no sound, audience or no audience. And they rocked themselves and whoever remained into a fine admirable frenzy, falling about knocking into each other wailing harmonizing and even dangling the mikes in front of the PA columns when more conventional backing licks just wouldn't do. Somehow they salvaged the show where anybody in their right mind would have taken the hint and admitted defeat.

PS: Fears of a grand disaster for the next night remained unfounded, the system held up like a good machine should, and the bands were free to sadistically work over a few brains. Which I'm told they did with true flamboyance.

Kick

RHINO 39, DEAD KENNEDYS, GERMS at the New Masque

JUST DESSERTS: "NEW MASQUE"

Take one large unit of oxygen – preferably the stale Hollywood variety – and encise it with six cement surfaces. Locate on famous intersection. Put four surfaces aside for acoustical purposes. In one of the remaining surfaces, knock out a rectangular section at ground level – this is the "entrance." The last surface is the "floor area." Choose one that is hard and sticky, and large enough to accommodate several hundred bored teenagers, a mixing booth and a stage.

Squeeze the teenagers through the entrance individually, removing their green leafs as you do so. Scatter randomly around the floor area. Let teenagers circulate freely along the surfaces, amongst themselves, or even back out the entrance. Place three bands on the stage, in order of potential teenage activation, and plug into electrical and emotional outlets. Heat until cold (approximately 3 hours) and serve immediately.

This perky concoction is suitable for indiscriminate tastes and limited budgets. For the main course, one should bow thrice towards Cherokee Ave. and give a prayer for Brendan's perseverance.

First band: Rhino 39. The only thing to say about Rhino 39 is that there's not much to say about Rhino 39.

Second band: Dead Kennedys. The name says it all. Political terrorists may plant bombs, but the Dead Kennedys plant whoopee cushions. They are the Dick Tucks of rock n roll. While the Dils rabble rouse from plywood platforms, the Dead Kennedys would just as soon bring you to a bar and gabble over Black Russians. Revolutionary Ridicule. "Laught at it long enough and it'll go away." That's not only a healthy position, but also a realistic one. I mean, just how long can we afford to take this shit seriously??

Musically, they're intriguing. Dead Kennedys .001 · .004 are adept at erecting an electric fence of sounds, and if you concentrate long enough, a whole slew of graffitti and embellishments pop into view. The wall may knock into your skull, but its their downplayed sophistication that makes you stop, look, listen... wonder who built it and why. It's a sound that is immediately translatable onto vinyl, and it even appears that they will fare better on record than on stage. The weak link of their performance, oddly enough, is their singer.

Biafra Jello has a good pair of vocal chords and wry lyric sense, but on stage he seems mannered and clumsy. He is in a twilight zone between unconscious intensity and conscious entertainment – resembling a deoped-up Leo Sayer attempting a John Denny imitation. His real saving grace is his obvious enthusiasm for performing, his need to be on stage whether he belongs there or not. When he gave in to either side of the emotional/intellectual dichotomy – his leaps into the crowd, his hilarious mantry position on "California Uber Alles" – he was effective, otherwise he was lame. Would it be idiotic to say that the Dead Kennedy's could be SF's Weirdos? Good, I'll say it.

Third Band: The Germs. "The Legendary Darby Crash and the Germs" – looks good in print, sounds good in hushed whispers. Our most infmaous commodity is still going strong. One of the last survivors of the primordial post-glitter pool, this strain seems to be surviving on sheer will power alone. I mean, what else could there be? Not a record contract, that's for sure. They write classics, but not hits. They have their little cult, but Mass Acceptance is just out of the question. I can name a couple of editors who are fond of them, but can you imagine Jan Wenner savoring "Sex Boy"? What could it be that makes the Germs persist on existing, despite everything . . . could it actually be that here's a group that exists for "no rhyme or reason?" No, not really. They exist for Darby Crash's rhymes and Darby Crash's reasons. And take one guess who has the will power.

They're a much tighter and more commanding group since the Masque benefit a year ago. They're alarmingly good, in fact. That joke has an arresting punchline in Don Bowles, perhaps the first real stylist since KK. What's funny is that he developed his two-fisted offensive in only seven months. He has no right to be that good . . . look long it's taken Lorna to make sense out of her bass. And she does now. Pat Smear has always transcended any critical comment. None could do him justice. Pat is the most Germatic of them all, and if I could write like Pat plays . . . well, you wouldn't be reading this now, that's for sure. The Germs are like epileptics, one fit leading to another with equal intensity and lack of grace.

Darby Crash has further streamlined his ritual. The cut-with-glass routine finally got stale, so he confines his Iggian antics to shaved armpits and amplifier swan dives. When those get stale, I don't know what he'll do. His act will be No Act at all, that would be something new. His genius has always been a matter of content and not form. His power far outstrips his imagination, even in his (great) lyrics, which are closer to propaganda than poetics. He has that certain something, so hard to put your hand on. It demands a response without posing a question. When it comes out on stage, he's riveting. When the "No God" chords come crashing down, and his eyes burn in the cosket and he lookds skyward in a defiant grimace and horrible scream, and the audience claws at each other like uncaged savages; when he looks capable of psychosomatic suicide. Yet, instead of being a decent chap and killing himself, he apologizes for his crooked teeth and modest wardrobe. C'mon, Darby, that's not what we pay for. No one takes sides over sympathy pleas.

His rock n roll band may be almost played – certainly his sleeves are empty. The Germs will finally rest as a true myth and Darby will enter the World Domination ring – winner controls everything, losers teach existentialism in alternative schools. And that could prove to be real fun, too. He already has his swastika/circle, now he needs a minority group to prosecute. If he keeps up a sense of humor, he could start with rock musicians.

I sure hope he keeps his sense of humor... when nihilism becomes conventional, what is there left?

Will L'Amato

THE OTHERS, THE YOUNG MARQUIS, THE BRAINIACS, DELL AND THE SENSATIONS, FEAR, U.X.A., LEVI AND THE ROCKATS, Friday and Saturday at the New Masque

One night hardly anyone shows up, next night everybody and their out of town sister is rushing to the door. Conclusion: if you want to get to the trendie's wallets this month, give 'em rockabilly. Ha, fads . . . Anyway, on Friday the few of us who bothered to show up got The Others, Dell and the Sensations, Fear and U.X.A. The Others sounded like every other band but played longer than most, they could have been vaguely promising two years ago but a lot of safety pins have gone under the bridge since, they even look kind of angry but by now only the lettuce at Safeway don't look angry, identikit punk 1 2 3 4 I don't mind it's okay music to drink beer to but somebody minded and pulled the plug on them, big hassle, the girl singer has a fit insults Brendan to his face (so what's new?), they scream bloody rip-off but the whole twenty-two people in the audience couldn't care less, christ what are we doing here????

Dell and the Sensations have been doing the carnival-people-of-all-nations-get-together jamboree liberal pow wows circuit for many moons and it shows. They're so used to trying to please all of the people all of the time that they can't tell heart music from barmitzvah background music. On Friday, they did a show that would have had grandparents happily dancing withtheir grandchildren at a wedding reception but came about as close to reggae as Donny and Marie do. The cherry on top of the cake was a "reggaefied" version of the sickening "there ain't no sunshine" (When she's gone...) that went down as easily as a cup of raspberry flavored pop wine that's been sitting by the sink for two weeks. Kind of made you gag, with the most godawful lingering aftertaste. The random shouts of "reggae" this and "reggae" that didn't help a bit. There were also a few inocuously pleasing calypso numbers that had some of the good natured crowd good naturedly bopping, kind of all right 'n a Kingston Hilton cocktail lounge way, exotic junk for the jaded urbanies. On Saturday it almost looked as if Dell had sensed and learnt something from the Friday night washout, the set started rather strong and tight in a revised Wailers way, there was almost a bass sound to hang on to, hopes were raised and feet started moving, but within ten minutes it was back to the brotherhood of blandness, pointless solos that strangled themselves and croaked forever, percussion decorations that hung onto nothing, show biz vocalizing and cliches galore. Not forgetting the "Ain't no Sunshine" epic, probably a big crowd pleaser at one time, we sure ain't getting younger, are we Dell? Not much else to say 'cept it would be nice to have a reggae band at the Masque, god knows we could use some different sounds, but let's not let our charming honky naivete get out of hand: we like our music strong and stiff, right straight to the chest, and we've had it up to here with the countless imitations that have been shoved our way ever since we can remember.

Before we get a look at the more "credible" bands of the weekend, let me ask a couple of innocent questions indirectly related to those two nights' festivities: The second night opened with something that called itself the Young Marquis and that is rumored to be one of alternative radio's most entertaining personalities. Since I am a terminal snob and don't listen to the creepy medium myself I don't know about this young duke or whatever and his brand of airwaves charm but I do know that on stage the man is an obnoxious big mouthed tiresome showoff, and almost forced me to throw in his direction a can of Colt 45 that STILL HAD SOME GOOD HONEST BEER LEFT IN IT. Talk about an impulsive and regrettable gesture! So, who decided to give 40 minutes of our precious weekend time to this exercise in self-indulgence? The only people showing any interest in the guy's redundant covers of pseudo new wave hits were his rowdy cliquey 60s-hip-with-a-mustache pals who pogoed themselves silly with that famous Burbank abandon. Jerks and jerkettes with middle-aged minds laying their sick idea of a "good time" on the rest of us. They gave me the creeps, and that's no way to feel on a Saturday night at the Masque. If I'm in the mood for hatred I can always go to the Starwood.

Question number two: Why does Brendan think that his stage satirical impersonations of punkitude are funny or exciting after two songs? Maybe that crazy Scot sees in his performance some sort of therapeutic value: it allows him (and that flipped court jester of his Geza) to express his well publicized contempt for certain deplorable aspects of the scene, and also gives his ever resentful customers a chance to get back at him (which they did with genuine enthusiasm and vigor). But why wallow in it? Brendan, leave the abuse to Dirksen. Don't YOU be the anchovy that fucks up a good pizza. Don't tell me you miss the SatinTones THAT much!

Bands before last were Fear on Friday, Braniacs on Saturday. Fear we all know and love except lots of you I won't mention names you snotty wimps anyway enough private messages they once again outdid themselves desecrated the national anthem and many other things dear to our hearts, subtle as an air raid that set was, but don't misjudge them and go calling them music brutes 'cos they can play and sing better than the whole load of you, it's just a style of simplicity and wholesomeness they have opted for to counteract the limp leanings of the city's sewer children. Fear at night, chili dogs for breakfast, half a pint of vodka with a couple of twinkies for lunch, I love . . . living in the city. Braniacs the night after, they have some staunch supporters amongst us, one of them raves and drools about their music in another review near this one, I'll leave it at that let the experts talk I say. Final contestants now: Levi and his Rockats and U.X.A. The rockabilly babies first. The heartthrobs of every romantic punkette in the metropolis, the vision of innocence in a scene of weariness. Looking like perfect reincarnation of other bad boys long ago forgotten, absolutely soaked in rockabilly lore from foot to jelly roll, they instantly took whatever still lingered in the air of late 70s consciousness and attitudes, killed it with some choice classic intro dating back to the days when one could genuinely rock and go bonkers on the strength of a few tinny notes swiftly following each other, and charmingly revived the roots of the whole mess (today's rock) for the delighted hundreds who still love nothing better than a party. It was a party all right, and the juke box was stacked. I mean Levi and pals kept pulling them out from the dust, tune after tune of sexual innuendos now safer than nursery rhymes, broken hearts, big cars and wild parties, all strung on clean elementary riffs with the beat that won't quit and the boom boom bass that can be used as a stepladder for the highlights. The guitars swung up and down with the tempo, the hairdos bopped and stuck to the sweat and Levi who obviously has dedicated himself to singlehandedly turn the flow of time around and pin it there once and for all so that we can all finally dedicate every moment to the serious business of dancing, kissing and combing one's hair, Levi the englishman most eligible for honorary American citizenship, Levi just showed how stylized your wild and sexy side has to remain if you are intent on becoming a cool cat: If you move too much, sing too forcefully you ve blown it. Tease, suggest, smooth it out, a forgotten art form in these days of bloody cuts and crawling through the audience. And so they rocked and rocked all night long giving everyone the time of their lives, and then rocked some more 'cos nobody wants a good party to end, not with what's waiting outside in the real world. I don't want to grow up either.

U.X.A. is an erratic band in an erratic world. They have had more ups and downs that most bands combined and still keep going Dee Dee's haunted eyes never focusing on the gaping faces below, always looking a bit beyond tonight at whatever is out there that makes little girls get up on sleazy stages and sing. Dee Dee is not a spotlight creature like so many other girl singers, and where others show acting abilities or exhibitionist tendencies all that keeps her going is determination. U.X.A. music is not flash or fun, it's a necessity. All that is needed for all this to reach the public in a less haphazard manner than it has so far is more exposure and more self-confidence, a quality many other bands with a lot less authenticity are certainly not short of.

Kick

SPECIAL EXTRA: The Clash on stage in London (twice), Santa Monica (once), facts, opinions, and...still no interview.

December something, in London. The Clash are playing a "Sid Vicious Defense Fund" benefit at the Music Machine. No press passes, everyone must pay, it's for the cause. Naturally it is sold out before you have time to search your pockets for the dough. I have never seen the Clash before, I shift from fear to anticipation with every tube stop. Security galore at the door and around the entrances, I suppose benefits for criminals do deserve extra loving care. INside it looks just like them books about punk and how it used to be: scene time, the IN gig to be at tonight. Sid sure got lots of friends. First band on is the INNOCENTS, an almost all girl band (the exception is an ex-Electric Chair) that have been adopted by the Clash as their current opening band. They're all right with nothing special, it goes by without any impact, background noise to fill the void while waiting for something. They play a rather long set with virtually no response from the crowd. There are beers to score, friends to look for and strangers to be judged by their looks so no one has time to spare for the band. The music has become just one of the many elements of THE SCENE, an increasingly disturbing aspect of some gigs. Soon young bands may simply refuse to open those "special" shows once they realize it's the surest way to stay anonymous. After a long posing break some guys walked on, one of them Mick Jones on guitar, don't know and after a while didn't care who the others were. Innocuous America influenced music (even did a Dylan tune), maybe they were together for a laugh, Mick seemed to be having a good time being flash on the guitar, certainly a less demanding job playing with this bunch than being a fourth of the Clash, and a lot less imposing. The band disappeared but hardly anyone noticed.

After them the legendary Slits took over and good naturedly slobbered their own brand of everyday music all over the joint, Ari Up decked out for the night in her version of classical entertainment gear; tired tutu probably full of cigarette holes and fishwife hairdo miraculously grown overnight to jungle proportions, their songs came across with more punch and focuse one should expect from this type of stubbornly unconcerned assembly of misfits, after all Palmolive had been replaced by a genuine rock drummer so there must be hidden somewhere in this carefree parade a genuine thought or two about the future of the band, not that the Slits are yet on the verge of an EMI offer, or any kind of offer for that matter. They should be granted the honorary Los Angeles New Wave Spirit Medal for having lasted that long without any faint hint of a brighter future having materialized en rouse. Keep at it, girls (and boy), you must be doing something right!

The Clash stormed on, and until then it had been more waiting than live music, and most of THAT wasn't what you'd call memorable. Anyway here they were, just like in the pictures, Mick hair shorter than his L.A. visit, scarf and swagger and very very rock n roll (check early vintage pics for comparisons and private conclusions) Joe having no choice but to look like Joe and as real and likeable as I wanted him to be, Topper way back in sweat suit and sea of drums and Paul on the right minus his spike, serious and low key. They exploded into a series of songs off the "Rope" album, giving every tune that extra raw franticness that the record lacks and not losing any of the melodic sophistication in the process. Like erasing the Sandy Pearlman gloss and being blasted by a breath of fresh air. And here I was, liking them quite a lot in other ways than I had expected, getting adjusted to the fact that they were a hell of a unique rock/punk band with potential for being THE essential street band of the next dacade, and with flaws, weaknesses and an occasional lack of scope in their own self-limitations that made you wonder how they ever got that far on such shaky ground. That night Strummer's vocals came close to critical depths, once he offhandedly acknowledged the fact that it wasn't up to standards and gratingly yowled the opening lines to the next tune (could have been Police and Thieves, the worst possible live version of this seemingly undemanding tune, a butcher job that effectively proved that nothing is as easy as it sounds on record, especially them slower tunes that show the gaps in the seams and the studio bluffs behind the cracks.) Yet "Stay Free," a tune that I can happily skip over on vinyl, was honest and straightforward, Mick Jones gave Joe a breather on vocals and although he has none (and does not try for) of the manic I-mean-it-man edge of Strummer he handled that particular song with class and style. Later thru the set they brought in the old classics of the first album, and it was reassuring to see that the newer cuts had been accepted as enthusiastically by the fans as the standards, and in most cases performed with much more challenge and audacity. There is always trouble brewing when a band, no matter how good and clever they can be, have to rely on the older stuff to get the place jumping. Thank god the Clash audience is still right there with them, with fans and band nicely progressing along to being the best band and the best audience of rock history. And if you think we've moved away from strictly punk matters by getting into this rock history business, you're quite right. The Clash have a lot going for them, some of it in the right direction as defined by this paper's particular stand and some of it toward various shiny shortcuts to mass acceptance and commercial relevance, with the negligible price of image shifting and asethetic streamlining (Sandy Pearlman in complete control of next album would be a way to get there fast) to pay for the material bonuses that would fall like rain on our ex-culture guerrillas. Do you know how much one of the big commercial enterprises would pay for a really good, modern, challenging and exciting but ultimately SAFE new band? Why do you think they're spending millions on the Cars and their like? The way they see it, they're bound to score one of these days with the new Beatles/Rolling Stones, the catalyst of the 80's, the big prize in the sweepstakes to the future. If only the Clash would agree on being just a bit .... easier to hug and dream about. Will they, won't they???

Part two. later in the same month, at the Lyceum.

This was a genuine tour gig (the 'sort it out" tour that preceded the American "Pearl Harbor 79" tour that swiftly got renamed–who chickened out and who agreed to soften the image??the "Give 'em Enough Rope" tour – creative labelling that one, must originate from record company think tank). with two dates at the worn-out Lyceum (a third one was added due to public demand) featuring the Innocents, the Slits and the old boys. The Innocents continued to be real troupers and played their hearts out to mild gobbing and can throwing, the Slits played the Slits again with many real fans giving them the roots support they must treasure since nothing else has come from the sky above as it did for almost every other odd assortment of misfits with stolen instruments. Yet I kept thinking ugle stuff like them being the Clash's gutter credibility token, the Wild Man Fischers to the Frank Zappas, the naive fools in the court of the king. Maybe they're just good friends and I am a paranoid twisted hair-splitter. That's what happens when a section of our flesh like the Clash gets accepted and coveted by the other side: everyone left behind in our day to day insecurities and rages hopes for the best and keeps expecting the worst. Upward mobility can be a bitch on relationships. I know: back to music. Okay. The Clash. The stage. The audience. Mix the three, shake well, pour. It was pretty much the same set as the benefit, but this time I felt the power, I saw the myth in action. You guessed it, they were HOT. Strummer effortlessly carried the tunes to the very end, the rest felt more secure and willing to relax (which in the Clash handbook has never meant mellowing out) and every moment felt true and right. The few weak lapses were immediately erased by the next explosion, the Clash and their music were everything they should be, which is a lot. Honorable mention to Topper Headon, the invisible heartbeat, the long distance runner behind the 50 yard dash experts. Second honorable mention to the audience, so beautifully necessary to the show (try to find thousands of paying customers that know the lyrics to every song YOUR band has ever done, and sing them and dance them and will not drop until you do!), so energized by the music the meaning behind the music and each other that even skeptics and mutterers gawk and envy (an impossible task to achieve during a wham bam american tour in front of brand new customers with curiosity as their main motive for being there). The Clash are not the REAL Clash without their audience, and so what we all saw in America was like a sketch that hasn't been filled in, and without imagination the fuss about these four guys might have seemed a bit exaggerated. It wasn't, we're just in the wrong place, as usual. ◉

THE CLASH, BO DIDDLEY, THE DILS
Feb. 9, Santa Monica Civic

The Dils said they'd be on at 8:30 but at the last minute Avalon Productions had other ideas and 8:00 was the real starting point. So I missed them. People I talked to reported they played well, though a little tensely. As I was soon to find out, they weren't the only ones supercharged from the pressurized atmosphere. Somebody . . . record company people? Clash people? individual crooks? sold silkscreen T-shirts and buttons in the lobby at the customary ripoff prices. For lack of business, they quickly folded their tents and disappeared into the stampeding horde.

The less said about Bo Diddley the better. Lay it at the feet of his pudgy, hippie back-up musicians and you'll have pretty much hit the nail on the head. The show, by this time, was moving along at a breakneck pace; it was only 9:30, Bo was off and the Clash were only moments away. Meanwhile, the British DJ played "New Wave" hits that were better than the standard hardrock/MOR fare usually found at concerts this size but still proved little more than background static. It's a sad comment that the only American record played (that I heard) was the abysmal single by the unfunny, out-crowd swingers, the Rotters. No other local bands received any airplay period. It's heavy praise that the Clash, taking the stage, immediately vanquished the uncomfortably slimy shiver that was slowly working its way up my spine. I've only had this feeling of expectation fulfilled a few times: Bowie (the first Ziggy tour), the Stooges at the Whisky, the Sex Pistols, X . . . They were all a little nervous, Joe especially, sublimating the tension into a quaking, shaking fury, every song in fast, epileptic motion. I could swear that "White Man in Hammersmith Palais" came in under two minutes. And through the mud wall of sound Joe made the translation. You couldn't comprehend a fucking, deafening word, but he made himself understood. Veins popped and the blood was ready to burst from his eye sockets. He trembled, swayed, and rambled on with an undeniable authority, moving into a kind of Old Testament place, the realm of the possessed. A simple description can't do him justice. He brought down the wrath of the gods on everyone's heads, while Mick and Paul jumped splaying their legs, rending their instruments in two with what Lee Perry has described as playing "with an iron fist." Nicky was the coal stoking fire. Then they were gone and back again, Kickboy joining them onstage for an encore of "London's Burning." Joe seemed simultaneously delighted/terrified at seeing him. Two bars and the honeymoon was over. Football bouncers descended on Kickboy like a swarm of hungry locusts and, once backstage, proceeded to beat the living shit out of him under the eye of a merciless Caroline Coon. And suddenly you could understand the apprehension in Joe's eyes . . . here was evidence of something monstrous and sick afoot in the house of Dread, something that Joe had very little control over. More of this evidence came to light in the following backstage press conference. One got the feeling of gunpoint coercion on the Clash to force them to face these guardians of the "people's voice." And once you heard and saw the, mostly, idiotic representatives of the press, you understood the Clash's hesitancy to indulge what could turn out to be just more of the same lame, image making and out-of-context publicity. A barely repressed hostility hung in the air, detectable somewhere in between the odor of Heineken and eau de cologne. When the Clash at last filed in, they looked tired and on edge. When they spoke, they were sullen, yet totally unafraid in letting their true feelings be known, no matter what the "professional cost."

Chris D.

photo: Lydia Valentine

The Kipper Kids, Mutants, Rhino 39, Del & The Sensations, and Red Army (Try that counter clockwise).

THE NEIGHBORS, THE SUBURBS, THE SUBURBAN LAWNS, THE KIPPER KIDS and FEAR at the Other Masque

Juding by the names of most bands on this bill, Middle America life has become the number one source of inspiration in new music circles. The Neighbors may have been raised there, and they still might shop there for those spiffy jogging outfits they wear on stage, but they have higher goals than your average clean american kid: they want to make art so bad it's going to age them before their time. They play competent fast stuff and the singer has a pretty powerful voice, but she has also an obsession with mining and stylizing her performance so deeply imbedded in her it effectively prevents anyone from greeting their set with anything but embarassment and sarcasm. Her robotic balinese gesturing is so obviously added on, contrived and gimmicky the rest of the band might as well tiptoe away and leave her to do the "interpreting" and symbolizing on her own. As long as that's the way she insists on expressing herself, there won't be too many left to watch and listen.

With the Suburbs came loony unpretentious rock n roll madness from Minnesota at its best, not that we get a lot of Minnesota rock n roll madness coming our way anyway! There are many of them and they all stand on the front line so it looks like more. Fun and fast, the perfect crossover sound for hesitatnt record companies who want the more accessible parts of the new music without its darker aspects. But record companies do not make it a point to come down to the Masque and see what's cooking on the stove, so the Suburbs are sweating away for the dubious distinction of entertaining two hundred jaded underground rats who do not find them quite "in" enough, O well at least they got a chance to flee the Minnesota winter.

The Suburban Lawns are not bad, but when Miss Sue Tissue joined them for two or three songs there suddenly was that feeling of an unusual event taking place before our unprepared eyes the intensity of her neurotic performance, her quivering clenched attempts at grasping the microphone stand, the twisted deformed shape of her face while she spews out her lyrics, it was all very unexpected and slightly awesome. That strange unfashionably dressed girl (a long shapeless dress gathered in a gruesome oversized balloon at the waist with matching headband!) sang like others slip into the first stage of an epileptic fit. Absolutely unlike anybody else in the vocal originality sweepstakes, and the very short performance she stunned us with stuck with me for the next few hours. It was hard to believe I saw what I saw, and even harder to absorb it in a reasonably satisfying manner. Puzzlement, and a very strong need to see more of it.

Fringe artists, aesthetic pranksters or regular neo-dadaists, the Kipper Kids have been around this music scene for some time (when they are not travelling and doing it to sophisticated international audiences), they were beaten up once in the old Masque parking lot and they can empty a quart of Scotch as fast as the most terminal cases amongst you street purists so don't give me that art-fart redneck bullshit you wouldn't know art from exit signs if they locked you up all night in a museum anyway! (nothing wrong with that, but just find more adequate and precise levels of criticisms, okay?) So Harry and Harry keep on looking for more credible audiences than the art jet set, and when they find them, tilt, it's confrontation time, flying bottles dialogue time. Ever so adaptable, they offered us something we could all relate to, a revamped medley of pop hits, all performed with minimalist economy on amplified ukulele and toy saxophone, sung by a formidable lady clad in trash liner haute couture, and illustrated with generous pourings and slappings of colorful vinyl latex quarts of paint on each other's anatomy (highly visible, the anatomy — perhaps that triggered the hostility in the average punk's oddly puritan mentality). "Jumping Jack Flash," "Heroin," (sacrilege!), "Feelin' Groovy ' were interpreted with a moronic intensity and stubbornness that left anyone with a half open mind appalled and tickled to death. The songs were once and for all effectively buried and the grave covered with dung. "Feelin' Groovy" was especially chilling, a contemptuous dismembering of the 60s stupidly benevolent moods, a black mass in the church of pop music. It was also a barrel of laughs, and that's where the crowd became increasingly divided. While a few of the spectators seemed to go along with the demonic trio the rest of the alcohol soaked white noise desperadoes screamed bloody murder, threw projectiles and choice word abuse or stumbled away cloaked in offended dignity. No one was going to shove art in any form down their proletarian throats (no one had claimed they would!). The finale, a mesmerizing version of the immortal retard rock classic "Wild Thing" (a parody in itself) reached a new level, with singer Ann Bean screeching and panting until complete genuine exhaustion sank her to the floor, a drained pile of torn plastic and gooey paint splashes, a more sexually charged vision than one would have thought possible even in the Masque, that urine flavored hotbed of exhibitionistic depravity.

Fear reconciled the outraged fun seekers to the general programminc of the evening and the way things ought to be . . . but if we don't get a bit adventurous soon, what an appalling bunch of boring young farts we may become.

Kick

LITTLE CRIPPLES (STRICT IDS), U.X.A., MIDDLE CLASS and the BAGS at the Deaf Club in San Francisco

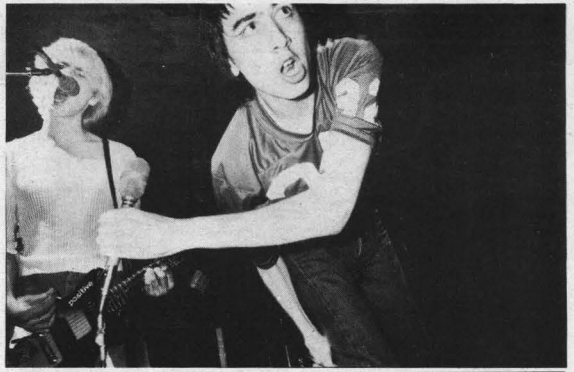
The Deaf Club in SF was a month ago THE underground place for punk shows now that the Mabuhay is getting increasing flak from the more militant segments of the movement ("Take control of your own lives! Boycott the Mab!" read a flier I was handed upon arrival). It's small and rundown, the stage is the size of a folded confetti, but it's freindly and appears to be relatively hassle-free. The deaf people in charge run the bar (beer and wine at decent prices – you write your order on a piece of paper) and more or less keep an eye on the goings on, everybody appears to be satisfied with the arrangement, definitely good vibes city compared to our bickering cesspool! I also find it pretty humorous that punks and their music have found a temporary haven amongst stone deaf persons. What a marvelous solution to the usual bitching about noise level on the part of grouchy paranoid hall managers! And who knows, medical miracles may occur one day! ("I can hear, I can hear!")

In spite of a competing bill including Negative Trend, Avengers and Dils some where else that night it was crowded. I suppose when you live there you have plenty of opportunities to see those bands and that such a dynamite travelling extravaganza from L.A. is a more exciting prospect. Noone had yet heard Little Cripples (now Strict Ids) as this was their very first gig but a few minutes after they started there was no doubt that a lot of people would soon hear about them. Even disregarding the first time ever factor, they were stunning. Their sound held the surprised audience spellbound, like a steel claw that won't let go of its prey. Mike's obvious nervousness only added an extra feel of unbearable tension, and at one time it looked like he was going to explode, his swollen veins and eyes bursting all over his cool partners in gory ejaculations. They quickly established a relentless pattern of an initial attack with the beat, the chords and the slightly out of rhythm word barrage rolling at once all over you, sometimes fast quite often methodically slower, more hypnotic, Mike would gasp to a stop while the rhythm was reinforced with parallel guitar layers, then go for the kill with all the melodic, rhythmic and vocal lines bringing the almost nightmarish hurricane to an abrupt halt. At times Alex would do counterbalancing vocals against Mike's brain foamings, the two of them looking like a perfect illustration of their double-edged music: the most volatile combination of madness and method, of instinct and intelligence I had heard in a long time. Not unlike what the Banshees or Wire can do in some of their most technologico-primitive cuts. Except that there are no lapses in floating surrealism, no fuzzy double meanings. The titles say it all: "Face," "Hand," "No Motion," "Genital Freeze." Poetry from the morgue: ". . . the state of your complexion/the state of your sores/All in all a terminal face/All in all a terminal face/All in all a terminal face." See them if you dare.

U.X.A. followed. They were great. Harsh tunes constantly threatening to sweep frail Dee Dee the shivering orphan off her feet, but Dee Dee is tougher than she looks and she can ride the machine. At the end some of U.X.A. backed a supercharged skinhead kid for an explosive version of "I wanna be your dog," the crowd went ape, the kid went more ape, singing with more vibrancy than Iggy has shown in ages, proving that it's always the singer and not the song that goes tepid and lifeless.

So far the show was a perfect example of how good it can get, given the right circumstances, the right combinations. In this atmostphere Middle Class dove head first and only resurfaced for air at the end of their speed of light set. Other times I have been known to have trouble with their music, so maniacally one dimensional it can sound live (the single is another matter). That night it went down like kahlua. They play and sing like they're falling off a bridge and want to cram as much in before splattering on the pavement. Dance at your own risk, the management declines all responsibility. I found that by standing slightly on one side with one leg at an angle I could survive the Middle Class artillery with a minimum of body damage. The deaf spectators looked uneasy. After the fantastic Bags had started they showed also genuine anxiety mixed with morbid fascination. It was awesome, an all-out eruption of unknown energy, a ritual for overamped demons led by the she-creature Alice and orchestrated by her supercool and efficient band. The sound man propped his speakers against the ricocheting dancers with whatever feet and hands he did not need for the knobs, the manager made desperate sign gestures begging for mercy, Alice spotted the poor soul who had adoringly ripped her dress and almost succeeded in gouging his eyes out, her stare frying the brains of whoever came too close to her throughout the rest of the set. Too many nights of that nature, and the weakest amongst us will never get to see the eighties and impress our grandchildren!

Kick



The IDS, Negative Trend, The Simpletones, Middleclass, and Geza X. Now try it clockwise).

photos: Melanie

The CRAMPS rip it up Voodoo style... photos: Melanie

THE NIGHT THE NEW MASQUE WENT THE WAY OF THE OLD MASQUE, WITH THE SIMPLETONES, EXTREMES, WALL OF VOODOO, PURE HELL, THE DEAD BOYS, THE GERMS AND THE CRAMPS

End of round two in the never ending battle against weekend boredom. Troubled by an acute lack of permits (you wouldn't know about that but permits are like passports to the land of fun, booze and music, and access to that promised land is severely controlled and regulated, god knows we might even get a taste of anarchy otherwise! Permits also always come in groups, all unrelated in their demands but each one totally useless without the others.) and equally troubled with a rent increase on the luxurious premises of Santa Monice and Vine the Masque promoters call it quits until more favorable conditions prevail. To ease the pain, they assemble for the last show, a line-up with more punch and promises than the last six months of the Whisky and the Starwood put together (at which Starwood a certain Black Oak Arkansas bunch was billed for Saturday, showing how wonderfully the past and the present can cohabit on the same street). To ease their pains, the admission goes up 50 cents (I can hear red rockers cursing all the way from here!) and the bitching level at the door goes up a few decibels. Quality wise, the entrance fee was hard to justify at the end of the first night but happily forgotten half way thru the second one. With the exception of the Simpletones, the bill was the same Friday or Saturday, plus loads more on Saturday. Levi and the Rockats were scheduled, did not play, but jitterbugged amongst the Cramps audience with lucky little girls. The Simpletones were scheduled and did play, on and on and on. Apologies to their fans (this rag is getting mellow), I just don't care after 5 minutes and yawn very ostensibly after 10. After 40, I write this kind of review. A budding new wave Sha Na Na might be considered a brainstorm for a possible TV series, but in real life it fills as much of a basic need as an electric toilet roll dispenser. Cute and disposable, next gimmick please. Of course my idea of fun is becoming less and less wholesome and easygoing by the month, they're after all pretty good at what they're doing, it's just that my addiction is getting out of hand and I need stiffer doses every time. And as a drug, the Simpletones have been stepped on so many times you might as well give it all to your kid sister so she can pretend with her friends.

On to Saturday night, where the crowd is as thick as Southern Comfort and the feel of "an event" is almost as present as it was at the legendary Elks Lodge Benefit, the people are just as new, just as bewildered and just as willing to discover, enjoy and understand what's bubbling under the surface. Yes, there are still thousands who haven't had the opportunity to sample the goods, so forget the media blitz, the hardcores' jadedness and the thousands of past Slash droolings, it hasn't REALLY started yet, the fuckin' music (and the mish mash that goes along with it – some of it admirable some of it unavoidable) still has a chance to spread, infect and convert. Global village my ass! Society layers are more cut off than they ever were. The kids heard about the Dead Boys playing the Masque on the radio, they come and get the Cramps in the face as a bonus. Conclusion: a healthy redefining of rock n roll for the more astute and a grand old time for the rest. Before these various highlights other bands went on, like Robot Factory whom I did not catch (another Geza product which thankfully keeps him off the streets) and the Extremes who had started when I arrived. They seemed to be doing find without me, the audience was unusually attentive (them new crowds sure know how to **watch**: totally still, hugging their girl (or boy) and **staring** until the song's over or someone happily pogoes all over them) and the band was very busy intriguing everyone with their electronic surf punk outbursts, Mikel playing the crimson miniature greaser every inch of the way. After a moody sax interlude they really took off on a flurry of hard syncopated numbers, halfway between oldie but goodie junk and experimental forays, the vocals were not as could be but something was working and I wouldn't have agreed to be anywhere else for all the money in the world. After the Extremes that other offbeat combo Wall of ~~Voo~~doo did a short atypical (for L.A. aesthetics) set of crisp excursions into the lofty regions of synthesizer/keyboards/rhythm machine music, with Mark Conehead's guitar thrown in for good measure (regular drummer Brendan M. having other things to do that night much to his disappointment), Bruce Barf and someone called Stan in charge of the machinery. Stan also did the singing but his heart was more into the abstract sounds that kept materializing under his fingers. For such an unaccessible twist to pop music to be received so (relatively) favorably was another sign that this was not a routine bang-away-with-the-happy-few evening. Heads were bopping here and there, there was a definite respect in the crowd, and I wondered for a second if I was in the right place. Holy shit, these people are listening to the music! When Pure Hell came on everyone could at last relax and happily behave as one is expected to at them punk bashes: climb the walls and knock as many bystanders on the floor as possible. Pure Hell music is not conducive to much else. Philadelphia heavy metal slightly souped up and served in big steaming chunks of identical sledgehammer attacks, distorted solos full of debris and electrical interferences, a bass ominous enough to cause a permanent parting of the Red Sea and a singer into handstands and floor writhing. Add to this the fact that they all are genuinely black and dressed to kill and you'll get the idea: the set that is bound to catch every little innocent whitey's imagination and send him home ripe for mayhem. Black heavy metal in punk trappings; it made Van Halen come on like Seals and Crofts! A success even with the obvious lack of true power showing after 3 minutes and the quickly redundant wall of shrieks numbing the better portion of one's brain. The singer couldn't sing worth beans but that bass mother had a weapon in his hands. Towards the end their origins started showing at the seams and I expected "Purple Haze" to be gloriously revitalized on the spot. They

Bits and pieces (12 lovely poses) of the (other) Masque...

stopped a fraction of an inch short of playing their guitars with their teeth. The crowd had by then lost all of its early politeness. Every imaginable ill-concealed liquor container was being feverishly drained (there being an unexpected half-hearted ban on alcohol consumption – something to do with the expected police raid) and more were being opened. A truly classic Saturday night ordeal was on its way. Then, the Cramps. The one and only NYC misfits, L.A.'s favorite strangers, the dark angles of rock n roll, the mighty Cramps. Disappointing the night before, they immediately regained their bigger than life stature and stayed there, in spite of minor problems with amps, loss of clothing and quarreling over ownership of the microphone with possessed audience members. Their music is directly aimed at the more irrational primeval centers inside us with sometimes disturbingly effective accuracy: in other words, people go temporarily nuts, and while under a trance-like spell that rivets them to Ivy, Bryan, Knick and Lux's every move, beat, intonation or note, are apt to suck their girlfriend's blood, dance like a zombie or turn into a wolf. So far this magic hasn't been fully conveyed on vinyl, just as you couldn't really succumb to a vampire over the telephone. Live, it can be chilling, Lux's dark demonic handseomeness, Ivy's icy authority, Bryan's elegant spookiness and Knick's gloomy steadiness all combine into one of the most devastating and stylish rock sets we'll ever have the chance to witness. Their sound may not be as sophisticated as other 1979 groups and their subject matter as modern, bt on the strength of style alone they can reach immortal status, and make any other point of view totally inadequate and besides the point. When pure rock n roll greatness is in front of you, it's goodbye the rational mind. You'll dance and jump 'til you die (some will stand there blissing out 'til they die– a different but valid approach) because nothing else can do so much to you and for you and that's the beauty of it all, may god or the devil have pity on the unbelievers. Nothing else mattered for 40 minutes, and the lingering after-effects are still with me; please play again soon you distant bastards from the crypt I will never praise another group again. . .

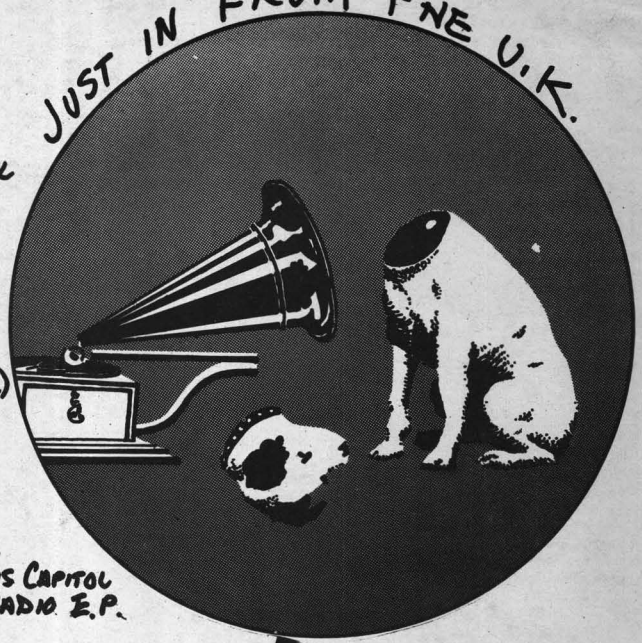
After the Cramps we left all pretenses to form and substance behind and settled for some serious wallowing. The imbibing reached epidemic proportions (the ban having been lifted out of sheer logistical considerations – like forget it it's not doing any good they're still passing out left and right) and some of the most delicate observers beat a cautious retreat. Now the zonked contingent was ruling, it wasy way past bedtime anyway so why not take the date home and avoid unnecessary incidents? Left were the Dead Boys mob and the spikey nucleus that never feels quite awake before midnight, a few blitzed tourists who could not have found their car anyway and a sprinkling of observers who knew history was being made. The Dead Boys came, what was left of the them (Stiv the rodent Cheetah the hyena) reinforced with two Rubber City Rebels and one ex-Weirdo now Monster, the malleable Nicky Beat, they did "Sonic Reducer", "Hey Little Girl" and a few more near hits, it sounded just like the old Dead Boys without the novelty it had then, a bit early for a super session of past glories I thought but it did not matter, no one was feeling any pain and critical distance was not what everyone else was getting off on, and so in neutral I went. Other thing I recall is Stiv the death-tease ingenuously hanging himself from overhanging waterpipes with the mike cord and actually dangling there like a lifeless reject until he blew it and let go. For a second there . . .

But there were further depths to reach. The Germs, masters of the Formless, grand priests of Chaos, the undefinable unmentionable unsignable Germs were going to appear on stage with their instruments, their guru/lyricist/singer in whatever shape he might be, and their repertoire of obscure evil anthems. The cult members were shiny-eyed with excitement and anticipation, and everyone else's curiosity was aroused in spite of the late hour. After lengthy unconcerned preparations the Germs staggered into their set, a much asked for rendition of their equivalent of the Lord's prayer, "Forming." They were in rare form. Darby managed a couple of verses in an upright position, slurring the words slightly but actually making sounds until the burden becamse too much: immediate collapse after 30 seconds, face in the carpet while the faithful band races thru the remaining riffs. Long deliberations before the next tune with every member, off they go, Darby spits out the opening verse, walks into the pile of speakers, reels back and is swallowed by the crowd. A couple of strangled words come through, he is spat back on the stage and gets tangled in the electrical cords. Finishes on the floor groaning undecipherable improvisations. Later, much later (the Germs have not learnt a proper ending to their set and so rely on external circumstances to solve the problem) after Darby has fallen head first into the worshipping audience about twenty times, fallen off the main speakers ten times and gotten hopelessly stuck between the monitors and the speakers five times, not having completed one whole song yet but moving along nicely considering the odds, the inevitable audience participation segment rekindles his performing fire, a few verses of "Shutdown" come thru before he, then fellow harmonizer Mad Dog take the ritual dive into the crowd, Mad Dog makes it back to the stage first, hauling Darby who is still clutching the microphone. Some sadistic joker at the lightboard is fiddling with the strobe light above, causing Darby unforseen problems with his sense of direction, balance and show biz restraint. Up and down have become hazy abstractions and the mike is something one clutches out of instinct and occasionally moans in about the state of one's equilibrium. The band plays on, secure in their knowledge that an inspired dervish is better than a singer anyway. As I leave, unable to absorb much more holy behavior on an empty stomach some clever follower asks me if "its getting too abstract" for me. Outside, a patrol car bullhorn is almost begging the stragglers to go home. They are obviously not about to go inside. We must be the new Untouchables! Darby may have a point.

Kick Boy

ZED Records

JUST IN FROM THE U.K.



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NEW ONLY ONES
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NEW TUFF DARTS
NEW FLYS
DOLL 12"
NEW KLARK KENT GREEN
VIENS ON BUM LABEL
SHRINK
BACK IN → FLYING LIZZARDS
↘ THE NORMAL
THE OTHER E.P.
DIE ELECTRIC EELS
RUTS
JAH WOBBLE 12"
V2 12"
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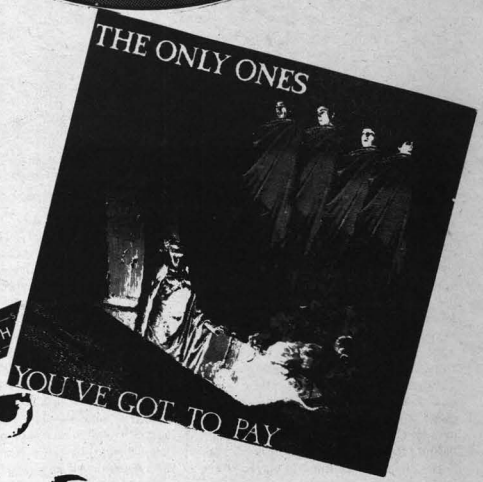
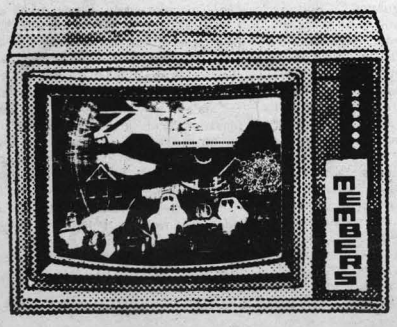
DEKE LEONARD
VIOLINSKI
NEW SKIDS
RED NOISE RED VINYL





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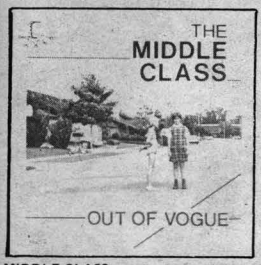


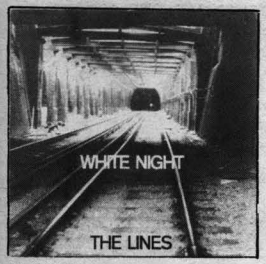
MIDDLE CLASS
(Out of Vogue/You Belong/Situations Insurgence)
Joke Records

Funny how the group that everyone never really though about as being a threat (or anything for that matter) have come out with a record that pulls the vinyl trigger and splatters your prejudiced ideas all over the kitchen floor. While other favorite local combos of the past lie in their elephant's graveyard, Middle Class marches on. They never did wear Jackson Pollock pants or get a deal with a major record label. When you hear these four songs you understand why. Not to live in the bygone era, I mean the past is the past, but there's this crazy '77 sound here steaming up through a morass of poor engineering and a bad pressing that's something akin to a rattlesnake, its fangs hooked in your bad vein and clinging all the tighter as you try to yank it off. Wonderful.

Half-Cocked

BATTERED WIVES
(Uganda Stomp/Giddy)
Bomb records

From Toronto, a vision of teenybopper hell. The Controllers covered the Uganda bit with a lot more simplicity and humor than this over-wrought piece of cutesy crap. The other side is another tasty helping of their peppy manure. For twinkie heads only.



THE LINES
(White Night/Barbican)
Illegal records import

The bluish/white cover of a tube tunnel, with the train light in the distance, sets the mood for this murky piece of midnight. Subterannean rock for insomniacs on the prowl, cool and driving. B-side instrumental seems pointless, or is part of a cryptic method they may or may not have. Only time, and more singles will tell. Definitely one of the more interesting prospects this month.

MAGAZINE
(Give Me Everything/I Love You, You Big Dummy)
Virgin records import

Perfectly produced to the point of sterilization. Everything is precisely arranged and as calculated as the funk bass line on "Everything," an attempt to create a shining citadel that only leaves you in a bright emotional void. As for "Dummy" — swell, they acknowledge Beefheart. Everybody should — but this song has nothing at all to do with the original. Magazine's brittle steeliness is compeltely removed from Beefheart's crazy (in the most genuine sense of the word) earthy grittiness. They just don't have the same spirit and it's their loss. My artistic friends might call me an ignorant infidel and proclaim this the hot masterpiece of the week, but fuck peer pressure, this record still leaves me cold.

MEKONS
(Where Were You/I'll Have to Dance Then, On My Own)
Fast records import

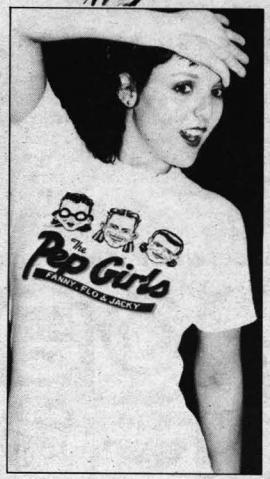
Two chords bashing at each other, a drum roll crescendo and BAM — a great song with an edge that doesn't quit. You can always tell a good song) they end way before you want them to. "Where Were You" walks around with me all day and won't leave me alone until I go home and play it again. And the cover's claim that this is a double A side is totally correct. Side B is a bit disjointed and crazed and builds to a climax you don't see coming till it smacks you between the eyes. Singles like this restore my faith in music.

THE SNIFTERS
(I Like Boys/Baby Punkers)
Lightning records, of course

Metal urbain for morons. Every gimmick in the house–rhythm machine, french pose, gay insinuation, phased guitar solo, none of it disguising the material from being the second rate shit it is.

NERVEBREAKERS EP
(Politics/My life is ruined/I can't help you/My girlfriend is a rock)
Wild Child records

The only things these old farts have done is open for the Pistols and get their picture in Rolling Stone cause someone threw a dead fish at them and the guitar player put it in his mouth. Judging from this boring EP of boring 60s pop-rock they should have thrown molotov cocktails. If I was from Texas I'd sue for character assassination.



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THE LEWD EP
Scratched records

This Seattle bunch have meticulously studied the 'how-to-be-a-punk band' handbook. Circa early '77 exploutation stuff, intended to repulse and revile. Despite the occasional catchy hook, it's worthless—after all, who can shock US anymore?

EATER
(What She Wants She Needs/Reach For the Sky)
The Label Import

More disappointing that it has any right to be. This could've been a "killer". The music is there, the words are there, but the underlying IT isn't. And things are just off by a hair. The chorus starts off beautifully but at the last second rolls into an unintentionally lame resolution. Everything about the take is just ho-hum, like maybe they were trying too hard, rehearsed so many times they just got bored. Whatever it was, the struggle for perfection ends up in a struggle down the drain.

Chris D.

TELEX
(Twist a Saint Tropez/Le Fond du L'air)
Sire records import

Perrier vinyl. Techno twist for the modern androgyne. It's decadence is sprightly and light hearted, making it more truly subversive than your average disco cant. Why do records like this make fun seem like such a dangerous concept???

THIRD RAIL
THE REMAINS
Spoonfed records

Both on same label, both on blue vinyl, both from Boston's "Nuggets" era though the Third Rail thing is a new band recording. They should have remained in the 60s. The Third Rail song is a pointless and incredibly stupid commentary on a scene they obviously know nothing about. (Just read the lyrics: "Isn't Johnny around, the Damned aren't making a sound, it's two years on, the power's gone, it's over now!") Sorry to say, it's over for these nitwits if they should ever come by the Masque. They have to eat their hat for ignorance, and have their blue vinyl firmly porked up their butt for their stupidity. Meanwhile the Remains are a decent enough relic, but any associationwith this label (Spoonfed — hippie cocaine drek, I guess) is default by association. Oh yes, the lead geek for the Cars produced the Third Rail garbage thing. It figures . . .

999
(Homicide/Soldier)
UA Records Import

"Homicide" is from the SEPARATES album and that record, even after a few months listening, makes me feel that 999 can do no wrong. "Soldier" isn't included there, but is just as worthy. Creepy tick-tock rhythms turning into musical snakes in the grass. Then come the sarcastically melodic breaks homing in on you. There you are, the clay pigeon sitting unawares when your head suddenly becomes this shredded mass of aural wounds. I don't think this bunch has a bad tune in their entire songbook. Hopefully, the "Action/Waiting" single heretofore only available as a limited giveaway in the UK will be released here, too.

Half-Cocked

NEGATIVE TREND
(Mercenaries/Meathouse/Black and Red/How Ya Feeling?)
Heavy Manners Records

Sometimes Negative Trend gets a little too negative for its own good. If "Meathouse doesn't push you over the brink and drive you to suicide then nothing will. Grotesquely honest, beyond the point of mere disillusion, this goes all the way into a true-to-life nihilism that is the only alternative to aresenic in the morning coffee. After hearing these four repeatedly, it no longer makes any difference that Rik L. Rik isn't doing the vocal honors (this is stuff done before Rik joined the group). These move anyway, Will driving his brainchild crazy with dark, thumping bass lines that echo from the morgue; the singer (can't remember his name) matterfactly crooning out the worst of all possible fates, putting a nervous enthusiasm behind his otherwise smooth and apathetic voice. If you can take it, better than anyone had any right to expect.

Chris D.

THE REACTION
(I Can't Resist/I am a Case)
Island records

Big label pop fluff, energetic playing but not my cup of poison. Another attempt to recapture those overvalued 60s, but then this song probably wouldn't have been a hit then either.

THE CURE
(Killing an Arab/10:15 Saturday Night)
Small Wonder import

"Killing an Arab" is the first raga rock song done since the 60s took a nosedive into the patchouli vat. Other side is a moody piece of theatrics, about sitting in a kitchen sink. Weirdly undermixed and underproduced, another curiosity from Small Wonder Records who never do anything monumental and seem to prefer it that way.

THE SUBHUMANS
no label

Politico punk for the Canuk prole. The raw basics, once again, and I'm glad. They sound like they'd be great to dance to.

THE SLEEPERS EP
(Seventh World/No Time/Flying/She's Fun/Linda)

Moody waking dream rock. Icky (Iggy) Ricky's vocals are an ecstatic slur, the guitar is eerie and powerful (though a bit undermixed) the bass and drums play off each other in perfect seconal syncopation. Your mother would not like this record, it's dark and disturbing, the story of people drowning in themselves. It's not obvious, and don't go near it if you want something catchy and sensible. Me, it's my favorite ep, and I don't care if the band has deteriorated faster than the cheap vinyl this thing is pressed on. It's a souvenir from one of the finest. I just wish they had left behind more . . .

HUMAN LEAGUE
(Being Boiled)
Fast records import

Throbbing Gristle, the Normal etcetera now prove to have been merely a chip off the circuit board. The Human League are part of a rapidly forming new area of experimental music that not only eschews traditional instrumentation but attempts to redefine the listener's views of music as a listening experience. Not even the safe old 1, 2, 3, 2 intro remains. Synthesizer and rhythm machine provide a loping structure to one of the most obscure lyrics you might hope to encounter in this day and age. If you're interested in that "death of rock n roll" concept, check it out. If you're not, buy a pail of sand and immerse your head in it.

D.A.

THE DOLL
(Desire Me/T V Addict)
Beggars Banquet import

No matter how many leopard spots this chick covers himself in, she's still kind o of homely. Too bad, cause the band's not that bad—it's that bouncy 60s carousel organ rock, the kind of thing Blondie was trying before they want ga-ga for the mega-buck. The collectors item 45 is as dispensible as Cheetah woman and co.'s efforts to make you cream your Fiorucci jeans. And they say glitter's dead . . .

NASTY MEDIA
(The Ripper/John Peel/Winter/Spiked Copy)
Lightning Records Import

The whole thing's pretty much of a joke and not a particularly funny one. A fairly thick sense of humor if you know what I mean. There are a few good lines about John Peel going bald though still playing what the kids like to hear, some unenthusiastic, standard riffing on this and the genuinely terrifying horror tale, "The Ripper"; nevertheless it is catchy. Side 2 is a complete throwaway except for the lyrics to "Winter." On the whole nothing to get excited about.

Half-Cocked

CRAMPS
(Human Fly/Domino)
Vengeance

Listening to the Cramps is like being on a ghost house roller coaster. Side one is this decade's answer to "the monster mash," a neat, petite ditty that might just save you from that fatal step into the matter transfer cabinet. Flipside is Sam Philips (!!) classic Domino, rockabilly a la Cramps. Recorded in Memphis circa 1977, this is obviously a historic piece of vinyl.

D.A.

RICHARD HELL
(The Kid with the Replaceable Head/ I'm Your Man)
Radar import

While the rest of his peers sink into a cesspool of big business, bad drugs, forgotten principles and over-intellectual dog poop, this guy Hell, an also ran in the initial new wave sweepstakes, resurfaces with a good one. More of his manic on the 4/4, "Replaceable Head" is smart, but not too smart for its own good. It's also catchy pop without being crass pap like most of this pop stuff is. "I'm your man" isn't quite so good—sounds like the old Kinks reworking Blank Generation. But at least he still has that crazy energy. Shows there's still some life to the old scene yet.

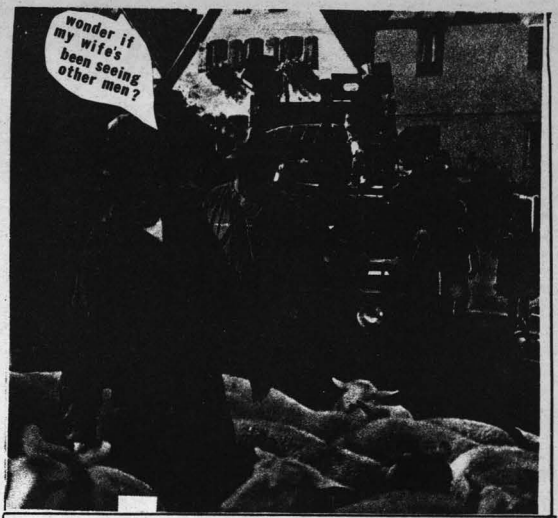
JOE GIBBS/MIGHTY TWO
(Don't Skulk School/Hully Gully Rock)
Crazy Joe Records Import (Jamaica)

School is safe and sane is the message from Crazy Uncle Joe, also be sure to do what your parents say. It bounces along nicely but seems a little distanced from its audience of bedraggled, barefoot students. School is a good place to hide from all the bullets whizzing around Trenchtown, but what you leart there that's going to get you out of the gutter is another story. Version "Hully Gully Rock" gives a completely different feel, soaring right up into some kind of everyman's ionosphere. Sergio Leone-type carbines whistle in the echo chamber while the tread of a single man, Joe Gibbs' music, drowns out the grinding-to-a-halt sounds of the juggernauts of war.

Chris D.

SUBWAY SECT
(Ambition/A different story)
Rough Trade import

Either I'll write a five page essay on the significance of this modest looking record and be carted away to the funny farm for burnt out music critics or slyly hint at greatness and be tolerated for another month of vinyl pushing. Slyly then, I'll nonchalantly mention the superb balance between the innocently catchy tunes and the devastating clear headedness of the message, the vaguely sarcastic statements that barely disguise the acute anguish of the singer's situation, the plaintive offbeat singing that discreetly hides behind consciously tinny upbeat riffs, the whole goddamn increadible richness of this record and leave it at that. I want to



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drown in these two songs. Produced by Mickey Foote (first Clash album) who certianly can treat greatness with feeling and intelligence. "And I won't be tempted by vile evils/because vile evils are vile evils." I must be ripe for the sickly green padded room after all 'cos the way Vic Godard sings that line gives me goose bumps. Okay, I've said it. Run along now.

Kick

PS: Don't miss the dialogue with Vic the champion of elusiveness in next issue, in which many questions are asked and occasionally answered.

THE FALL
(It's the New Thing/Various Times)
Step Forward import

Single number 1 was no fluke. These two new contributions to the contemporary musical confusion that sends critics to retiring pastures with increasing regularity prove that this MAnchester combo are no lightweight dabblers in the unusual. There is a plan behind all this choppy progressive noise making, there is also more intelligence, sensitivity and futuristic humor than anyone can handle in one gulp. For a more extended study of what the fuck this is all about anyway, read our April issue in which Slash talks to the Fall members over a few pints, witnesses the making of the upcoming album, reviews the results and watches them in action at the Marquee. This is one group we are going to talk about a lot in the near future so get ready now: It's the new thing, and we would not want you to miss out on that.

Kick

SCRITTI POLITTI
(Skank Block Bologna/Is and Ought the Western World)
St. Pancras records import

THE esoteric vinyl slice of the month, a mysterious late night blooming species, a fragile thing that wilts away unless kept in a rarefied atmosphere, it will grow for (and on) you if you approach it with care and respect. I love it and even listen to it on the freeway, but it's especially recommended for gently nibbling at the telephone cord while laying on one's back. Alienation music for those precious moments when you're simply crumbling away and there ain't nothing you or anyone can do about it.

Kick

SHAM 69
(Hurry Up Harry/No Entry)
Polydor import

"Hurry Up Harry" is the same "Hurry Up Harry" off the album, pub stuff for rowdy hikes back home when it's cold and the streets are wobbly. "No Entry" is about Sham being refused American visas awhile back, it's a shame the fucking government sticks its nose where it does not belong and tell the lads they're not welcome, god knows we need new drinking partners, it's also a shame it gave the boys an excuse to release a lame, pedestrian, childish piece of whining shit like this. Hey, Jimmy, so what? If you really wanted to you could come and play anyway. Don't use those official excuses to avoid the big moment of truth. A man of the people knows no borders. Forget the record company nannies and sneak in as tourists, eh??? You can sleep on my floor. I mean that very much, Jimmy.

Kick

THE BAGS
(Survive/Babylonian Gorgon)
Dangerhouse

If you haven't realized by now that the Bags have become one of the most riveting combos Los Anrrreles has a right to rave about you're probably leaving in Des Moines or Timbuctu. Now here's your chance to make up for your uncoolness and general lack of with-it-ness. And don't think for a second that the terrifying sounding female on vocals and the superb musicians wham-bamming away behind her are just the result of clever studio work laboriously gluing together occasional snatches of brilliance. This is in fact a pale reflection of the Bags' live performing presence, and since it is at the present the hottest selling item on the Dangerhouse list it should tell you something about the REAL power of this unique band. So you'll cream over the single, feverishly wait for the new one, read all about them in our live reviews, and still be awfully sorry to be living in Holbrook. Come on now, we need SOMETHING to make up for Van Halen!

Kick

Don Letts
Stratetime Keith
Steel Leg
Jah Wobble

JAH WOBBLE
(Dreadlock don't deal in wedlock/Pthilius Pubis)
Virgin import
(Steel Leg/Stratetime and the Wide Man/ Haile Unlikely by the Electric Dread/ Unlikely Pub)
Virgin import

Arrogant white smartass makes fun of reggae cliches while showing an impressive knowledge and reluctant respect of that parallel music universe. It's all here, the wacked out herb-alluding cover, the reverb spoken intro, the rude reggae touches a la Buster, the back to Africa whining, all the paraphernalia that nowadays unavoidably tags along with the Jamaican music, Jah Wobble has obviously too many ideas to stick to one public image, so expect more irreverent excursions into whatever field strikes him as needing a bit of piss-taking. Pompous fanatics beware, nothing is sacred anymore. By now the P.I.L. gang sure has gained my undivided attention.

Kick

NIKKI CORVETTE AND THE CONVERTIBLES
(Young and Crazy/Criminal Element/ Back Seat Love)
Juvenile Delinquent records

Budding Deb Harry from Detroit, minus the slickness plus the sincerity, american, naughty and pop damaged beyond belief. The promo sheet says she's coming to Nostra Madonna De Los Anrrreles or whatever the crazy Mexes call this dump so be prepared, don't be rude and don't throw things. As long as she leaves her band home, we might make something out of her. First a couple of weeks in the company of the Mau Maus to tarnish that Midwest shine, then . . .

Kick

BIG IN JAPAN
(Nothing Special/Cindi and the Barbi Dolls/Suicide a Go Go/Taxi)
Zoo import

The final legacy from one combo that bit the dust at the same time it seemed on the verge of acceptance. Definitely experimental without kicking you in the balls for effect, certainly too much variety and intelligence for that quick imagination-freeze necessary for the marketing wizards to mold an image that stops blurring before the end of the commercial. Philomena goes all funny when the girl does the punky Betty Boop stuff and says it's better than Pere Ubu at the wrong (higher) speed. Some people definitely enter pop music thru the side entrances!

Kick

ULTRAVOX
(Quiet Men/Slow Fade)
Island Records

Another case where minimalist style should not necessarily be equated with either emotional or intellectual excitement. Instead, this is equivalent to two sides of nearly empty air. Sterile, unimaginative "new wave," a lot of synthesizer all dressed up in simple rhythmic drones, its belly to the sun and no place to go but hell. Ultravox is one band (of their singles are any evidence) that seems to be losing their life/originality by the minute.

Chris D.

VERMILLION
(Angry Young Women/Nymphomania/ Wild Boys)
Illegal records import

A first half attentive listening won't do justice to this. It's terribly recorded, pathetically mixed, heading straight for the garbage bin, but WAIT! Play it again, listen closely: now don't tell me it's not a great demo. Give her another band (possibly a real one, not studio pals laying down the tracks on their spare time), a good engineer, tell her to REALLY sing it like she ought to. It's there all right. Why did anyone involved settle for this faint approximation, that's what puzzles me. (If you don't know, Vermillion writes for our direct competitor Search and Destroy. She is smart so she lives in England. She's not that smart so she releases a single that is miles away from what she probably can do)

Kick

THE NERVES
(TV Adverts/Sex Education)
Lightning import

Could be billed as new wave in a particularly undiscerning bar where the singles are panting after each other's night specialities. Background music for hollow occupations. I bet if I was desperate and lonesome I'd tap my foot to it while waiting for the barmaid.

Kick

Note: All unsigned single reviews by CLB, Slash's newest contributor.

DISGUISE
(Hey Baby, Juvenile Delinquent)
Chiswick import

A side is teenage mush, the Bomp syndrome with the overseas touch, B side is above average party noise, adequate and indistinguishable from the other adequate youth outbursts the suburbs are breeding these days.

Kick

TRANSMITTERS
(Nowhere Train/Uninvited Guest/Persons Unknown)
Ebony import

Terminal stuff. Like them specks of undefined nasties that flicker on the edge of your field of vision when you've been up for three days and spookiness is no laughing matter. Very dehydrated music, if you know what I mean. "The smell of success in here is something that stinks." Don't worry guys, you're not exactly aiming for mass acceptance.

Kick

FLYING LIZARDS
(Summertime Blues/All Guitars)
Virgin import

Flash hit "Summertime Blues" is too gimmicky but undeniably close to perfection in its hashionably irrelevant approach to old classics. It's hilarious, challenging and quickly tiring, but it's good for a laugh and inspiration. That thumb sucking girl in charge of vocals could probably do it to every bloody song she stumbles upon in her oldies collection. She shouldn't. B side is instrumental doodlings with intellectual backpack.

Kick

THE FLYS
(Waikiki Beach Refugees/We Don't Mind the Rave)
EMI import

Absolutely pathetic. Pathetic because the music is actually good, haunting arrangements that get you all limbered up, then deliver the goods in a direct, though restrained fashion. It's just that the words are stupid. Not funny stupid, boring stupid. Unimportantly stupid.

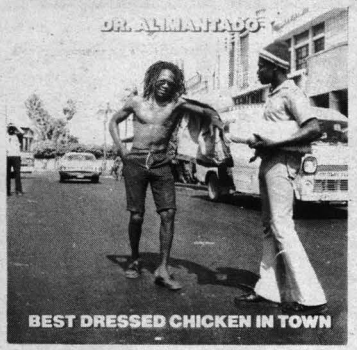
Chris D.

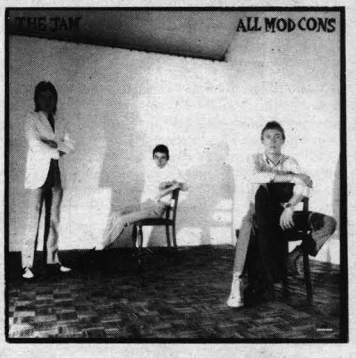
THE MIRRORS
(Dark Glasses/999)
Lightning import

This ain't bad at all, it's not even new wave punk progresso anything so what is it? It's simple almost mellow rock n roll. I must be slipping!

Kick

ALBUMS





BEST DRESSED CHICKEN IN TOWN
DR. ALIMANTADO
(Greensleeves import)

"What time is it dread?" "Twelve o'clock natty" . . . no doubt you are now in the deep swamps of reggaemania, where nothing makes sense but the sound that tickles thru your bewildered sound system (pretty conservative bunch them sound-systems) explains everything until the next tune starts and different nonsense calls for different explanations. Seen? Dr. Alimantado, not your average local MD by any means (check cover and imagine the kind of prescriptions that maniac would hand out!), is one of the most off the wall practising DJs on the talking reggae airwaves, a freeform delirious master who backs his baffling strings of words or slogans with some of the most slyly swinging musical tracks ever recorded in Jamaica. Calling it "catchy" would be the understatement of the year: the beat literally jumps at you, not because of a heavy recorded presence but thru the sharp crispness of a simple tchak tchak rhythm guitar, a couple of underlining horn lines in the background, a tinny keyboard that skips across two repetitive chords. Like the essence of that unescapable sound a few amongst us have never recovered from, and across this backdrop of primitive elegance the man with the out of control locks hums, shrieks, wails, blending his rapid lyrics with the music or unleashing his outbursts at key intersections, always in perfect balance with the overall feel of the tune, each verbal stroke the final necessary touch to the MOVEMENT of the number. Undefinable magic at work, rationalists of all colors stay away. If you feel it, you're alright.

Chatty Mouth

SHAM 69
That's Life
Polydor records import

I'm sick of reading British rock press contradictions of Jimmy Pursey being a "fascist creep" who won't commit himself to the "cause" against racism and Jimmy Pursey, the sentimental liberal who loves money and has sold his fans down the river. Neither's true. But this record is still misdirected, so misdirected it's painful. "Leave Me Alone" and "Who Really Gives a Damn?" raise your expectations (if only you knew enough not to expect anything ever) that this whole album is really going to be IT. Then the simple directness of the two coupled with the conversational cockney segues, de-escalates into the working man's existential bullshit that is "Everybody's Right, Everybody's Wrong." "That's Life" picks up again, but not enough. "Hurry Up Harry" looms on the horizon of Side 2 crushing everything in its path with a deafening singalong chorus, and you think that the world really will end if Harry doesn't hurry up. Then there's nothing . . . nothing except for an OK B side from the "United" single and "Angels with Dirty Faces" which sounds more convincing here than on its previous release. It's too bad because with a little more foresight this record could've been so much better.

Chris D.

ALL MOD CONS
THE JAM
(Polydor)

Better than number 2 release, most certainly. A definite streamlined finished feel, smooth edges, carefully studied balance across the entire package of songs, nifty musical sophistication agreeably blending with the more gut-grabbing segments, those mods are maturing nicely and their family must be proud of them. Unashamed respect for the elder musicians of more naive days, that's what a company must like to see in their once rebellious young turks. All nicely symbolised by dropping the graffiti-like logo of earlier albums. There still is a fair number of street conscious songs, of individualistic teen anthems, and in those moments the Jam are still able to convince and move you, the unfocused idealism mixed with the stylized realism of "Down in the Tube Station" (a masterpiece), "Mr. Clean" or "To be Someone" still prompt them to kick, jump and give their best outbursts of melodic energy. In between these precious slices the boys forget their anger and their once admirable electricity. Lifeless ditties and non-existent cutesy ghosts of melodies are brought in, undoubtedly in the hope of broadening the old market and gaining the respect of the mediocrity oriented mases. In the Jam case, irrelevance may not be far behind acceptance.

Kick

IAN DURY & THE BLOCKHEADS
(Hit me with your love rhythm stick)
Stiff import

Fact: Ian Dury is destined for great fame. It's not yet apparent to many of you I realize, Ian is a peculiar even comical figure that is hard for the bean can mentality of the average californian to comprehend. Quite simply Ian Dury and the Blockheads make some of the most consistently intelligent, humorous and danceable rock n roll around. "Rhythm Stick" is another gem of inspiration for all you rocked out cats to help you back on your boppin' feet. Fixed to a disco beat that actually cooks, Ian implores that great drummer in the sky in a variety of foreign languages (not to mention his own tongue) to beat him unmercifully with that rocking sound we all live for. Buy this record, it could change the world. Honest.

D.A.

DOA THE 3RD AND FINAL REPORT
THROBBING GRISTLE
Industrial records import

Not too many people really understand what Throbbing Gristle is up to. I'm not totally sure I do, either. But if you came up with the image of 5 ot 6 (varying sometimes even higher if you count their vast array of correspondents) technological investigators exploring and trying to find the roots of evil you wouldn't be too far off. Evil as a moral, immoral, or amoral thing it doesn't matter, because its final form has the same effect on the human organism. Industrial mishaps, accidental mutilations, riot control, bodily functions, genocide, fascist supermarket chains are all a part of the scheme of things; something that must be faced and all but reveled in before the fear and terror that come with it can be erased. Songs (if you can call them that) like "Hamburger Lady" explode myths of technological advancements in medicine when all the "Advancements" result in is the most barbarous, mind-numbing pain imaginable, doctors faced with keeping this charred ruin of a person "alive" when even sleep, because of the physical agony, no longer exists. Other pieces, like "IBM" set up an environment as evidence of what's coming next. If after "United" (single version), you're expecting more of the same, you're in for a nasty surprise.

Chris D.

ARMED FORCES
ELVIS COSTELLO AND THE ATTRACTIONS
(Columbia)

With thos 3rd well-oiled album (the original english cover was an expensive extravaganza of folding flaps of various designs stuffed with an enclosed assortment of separate pictures, a bonus single – live at Hollywood High, a second sleeve with additional graphics) the Costello assault on the english speaking public reaches even further in its intriguing determination to bypass the well worn roads to mass success: Hardly a trace of any tactical toning down in the mood or the message in this new collection of songs, the little guy insists on incessantly attacking and deriding whatever offends him in humans or organizations or whole countries, arrogantly counting on the strength and seduction of his music to make the crowds swallow the bitter feelings they are not usually keen on accepting. How far can you carry such a gamble like venture? Columbia skillfully underplays the negative tone of Elvis' ideas and emotions, the man himself refuses to comment, soothe or pontify, keeping a respectable distance between his art and his market. The quality of the music can easily seduce the most tone deaf musical programmers, there are enough instantly recognizable tunes, near classic riffs and surface gut appeal to break into the listeners' charts and the near pop perfection of the stuff may be enough to overshadow the definitely not nice thinking that saturates every moment. The original album title, "Emotional Fascism" might have been just a bit too challenging for the cash carrying cattle, it was replaced by a more ambiguous one, making it slightly less obvious to the world that this is after all a relentless attack on many, many things we are all too weak, dumb or cowardly to oppose. Are we also all so deaf that the words will not register while we hum along to the tunes?

Kick

OUTLANDOS D'AMOUR
POLICE
A&M

Don't know how these three ever got linked with the punk hordes 'cept for maybe a certain attitude towards the business and the fact that they look like they regularly dye their hair. Honest rock n roll with the occasional reggae inspired tempo (any decent pop musician with a pair of ears must be finding it hard to avoid any trace of jamaican influence), is what you'll find here. Tasteful melodies, no bullshit flash although the trio format sure can lend itself to the worst excesses (known as the Cream syndrome—make up for the lack of instruments by sheer overkill), a pleasing batch of songs for a bopping afternoon. Try it, America. You'll want more. Just because it's english don't mean it's bitter and distasteful.

Kick

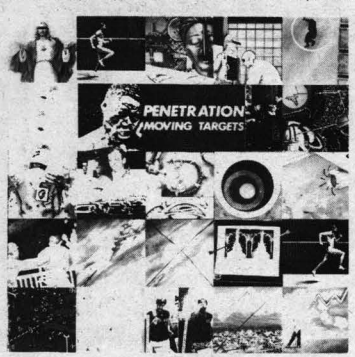
PUBLIC IMAGE
PUBLIC IMAGE
(Virgin import)

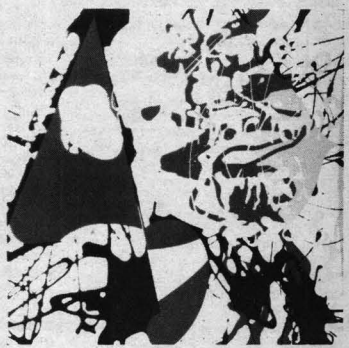
Rabidly uncompromizing Xmas gift from the still Rotten one and his new cohorts that will either repulse, bore or hypnotise old Pistols worshippers and newcomers alike. Considerably removed from everyday rock n roll pastures, it contemptuously turns its hunched back on every standard ever set up by old or new wave establishment.

Immediately it establishes its objectives by a lengthy ("Theme") instrumental kick in the balls that is guaranteed not to make you want to dance, laugh or take your vitamins. It creaks, screeches and crawls all over your nervous system like a deliberate injection of poisonous fluids of the battery acid variety, scrapes the coating off your most sensitive fibers and wines the smirk off your face. Unpleasant, irritating, offensive to all but the few scattered mental cases who have similar symphonies of hatred and disgust simmering under their skulls. By then most of the curious observers and dilletantes will have fled, broken their record players or indignantly stormed back to the record store for a refund. Public Image couldn't care less, they're not on earth to be admired by the masses.

Further along this twisted path we are submitted to Irish blasphemy (the most potent kind) and musical Irish blasphemy (understatement being a bourgeois concept culture guerrillas have no use for) a few songs of venom, resentment and bursting hate, all slapped on the vinyl with malicious carelessness, like raw 1st takes done while the engineer had been tied down to the floor with a boot on his cheek, melodies and structures are tossed around until they submit and beg for mercy, the mixing becomes a vicious exercise in pain threshold experiments and migraine inducing subterranean drones, singing is brought to daring depths of animal imitations or torture cries, the little beasts are on the rampage and pop music better watch its ass. This is without a doubt the most purifying and intolerant outburst of the new music, a truly dangerous nihilistic assault on everything which burns and consumes like a holy fire and shows no pity. Its sound is the inescapable result of the exasperated awareness of sharp kids who have spotted the lies and who thought they'd share their disgust with us all just for a laugh. If it comes out in such a unique brilliant manner it s only because they didn't know how to or were too bored to play the countless games entertainers, musicians and other "creative ' riff-raff have always utilized to package their soul and win their trophies. Rotten and friends have no interest in your eventual comprehension of what academic moles would call their message. No one is going to take you by the hand and condescendingy lecture you in this record every sound, every word screams it loud and clear. Your heart will know.

Kick





VINYLLY **bo clifford**

This time around was to be a cinch. I was gonna get caught up with all the good American singles of recent months. Something I've been meaning to do. Then what? Two weeks before deadline at least a dozen hot (or at least interesting) U.S. 45s drop in my lap. Ouch. So, I erased my original tape and started again. . .

NECK-OF-THE-WOODS JOURNALISM:

From Cleveland come the Wild Giraffes. Their new single is an apparent improvement on their first, which I haven't heard. Nonetheless, "Love Me" is good, rocking fun. Well made, but their songs could be stronger. Lucky Pierre debut with a subtle "Fans and Cameras" (Unadulterated). Very bright and accessible; terrific bassline. Addictive. The flip is a sort-of-ballad in perpetual motion and surprisingly good. For those with open ears. A true suprise comes from CHI-PIG, an Akron band. Their "Bountiful Living" (Chi-Pig) is incredible. To put it in a phrase (and you know I will) it's Talking Heads meets the Supremes. No Kidding! The changes on the bridge (check those bongos) are pure Motown.

KNOW YEW NORK:

It's a relief to hear something other than noise coming from New York. Matter of fact, some of the best this month came from there. Although it's been out a long time "Don't Walk on the Kitchen Floor" by Come On hasn't received much attention. Too bad; it's really deserving. Favoring the arty funk school with a bunch of lyrics that are both witty and chilling, it's got lots of hooks as does the flip. Nervus Rex know the value of a good hook; their songs are strong and use interesting twists of language. The production lets 'em down a little, but still an excellent record. "Love Affair" is my fave, but both sides are great! Perhaps the best record to come out of New York in the last year is by Chris Stamey and the DBs. It's another one that makes it tough to choose the best side. Sometimes it's the sweet production of "You Wanted to Know," other times the rawness on "If and When" (Car). Chris is trying to get an English deal for his label and hopefully that will happen.

DC CURRENT:

Moving further down the East Coast, the Baltimore-Washington area has been producing several fine records. Trixy and the Testones take on "Palisades Park" (Toy) and manage to Ramones it into submission. Fun and ferris wheels, the Gong Show would be proud! An important new label grows in Rockville! Maryland is the place and Limp is the label with two singles, three EPs, and an LP already released. Only space enough to cover a couple of 'em. Tina Peel is a group that seems to swing from UK style art-rock to early Blondie punk poppery. An EP called "More than Just Good Looks" shows a versatile, modern band working out on four quite different tunes all with lighthearted lyrics. Very confident sounding bunch that mostly make it. A new, improved Slickee Boys return with their second EP: "Mersey, Mersey Me" (Limp). Evenly divided between art-punk and pop, the Slickees turn in some great performances. Unfortunately the production doesn't come up to the quality of the songs. The previously unrecorded T. Heads "Girls Want to Be with the Girls" is a real highlight! Recent personnel changes have clouded their future, though. Next time I'll try to cover more Limp output.

MEANWHILE:

Many excellent records from L.A. bands these days. Besides the oft-discussed Bags "Survive" (Dangerhouse), all nervous writhe and Spexisms, there's one Gerhard Helmut. His "Trapped Like a Rat" is a sophisticated production that shows a lot of European influence. The clean, crisp sound continues on the flip "Unter Der Faust" (German for Under My Thumb). Very stylish and nicely done.

Moving up the coast to Santa Cruz we find JJ180, an inventive band with their first single "Out to Lunch" (Indole). A dash of psychedelia that works! Actually, the band is not overly happy with their record and, if the demo tapes I heard are any indicatio, JJ180 will make much better ones in the future. Up in Seattle the Lewd want you to "Kill Yourself" (Scratched). A very well produced hard punker with (hopefully) tongue-in-cheek words. These guys even steal a Buzzcocks riff for "Trash Can Baby."

If I can cheat a bit and talk about Canadian records Vancouver's best record store has started it's own label, Quintessence; two releases so far and they re both excellent. D.O.A. have released their second record, "The Prisoner." A great hard punk single that proves some dead horses will kick back! A large improvement over the first. The Pointed Sticks have released "What Do You Want Me to Do," one of the few domestic records to match the British in terms of production and performance. The other side is just as good, too (how can anyone dislike a tune called "Somebody's Mom"?) A fast start for Quintessence and it will be interesting to see if they can maintain the quality of these two in their future releases.

I-RANT:

Which more or less brings me to the subject of today's sermon. Why is it that American records (the independently produced kind) don't sound as good as the English ones? With very few exceptions (Dangerhouse, Quintessence, some Bomp things, Chris Stamey, and a couple more), US singles sound flat, lifeless, and just plain blah in comparison. Lots of good songs and potentially good records have been ruinted by indifferent production. I really think it's true that any band in England can walk into any studio and get a "hot ' and alive sound for their record. It's really a matter of education, isn't it? American engineers and producers are used to making things sound smooth and seamless and that just doesn't work on the "new" wave of records being cut. They should be shown that there are other ways to make records; ways that allow the life and vitality of the material and performances to come through, not to be blended into sterility. Here's at ip for any band going into the studio: don't blindly accept a "smoothie" production job, try and play some of the better sounding records for your engineer. He's got the technical know-how, but he might not be aware of a different way to use that knowledge. Tell him it's OK to put it in the red once in awhile. Who knows, maybe he'll even find it fun! Hopefully, soon we'll be able to truly say "We Don't Need the English" to show us how to make good sounding records.

FINALLY VINYLLY

I've got a new address to send things to (letters, records, tapes, etc.):

Bo Clifford
5734 Laurel Canyon Blvd.
Box #11
North Hollywood, CA 91607

THE SCREAM
SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES
Polydor import

I would move to a new city and buy this when I arrived. There is nothing standard in it. Comes in underwater wrapping paper with lyrics inside. Suburban Relapse: "(Should I) throw things at the neighbours/expose myself to strangers? kill myself or . . . you?" Let the little girl next door listen to it. And Siouxsie's voice is matched perfectly to the themes, from cigarettes to masterschemes. I've heard she sounds like Grace Slick, but forget that shit. Sioux can't be compared to anyone else. Her enunciation on Switch, the last song, still strikes by surprise: "Doc-tor rec-tor-ates . . ." And the cover version of Helter Skelter is like adding Manson to the original. The drums are hard, the strings scary, then it stops. All of the Banshee songs make me want to see them live, now, which is one thing albums should do but almost never. . . . A peculiar record. Sit in a room with it and smoke cigarettes.

Brenda Spencer

TUBEWAY ARMY
Beggars Banquet import

I expected a lot from this after that nifty single with "Ain't that too bad" and "Oh didn't I say." Well there is a lot, it's just not the lot I wanted, darn! Pretty much one guy's effort (guitar keyboards vocals lyrics production), in fact he (Gary Numan is the name) is the only surviving member of the group, he's got pretty definite ideas as far as what his style ought to be but it's still a rather self-centered album full of heavy obscurities, the sound and the vocals are quite bowie-like (a Bowie with hiking boots) but the overall sterility makes any kind of sustained interest impossible.

Kick

PENETRATION
Moving Targets
Virgin Records import

Sometimes this sounds like a leftover from the 60s, very poppy Julie Driscoll meanderings. Except much of the music of that period had its straightforwardness/energy diluted by acid and the directionless, half-baked "Culture" that resulted. For the most part this is to the point. A lot of the time, though, I'm not so sure what point Penetration's trying to make. Once in a great while the purity of their whole set-up brushes shoulders with a sentimentality that defeats their very purpose . . . sometime's it's just a hint of self-indulgence in Pauline's otherwise smokily angelic voice; sometimes it's Fred Purser's hard rock solos in otherwise dynamic flourishes; or maybe it's just the murderously boring Patti Smith imitation on their version of "Free Money." But I'm nitpicking. I like these naive little parables about life going on even after flies and blood have been torn asunder.

Chris D.

DUB HOUSING
PERE UBU
Chrysalis records

Forget the situation comedy DEVO shit, this is the tendon and spleen of the matter, the real industrial watesland soundtrack. Funny/sad, challenging, never falling into the cliches of techno anything. It has dance sections, noise sections, constantly walks the tightrope between inventive and indulgent and is a lot better than the first album, but still doesn't measure up to FInal Solution. Smoke stacks do the hully gully on tv sets – Jarry would have been proud. Me, I'm entertained but don't ever try taking a nap with this record on. It could be very dangerous.

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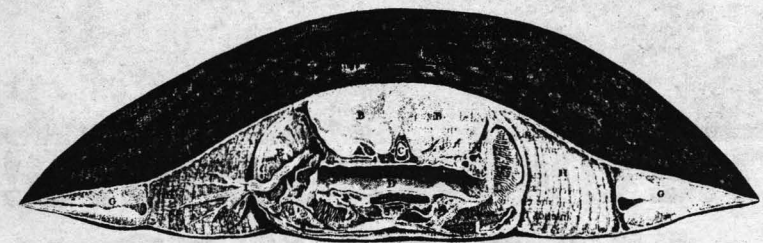
TUXEDOMOON

(MODERN MUSIC FOR MODERN TIMES)



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CRIME

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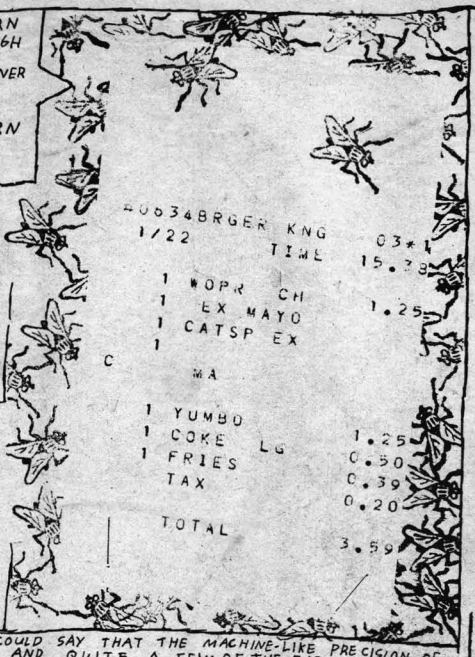
MANY MONTHS AGO CHARLIE HAAS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE IDEA THAT JIMBO NEVER GETS TO EAT. ALTHOUGH IT IS TRUE THAT JIMBO (& VARIOUS OTHER PERSONNEL ON THE SLASH STAFF) DOESN'T GET ENOUGH TO EAT & IS MUCH THINNER THESE DAYS, HE DOES EAT SOMETIMES. AS PROOF I OFFER THIS RECEIPT SHOWING THAT ON THE 22ND OF JAN. 1979 JIMBO ATE AT BURGER KING. I DO APPRECIATTE THE CONCERN THOUGH. ©1979 G. PANTER.

JIMBO



①.

OK MAN! WHAT'S THIS I HEAR... ABOUT YOUR CALLING MY STRIP DEVOID OF SENTIMENT? I MEAN RIGHT ON THE SURFACE IT FUNCTIONS AS A NOSTALGIC BUFFER AGAINST FUTURE SHOCK FOR A TIRED & TECHNOLOGY-TORN SPECIES.

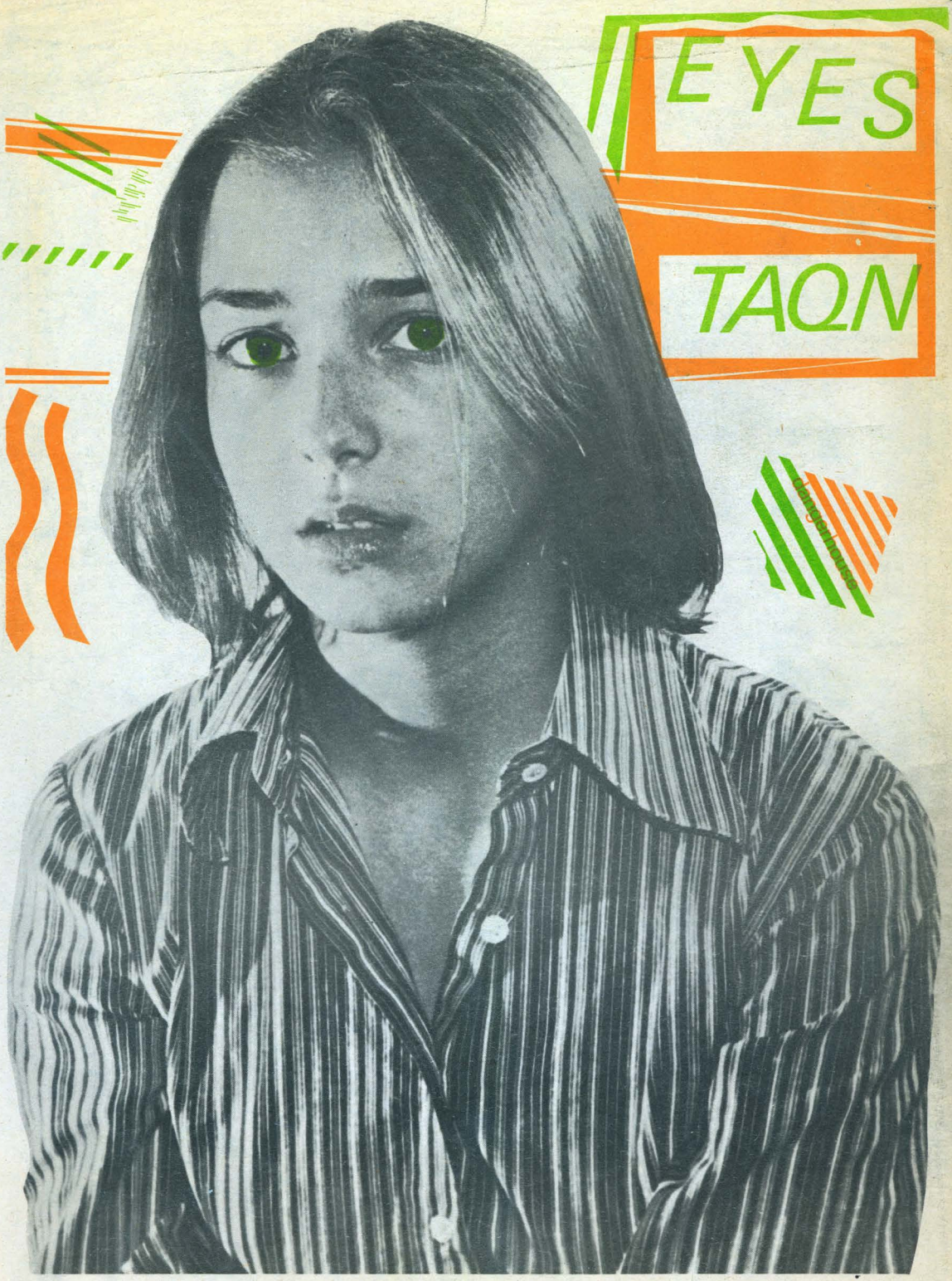
FURTHERMORE, SOME PEOPLE FIND THE STRAIGHT-FACED ABSURDITY RAMPANT IN MY STRIP QUITE REFRESHING & FIND THAT BY READING SINGLE PANELS OUT OF CONTEXT THEY CAN GET QUITE A LAUGH. I CONSIDER HUMOR A MOST PROFOUND SENTIMENT.

ONE COULD SAY THAT THE MACHINE-LIKE PRECISION OF NANCY AND QUITE A FEW OF THE EARLY STORIES PENNED BY BUSHMASTER ARE SOMEWHAT NEUROTIC, BUT WHERE WOULD YOU NEUROTICS BE WITHOUT A MODE OF RELEASING ABSURDIST ANXIETY THROUGH LAUGHTER? EVEN THOUGH YOU TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER & PERHAPS LAUGH WITH CONTEMPTUOUS SUPERIORITY.

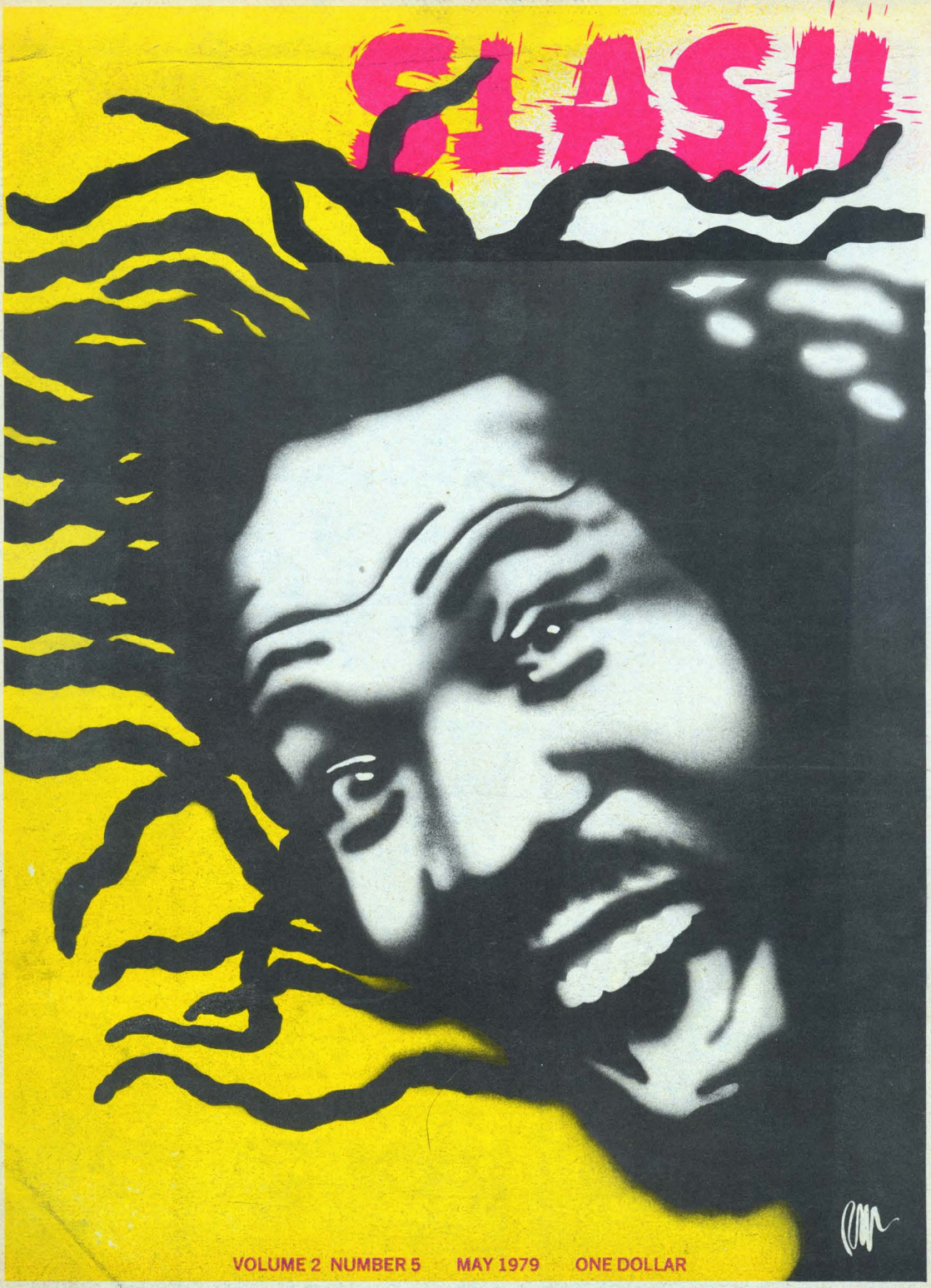
TRY EXCERCISING A LITTLE HUMILITY & HUMOR! BY THE WAY! WHAT'S A GUY IN A SO-CALLED PUNK MAGAZINE DOING WALKING AROUND WITHOUT A GUITAR? I THOUGHT THE IDEA WAS TO START AT STEP ONE & THEN DRUM UP SOME BUSINESS!!! HERE TAKE IT! IT'S YOURS!!!

GEE THANKS !!!

HEY PAL! YOU STARTIN' A BAND? LEMME JOIN IT OR I'LL KILL YA!


EYES
TAQN

SLASH



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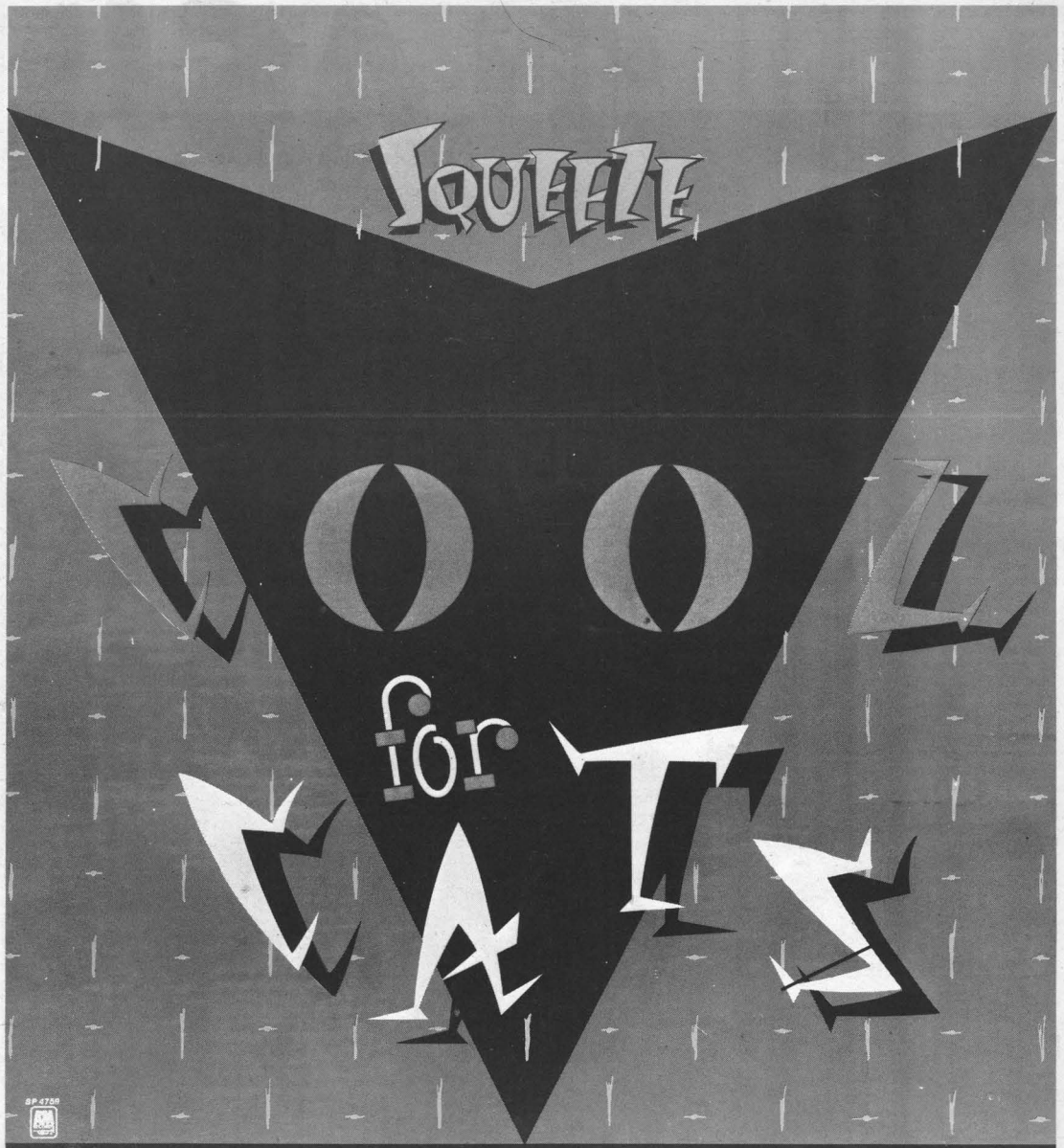

NEW.

Includes "Cool For Cats"
The #1 Single in England
ON A&M RECORDS & TAPES

Produced by John Wood and Squeeze.

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THE READERS' CHART

Hey, you woke up after all. Not staggering, but still a real effort in telling us your choices for the best of the new music. Not totally unpredictable either, but maybe this will spur some of the more kinky connaisseurs amongst you to let us know what THEY poison their brains with, and the race will be on. And remember, good taste is YOUR taste.

TOP ALBUMS

#1 ARMED FORCES – Elvis Costello
(a definite majority choice)
#2 GIVE 'EM ENOUGH ROPE – The Clash
ROAD TO RUIN – The Ramones
(same amount of votes)
#4 ALL MOD CONS – The Jam
#5 YES L.A. – Compilation
VALLEY OF THE DOLLS – Generation X
GERM FREE ADOLESCENTS – X Ray Spex
THE CLASH – The Clash's 1st
DUB HOUSING – Pere Ubu
CHAIRS MISSING – Wire (same amount of votes)

TOP 45S

#1 PUBLIC IMAGE – Public Image
#2 OUTDOOR MINER – Wire
#3 SURVIVE – The Bags
#4 DOMINO – The Cramps
#5 PRESSURE DROP – The Clash

All 5 were definite choices with many votes for each. After that the overall picture crumbles and countless 45's are nominated with never more than a vote or two for each. OUT OF VOGUE (Middle Class) received a few votes, as did MEATHOUSE (Negative Trend), DAMAGED GOODS (Gang of Four) and EVER FALLEN IN LOVE (Buzzcocks).

So drop your 10 cents post office card in the mailbox and let us know what next month's top records are. The choice need not be different. That way we will be able to separate the real hits of the gutter from the novelty items. Fun, innit?

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LOCAL

Being off the gig circuit definitely doesn't signify inactivity at all for the ever enigmatic WALL OF VOODOO. The trio consisting of the Moreland Bros., Bruce and Marc and Stannard Ridgeway have been in communication with David Lynch, the bizarre producer/director of Eraserhead currently acquiring midnight cult classic status for the purpose of discussing musical ideas for the Lynch follow-up. The band also recently met with Rhett Davies, engineer and co-producer of Eno records, who is thinking of breaking away from the Eno clutches and is considering an album project by himself . . . "We definitely won't be using Oblique Strategy cards or any of that Eno jive . . . ." quoth Ridgeway. Meanwhile the band isamassing equipment to make it possible to perform live what they have been composing, preparing and recording at their own office/studio . . . "It's not that we're stuck up or that we're too much into our ownlittle personal bag of indulgence that we can't play live, it's just that we don t have all the equipment together yet to do it. . . ." Hopefully, the electric three will have it together in time for a scheduled appearance at the Vanguard Gallery on April 18 during a Masque experiment involving New Music, Jazz, and "Punk Rock." Emmett Chapman might play

photos: Melanie

SHIT

and other musical quirks of avant-guardness. Call 464-3001 for confirmation of the gig.

Hey, all you teen queens! Levi & the Rockats and the Extremes will be greasing the earlobes of hundreds of virgin high schoolers (Virgin? Why virgin to the sound of genuine rock n roll, what else!) at a series of projected sockhops at the more posh local institutes of learning. The first two are schedule for the end of April at Beverly Hills High, and the other at the beginning of May at Uni High. (P.S. Marilyn Monroe and David Cassidy went to Uni.)

EARLY SPRING FEVER DEPT. Coupling of the month: Dean, drummer with the Rockats and Jane Drano, GoGo guitar slinger, making high speed noise together in the public eye . . . before he crept out of town for that Big Radioactive Apple back east, Bryan Gregory of the Cramps spun the wheel of furtune, wooing a certain svelte, blonde correspondent for the L.A. Weekly over the telephone. But how much can be accomplished over those live wires?

Dangerhouse having their fun too, with work on an upcoming Rhino 39 single co-produced by David and Linda Brown, and the 1st Black Randy and Metrosquad album, called "Pass the Dust, I Think I'm

Bowie." Also the much-demanded return of the Alleycats to the studio is imminent with Randy Stodola producing.

You're all in for it now! GoGos and Extremes headline a benefit for nouveau art gallery at Immaculate Heart College on May 9. Rosary beads are optional. . . A red-haired writer for the L.A. Times entertainment squad, New Wave delegation, has been stung by Sting of the Police. Also eavesdropped: "hot enemas" for the more timid souls writing rock critiques for same aforementioned paper.

BACK TO THE REAL NITTY-GRITTY: Throbbing Gristle will pulse their way into this trendy burg sometime in May, while even now their label Industrial Records presses Monte Cazazza's debut single for release sometime in the summer. . . latest roster of Upsetter Records album compilation includes the Controllers, Flesheaters, Negative Trend, Middle Class, and last, but not least, the Germs (Incognito).

The Punk Rock Movie will be showing at the Nuart on April 30th. — English Punk 1976-77. It was directed by rasta DJ Don Letts and features all the early nasties.

Middle Class signed autographs for a huge crowd at Peaches Records, Hollywood one Saturday last month. Middle Class played a daytime show at Santa Ana Community College with Rhino 39. Later in the month they are leaving to play two nights in Texas.

HOT DAMN! THIS IS JUST LIKE THE GOOD OLE' DAYS!

POLICE REPORT

March 2

Univ. Calif. Irvine

Debby, the campus cop, allows visiting punks to graffiti whole bathroom. She better get a scapegoat or else. No, not Bates Motel, the other band, X! The rookie cooks up a couple of witness and a bill of $450. Watch for a benefit (including mystery graffiti band) soon.

March 13

The Squeeze, Riverside

Panic stamps the hands tonight. Germs stampe the brains. A group of fifteen pretty ballerinas were stopped in mid-pirouette by six of Riverside's dance squad. Melissa and Tar were arrested and held on thousands of dollars bail. The show was ended. X didn't get to play and no guarantees were paid the bands. Some spent the night in a gas station. The manager called the cops because it looked like people were fighting and something's going to get broken any minute now.

March 17

Elks' Lodge

We all know this one. The Plugz didn't stop for nothing. Barbara bailed out for $3000. The hippies were there, finally noticed us, and really got behind the police brutality of it all.

April 2

Pat of the who-else-Germs was walking north on Genesee after a visit to the Golden Rule. The POLICE thought he was a ROBBER and made him drop his beer while they pointed a GUN at him. They thought he was carrying a bag full of money! No, April Fool's was yesterday. Later that evening Pat, Lorna, and Gary visited the Spike. Earlier that evening Pat killed his parents.

Oh, on April Fools' an anonymous bomb threat was phoned into the house of Doom. The caller said that banker was going to get the Germs at their next performance. Lorna said that's what they want anyway. And they should get beombed after these terrible things that they have done.

The Godfather (Black Randy) lives up to his real reputation providing financial push for others & receives investigation from the organized crime strike force. FROM BLACK POWER TO BLACK MARKERS.

Mau-Maus at the Masque Party

photo: Gary Pearlson

LETTERS

Dear Slash editor,
the letter to the editor in the March issue of Slash from "Red" is the best letter to the editor ever.

Tom Campbell, M pls.

This isn't!!

Kick

What's your problem anyway, Kick? IRON POOR BLOOD?

I mean, why do you really yawn when the Simpletones play? Must you self-consciously feign boredom as they poke fun at hemorroidal poseurs like you along with the rest of the status quo?

Well, I hope you're right on one thing, anyway. May be your kid sister or brother hasn't gotten too stuck yet in your ultra cool tight-asses negativity to have a good laugh at it all for real.

Next time the Tones play why don't you just do us all a favor and stay home with your geritol and pate de merde gras on melba toast (or whatever else people like you like to spread it on).

-Simply a Tones fan-

Hey simplistic fan(ny),

Do I have to get psychoanalysed every time I say unkind words about a band that does nothing for me ? Especially by someone who could use a couple of crash treatments in psychoanalysis himself (.."poke.." .."hemorroidal"..."stuck"..."tight-assed".. .."merde"..."spread it".., rather transparent, all that).Glad to know it's poseurs like me they're poking fun at. I always wondered what they were getting at. As to feigning boredom, let me reassure you. That is one feeling I am intimately familiar with, that I don't thrive on, that I am truly terrified of encountering. The last thing I am likely to do is FEIGN it. So when it happens (boredom) it's the real thing, managers' wishful thinking notwithstanding.

Kickboy Services

Dear Slash, (exerpts from a 6 pages letter)

It always came to my att ention how your mag put down more than helped to create an L.A. scene... You write of english bands as though they were god-given.. a lot of L.A. bands and american bands are even better than many overrated british rock bands... There shouldn't be so much mumbo jumbo poetry shit on the paper...Your writers are too artsy fartsy and I don't care to hear about more beer and booze and drugs. The only writer I like is Chris D., he exercises a great deal more insight than a lot of other Slash staff.... I think the punk scene today is boring because it has become a parody of itself, people dress as punks, throw bottles, destroy property, for what? NOTHING!!.... I don't believe in having a social ladder, I don't want to climb it. Who says there's no oppression in America? Maybe after the Elks gig it will open people's eyes...So don't knock the Dils, I sincerely don't believe Tony meant all he said. It was interpreted wrong as everything those Dil boys say...He criticizes everything because there is so much to complain about...I think they have more insight than any one of you, except Chris. They are trying to help the youth take control of their lives, you at Slash and Flipside try to break it down, you are trying to kill the scene you so proudly write about. The Dils try to make people see, Slash makes people blind. All the poetry and social climbing calenders do not make a magazine for punks.

Hey comrade!
What a load of shit!

We've been pretty much on the side of the Dils ever since they and we started (how long you been reading us, late comer?) and just because we get pissed off at them once does not put us on the other side of the fence, ninny! (the Search & Destroy comments in this local shit section do not reflect our opinions, as we know nothing about the matter).Glad you like at least one of our writers, but what mumbo jumbo poetry shit are you talking about? Always thought it was in the grand sleazy greasy realistic tradition myself, but I suppose it's still too elegant and refined for the likes of you. Anyway you are out to lunch on so many points and your accusations are so silly I can't even build up a righteous anger. Why don't you drop by and we'll share a six pack of Colt 45 and bitch at each other? Oh sorry, I forgot you disapprove. And you'd probably think this would be some sort of social climbing on your part. If you only knew.....

Kick boy

ps: hope you like the article on The Fall, Subway Sect and other god-given groups.

Dear Kick:

You crazy frog... (r e: the "Punks" performance at the Other Masque).. Why don't some people have what used to be termed a SENSE OF TUMOUR ?

Bizarrely, you are the second most influential "writer" on the Scene, and, following closely on the heels of the first most influential "writer", the illustrious young McKenna, you FUCKING MISSED THE WHOLE POINT OF THE PUNKS !! We can hardly believe it !

The Punks was not an attempt by Brendan to be "amusing" nor was his "performance" delivered for self-therapeutic reasons, nor was it delivered to "abuse" anybody or to accentuate the more despicable aspects of the "scene".

Why, it was conceived and delivered with AFFECTION AND TENDER LOVINGNESS, as only the lovely Brendan knows how. Kick, it was not anything more than a spontaneous-that-afternoon tribute to the energy and exubherance of the kids, it sure had nothing to do with the lushy excesses of 30-plus Slashers...

So, Kick, quit fucking drinking, open up your eyes...and rave on.

We love you,

THE PUNKS

Wonder who wrote that? Could only be someone intimately familiar with our so-called "drinking excesses".. maybe that seedy club "manager" who threw up once on a slasher's bathroom floor after a moderately lushy evening... the one with the funny accent and the price on his head.. Naw, couldn't be him, he is too busy working in a joke band that plays pool side parties and rewiring his underground kingdom... Wonder who it could be then .....

Puzzled Kick

Slash,

how fucking dare you dole out messages of morality? And where the hell is your sense of humor anyway? It's just so easy to snicker among yourselves in tight little cliques about people like Stevie Nicks. Your supposed wrath is pathetically transparent - it reeks of envy. In one breath you proselytize about changing the world and then launch your energies into verbal assaults against people who are insulted by such an obviously and predictably insulting record as the Rotters'. What a waste! You so actively seek out the set-up of victim and oppressor roles, which are constructed by human beings, not dictated by some primordial force. The responsibility of change lies on all of us - me, you, as well as Fleetwood Mac.

I am also incredibly sick of such sexist asides as : "..the boy wouldn't want her to sit there if she was no lady, now would he?

Come off it, Slash, if being an ultra modern magazine amounts to nothing more than being a small town gossip rag, then you are indeed helping to create a future full of all that you hate.

Signed: X-Slash buyer & reader

Dear offended goodie-two-shoes,

if the responsibility of change lies in Fleet wood Mac as well I want out right now, any sulphur-soaked planet will do, I just can't stand the stench of these so-called "changes" anymore. There wasn't much energy "launched" into our harmless comment anyway, but if you think it "reeks of envy you're a poor thing indeed! I wrote the hardly offensive bit, and I wouldn't be caught dead in those corpses' platform shoes! So stop defending the undefendable, you humanistic idiot. I thought these people were doing rock n roll, which was never supposed to be the most considerate and polite form of expression that ever existed. No one told us it was now exclusively for the well bred and nobly spoken. The blues the early Fleetwood Mac so eagerly emulated was also a field with more than its share of foul-mouthed individuals, so where did they get the idea they were now part of the gentry? Just because they get the red carpet treatment every time they go to their bank does not mean the rest of the populace has to show awe and respect, does it? And that "sexist asides" bit is just bloated simplistic thinking: we still reserve the right to laugh at or hate anyone, women and children included. Go back to group therapy, you're boring us.

Kick

PS: Don't use that victim/oppressor philosophical straightjacket with us, dumbo. We are outsiders, WE DON'T THINK LIKE YOU.

TOP OF THE FLOPS

BO CLIFFORD

1) She is Beyond Good and Evil — The Pop Group
2) Punk in Paradise — The Neighbours
3) Pebbles Vol 1 & Vol 2 — Various Artists

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH

1) Civilized Reggae — Burning Spear
2) Wear You to the Ball — U-Roy
3) Tricksters — Junior Delgado
4) Three Piece Suit — Trinity

CHRIS D.

1) Belsen was a Gas — Sex Pistols (Rotten Live Version)
2) Valley of the Dolls — Generation X
3) Mercenaries — Negative Trend (Rik L Rik tape)
4) Wild Boys — Vermillion
5) New York Dolls — 1st album
6) Strange Notes — Germs (tape)

JIMBO

1) Love Like Anthrax — Gang of Four
2) Fisheads — Barnes & Barnes
3) Foreign Accents — Godley and Creme
4) Too Tender to Touch — Lene Lovich
5) The Loyang Tractor Factory — Andy Mackay

KICKBOY

1) Music Scene — The Fall
2) Meathouse — Negative trend
3) Mother-Sister — The Fall
4) Vibing Up the Senile Man — ATV LP
5) 3:38 — The Pop Group

MELANIE

1) Dub Housing — Pere Ubu
2) Live at Witch Trials — The Fall
3) I Like Drugs — Simpletones

PEA

1) Vibing Up the Senile Man — ATV LP
2) Social Living — Burning Spear LP
3) Germs tape (Upsetter LP)
4) Love Like Anthrax — Gang of Four

STEVE

1) Love Like Anthrax — Gang of Four
2) Social Living — Burning Spear
3) Great Rock n Roll Swindle — Sex Pistols

WILL L'AMATO

1) Stepping Stone — Sex Pistols
2) Touch and Go — Ultravox
3) Split-Level Head — Napoleon XIV
4) LA Sextette — Waxx (tape)

V

1) Honey Hush — Johnny Burnette
2) No Particular Place to Go — Chuck Berry
3) Belsen was a Gas — Sex Pistols
4) Circle One — Germs
5) Meathouse — Negative Trend (Rik L. Rik tape)
6) Ghostly Sounds (sound effects LP)

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THE sITuaTiONs AND THE CUT-OUTS

THE SITUATIONS made their debut last Halloween at the Bears Lair, UC Berkeley (site of a terminal 1968 street-people-crafts time warp). They were unique: bright dayglo thriftstore costumes, genuine teenagers (one 15-year-old & two seventeens) from "Pleasant Hill" suburbia. understated lyrics like "I'm just a suburban girl"/"Drowning in my coffee" and lighthearted open-spaced musical arrangements totally devoid of machismo (yes, there is punkrock macho). and they include 2 go-go dancers, Snit & Erich, who enact an unforgettable original dance, THE POSSUM....

We were planning to interview the entire band separately, but..due to last-minute pressure-rise, Therese was the first & only member tape-recorded. Janet has a rather amazing past herself (running away at age 16 to England in 1977, leaving-her-body experiences, etc.) but....

Therese was born Sept 26, 1963, for those who care....

(Intv by Vale)

S&D: What's your newest plan?
THERESE: I'm planning on throwing a great big anniversary -- with lots of booze -- for the anniversary of my Rape!...A lot of people know about my rape, I think it's a funny joke -- I mean, I can say I've had a lot of worse fucks than that. (sarcastic) I've always WANTED to try it outdoors next to Geary Road!
S&D: Wasn't it kind of cold?
THERESE: No, it was a nice warm spring night, the stars were shining overhead, the grass was green, somebody was pulling my dress off into shreds -- it was just marvelous!
S&D: Was the rapist caught?
THERESE: Oh, I got him in jail for 7 years...There was an accomplice who stole all my DAVE CLARK FIVE records (collectors' items worth about $13 apiece) that I'd bought at the Goodwill that day -- they caught him at a saloon an hour later, and immediately got the other guy just like that!....After I got home I thought, "Well I'm not going to be affected by this, it's just going to seem like another one of Those experiences" -- until about 6 months later when you get anxiety symptoms having to be put through the whole trip again going through court. But I wasn't Damaged by it -- the people in court were so shocked that I wasn't one of those kind of girls who break down in tears. The worst thing about that rape was that it was the first time I'd ever had, uhmm, oral sex -- they asked me in court,"Well, what sort of oral copulation did you have?" And I turned to the rapist and said really loudly into the microphone (measured vehemence): "Be..stuck his..penis in my mouth!" and the guy just bit his lip and turned around and lost the case!
S&D: Didn't the defense try to prove you were "inviting attack" -- what clothes were you wearing?
THERESE: I haven't even gotten them back from the police department yet, they took all of 'em. I had this great pair of "I Dream Of Jeanie" flats with diamonds all over them, a white housewife dress with red pinstripes & a high-necked red Chinese collar, this really ugly coat (disguise) and I was fat, I weighed 165 back then a year ago. My hair was in a ponytail, I was wearing big red glasses, didn't have any makeup on, & wore black leotard stockings.... That was one of my Best "housewife" dresses and it's gone -- ripped around the sides too because he was pulling....

I was coming back from the MUTANTS and had gotten off the BART train at midnight & was walking home -- then this car followed me for what seemed like half a mile and.... suburbia is DANGEROUS!
S&D: How was the trial conducted?
THERESE: In court I looked like a little schoolgirl -- had my hair pulled back, barely any makeup on (just the right amount of pimples) had my little glasses on, trying to look 14 -- they still didn't believe me....They asked me crazy questions like, "Did you eat anything beforehand? Did you drink anything?" (water!) "Did you smoke anything like marijuana or take any drugs?" (No, all I was doing was dancing to Yma Sumac). They wanted to know where I'd been -- "I was with Sally and Sue who are singers with the MUTANTS" -- "Well what are the Mutants, are they a punk rock band?" -- "NO!! they're NEW WAVE!" (even though there's no difference, but I had to make it sound more respectable else I'd never have won the trial).... "What's the Difference between Punk Rock and New Wave?" -- So I said, "Well, punk rock, which became well-known through the English rock'n' roll band the SEX PISTOLS, has the sort of image of putting down the establishment, all-around toughness, streetgangs, kids like (contorted face, microphone to mouth) "I AM AN ANTICHRIST/I AM AN ANARCHIST/I KNOW WHAT I WANT AND I KNOW HOW TO GET IT/I WANNA DESTROY AND I KNOW I CAN ...." (jury slightly shocked, lawyer kind of shocked, mother in back of courtroom putting her head in her hands, judge shaking his head).

"Whereas NEW WAVE is related to Punk Rock like a second cousin -- the music is somewhat the same but it doesn't quite put across the same ideas, political values -- its more to do with pleasant things like "SALLY IS A SOCIAL CLIMBER/SUE IS A SOCIAL CLIMBER/SID IS A SOCIAL CLIMBER/FREDDY IS A NIGHTCRAWLER/OK YOU CREEPS, GET OFF THE MACHINES/OK YOU CREEPS, YOU'RE COMING WITH ME/WE'RE GOING DOWN TO THE INSECT, INSECT LOUNGE (4)/THE KING OF ROCK'N'ROLL JUST DIED, etc." (MUTANTS song, "Insect Lounge)...New Wave can tend to be more positive than punk rock -- I guess That Ends my explanation, Mister (lawyer)."
S&D: -- the first time That's ever been on a court transcript....can you sum up your life in suburbia?
THERESE: I have to incognito myself like, hat and sunglasses when I walk down to get cigarettes, and people whisper, "Oh my god, that's Therese Soder, she's got a punk rock group!" -- that's the reason I quit high school. There was absolutely No way to have any artistic freedom at the high school I went to. I quit last September (a month after my second year began) -- my father, who WORKS at the high school, went, "You're QUITTING?" -- I said, "I'm TRANSFERRING to another high school!" -- I never did! I'm going to take the proficiency test, get that all settled, so I can go on and face the world and become a Good Adult!

High school takes up so much time -- you waste so much damn time getting all the kids settled in class. I could have been good at mathematics but I didn't think mathematics would be that useful for me. I ONLY WANT TO LEARN THINGS I MIGHT USE.... You spend from the age of 5 till 18 -- that's 13 years -- in school, and you could learn all that in 5 years
S&D: -- five months!
S&D: Did you ever take dance lessons?
THERESE: I took ballet for 10 years and I was bound and determined to end up in the SF Ballet, at least. And I gave up after I figured I was never going to lose weight; then I lost weight. Then I just started go-go dancing. The time I started go-go dancing for the MUTANTS was February 27, 1978 -- I was supposed to go see Mikhail Bereshnekov (sic) and I was panhandling to get the money to do it, and I ran into this Swede who took me up to the top of the Hyatt. I had champagne & caviar & champagne & caviar (he was richer than hell). Finally it came time to proposition me, I said No, & I left & went to the MUTANTS. He did give me five dollars for the conversation (thank god) and I went, I was real drunk...I'd always been real closed up before then, I'd never let out barely any of my personality, I was real suburban & strange & just kind of a dumb-dumb person -- all of a sudden I was real goofy....

Top row: Larry, Myke, Theresa, Janet.... Next row: Snit & Erich

THE SITUATIONS ARE
JANET SODER lead vocals/guitar
THERESE SODER vocals/Farfisa 345S organ
MYKE REILLY bass
LARRY MAHEM drums
SNIT-OUT & ERICH BROGGER go-go dancers/back-up vocals

SITUATIONS SONGS

ANDROID
DENIS
OPPOSSUM
COFFEE (DROWNING IN MY)
GUN HAPPY
WITHOUT YOU
HOT PASTRAMI
SHOCKING BUSINESSMEN
SUBURBAN GIRL (I'M JUST A)
BATMAN
I'M DIFFERENT
CRAZY ABOUT YOU

SUBURBAN GIRL

I'm just a suburban girl (4)
Oh yeah!
I live with my mom & dad
I sleep in my very own bed
Can't think about getting ahead
Oh my life is really dead

I could have been Queen of the Prom
Now my parents wonder what went wrong
I was a disco queen but I changed my song
Now I know where I'm coming from..

SOME REJECTED BAND NAMES

THE LONG GOODBYES
CAPRIS
RUNS
TRICO CUPS
SODA & THE SHAKES
THE BALD HIPPIES

KAMERA ZIE

PINK SECTION

PINK SECTION share a menage-a-trois Victorian flat in the Mission district ($350 rent) equipped with darkroom, drawing studio & living room cluttered with jazz albums, "new wave" records, odd pedals & amplifiers & instruments including a 6" plastic ukelle wired to a guitar pickup. They were experimenting with a new $25 MUSON synthesizer (from TOYS R US) played through a flanger & some kind of Morley effects pedal which Matty had bought that day. Local electronics whiz TOMMY TADLOCK was adjusting knobs & sequences on the MUSON -- it has amazing potential for anybody....

PINK SECTION are a 1979 Band along with the SITUATIONS, UNITS, VOICE FARM, TOUCHTONES (& no doubt others) who've eschewed the now-cliched raw-power guitar approach in favor of a more play-experimental, multi-instrumented context for their subliminal social criticism. Their music often emotionally contradicts the lyrics, & as they put it, "The problem's now more about getting your point across subtly...."

MATTY TODD plays the studio guitar, PONTIAC DE L'AMOUR switches from Vox & Magnus chord organ to Gibson bass, CAROL DETWEILER pounds the drums & KITTEN OF LOVE emits loud vocals while shaking her B-52...

(Intv by Vale)

S&D: ...how do you see yourselves in the context of local music?

PONTIAC: I think we have an affinity with the SITUATIONS, at least in some of our attitudes. Musically, I think we're a lot different --

MATTY: They (SITUATIONS) appeared so much like we had always seen ourselves in relation to the intimidating black leather heavy-metal scene -- NOW!! bright colors, young kids, more playful

PONTIAC: For a lot of the bands that preceded us, the music was a Secondary consideration to the lyrics & the Message that they wanted to present...but a lot of times the music was secondary & also very bad...

CAROL: We got together because we were close friends with a similar appreciation & gaiety about art & music....

KITTY: The four of us started a band last summer, SPORTSWEAR, with 2 other boys. It subdivided because Gary & Charly wanted to be ENO, just for one day!

MATTY: ...A lot of the earlier bands just were & still are copping to -- not exactly Copying "star guitarists" (they aren't exactly doing Jimi Hendrix riffs) but they're still Centered on that pose. As the guitar player in this band, I still go through funny feelings if we have some song where I have to improvise

PONTIAC: -- In certain songs where there Are lead guitar parts, intentionally they may be hokey....

CAROL: We're reacting against 1970s "Art Performances" which seemed to be about boredom & endurance -- real cruel, in a way, to the audience, but a big joke, too!

S&D: What instruments do you play?

KITTEN: We have a VOX organ, & Pontiac plays a Magnus chord organ --

PONTIAC: real cheap plastic --

KITTEN: and I play an FAO SCHWARZ xylophone

PONTIAC: And we bought a really neat synthesizer at TOYS R US, it has a sequencer -- very sophisticated toy & I'm sure next year, they're going to have a MUSON II that'll do even more

KITTEN: I'm so immersed in this present "new wave" that it's hard to Remember that everybody else is in a rut, and We have all this freedom to do whatever we want, and I get scared that I'm already in a rut with this, too --

MATTY: We're in the New Rut!....

KITTEN: In our circle of friends in particular, there's a real renaissance going on of our peers -- we don't want to work, we don't want to have steady jobs, we want to do what we want to do, and have our own hours & be more in control of our life so we can play more, stay up late, & then create when we feel like creating, & we are very creative people -- for those who take advantage of it, it's really exciting

PONTIAC: So we're becoming leisure specialists in our own way....

KITTEN: I think we're sort of projecting a futuristic lifestyle in the way the 3 of us live together -- we have a FAMILY, we're not roommates -- a feasible relationship where 3 people live together & support each other & do all the things that TWO people used to do (or were supposed to do but never did!) When there's 3 people you don't get your roles as defined either....

CAROL: I spent a year at a very idealistic, futuristic-oriented community, ARCOSANTI, founded by PAOLO SOLERI. He immigrated here from Italy to study at Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West. While washing dishes he realized he wanted to design prototype cities for the future, not bourgeois homes. There's a book of his original designs called CITY IN THE IMAGE OF MAN. They're basically very complex in 3 Dimensions & gigantic structures accommodating anywhere from 2500 to 200,000. The arco-logy (combination architecture/ecology) is a self-sufficient, self-supportive, efficient structure with land surrounding reserved for cultivation. But Paolo's ideas are much more than the efficiency of the architecture & technology. He has a very complex philosophy for which he has invented his own language & combination of languages. Ultimately, that man is seeking a greater consciousness of the whole, including the universe. And the arcology is not to glorify it but to assist it by means of its own internal & immense complexity. Designed in the image of man's mind! It raises a lot of questions....

I was glad for the opportunity to live there in the desert where no one's lived since the Indians. The city is all hand-built from scratch, and of course with the aid of cranes, etc., but much of it is cast concrete. Paolo started out on his own, funding his ideas by the sale of ceramic wind bells which he slip-cast. But the progress is very, very slow & in fact those working there are not supposed to consider themselves already living prototypes of the future. The Second generation will be the product of the integrated city of the future.

Soleri's ULTIMATE concept is a space arcology where you have an orbiting, totally self-sufficient, technologically efficient world in space....If you try reading his book (MATTER BECOMING SPIRIT) -- it's impossible reading!

Carol, Pontiac, Kitty & Matty

photo: Gail Stobelight

JANE BLANK

Red Brigade call me up one day
say run guns/I say that's OK
I been reading & the Shah's a Jerk
My time is open for some volunteer work
Housewife/Pissed Off/Flipped out
'cause the world's messed up

UPI Austin Texas/Officer howard park on a routine check for a parking violation discovered that a Ms. Jane Blank was transporting large quantities of unregistered firearms. As Park asked the driver to step from the car, Ms. Blank sped away in a volley of gunfire. Park is in critical condition in the county hospital

Flash bulletin Galveston. Richmond Mall was the scene of a bloody gun battle today. Two officers are in critical condition & a suspect is in custody. A Ms. Jane Blank is accused of carrying illegal firearms across county lines & assaulting officers. She is a resident of Austin & the mother of three.

Investigators broke into her home, found some books & some magazines, looked for clues but there weren't any, Whole thing still a mystery

Housewife pissed off/flipped out/cause the world's messed up

Jane Blank was arraigned in Galveston superior court today in connection with Richmond mall shootings, She's charged with wounding 3 highway patrol officers. She's been linked to the red brigades & other subversive groups. Jane Blank is also accused of attempting to run guns to Nicaraguan revolutionaries. Asked why, Jane replied, I HAVE MY MIND....

CARS DON'T WAIT FOR LOVE

He & She were kissing in the street
They looked like stewed tomatoes
I saw them/front window pane
Light was green/I hit them clean
I wanted to stop honestly but cars
don't wait for love....

I could imagine what a cute couple
they make/him the giver her the
taker/eating together & watching TV/
the two of them heavenly
I wanted to stop honestly, but cars
don't wait for love....I've never
been in a car that stopped/you silly
pedestrians, get out of the cross-
walk

Pretty, pretty in her new red dress
Him in khaki, what a funfilled mess

PINK SECTION SONGS

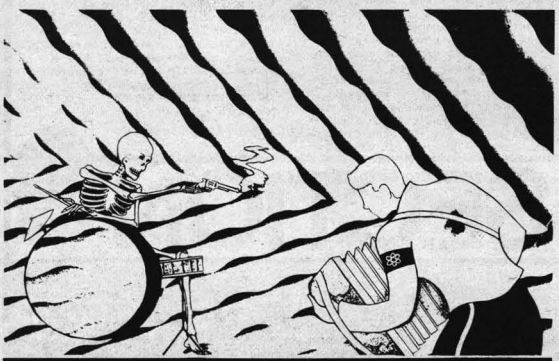
FRANCINE'S LIST
CARS DON'T WAIT FOR LOVE
SHUT UP BABY
SHOPPING
BEEN IN THE BASEMENT FOR 30 YEARS
SAFETY INSTRUCTION
TOUR OF CHINA
LOVE PRISON
JANE BLANK
NO NOISE
MIDSUMMER NEW YORK
COCKROACH PRINCESS

The debut 45 of

The World Imitation Band

MONITOR

L 6000



Available at some record stores in May

S.F. STREET REPORT.....

BY SEARCH + DESTROY

The DEAF CLUB was NOT closed by Mayor Feinstein or a 'Police Crackdown' but by neighbors who filed a stack of 'noise' complaints with the gendarmes. The DEAF CLUB people want to host more concerts & have started soundproofing the old building -- it remains to be seen whether they can lower the volume of sound leakage 30 decibels. Possibly by May?....

The MABUHAY, still the most stable 'base' for out-of-town acts who 'draw', has gotten better since the extensive police raids & macho-jock invasions of several months ago. Especially compared to the Old Waldorf whose recent showcasing of 999/The MUTANTS was depressing, the same way 'Holiday' Inns depress me. The 7-member MUTANTS received $50 per show 999 (despite achievements like 'Homicide') remain a second-string cliche band with a 'professional' wall-of-sound, resembling 3 skinheads & a hired (guitar) hand....

-- Saturday night the MUTANTS, DEAD KENNEDYS & a vastly-improved KGB played Finnish Hall in Berkeley -- probably the outstanding event was an intense but harmless empty beer can fight between the small balcony & the floor between sets (& filmed by TARGET). DEAD KENNEDYS did a disco version of KILL THE POOR which the audience didn't even notice but pogoed wildly to anyway, & new songs RELIGIOUS VOMIT, RHODESIA, DEAD END & CHEMICAL WARFARE....The night before at the Mabuhay, Biafra, who's been in a wheelchair since severing his achilles tendon, was wheeled in like a corpse by "nurse" Therese Soda who then brought him to life with a hypodermic needle in the neck....

THE DILS, those "revolutionary" con-men/hypocrites turned rock'n'roll assholes, recently played a 'benefit for the Rich' at beautiful Monterey (one of the highest per-capita-income townships in the USA). Chip & Tony Feinstein almost won the Pete Townshend & Tom Joad Imitation Awards (respectively) for their mouth-to-mouth resuscitation of nostalgia corpses such as ONLY THE LONELY, SHE'S SOMETHIN' ELSE & other "love songs", following a revivalism-for-success formula established by Linda Ronstadt & other 2-dimensional cut-outs....The Dils, who feverishly long to cut a "smooth, more palatable" single with a major record conglomerate, define their revolutionary program after they receive their six-figure signing as, "Uhh, well we'll never tell people what they want to hear..."

SNUKY (whose EP is excellent, especially "I Wanna Live") is looking for a permanent band -- bassists & drummers call 415-863-9673.

The hottest new store with plastic, dayglo, industrial clothes etc is SUPPLIES ("For The Master Race"), 3128 16th St/Valencia near the ROXIE Theatre....And speaking of plastic clothes, one of the hottest events recently was a "DISPOSABLE CLOTHING" Party held above "The Farm" in SF -- entrance through a long black plastic "tunnel" into a totally plastic cavern hung with combinations of balloons & other ephemera. THE UNITS (a synthesizers-and-drums trio & one of the most promising new music groups, all they need is a TOMATA) played loud, fast & Interesting songs like HIGH PRESSURE DAYS, TEX-NOLOGY, CONTEMPORARY EMOTIONS, TRIBUTE TO GALVANI, WARM MOVING BODIES etc after which people began destroying balloons, pulling down plastic off the ceilings....also noteworthy was a performance art piece of dog iconography & a simulated lesbian wrestling match against a backdrop of "pornographic' Japanese color woodcuts....there should be more parties which demand EFFORT from participants rather than merely showing up and "being yourself"....

Sunday, April 8, punks invaded DAYS, a traditional Irish saloon, for a generally blotto experience w/ the URGE, all-girl Motown-influenced primitives, and the ZEROS who are relentless & beautifully 1977....As Susie (ex-Pop Tart) put it, "It's now just a rock'n'roll scene...."

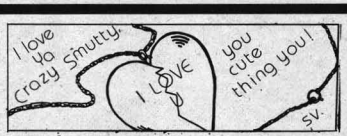
classified ads. $4.00

instructions

1. Take a piece of white paper and draw a rectangle 2 inches high and 6 inches long.
2. Draw, write, or type anything you want inside the rectangle (use *black* ink for good reproduction).
3. Put your ad in an envelope and mail it to us with the money.

That's it. Ads will reproduce smaller (1 inch by 3 inches). If we receive your ad too late for the next issue, it will appear in the one after. Make sure your ad is the right size (2 × 6) or it won't fit, we won't use it, and we'll cash your fuckin' check anyway.

Sitting in a factory, drinking instant coffee laced w/ cognac, on a rainy day afternoon in San Francisco. Writing an ad demanding a reduction in the distance between here and L.A. so that I can go to a bar and have a drink w/ Irene instead of dancing w/ a pinball machine all nite and waking up w/ smelly fingers.



HEY PUNK! Yeah, you with that snappy little combo, going to waste in your parent's garage. Tired of playing to an audience of garden tools? Here's what you can do... Send your name, band's name, description of your noise, a number where you can be reached & your rates (if any) to: h&r 44/2 DIRECTORY, 916 NEPTUNE AVE., WILMINGTON, CA. 90744. You will be included in a directory listing of local Punk/New Wave bands to be sent to folks who Can Do Something About It! Soon U2 could be playing on a real stage to (reasonably) real people. And best of all, next to the fact that U and yer pals will be bored no longer, this service is SUBSTANTIALLY FREE! GRATIS! What have U gotta lose? Nuthin'! So write now or miss it and if U want a copy of the directory, just include a S.A.S.E. and one will be sent to you when they come out.

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WHAT'S YOUR NAME? DANGER ROADS!
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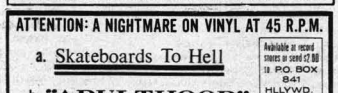

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THE RAMONES

"Rock & Roll High School"

"If you want to appeal to the kids, drive their parents up the wall."

—Brian Epstein

"Rock n Roll High School" centers on a power struggle between girl student Riff Randell (played by Hollywood starlet PJ Soles) and her high school principal, Evelyn Togar, played by Mary Woronov, a veteran Warhol superstar who has since been christened "Queen of the B's." In "Chelsea Girls" she played the sadistic leader of an all-girl gang.

Riff is a rock n roll rebel and Togar is the class 50s style "voice of authority" down on rock n roll. The movie takes rock n roll to its logical conclusion when Riff, her fellow students, and the Ramones take over the high school and blow it into pieces of flaming debris.

Director Allen Arbush thought up the project in high school — "I'd always think: all I have to do is sit through this one class and next period the Yardbirds would be here." He first tried to get the film going a couple of years ago, after co-directing "Hollywood Blvd.", the lowest budget New World picture to date that combined footage from 3 previous Corman releases wrapped around a new storyline. "Rock n Roll High" was originally called "High School Spirit of '76" then "Heavy Metal Kids." "I wanted to use Todd Rundgren and tried to get New World interested and they weren't. I gave Roger 8 ideas for movies and he turned them all down. Finally, he said, yes I could do a high school picture and it was going to be called "Girl's Gym." The character of Riff was in there and there was a robot; it was very different — an R-rated girlie film. I kept saying to Roger, "This is the wrong direction" and he finally cancelled it. I kept working on him to do a rock music picture and the closest I could get was "Disco High," because he saw that disco was big. He never understood the music. So I got in his office one day and hd to explain the difference between rock n roll and disco and I was doing all these Pete Townshend moves, jumping around his furniture."

Bands other than the Ramones had been under consideration such as Tom Petty and Cheap Trick. Allen had the Ramones albums, but he'd never seen them live. He flew to N.Y. to see them at Harrah's. He talked to them about the film and they were very enthusiastic. Johnny had been a Corman fan since he saw "Attack of the Crab Monsters" when he was 6. Corman was finally sold on the Ramones when he saw the "Mutant Monster Beach Party" photo comic that Joey Ramone and Debbie Harry did for Punk magazine.

The Ramones were nervous about their dramatic scenes, they'd never acted before. After screening films like "The TAMI Show" and "A Hard Day's Night," they'd sit down and discuss how the Ramones could best be presented to the audience. "I didn't want to do anything in the movie that wasn't representative of the group," said Allen. "We talked in detail about the script, I wanted as many different styles of presentation for the Ramones as possible. We rehearsed a lot, Dee Dee Ramone was not very good in rehearsals, he could never remember where he was supposed to come in; yet on film, Dee Dee is wonderful. Joey could do his lines only in one big block. Because they had no acting training it was a matter of memorizing all the inflections and doing it that way. Their music and acting styles are very similar. All the actors treated them as fellow actors."

The cast and crew were under incredible pressure during the shooting; the film was cranked out in 20 days. Often over 50 camera setups a day were achieved (24 is the industry average). The shooting took place at Mount Carmel High School in Watts, long abandoned. (Rock Around the Clock was shot in the same school 20 years before). The crew literally took over the place, turning it into a cinema encampment. Certain areas were spruced up for filming and occasionally whole rooms were built up from nothing. The filming of the student takeover was saved for the end, when the walls were covered with graffiti, filling cabinets chainsawed and the halls strewn with books and papers.

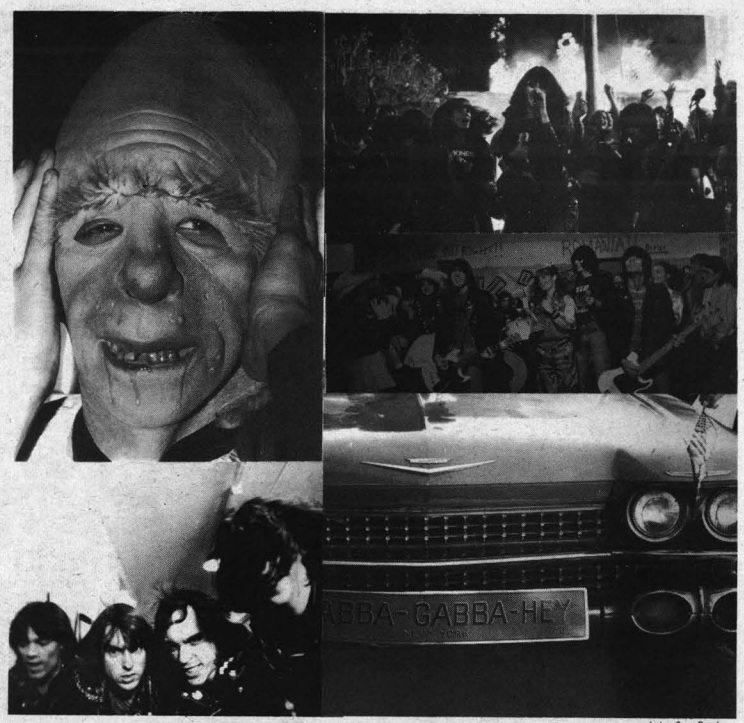


photo: Gary Pearlson

The Ramones slowly become a presence in the movie. We first see them in front of the theater where fans are waiting in line to buy tickets for their show. (This was shot at the Mayor Theater, a porno house downtown). The Ramones pull up in their pink cadillac with leopard skin upholstery, pile out and perform "I Just Want to Have Something to Do", while checking out the pogoing maniacs on the sidewalk.

Later, after having her concert tickets confiscated by Principal Togan, Riff fantasizes Joey and the boys singing to her in her room. Joey does a masterful lip-synch to "I Want You Around," a tender-tough ballad.

Riff finally gets to meet the Ramones backstage after the concert, (shot backstage at the Whisky). The sequence ends with Joey telling Riff that they'll come to play for her music class the next day. They arrive just in time to join Riff and the students in destroying the place. The concert was shot during one long hectic day at the Roxy. The audience consisted of belligerent local punks, who became more rowdy as the day progressed; they had paid $4.50 for the privilege of seeing the Ramones filmed in concert. Most of them didn't realise that filmmaking would be such a tediously slow process. At one point some audience members decided they didn't like the way P.J. Soles was dressed and gave her a very rough time as she was filmed on her way through to the foot of the stage. Dee Dee and Joey reluctantly came out to tell people to cool it.

The whole day at the Roxy was really a culture shock for most of the crew. Because of the bloodthirsty condition of the audience, once the cameras started rolling the takes were really intense. One of the crew said, "If the Ramones don't play soon, they're going to kill us." Finally, when all the official filming was wrapped up, the Ramones did a blistering complete set for their well-worked fans.

At the moment there are 5 live songs in the film. Dee Dee had sprained his ankle and was seen hobbling about on crutches, but he and Johnny still did their usual leaping about on stage. "Eighteen hours is a long time to stand on the stage with everybody yelling at you," said Johnny — "the fans, the kids . . sign this, sign that, and you've got to be nice, but you start getting a little tired."

One of the craziest parts of filming was the blowing up of the school, at 2:30 AM in 30 degree weather. The Ramones are playing "Rock n Roll High School," the kids are dancing and the school administration, police and parents look on in amazement as Riff pushes down a plunger and the whole school goes up in a huge fireball. 6 cameras covered the explosion — it could only be done once. Allen said, "The main thing I tried to bring out in the movie was the thing about high school kids — that their fantasy life expressed through their music is really much more intense than their real life. The second the music enters, the intensity jumps. It's not a movie about new wave music, but it is truthful to the way kids perceive their music. I talked with Johnny Ramone at length about the additional music which has to fit the style of the movie. Other artists set so far include The Flamin' Groovies, MC5, Chuck Berry, Lou Reed, Blondie and Nick Lowe. The soundtrack will feature all the live Ramones tracks, plus the 2 new songs they wrote for the movie. A Paul McCartney song not used in "Heaven Can Wait" is also being considered. The producer wanted Brian Eno to score the film, but Eno was held up in Nigeria and said he wouldn't have time; but he did give his permission to use any of his music that might be appropriate. Certain sinister selections have already been picked as background music for some of Togar's scenes. Also, according to Joey, Phil Spector has already remixed "Rock n Roll High School" and will possibly do some work on "I Want You Around" and the rest of the soundtrack LP.

Allen is already working on an idea for his next project "The Big Broadcast of 1999" in which 2 huge rocketships are racing to the moon, each powered by rock groups.

Ken Beyda

ELKS LODGE '79

Along with Harrisburg and the Middle East peace pact, the Elks' Building Riot/Massacre/Beano will go down as one of the media events of '79 . . . and we're only into April already.

Frankly we're bored with myriad interpretations of why the bully-boys of the Rampart Division beat on the punks, 'cause it was inevitable that it would happen sooner or later. After all, does anyone yelling politically extreme slogans expect to sashay through life unhindered by the tac squad? Some might in fact say that any culture which barely conceals an obsession with bondage, nihilism and chaos openly invites blood-letting.

But nobody enjoys the taste of broken teeth and we ain't condoning anything, merely asking if anyone was really stupid enough to totally discount the red-rag-to-a-bull theory? This isn't 1967. We're not all sitting around smoking dope and chanting mantras. This is '79 and we're getting angry and ugly. The cops know that they're not dealing with passive resistance and they should also know that next time they won't get away with it so lightly.

Many readers rang us to report individual attacks in and outside the Elks' Building, and the phone lines to KROQ and most local newspapers were also kept busy following the police vs. punks debaucle. The hefty slice of supportive coverage which consequently appeared in a media that understnads the New Order of '79 far less than it did that of an earlier generation, is arguably more significant that any bitter manifesto Slash might publish, however justified. So what follows are quotes fromthe straight press, plus an exclusive report from our Special News Service, World Imitation.

And just remember, Lt. Bushey, the society which has abolished every kind of adventure makes its own abolition the only possible adventure.

Los Angeles Times
(Robert Hilburn)

"If there's ever a threatening tone at a concert, I'll leave," McKenna said. That wasn't the case Saturday night. I got to the Elks Building about 8:30, just as the opening act was about to go on stage. Everyone seemed to be having a good time.

"Over the next two hours, I didn't see **any** incidents in the hall that would have required police attention. That's why I was very surprised when I saw them arrive en masse. Things immediately got ugly. People were confused. Police just started roughing people up without any warning or explanation."

"The only time I saw people throw bottles was after police had angered and frightened them by their rough tactics. Usually when you deal with police, you can establish some dialogue or logic with them. This time there was none."

"The (the police) generally come up and ask what's going on and I explain that it's just like it was in the 50s . . . the kids like to dress up in leather jackets, but they're not really violent," Mullen said. "The police seem to understand and leave us alone. That's why what happened Saturday was such a surprise."

LA Reader
(Chris Morris)

"The crowd in the ballroom was relaxed, appreciative and thoroughly under control — one of the most placid, polite audiences I've encountered at a hard-core L.A. rock n roll show lately.

"I saw no evidence of any major violence, vandalism or disorder, and there was nothing to suggest that the concert itself was out of hand in anyway. Yet the official Police Department line is that 'the situation had gotten out of control,' although the Rampart Station officer I spoke to the next day could not cite any specific situations that suggested that the building had to be cleared.

"The only people who were out of control were the police. The LAPD was clearly looking for **any** excuse to close the show . . . .

"Apparently the police were beating anyone who was not moving out of the area with what they deemed sufficient speed. I saw at least a couple of young women holding their heads with bloody hands . . .

"Every stranger that I encountered had some horror story about a totally unmotivated police clubbing that he or she had witnessed. . . .

"Police say that there were widespread compliants about drug and alcohol abuse; where are the arrests to back this up?

"The Elks' Hall, an outstanding venue for live shows, will now undoubtedly close its doors to rock n roll forever. The local papers will have a field day with trumped-up stories about "punk-rock violence" And, of course, the barbarity of the police leaves its irrevocable legacy of hate and fear.

"Last Saturday's display was one of the most offensive, outrageous displays of senseless police brutality I have ever witnessed.

"It is clear that the disgust and loathing that police have for American youth is still in force. And it is clear that the kids will always be the losers and there is little we can do about it."

LA WEEKLY

"The fracas between squadrons of helmeted LAPD

photos: Ann Summa

Badges of Honor?

troops and punk rock enthusiasts at the Elks' Club last Saturday night has brought back memories of the 60s, when it was standard practice for then police chief Ed Davis' boys to smash hippie heads just for showing up at an event."

WORLD IMITATION

INCIDENT AT ELKS' LODGE: FESTIVAL OF CRUELTY

On the evening of March 17, at the Elks' Lodge Hall, the LAPD made amockery of their motto, "to protect and to serve," demonstrating by their unprovoked brutality that every citizen – especially those with spiked hair – is in need of protection FROM the police.

As in the 60s, the police have a new subculture to attack. It's a small group–considerably less widespread than the hippies, but considerably less complacent, as well. And this very lack of complacency must serve to strengthen our outrage and our determination to ensure that the incident at Elks' Lodge will never recur.

The following points are taken from the interview that friends, members of my band, Monitor, and I had that morning at Rampart division, with Lt. Bushey, the man who ordered the police action. I want to make public the contradictions and outright lies that Lt. Bushey made later that same day on KROQ radio. We approached him enraged, but listened to what he had to say. Throughout the course of the interview it became clear to us that the police had planned and organized the raid well in advance, and that the alleged "riot" which caused their presence in full force was a false pretext for a pre-conceived exercise in sadism.

In a patronizing manner, Lt. Bushey avoided the important issues we brought up and tried to deal with relatively inconsequential aspects of the raid. We did elicit from him a rough timetable of events: at 8:00 there were five plainclothes officers on the premises. By 10:00 the station had received some calls about broken bottles, and there were 8 police cars on the premises. At 11:20 the station received a help call about a plainclothes officer allegedly jumped at the top of the stairs, requiring further assistance. Ten minutes later the full deployment arrived, and began clearing the hall.

Lt. Bushey stated several times that only a few people made any disturbance, ruining the "festivities" for the majority of law-abiding participants. He then drew a diagram for us, to illustrate the original plan to close the concert **at 10:00**. He did not mention any compliant that had necessitated this plan, citing only the officer's call for help **at 11:20** as the cause of the final mobilization. At this point it became evident to us that the raid had been pre-planned, and that the "riot" was a flimsy excuse. At no time did Lt. Bushey offer any further justification for the police action, and he seemed unaware of the blatant inconsistencies of his timetable and the actual sequence of events.

We then related the acts of brutality that we had witnessed. Steve Thomsen and I had seen two people, male and female, bleeding profusely from the head, barely able to stand, attempting to evade further blows from the police. We saw one person, hands up in non-resistance, choked and dragged backward many feet by a club across his throat. On two separate occasions, we were all standing several hundred yards away from the hall after the evacuation, when a line of police charged at us, clubs raised, forcing us to run as fast as possible. Steve and I witnessed one officer, club raised, chasing a group of fleeing people across the street, while another officer tried to restrain him, and finally succeeded. We saw several police laughing as they beat people. We all witnessed police kicking and pushing people down the stairs, and beating non-resistant people. At the close of our discussion, Lt. Bushey directed Sgt. Espiau, who had been taking notes, to include our report in the addendum to the case.

Later that day, on KROQ radio, Lt. Bushey made several statements that directly contradicted his earlier interview with us. He stated that he was unaware of the police beating any girls. This is an outright lie, because we had informed him that we witnessed a girl being beaten in the head, and he had said that our testimony would be included in the case.

On the air, Lt. Bushey also stated that approximately 150 people were engaged in lawbreaking activities. This contradicts his earlier claim, repeated several times, that "only a few people" made any disturbance.

The most extreme contradiction was his statement that the police had behaved in an exemplary manner. If he had included our statements in the case report, and considered them as valid eyewitness accounts, as he had indicated to us, he would be well aware of the ludicrous falsity of this statement.

Along with these outright contradictions, Lt. Bushey's general description of the incident on KROQ differed greatly from his original story. On KROQ he did not once mention an officer being jumped, which was the sole concrete act of violence he had related earlier. On the air he described a "riot" in progress, abuse of drugs and alcohol, people breaking furniture and disturbing the wedding party. None of these incidents were mentioned to us, and I question their validity. If all this had occurred, surely Lt. Bushey would have included it as further justification for the police action when he discussed the matter with us early that morning. In fact, his total omission of the occurrence to which he had previously ascribed such importance, the officer being jumped, indicates the dubious validity of this claim, as well.

I'm not aware of what the police feel they accomplished that night, but I do know that they have created mistrust and hatred in the minds of several hundred innocent people. I cannot help but challenge the system that allows laughing men – obviously enjoying their brutal work – full legal access to clubs and guns.

Now the police have dropped or reduced the charges against several of those arrested, in apparent acknowledgement of the lack of concrete evidence for their case.

But the case against the police has plenty of concrete evidence – including the lies of Lt. Bushey, the 15 stitches in Dorothy's head, Cathy's broken wrist and finger, injuries sustained by the 13-year old boy they knocked unconscious, and the honest testimony of the injured and the many witnesses to this festival of cruelty.

Laurie O'Connell

WHAM! BAM!

ONTO THE L.A. SCENE!

LONDONER MARK WILLIAMS (an unfortunate by-product of Laker Airways and a compassionate immigration service) JUMPS IN AND SORTS IT ALL OUT... AND WHILE YOU MIGHT CALL THIS "OBSERVATIONS OF A RIGHT WANKER", HE PREFERS IT TO BE KNOWN AS "RANDOM STOATS"...

In Britain there was a grey inevitability about new wave. A fifth of the teenage working population were unemployed. The limp contrivances of our incumbent pop idols, all glitter and random heavy metal posturing, were patently irrelevant to the mood it was supposed to reflect. So what could a poor boy do but play in a rock n'roll band? The rest you know.

But what / wanted to know, was why punk in the USA? The cradle of the affluent society spewing forth ragged edged musical malevolence implies an effete hypocrisy. Is American punk merely another fashion, or is there real social deprivation smouldering beneath the Californian sun? I had to know before any more of my limey brethren wasted their beans on Freddie Laker and came west in search of Big Action.

(See, Slash's quasi-religious fascination with London's new wave is almost matched by the feeling in certain grimy corners of the UK music biz that the next big wave is going to break not on the Eastern Seaboard, but right here in So. Cal. My job: cultural reconnaisance).

Within ten minutes of stepping half-drunk off a 747, blinking blearily in the stark sunshine, things look promising. The hot poop is the Elks Building shindig and the way it comes over to this writer as he is whisked away to the Venice hideaway of Kickboy and Tinkerbell in a sleek '66 Plymouth with a stoved-in trunk, bald tires and ripped upholstery, is that a battlion of armed thugs in LAPD livery baton-charged a group of mild-mannered pogoers privately enjoying their St. Patrick's Night festivities.

It becomes necessary to file a story on the *contretemps* for a UK music paper, and in checking out stories from both the police and their prey, it seems that whilst there is some confusion as to why the cops got heavy, there is no doubt that their violent behavior was both random and gratuitous. But any grim forebodings are tempered with the unwitting levity of Mr. David Street's naive assumption that the Elks' riot "will provide the impetus for a punk revolution in America."

Politicizing social outrage is plausible only when the polarity is ingrained and/or widespread. an observation clearly eschewed by the earnest young idealists marshalling protests against the LAPD immediately after the carnage. And I was further amused by a remark passed to Masque Man Brendan Mullen by a Hollywood cop who felt ashamed of his Rampart Division brethren and hoped that the whole ugly affair wouldn't sour relationships between Us and Them in Hollywood.

In the meantime bruises are being worn as badges of honor.

At this point you should understand that on any night in London you can go to one of perhaps forty or fifty gigs within a five mile radius of the city center, and perhaps ten of these will be new wave. I guess I get my ears bashed three or four times a week and after the initial blitzkrieg of '76 when an awful lot of shit hit the fan, one developed a discriminating attitude to what music accompanies nocturnal perambulations. In L.A. the choice is severely limited and a rock junkie has to fix whatever's going.

If this explains why bands in L.A. are in their musical infancy compared to their British ancestors (e.g. today's Fear are yesterday's Sham 69), it also justifies my excursion to Madame Wongs' to witness the debut of Balls and just another set by the Motels. After the Motels' last three numbers and the first couple of Balls' ups, I decided I had not travelled 5000 miles to see a surrogate Cars and middle America's answer to Genya Ravan (or was it Patti Smith?) So I went to the attractively chintzy bar and watched wily orientals short-changing quaalude victimes and drank warm beer. Later still, American morals were upheld by an aging cleric who prevented me from entering a girlfriend's hotel room despite assurances from her that her virginity was no longer at risk. And I thought Hollywood still lived in the shadow of Errol Flynn.

The London smartset have almost terminated their honeymoon with reggae. Which is to say that I and I can rock steady seven nights a week without risking asphyxiation from Chanel No. 5 (they can't stand the way those niggers smell)-or having some tubby A&R man in a satin bomber jacket ply you with gin and tonic and incessant prattle about roots. I fear LA stands on the threshold of just such an unpleasant period of trendmongery, that is if the audience at the Filmex premiere of Rockers is any sort of barometer. Firstly, there couldn't have been more than 25 blacks in the audience (in London it would've been 60/40 blacks to whites) and consensus opinion acclaimed it as a work of considrable cultural and musical merit. Me? Well, against The Harder They Come it sucked. The soundtrack was largely minor league and the script, subtitles notwithstanding, and acting suggested a rastafarian soap opera.

Maybe righteous dub can only ever retain a tiny cult following in a country which spawned the blues, motown and black disco, although Marley and the acceptable face of dread will keep 'em smugly saw swaying on the cocktail circuit for awhiles yet.

A serious social miscalculation transported me into a glam-rock time-warp at the Starwood. Something called Pegasus was shaking its collective beer gut and satin dungarees to antique power chords and hysterically machismo lyrics. Fortunately my well-meaning hostess spirited up a bar tab which enabled me to get very shitfaced very quickly and thus I can recall little more of the evening's embarrassments.

Sensing incipient despair, the Sonny and Cher of the West Coast punk scene dragged my by now rather irascible form along to the Troubadour on a balmy Tuesday night, but not before I had roundly insulted two innocent damsels who'd dropped by our table at Barney's to renew an acquaintance. I'll say this for L.A., caustic bandinage is an art form here which gives me free rein to vent the nastier aspects of my troubled soul. The age of Oscar Wilde has passed unmourned in England and the barbed wit you can get away with here would get me a severe beating in the old country.

However, the Troubadour was a revelation, its atmosphere more akin to the edgy exuberance of London's Roxy in its heyday than anything else I've experienced. A small, well-oiled bunch of expatriates imbued the evening with camaradarie and the Cramps justified all the extravagant claims made for them by my L.A. friends. They (The Cramps, not my whacko Limey pals), surged convincingly to the precipice of good taste and orchestrated their antics in a muscular fashion. But listen, there was nothing happening on that stage that either the Damned or Slaughter and the Dogs or Johnny Moped hadn't accomplished two years earlier in Blighty, only now they call it Voodoo Rockabilly.

Another shot in the arm came three days later when we joined the cognoscenti at Club 88 for the Bags and the Alleycats. My feckless flippancy got me into trouble with Ms. McKenna of the L.A. Times who was not amused when I asked if she'd be following up her essays on such cultural heavyweights as Tony Alva and Bob Welch with a Leif Garrett interview. The resultant slagfest clouded my appraisal of the Bags' first set (alcohol and narcotics torpedoed my sensibilities for their second), but I remember harbouring sexist thoughts with regard to their disconsolately erotic bassist (the Gaye Advert of L.A.?)

I was however totally on the case for the Alleycats who confirmed that technical expertise and aggressive song structures can coexist. Randy Stodola copped my vote for the slickest (and fastest) indigenous guitaring I've heard in L.A. Their songs veered encouragingly away from the straight-ahead amphetamine rock that seems to stereotype many L.A. punk bands, and Dianne Chai cooks and looks just right.

Which reminds me that we chatted to the lady as she hawked leaflets for the Club 88 gig outside the Troubadour Tuesday night. This too smackes of London circa 1976. I can remember TV Smith self-effacingly passing paper outside a Lou Reed concert, for an early Adverts' gig. Nowadays a battery of PR flacks and ad men do the job with lugubrious efficiency.

Perhaps it's the very hand-to-mouth nature of the L.A. scene that is its underlying appeal, and I don't mean that condescendingly. It's a perverse truism that the best contemporary American music has been born out of suffering, and if vinyl moguls in black caddies start turning up at the Masque (if and when), cheque books skimbo, all we'll get is a bunch of Dickies: another extraordinary musical expression hitched onto the buckola production line, tarted up and mixed down for antiseptic FM appetites.

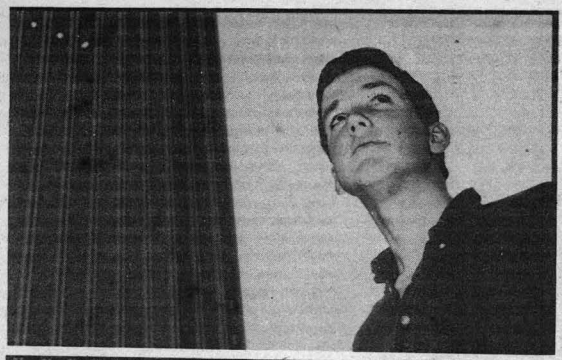
Even in England so much new wave energy has burnt out (e.g., Damned, Vibrators, Pistols, Cortinas, etc.) or sold out (Clash, XTC, Generation X, etc.), for reasons too sad or too tedious to relate, if you don't already know, so I'm still intrigued by the possibilities here.

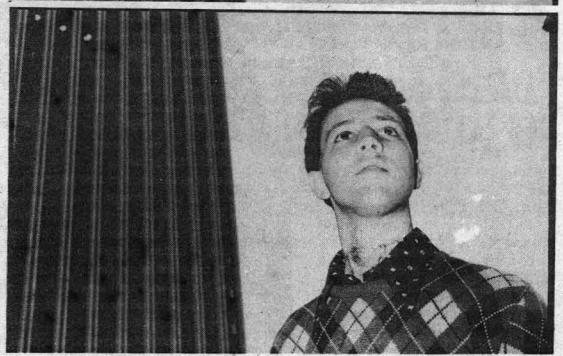
Los Angeles is a proud monument to trash and avarice, and such honest reverence for superficiality contrasts sharply with the dual-purpose aesthetics of a country like Britain which is struggling to reflect integrity in a world where it's almost universally redundant. Fuck, your cars and your architecture and your neon and your chemically-ridden food are joyously bereft of precedent or guilt. And so is your rock n roll.

And yet still I pursue some glib epithet which will conveniently explain why punk isn't big potatoes on the West Coast, some cheapshot at cultural philosophizing that I haven't yet had time to dream up. Just as I'm pondering this and reeling at the prices just quoted me for downers and sulphate (I'm dismayed to discover Young Americans ingest the same noxiants as their parents, and they're all advertised on floodlit billboards), my thirst for truth is unexpectedly slaked by a girl who was apparently trying to get as loaded as I at Club 88's bar.

"You know why punk'll never be big here," she snarled, " 'cause they stopped the draft, that's why."

Whew.





photos: Melanie

RHINO 39

HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL – 1979

While the Ramones are busy creating wishful fantasies of high school takeovers by rock n roll crazed students, the naxty realities of teenage life are more than ever plaguing the few brave underaged souls that do not follow the strict status quo condoned by their intransigent peers. In other words, it's still hell to be different in school, cliches and ignorance and pimply intolerance still rule the hallowed halls of knowledge and the locker rooms. So stop moaning about the way you get stared at at the supermarket or on the sidewalk, green hair. Others have to put up with that shit every day, and they are not allowed to get away from it until graduation, which may be in a couple of months or a couple of years. Rhino 39 are Dave Dakron on vocals, Larry Parrott on guitar, Mark Samaratan on bass and Tim Synic on drums, and it does not look like any of them is going to get a "most likely to succeed" or "most popular at lunchtime" comment under their yearbook photo. But then, it does not look like their schoolmates are going to get their picture in these pages either, not until they stop behaving like the narrow-minded parents and teachers they unconsciously emulate. Maybe there's some justice in the world after all.

Slash: One significant thing about Rhino 39 is that you are a young band, whereas you've got other bands in their 40's, and us well into our fifties . . . I mean its common knowledge that Tomata (of the Screamers) is 42 . . . Y'know, a lot of older guys, sincere & good intentions, are nonetheless inflicting their aged influences on a supposedly virgin medium . . . What I'm leading up to, is getting a little insight into what you four immature assholes feel about all this . . . Do you feel you are in a better position, or superior because you're young?

Rhino 39: We just happen to be young . . . I'm glad we're young though . . . but because we're young & know what it's about, we get shit from it from idiots at school that don't know about anything . . . things at our high school are getting rough; mob action & stuff . . .

Slash: Literally?

Rhino 39: Literally . . . three of our friends were sitting in the lunch area with a mob of like 100-150 people circled around them, it looked like a fight . . . it's a pathological hatred . . . When they walk by, they say like, "Devo, Devo" . . .

Slash: Are you the only punks in your school?

Rhino 39: There are nine of us . . . There are some sympathizers, basically people whose parties we play . . . Not everyone is against us, but a lot of people are . . .

Slash: Being in Long Beach, would you consider your school middle class?

Rhino 39: Yeah, mostly middle class . . . the only people who identify with us at school now are the blacks, not all of them but a large percentage . . .

Slash: Welcome to the world of minorities. What's the main "scene" at Millikan High?

Rhino 39: There's some actual surfers and some real skiers, that's about a quarter of the population . . . Everybody else just acts & dresses like surfers & skiers . . . And the "sosh" scene – the cheerleaders, the "rah-rah's," the jocks, they're the worst . . .

Slash: Do you get in fights?

Rhino 39: It's usually just threats . . . Usually it's a good idea to try to talk yourself out of a fight, cause there's nobody to back you up . . .

Slash: But aren't there people that are curious, kinda interested in what's going on that will stand up for you.

Rhino 39: Sure, but they just aren't as vocal as the rest. They'll stay out of it, or just pass the situation by . . .

Slash: Why do you think the majority are so down on you?

Rhino 39: Because they're ignorant . . . they feel threatened in some way . . . they're afraid to be individuals.

Slash: But you aren't dressed really radical, so what is it that sets you apart from everyone else?

Rhino 39: Well, everybody knows everybody else, and they know what we are . . . just dressed the way I am now, to them is very weird, and they consider me a clown & a punk & a faggot . . . "Fuckin' punk faggots," it makes me sick.

Slash: At recent concerts, I've seen a growing number of surfers, it seems like they would be interested in the music.

Rhino 39: It's really not so much the surfers as the guys that go around with their o p (?), they got the 'look' but they're not out there surfing . . . the real surfers don't have the money to go out and but those new rainbow thongs & gold bolt jewelry . . . we talk to a lot of the real surfers and they're halfway receptive . . . the main problem is the jocks . . .

Slash: Have any of your parents seen you play?

Rhino 39: My parents saw us at the Rock Corporation. . . They don't understand what we're trying to do, but they like us . . . my mom needs to be reassured sometimes, when she thinks people are putting safety pins through their cheeks and things like that . . .

Slash: It's real hard to break those cliches about punk.

Rhino 39: Yeah, there's a bunch of stories about the Masque, punks throwing up, pins through their noses, they think that we're sick . . . Last week these guys come up to us and say, "Why do you guys have to be so sick, why can't you dress like everybody else, why'd you cut your hair so short " – just giving us shit & there was eight of them and we couldn't walk away, they just kept pushing us back . . . that's when it's the worst, what are you supposed to do? . . . The stupidest thing is when you're walking down the hall & people just go "punk rock," walking 'round the hall & "punk rock" (laughter), where is that person's predicate . . . it's like talking in sentence fragments . . . you feel like saying, "radial tires," "brass doorknobs," just any consumer product . . .

Slash: Do you enjoy being "outcasts?"

Rhino 39: To an extent, it's like a fun secret club until it gets hairy, when you're totally outnumbered, when you're afraid to walk around school . . . we're always on the defensive . . .

Slash: When did you form the band?

Rhino 39: Well, the three of us (Dave, Mark, Tim) live on the same street and we had a band called the Chimpanzees and we lipsynched Monkees songs, that was awhile back, then we got Larry–we were looking for a guitarist–and we started to get more serious . . .

Slash: If you had to categorize your reasons for having a band, which would be nearest: fun, art, or rebellion?

Rhino 39: 'D,' none of the above . . . maybe a combination of fun and rebellion . . . when you think about it, it's the only thing to really do, everything is just boring . . . It's a bright spot in our humdrum lives . . .

the POLICE

Nothing (gifts, cash, promises of a brighter tomorrow), will compromise OUR integrity. We had planned well in advance to do an interview with the Police & when the publicist from A&M called and advised us that the band was planning a trip to Disneyland on the very (and only possible) day the interview was to take place, we had no alternative but to grit our teeth, dig in, and prepare ourselves for extremely adverse conditions (hopefully, Space Mountain). Nothing (no, NOTHING!) was in any way going to influence our feelings about Andy Summers, Stewart Copeland, or Sting, either as individuals or collectively as the Police. We started the interview accordingly . . .

(Scene one: Poolside at the Sunset Marquis)

Slash: D'you have tickets for us?

Police: Yeah, they're on the way . . .

(great guys these Limeys . . .)

Slash: This is actually your second tour of the U.S., how does it compare with the first?

Sting: The first tour was just to the East coast and the Midwest . . . This is the first time we've been to California . . . I would say that there's a very similar reaction. . . when we played places in the Midwest, the reaction was very negative, until they actually saw the group. We won people over that didn't want to hear new wave music. We came to a realization that we were weren't just kids bashin' on guitars; that we were a bit more sophisticated. But at the same time, we have an attitude to music the same as the Clash . . we're like them in the way that we play, in that we're a bit more sophisticated. At the same time we're defensive in the way we do it . . it's the same aggression against what happened before. I'm not saying it's bad music the Eagles make, it's just the opposite of what we want to do; it's the opposite of how we want to approach music, of how we want to look . . .

Slash: As far as reggae being an influence in your music, would you consider it a "novelty" or a temporary style of your sound?

Sting: We don't actually . . . we don't play reggae. We have reggae in our psychology in that we're in London and it's very hard not to hear reggae. What we feel we've done with "Roxanne" and things that have followed it, is developed an idea given to us by black people from Jamaica and made it white . . . if a new style of music comes along that we can assimilate — some weird ethnic music — we might go off on a totally different tangent, we might become a jazz group . . . as long as it sounds new.

(The interview is interrupted by the guy arriving with the TICKETS. He is an extremely nice guy, but we aren't allowed the time to savor his attributes as we are faced with a problem: Stewart Copeland decides to stay and wallow in the sun by the pool. Visions of "E" tickets dance through our heads until we are faced with another problem: A rumbling in the back of our heads. One of us decides it is the sound of the cars racing through Space Mountain, while another argues (successfully) that it is our "journalistic responsibility." It takes 10 minutes, the assurance that we have two spliffs (a term borrowed from the black people in Jamaica which we've made white) in our car, and innumerable compliments as to his "splendid London pallor" to convince him just how bourgois sitting in the sun is, to convince Stewart to come along.)

(Scene two: The Slash crew & Stewart inside one of the five cars "en caravan," somewhere on the Santa Ana freeway . . . the fog starts rolling in. . .)

Slash: Is it still a secret, the fact that you are Klark Kent?

Stewart: It's all bullshit.

Slash: No, I mean . . .

(At this point the interview doesn't exactly deteriorate, it just kind of goes in eight directions. We get cleverly stupid while Stewart stays amazingly coherent, although aloof. He seems to be the only one (on tape) that is constantly award that there's an interview going on and that we are the 'press.' As to his aloofness, it was probably the fact that we were "press," and not because he found us stupid (oh yeah — ed).

Slash: D'you appeal to a spikey-haired audience in England?

Stewart: Yeah we do . . . we have a cross-breed (laughs) we do have a very amusing breed of crossover.

Slash: What about the last 2 nights at the Whisky?

Stewart: Well the first night was entirely record company and the second show was an R & R convention, d'you know about that? . . . All the radio people all over the country, they're all there (funny voice) 'exchanging views' . . . getting fucked up is what they're doing. (Stewart talks about his days in Berkeley — heavy student strikes, the heaviest being the closing of the criminology lab.)

Slash: Have you played universities in England?

Stewart: We played Leeds Poly . . . the students I think are actually pretty cool . . . well they let the kids in from the street so it was hard to tell which was which. They (the students)are interested in hearing a change, something that a lot of radio stations in America are doing . . . they quickly jump on and it's anti-disco. . . that makes it easy, that kind of sweetens the pill a bit. We're trying to tell them that the enemy isn't disco, it's stagnation which is a catch phrase that they just gobble up. It was really a struggle, right at the beginning of the new wave, we decided we were going to play for those people, for the kids with new ears . . . It was the people we really wanted to play to . . . the punks had a pretty easy victory in England. Suddenly it was very chic a-go-go to be punk . . . I'll tell you one reason it isn't happening here so fast is cause America is a fucking rich place . . . American kids have got it easy, and there's not really too much for them to bitch about, except for just the plastic kind of texture of American society . . .

Slash: Since America's so decentralized, how can you expect 10 million kids to have some form, or unity?

Stewart: It's too big . . . I'll tell you what it takes . . . what it took in England was a name for all the kids to rally behind, 'cos England is a tribal place — have you ever seen Clockwork Orange? Different tribes, and it really is like that, there's the Teddy Boys . . . and its not so much how the kids feel, it's the area they grow up in. . . if you grow up in this neighborhood all your friends are Teds and you're a Ted, if you grow up in that neighborhood all your friends are punks and you're a punk.

Slash: That only happens in the ghettos in America . . . there are quite a few Mexicans in LA punk groups.

Stewart: Have you heard of a group called the 10 something and the Surf Punks?

Slash: D'you know the name of the latest reggae surf band? . . . Jah Cousteau . . . (we laugh, Stewart doesn't get it).

Slash No. 1: Getting back to my question — is it common knowledge that you're Klark Kent?

Slash No. 2: Oh shut up!

Slash No. 3: It's Miles (Copeland) that's Klark Kent . . . or Nick Jones, Geoff Travis.

Stewart: It's a common error . . .

Slash No. 1: This doesn't have to be on the interview. . (no reply) . . . Listen, you wanna get dumped off on Imperial Highway??? You wanna get a real view of middle America???!!

Stewart: You can write what you want about Klark Kent . . . (later, a few more of Stewart's observations): What's happened to us is that we've arrive in the lap of Americas' plush society with a little, what 'they' would call 'product' that they can use 'cause they play it on their radio station and it fits into their pattern. So here we are in Southern California handing out books in Disneyland and riding around in limos and we can say what the fuck we want and go on the radio stations and play tunes. (In advertising voice): We've taken off the 7 layers of cellophane on this particular product folks — you see this is the real thing, music recorded in **real** studios by **real** musicians without any frills . . . we're gonna have ourselves a good time, but at the same time, I might as well stir things up a bit; because y'know, my way is being paid here, I'm having the fucking time of my life, but I listen to the radio and the radio could be better . . . (later as we're getting lost): what a miserable drive . . .

Slash: No matter how miserable you are you're a lot better off than if you'd stayed and laid in the sun. If you went on stage with a suntan — no matter how good you sound, you'll get booed off the stage. You might as well stuff socks in your pants . . .

Stewart: (laughing) We played with a group in Cleveland and these guys had 3-inch platforms . . .

Slash: 3-inch? You played Cleveland with the New York Dolls?

As the tape winds off the spool the final words come from a warm familiar voice . . . 'There are several ways to visit Disneyland — if this is your first visit, you may enjoy the guided tour . . .'

ANDY STING STEWART

SUBWAY SECT:

A ZIP-COURSE IN "NOT REALLY THE WORST INTERVIEW EVER DONE".

SLASH CHATS WITH VIC GODARD AND HIS MANAGER BERNARD RHODES.

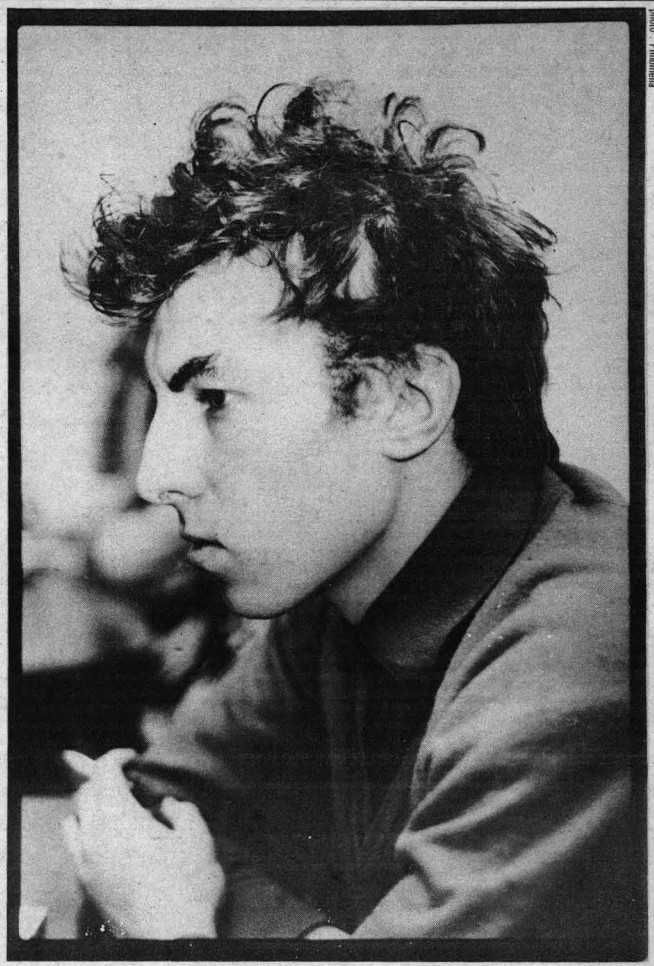
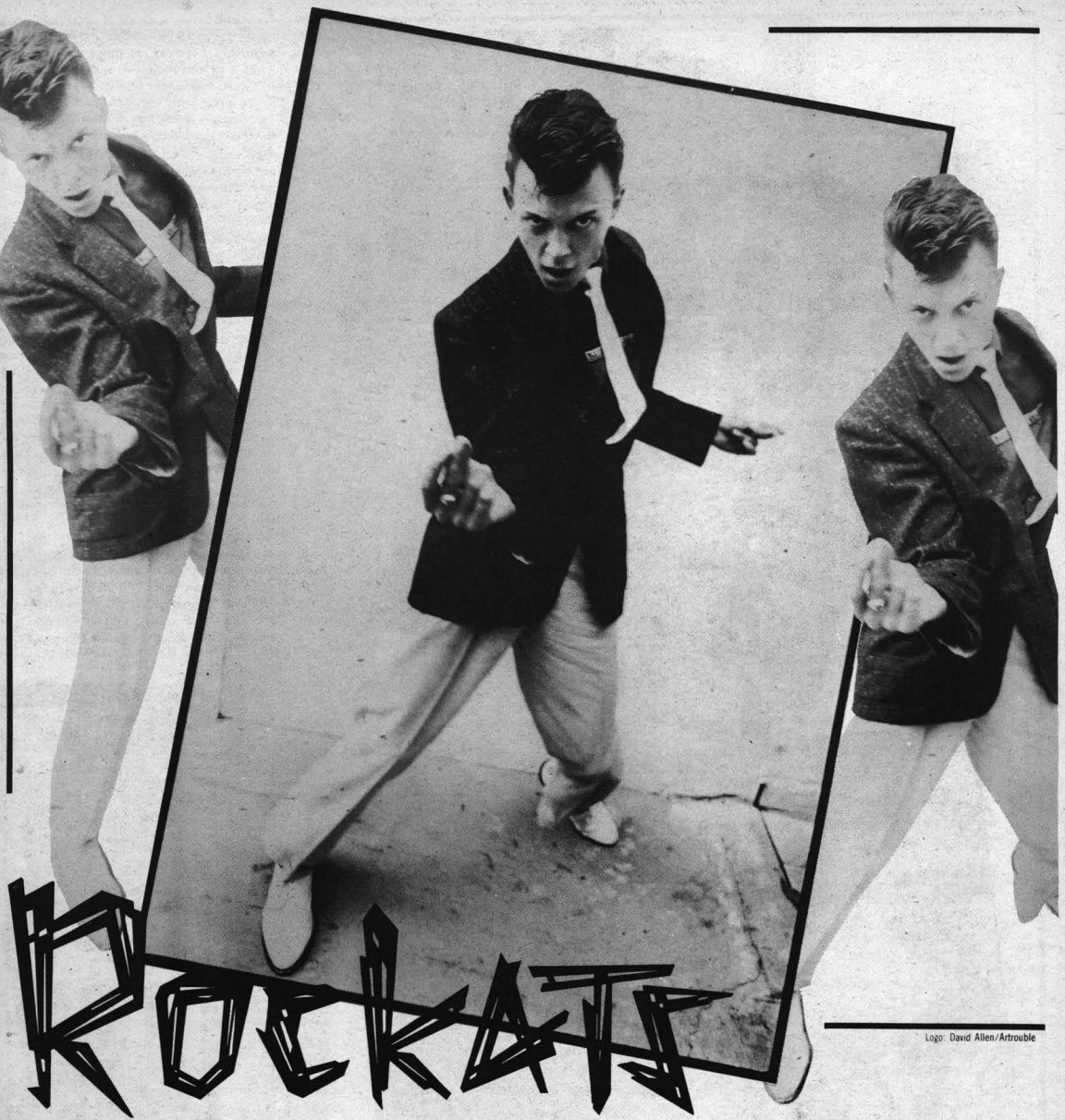


photo : Philomena

Slash: D'you hate doing interviews?
Vic: Depends who the interviewer is.
Slash: OK, then I guess I'll ask you that at the end of the interview . . . d'you have a single coming out soon?
Vic: Maybe, not very soon though, probably in about the next month.
Slash: You went from Break Records to Rough Trade.
Bernard: Break Records was originally set up by myself. The idea originally was to record everybody once, not twice. . . the idea of putting it on Geoff (Rough Trade)'s label was to tie up a few things, that's all.
Vic: I'd like to have every single on a different label.
Slash: It'd be nice actually, the same idea as a traveling club . . . a traveling group . . . and that way you can't get labeled (giggles) . . . Don't Splitt It was the B side wasn't it? It seemed to be the one in the States that really caught the people's attention.
Vic: (surprised) What, a lot of people listened to it?
Slash: Oh yeah . . . d'you think it was maybe because there was some early Velvets type of white noise to it?
Vic: The sound of it was sort of . . . it really grated on people's nerves.
Slash: Who played the harmonica on it?
Vic: Me.
Slash: How does the band survive?
Vic: Me and the drummer get money from 'im (Bernard), the pianist does painting, the guitarist is on the dole and the bass player ponces money off me.
Slash: If you got a big advance from a big record company who decided we're going to put a lot behind Subway Sect, would you do it, would you be interested in working with a big record company?
Bernard: I've worked with Vic for about 2 years and he's only interested in his work, he's not really interested in the rock n roll-er machinery and clubs and all that kind of stuff.
Slash: D'you like playing live?
Vic: Yeah . . . but I really prefer the other things.
Slash: When are you going to America?
Vic: Me ? (to Bernard) Are we going over there? May supposedly.
(At this point Vic becomes quite non-commital, grunts for answers, etc.)
Bernard: French literature, that's what you should talk about.
Slash: What was the last book you read?
Vic: A to Z of London.
Slash: I saw you reading the music sheet of Rasputin (by Boney M)
Vic: Oh yeah.
Slash: Are you really going to do that song?
Vic: Yeah . . . we'll give it a bit more shuffle, Lonnie Donegan Skiffle type of sh-
Slash: Don't you think some people are going to decide that this is it, Vic Goddard has flipped out?
Vic: No. They should pick up on how great it is and go and buy the record.
Slash: Subway Sect is going to play Europe soon, aren't they?
Vic: Yeah, fairly soon.
Slash: France? Have you played there before?
Vic: Yeah. . . there's a small band of people over there that are sort of linked with us in some way.
Slash: Why is the band called Subway Sect?
Vic: A friend of ours just made it up . . . no story behind it. (More pauses) the most boringest interview you've ever done, right?
Slash: No, is it the most boring interview you've ever done?
Vic: Not really. I can think of some more boring ones . . did a really boring one a coupla weeks ago, NME.
Bernard: What d'you think the clothing for Subway Sect will be in the future?
Vic: Very formal . . . not suits . . .casual clothes. I just like getting simple clothes, and putting them on different people who don't look right in them.
Slash: Are you going to force Bernard to go casual too?
Vic: No – 'cos he's always got the same clothes on.
Slash: I find if I dress differently I think differently.
Bernard: What I do is change my underwear . . . I get 10 pairs of shoes all the same.
Slash: D'you depend a lot on your manager for all this?
Vic: No, my mum usually buys my underwear.



Logo: David Allen/Artrouble

Interview Verite: LEVI & THE ROCKATS

Between an onslaught of cleaning women (who have a remarkable ability of working around chaos) and a tearful overseas phone call (from Ms. Mal Smith, resident of the South Coast of England, house mother to wayward Teddyboys, heartbroken mother to wayward Smutty longing for her boy to be by her side, or at least call as it was her birthday!), each member of the band was given the cassette machine & told to go off to a quiet corner and . . .

. . .My name is Dean Thomas and I'm the drummer for Levi & the Rockats, originally from Louisville, Kentucky . . . I traveled to New York in August of 1978, joined a group called the Hot Peaches . . . I did some acting and things of that nature & got to meet some good people, got involved with New York, and about that time I joined the Rockats . . . that was on the 7th of November. We played Max's Kansas City on the 10th, the first gig . . . I'm 21 years old . . . Umm, that's it.

. . . This is Eddie Dibbles, I'm 20 years old, I play lead guitar, uh favorite color is red or blue . . . started playing guitar two years ago & Levi & me & Smut sorta started the band in London . . .

. . .My name is Guy Hemmer, I'm 20 years old, I'm from Fort Mitchell, Kentucky, a little suburb of Cincinatti, Ohio . . . I started off musically just playin' cover songs for high school dances . . . I met Levi & Smut in Kentucky & they somehow talked me into switching over to Rockabilly . . . I went to New York with them & it was there that I really got into it . . . Let's see, before I got into the band I was studying physics, I was in my third year before I joined the band, so I've got a lot of technical experience as far as keepin the equipment runnin' . . . making sure the equipment is working onstage & repairing it when it doesn't . . .

. . .Okay, my name's Levi Dexter . . I don't know where to start really . . basically I'm a pretty romantic person, and I like all the real corny American stuff like cruisin' around in a nice car & drive-ins & car hops . . . I just like to do the old things . . . my favorite car is a '57 Cadillac Fleetwood, a pink one . . . my favorite colors are pink & black . . . I've got no basic preferences to girls, as long as they're pretty, intelligent and cool. I'd say my basic ambition is to be the best at what I'm doing, and eventually I'd like to live in Los Angeles, I think . . . I'm 19 and I was born in London, I lived on the Kings Road which was pretty poppy in the 60s. I didn't like it very much . . . I left home when I was 17. I wasn't thrown out, I left cause I wanted my mother to do the things that she wanted to do — I didn't want to cramp her style . . . thinkin' about

ment . . . I'm 19 years old an my real name's Steven Smith . . . If you can call that a real name, I mean Smith is as good as Smut. I've always been called Smut, ever since I was about 5 or so, so what's the point of having a first name anyway? Nobody calls people by first names – unless they're friendly . . . that's about it I think, how do you stop this thing?

(Now we fast-forward back to the real beginning of the real interview where real questions are asked & real answers given, Johnny Horton is on the record player singing "Honky Tonk Man" . . .)

Slash: Do you have any problem with cultural differences since you're two fifths American, and three fifths British?

Guy: Yeah, beans on toast.

Levi: They're not quite into that English food yet.

Guy: We actually get along pretty well.

Levi: Why it works so well y'now being able to work together is that everybody was sort of picked for their personality, more than anything. Like, 'you're cool & you're cool enough to be one of us, do you want to be one of us?', then when they say 'yeah,' we say, 'ok, let's get to work.' Then if they can't pull it out in the work then we say, 'well it's a shame 'cause you're cool, but it just doesn't work out.' Like with Dean, we said, 'you're really cool, can you play drums?' and he stuck around for a few days & we played records & he really got into it, and we said, this is the guy we want. He's got the right attitude. We tried him out and he was really good, so we said join us . . .

Slash: Do you listen to or like any other kinds of music?

Levi: Me personally, that's it . . . rockabilly, blues, doowop, anything that's old . . . I don't like anything from the 60s too much . . . The 70s, I just want nothing to do with. The new wave stuff, that's different . . . I can listen to it – I can really get into it . . . I don't consider new wave stuff 70's, it's more like 80's music or something . . . Some of the new wave I really like, but I wouldn't buy it . . .

my favorite food . . . I like the basics, hamburgers, fast food and stuff. I don't have any preferences as long as its home cooked & nice normally . . . I like my mother's cooking, that sort of food you can't get in fast food places . . . I mean I like 'em both but for different reasons . . . I'd say my basic hates are sarcasm & real arty sort of people who consider themselves greater, cause they understand what they consider art& somebody else doesn't, I don't like that at all . . . and that's about all I hate, apart from heavy metal music which I really loathe . . . that's basically what I'm about, who knows, maybe one day I'll be the best at what I'm doing and have a pink Fleetwood & live in L.A. . . . I'll just have to wait and see, I suppose . . .

. . . Hello? My name's Smut . . . Smutty Smiff. I been in this band about a year, and I used to live with Levi for about 6 years and I joined the band – not playing, just joined the band. We toured England & I learned to play – I just left my job & learned to play a bit – Came over here last May, an' it's really been great. I can play now & it's just been good . . . before I was in the band I used to work with furniture . . . I used to be a french polisher, I done hairdressing, I've done everything I think . . . Tailoring, ear piercing, you name it, I think I've done it, but this is all I wanna do now. Just play and be famous. . . I don't know what else to say really . . . It's kinda funny just talkin' into a tape recorder, especially with the mood I'm in at the mo-

Slash: With all the media attention you've been receiving, it seems amazing you don't have a record out yet. Have any labels approached you?

Levi: Yeah, the record companies are always phoning up, but to them it's (Rockabilly) new, it's not safe . . . if all of a sudden there were thirty groups doing Rockabilly, they would say, get on this quick . . . but they don't know if it's gonna be a flash in the pan . . . it's like 20 years ago.

Slash: Still, you're not saying 'fuck this & fuck that' & the fears they might have about signing a punk band really don't apply. And since you don't fit into that category, you might seem to them more 'accessible.'

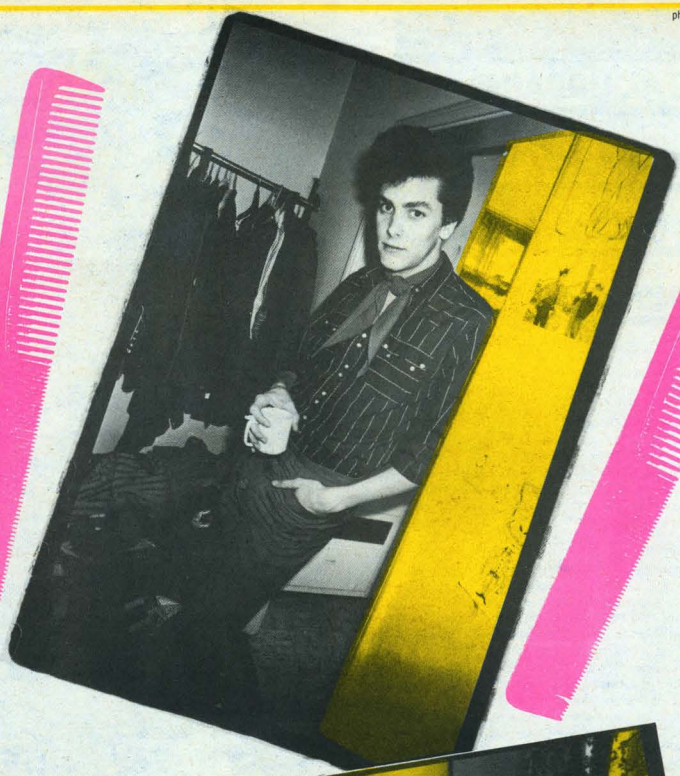
Dean: A lot of compliants have been that they don't think we can get the same thing on wax that we get live.

Levi: What happened is that we did a thing for some record companies & they said, 'we can't keep coming to clubs cause we get pushed around' so we had to do a thing under controlled conditions where they could sit down & watch without kids bumping into them . . . so we did a set and Richard Gottehrer, who produced Robert Gordon's album, said "you're really great but I don't think I could get it down on wax" . . . so we felt like saying, well you can get lost then— if you don't think you can do it then obviously you're not good enough for us anyway . . . but there was this other girl who worked for RCA who disagreed. She got really annoyed so she arranged for us to into the studio at RCA more or less just to prove it to him (Gottehrer). But the studios there were so advanced, you couldn't get that basic sound . . .

Slash: You were shooting for a four track & they shoved you in a twenty-four.

Levi: Yeah, yeah . . . we said let's keep the tracks to about eight . . . and they were so strict, a guitar break would come & somebody would scream, and they'd go, 'stop, stop!' a guy with headphones would say, 'don't do that, who screamed?' . . . He said, 'if you want to scream, come back tomorrow and we'll dub the

photos: Melanie



screams on after' . . . I mean that isn't quite Rockabilly, we don't scream cause it's written in the song, we do it because we're having fun . . . they feel if every note's perfect and every twang on the guitar's perfect, then they're happy. Like that Robert Gordon album — it's technically perfect, but what feeling has it got?

Slash: So you're basically purists?

Levi: We're purists in that we know what we want — if we don't get what we want on record, then it's not going to be us . . . if we sit back and say it's good but not good enough, then everybody else is going to say that . . .the thing that makes rockabilly so great, is like when you listen to the records . . . (like a Gene Vincent track) you say, wow, there's really something going on there, you think, god, I wish I could've been there when that was done. You shut your eyes and you can see a picture of it. But if you shut your eyes and see a picture of someone singing with headphones on, you miss the point . . .

[A brief postscript: Mal Smith, mentioned earlier, no doubt deserves an apology, as our conducting the interview prevented Smut from calling his mum. So Ms. Smiff, we just wanted to let you know that not only are we sorry that because of us, you had to make that tearfilled call on your birthday, but that you boy was truly broken up & promises to be home soon . . .
—the heartless slobs at Slash.]

METAL URBAIN:

"C'EST CON QUE CA DISPARAISSE DANS LA NATURE..."

Freely translated, it means "It's fucking stupid to let it disappear without a trace." That's how Herman Schwartz, guitar player of french group Metal Urbain felt following the breakup of the band in December of last year. The 'it' he referred to was all the music that Metal Urbain never would get to record, but it could as well have meant the spirit that kept them going in one chosen direction, and their determination to remain original and uncompromising in a land of Plastic Bertrands and other commercial mutations.

Metal Urbain's last lineup consisted of Clode Panik on vocals, Herman Schwartz and Nancy Luger (a boy) on guitars and Eric Debris on synthesizer. The group lasted two years, with no change of personnel after the first six months. Above all a Paris band that mostly played established punk venues like Le Gibus (they only ventured out of Paris once to play what Herman calls a "hippie festival" in the suburbs where their set lasted 15 minutes) they managed to play all the better known english clubs like the Vortex, the 100 Club, the Roxy, the Music Machine, attracting more interest and followers on the other side of the Channel than they did on their own turf. They leave us with three 45's (first one on french label Cobra, second one on Rough Trade and the last on Radar) and Herman's promise to pick up the pieces and start a new band, tentatively called European Sons. We talked with him and his friend Valerie immediately after the breakup, there was endless reggae in the background and french pop star Sheila (a hideous ex-Lulu type of imitator with pig tails and knobbly knees recently turned would-be disco queen) cavorted soundlessly on the tv screen. No wine and cheese were served throughout the afternoon.

photos: Philomena

S: Did you feel the breakup coming?
H: Apparently Nancy (the other guitar player) and the singer had been thinking about it for awhile. Personally I hardly did. I can't say I had invested all my hopes in this group, it was more of an experience type of thing.

S: What made everybody stop?
H: The main reason is our disappointment as far as the resulting impact the group had. We all hoped for a lot more than what we got. I'm talking about the impact on the public, the business side of it is another matter. Now that the excitement of punk is not here any more, we're not quite ready to enthusiastically start all over again. So it may be better to stop.

S: Was Metal Urbain too intellectual?
H: I think so. Especially in the lyrics. We put too much in our songs, you had to listen 20 times before it made sense. That's not the way to do rock n roll. People could feel something, they could understand a sentence here and there, words like panic, anarchy, red black . . . and that was one of our easier songs. Paris Maquis was so complicated it was insane!

S: Is it too early to ask about your personal plans?
H: I know what I want to do, I don't know what I'm going to do. I want to do rock n roll, nothing nostalgic, real actual stuff.

S: A few days ago I thought someone at Radar mentioned something about an upcoming album with your group.
H: According to the latest news, they don't seem to be interested any more. Perhaps even though we are not together anymore we will do an album, or a couple of gigs. That's a matter of personal relationships within the group. When you break up after spending quite a bit of time together everyone kind of lets go of everything inside them, admits everything he/she was holding back, and that makes it even harder to do something together after that. But it bugs the shit out of me to drop the band without having done an LP. We have loads of tunes that were ready to be recorded, and it's fuckin' stupid to let it all disappear without a trace.

S: And it did look as if it was getting easier for you commercially, from a tiny unknown french label to a respected independent english label to one of the biggest independent labels in Britain . . .
H: Actually I really believe it was getting worse and worse!

S: Did you have problems in your relationships with record companies?
H: In Paris we had a hard time plugging into them. At first we used to tell them to go fuck themselves, they somehow understood that if they signed us we would have a few surprises in store for them.
Valerie: They (the band) have a terrible reputation. Things like they used to do robberies, or they never were without their blades, there are punks still spreading those rumors . . .
H: People really exaggerated. We were not liked 'cos we didn't like anyone and we used to send them all to hell. At the peak of our popularity we were playing the Gibus, and a lot of people from big publications like Paris Match, people like Alain Pacadis from Liberation showed up at our gigs. Once my brother threw them out with a stool!

S: Will everyone in the group stick to the music world, or what?
H: Well, Clode started in it with Metal Urbain, and I don't know what he will or can do next. I think Eric would like to go on with Metal Urbain or have another group in the same vein, maybe more electronics-oriented, more synthesizer-conscious. Eric was the spirit of the band, it was his concept. But we didn't have a manager, we didn't have a label, we were fed up playing at Le Gibus for zero centimes.

S: I was about to ask you about the situation in France for independent groups like yours . . .
H: The salt mines! You carry your own equipment, 600 francs ($120) for the sound system, 100 francs for transport, you're left with 200 francs ($40) to split between 5 people.
V: Then the sound is lousy, you don't get a sound check 'cos the janitors haven't arrived . . .
H: But I'm not criticizing clubs like Le Gibus. If they didn't exist we couldn't even play at all.
S: Did you have a certain following in the french public?
H: Yeah, there is a growing audience for this kind of stuff. Every time we play we had our fans there, about thirty of them.
V: Still it's pathetic, they'll dance to anything, a bunch of sunday punks. A bunch of jokers compared to the english kids.
H: As far as I'm concerned the english are just as much jokers. What was interesting was Punk as a movement, you could sacrifice your musical ambitions in order to

belong to what was happening. Now, when you don't believe in what is going on, when you don't believe in the style, you got a problem. Even toward the end we were falling into sarcasm, cynicism. At first we were singing about getting involved, but in our last songs we were getting closer and closer to total uninvolvement, full of derision, a real what the fuck attitude. We were becoming more subtle, so subtle it was meaningless. I guess it was disappointment.

S: Do you see another possible direction?

H: Oh yes. There was the punk explosion, then every band went its own way, towards a more musical approach, there were more synthesizer groups, all that, but all these people are still looking for something, a truth, and for me the truth lies in the origins. The solution is in rock n roll. That's what remained okay, all the mid60s groups started with pure rock n roll and degenerated later, and it's true one always prefers the early records of the bands one likes, 'cos these first records were rock n roll, and that's what works.

S: In the early days, before I joined, they used to do Anarchy in France, and we've always played the Stooges' No Fun, right around the same time the Pistols were doing it. Also a T-Rex number, and the Troggs' I Can't Control Myself . . . that and about 15 original tunes.

You know, we never went as far as we wanted to. Like when we were supposed to play that new wave night at the Olympia (a bit mainstream PARIS auditorium — Ed), we had planned to really BLOW THE WHOLE THING but we chickened out. Of course the circumstances were bad, but it comes down to the same thing. We were going to start our set with a fascist type of tune, a german marching song, complete with dubious armbands, the lot, anything to create chaos, except we didn't do it. We just wanted everyone to destroy everything, and if we hadn't seen what was taking place in the hall we would have gone ahead, and everything would have been wrecked. When The Lous told the kids to go ahead and wreck the seats, they did it. We wanted them to start fires, we wanted a riot.

V: But the bouncers were itching to demolish everyone, it was late, the group members and the audience had robbed every bar in sight, everybody was tense, there had never been a concert like that before and the bouncers (about 40 of them) warned us: "If you make one move, we kill you." They were already hitting the audience.

H: Usually the outside security forces are what causes problems, inside they normally leave everybody alone. That night you could feel an incredible frustration in the audience, it was really something. A few years ago, when the anarchist groups used to come, there was a lot more action at concerts than now.

S: Would you say that suddenly your band found itself more radical than its audience?

H: On the contrary, we found ourselves less radical than we were claiming to be.

S: What about other french groups, do they think like you?

H: No, we've always been pretty much the only ones to think like that. We had some relationship with emmbers of other groups, but we never paired with any one, we always ended up arguing. At one time we tried to organize a scene, there was Asphalt Jungle, other smaller groups trying to get something together, but it never lasted.

S: So, did Metal Urbain fill any purpose, in the end?

H: It did prove that even in France one can do something extreme, free of compromises. Even though personnaly I don't think we went as far as we could, we proved there was room for a band that said fuck you to everyone and everything. It's a start. We proved that one could write real violent french stuff, revolt stuff, real rock songs. I think it's now accepted that one can start a group without really knowing how to play one's instruments, that one can express what one feels without being a technician. But punk was ephemeral, there was too much competition as far as living it, thinking it, there was something just as strong, like the old rockers. At least that's true for France. In England punk also meant a rebirth of skinheads, of all kinds of purists who yearned to be more gone than the punks. Punk was never really defined, and that became a problem. One might be an anarchist and not give a damn about definitions. It still becomes a problem if you want to people to follow. When you start basing your daily life on some kind of trip, you still have to know where you're going to land. And early punk was just a suicidal movement. The Pistols and their No Future philosophy, that was a way to live one's suicide.

V: And nobody was planning to be punk for the next 20 years, singing Anarchy in the UK in a wheelchair!

H: Everybody talked about destruction, boredom, and turned around to listen to reggae, which is a music of hope, of life!

S: No one can be desperate 24 hours a day.

V: And there are always times when one feels like dancing . . .

H: That's why punk fell apart.

S: But these "pure" rockers you mention, they still are a reactionary bunch . . .

V: Yeah, it's true. But they're still the real thing. They might be dumb but they're sincere. Rock n roll is the only music. Eddie Cochran or the Sex Pistols, it's on the same track. It never went thru Yes. But Throbbing Gristle, that never went thru Eddie Cochran either. One cannot not like Gene Vincent. That's what I think.

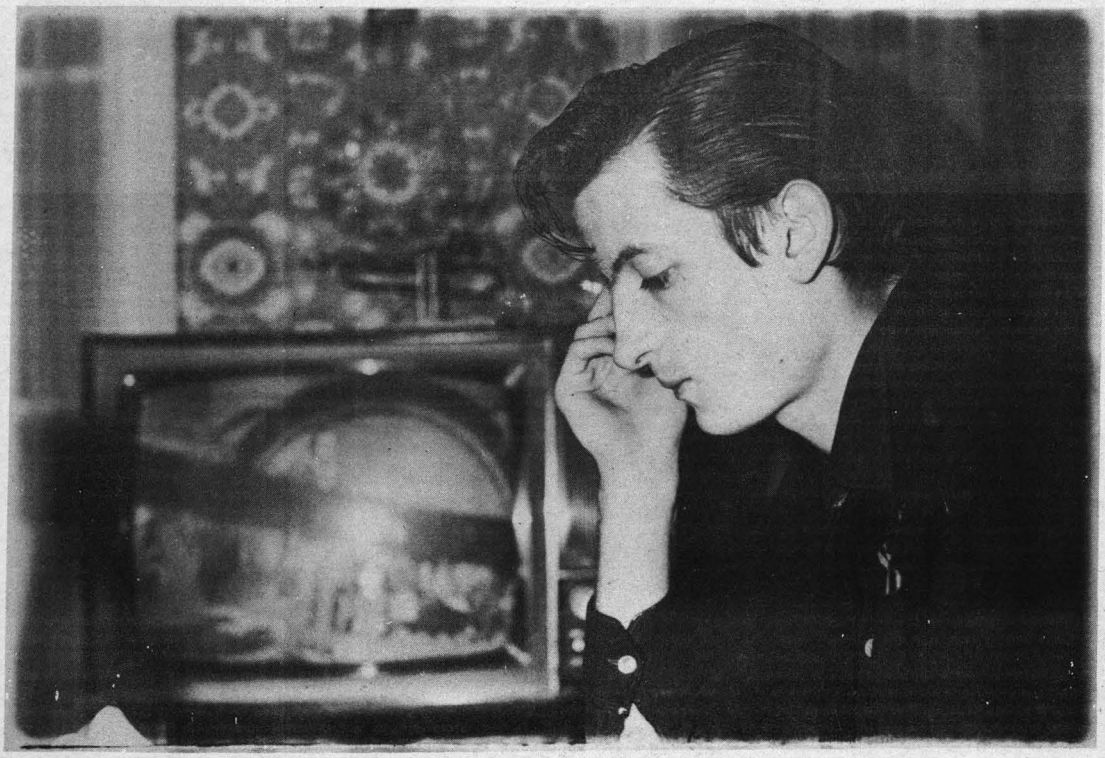
H: When you live in an overpopulated city, there is only one way to make it, and that's not to lock yourself up in your room. You must go out, talk. Being a rocker is one way to do that. To like Bowie or Gristle goes in the opposite direction. That's locking yourself up with headphones on. It's more than negative, it's bad. That's what the system expects, people staying at home and not noticing what's going on.

(translated by Kick Frog).

THE METAL URBAIN SONG BOOK (titles):

PANIK	**LADY COCA COLA**
E.202	**SNUFF MOVIE**
ATLANTIS	**GHETTO**
PARIS MAQUIS	**CREVE SALOPE (Die Bitch!)**
50 - 50	**NUMERO ZERO**
FUTURAMA	**ANARCHIE AU PALACE**

CLE DE CONTACT (Ignition key)
POP–POUBELLE (Pop-Rubbish)
REVE DE FER (Steel Dream)
HYSTERIE CONNECTIVE (Connecting Hysteria)
QUELQUES MONSTRES (A few monsters)



"I'M SEARCHING FOR THE NOW - I'M LOOKING FOR THE REAL THING" - "REBELLIOUS JUKE BOX"

THE FALL

While some bands are safely relying on formulas (even if the formulas are only two years old), others are once again pushing the frontiers and making waves. In England, where the punk explosion has been assimilated, digested and learnt from (and as opposed to here where it hasn't even been swallowed yet) there are now many barrier-breaking bands, and some are even enjoying a relative commercial success. It is too early to tell if the Fall will enjoy such a success, but their status as one of the most important "cult" bands over there is undisputed. (They are admired, they are put down, they are misunderstood). Which is not the only reason my fascination with everything they do has reached awesome proportions. Of course, now that everyone a and their country cousin expresses out loud growing doubts about the Clash, now that the Pistols have settled for double comedy albums, now that the Buzzcocks have become happy pop puppets, a group that retains all its initial darkness and elusiveness is a rare thing indeed. Therefore, wham goes the imagination center, hurrah goes the elitist that lurks in everyone of us, I've found my dear exclusive combo that only a happ few can relate to or pretend to relate to. Clever reasoning, but in this case untrue. You see, I have tried very hard to understand what the Fall are about. Not only have I listened zillions of times to the two singles and the very recently released album (mysteriously titled "Live at the Witch Trial"), but we had the opportunity to meet all the members of the group a few times, to be in the studio while they were mixing a few songs off the LP, to see them perform at the Marquee, to read their lyrics, talk to their manager, exchange witticisms and in spite of it all I am still at a loss.

I DON'T KNOW WHY THE FALL ARE GREAT, SOMETIMES I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THEY ARE. Except suddenly it's 3 a.m. and I have this incredible urge to play "Rebellious Juke Box," "Various Times," "Mother Sister," nothing else will do. Just like their singer Mark says in "Underground Medicine": "I found a reason not to die/A reason for the ride/That spark inside/When it hits the mind." And although he is probably talking about something other than music, I'll keep believing it is in fact a very apt description of the effect of their sound on my bemused brain cells. And that's lesson number one in Fall Appreciation for Beginners: you pick out what you want or need, the rest will come thru eventually.

At first (the Bingo Master's Break-Out EP on Step Forward, recorded in 11/77) the Fall sounded like an acutely inept punk band with a sarcastic attitude towards anything professional, the singer sang flatly and delivered his lines at random, the recording was tinny and one dimensional, the cover was vaguely repulsive in a pathological manner and the lyrics were obscure (how many of you are thinking of the Germs right now??) Since I haven't stopped playing the little mother since it appeared the above aesthetic appraisal is obviously a mile or two off target and my ears didn't know then what was good for my brain. But even in these dark ignorant days the lengthy repetitive "Repetition" had me sort of hooked and intrigued. It was both abysmal and superiorly funny, and it was a taste of what was to come. The kind of song you understand perfectly one evening and are thoroughly unable to comprehend the next day, making you wonder what it was you thought you heard. This wonderful effect is slowly becoming the de rigueur thing today, but then it was definitely novel and strange.

Our ears were still ringing from three chord street anthems, and the Fall are not exactly masters of the quickie battle cry. After a few months 45 number two appeared, and everything sort of came in focus. The lineup was different (a certain Una Baines on electric piano having been replaced by a certain Yvonne Pawlett and Marc Riley on bass having taken Tony Friel's spot), there was a picture of the band on the cover (with such music any small clue as to what people are like behind all this strangeness is useful) and there were two great songs ("It's the new thing" – "Various Times") still sung in that funny detached manner and still pretty offbeat in subject matter but with an added sophistication in the mood of the music. An infinitely more conscious effort to find the proper vehicle seemed to have gone in the recording, resulting in an even stranger but much more effective sound. It was unique, and even reached a respectable position on England's alternative charts. As usual, America looked the other way.

A month later, we were introduced by the Step Forward people in a cafeteria next to the studio and went to do the talking in what must have been the noisiest pub in London. We shouted back and forth for a bit while drunk Irishmen wailed sea-shanties in the back ground (or something like that) but it didn't amount to much. We had yet to see them live or hear anytning besides the 5 tunes already on vinyl, and they had no idea who the fuck we were or why we might be interested. The questions and answers remained pretty general and uncommitted.

The Fall singer, Mark Smith, 21. Mark is, along with Martin, the founderof the band. He writes all the lyrics, reads authors like Fritz Leiber. His influences (if this ounds like its off a press sheet release, it is!) are Big Youth, Jim Morrison, Can, and he likes the Seeds and Gene Vincent. Martin Bramanison, guitar and background vocals. Martin is 20 and has a reputation for getting in trouble a lot. His musical mentors are the Stooges and Richard Hell. Karl Burns was then the Fall drummer. He is 20 and has been playing since age 16. Karl quit the Fall shortly after the album was completed, and was replaced by Mike Leigh, an ex-Rockabilly drummer who plays standing up. (I am extremely curious to hear what the Fall sound like now, Karl's drumming being such an integral part of what has been recorded so far). By the way, the Fall have had about eight lineup changes since the beginning! At the time of the interview (late 11/78) the newest members of the band were Marc Riley, 16 year old bass player who was originally their roadie, likes early Buzzcocks and Lou Reed and John Cale and Yvonne Pawlette who is 18 and replaced Una on electric piano. Yvonne likes the Doors and the Velvet Underground. Last member of the band is Kay Carroll, their ex-nurse manager whose accent totally baffled me. Kay seems to be the ideal manager, totally committed to the band as a concept and a living entity. (a few days later at the Marquee gig, she was doing the sound mix in the booth and was heard yelling to the band as they were hesitating about doing an encore or not: "Come on fuckers, what do you think I love you for," or something equally vehement.)

Also there were two from Slash and Nick from Step Forward. The wise thing would have been to simply consider this as a preliminary introduction and meet at a later date. But the band is more elusive than most, insisting on going back to Manchester as soon as the London business matters are taken care of. That night they drove back in their van although it was past eleven and freezing cold. They also drove back after their show at the Marquee and as soon as the LP was mixed; as if there was a nagging fear of becoming too much part of a scene they distrust. So the opportunities for more philosophical chit-chat were rather limited, and we had to content ourselves with this initial conversation.

Slash: What were you exactly doing awhile ago in the BBC studios?

Mark: Doing a session for John Peel. We've done it before for him. We lay down like 4 tracks, and he plays it through the program. He has a 2-hour program 4 nights a week, which is about the only good outlet for music in the UK.

Slash: Do you choose the songs you do?

Mark: Of course it's up to us.

Slash: Since you don't seem to be following most bands' commercial route, why did you decide to do this?

Mark: He contacted us. He's a good guy, really into alternative music. When we did the 1st John Peel session we didn't have any records out.

Slash: He asked you to do a show without you having any record?

Mark: His producer saw us playing with the Banshees at Croydon, so he wrote and asked us. Apparently he gets about 300 tapes a week.

Slash: How do you feel about the London music scene?

Mark: Don't rate it really.

Martin: It's killed by the media because the media's based here, it concentrates too much on its own territory. If Manchester was covered like London's covered that'd be as dead.

Slash: How do you feel about the way people react to you? Do you consciously puzzle them as far as what you're saying, or is it the natural thing to do and it's up to them to catch up?

Mark: You should never make allowances for people. As for us kind of adopting a strangeness, it's not conscious, it's the way we are. We've always been pretty alternative.

Slash: What about that song Repetition? I know some people totally love it and I know quite a few who just can't stand it. Why do you think there is such extreme...

Mark: That's a good reaction. You're creating something. Most bands tend to go more structured — we're developing more the other way. We're very influenced by American bands you know, well I am.

Slash: Would you say one of the bands that've become more structured would be the Buzzcocks?

Mark: Yeah . . everything's very contrived with the Buzzcocks . . . I don't know if you've read any of our press, but we do tend to put the Buzzcocks down a lot, but the Buzzcocks helped us at the start . . . the thing I object to about them is they're too pretentious.

Slash: Since you're pretty certain you know what your band is about and you're obviously not flirting so far with any kind of commercial in between approach, how far do you think you can go with your philosophy?

Mark: I think we're breaking down barriers, I think we're the only band to do it.

Slash: What's happening in Manchester now as far as new music?

Mark: There's a lot of new music about. A lot of the new groups are going into a very pretentious sort of experimental thing which we're also against. We are an experimental band, but they're sort of doing it for experiment's sake.

Martin: A lot of new experimental bands haven't got the roots to build experimentation on.

Slash: What do you think comes first in what you're trying to put out, emotions or intelligence?

Mark: Both, you can't separate them.

Slash: Well, emotions can take over . . I'm thinking of Tom Robinson who is full of good feelings and is also a total bore . . .

Mark: It's paradox you know, Robinson.

Martin: Robinson does the same emotions on a tour every night of the week.

Slash: D'you think you're starting to have an audience of your own?

Mark: Defnitely. In the first 6 months of our existence, we'd do support things like with the Buzzcocks, we used to go on and there'd be these glasses coming over all the time, and just (funny voice) "heavy vibes" y'know and we used to really get off on that tension. We used to play really well,but when we started doing gigs on our own all these people started coming in and just listening and applauding, it was very alarming you know, we though oh they're getting disinterested, they weren't, they were just getting into it.

Slash: Why are you called the Fall? Is it from the book?

Mark: It was originally, yeah.

Slash: Does that mean you're an existential band?

(Stupid remark! Ed)

Martin: No, no.

Mark: I hate existentialism . . . I thought Camus was good, but this was a name we picked to pun with.

Slash: I've heard you're planning to do the album in a very short time. Do you think that you could spend a lot longer, and maybe turn it into something else?

Mark: Well, a wee k is a short time to do it and I don't think it'll take us that. I couldn't stand to spend a lot longer on it. I can't see beyond the album you know. We get criticized because people say "you don't seem to have any plans. . . ' Obviously you gotta plan where you're going to play next, and all this, butt . . .

Martin: Having a pln is a shallow thing I think.

Slash: Is music really important in your lives, or could you do something else tomorrow?

Martin: If it was just to earn a living I woudln't be in the Fall now.

Mark: I just like to have plenty of options.

Slash: D'you feel like I do, sometimes — that you're playing the game of corporations of people that are just sitting on the side waiting for the right moment to pounce upon whatever availble energy you've been displaying for a few months, as a band and then turn it into another money-making or even image-making bid for their own selfish ugly needs?

Martin: I know they use you.

Mark: I saw a thing on the TV last night, it was about this actor called Keen, saying how could anyone demand so much respect but have so little self-esteem . . . In Victorian times these actors were really hero-worshipped and I think the music business treats musicians like that. I'd like to think if it fell apart tomorrow I could do seo something else.

(An argument ensues between Mark and Martin, Mark saying he doesn t take music seriously and Martin affirming that HE takes it very seriously.)

(2 pints later)

Martin: When we started the band I was into socialism, I was into fighting fascism. I was into free gigs...bit th but the minute you stop doing it for yourself... Tom Robinson isn't doing it for himself anymore, that's why it's no good, there's no conviction there, he's just reeling it off, he s patronizing.

Slash: Yvonne, how did you come to join the band?

Yvonne: I was writing to him, Karl, 'cos I liked him and I'd put an advert in NME about 2 months before that saying I wanted to join a band and then Una left at the same time as I was writing to him and they rang me up and asked me if I wanted to join through the thing in the paper and found out I was the same one who was writing. When I was about 10, I did these 6 piano lessons and I got fed up with it, but I just learned the notes. I tried to play guitar once but I just couldn't get the strings. . .

Slash: Is it like you thought it might be being in a rock n roll band?

Yvonne: Not at all, it's much better, 'cos you've got a lot of privacy you know. It is commitment, but its not commitment in the sense that I imagined, obviously there's commitment to the band and the music which I'm totally for but at gigs nobody knows you and your picture's not in the paper which is good you know.

Slash (turning to KArl): You're the one the press sheet calls the "prodigy drummer," and the one who does not mention any musical influences

Karl: (laughing) I used to be into things like Whoosh and that sort of stuff. My two favorite bands are 999 and Wire. Mainly I like a band because of their drumming, you know.

Slash: Have you been drumming for a long time?

Karl: About 4 years, since I was 16. Been in loads of bands, I mean like soul bands...

Slash: How different is it with the Fall?

Karl: I can do what I want in the Fall.

Pause.

Karl: Run out of questions have you?

Slash: Nothing more to say.

MARTIN MIKE MARC YVONNE MARK

Awhile later, the Fall were back in London to headline a show at the Marquee with avant rock band Manicured Noise opening, and to go in the studio for the album project. The Marquee was packed. It was a bit surprising to see so many hard core pogomaniacs, since at least half of the Fall's music is more medium-tempo than most of the bands playing the club circuit. The band does not even look especially contemporary, dressing in ordinary working class grey gear and sporting medium length hair. But the reception was enthusiastic, with two genuinely asked-for encores topping the evening. On stage they were relaxed and slightly remote. Mark especially was somewhat removed, turning his back to the audience, standing on the side behind the other members, and only occasionally coming to the front of the stage right above the audience when about to introduce a song. Yvonne was the most unobtrusive of all, almost completely hidden in a dark corner, concentrating on her precise keyboard runs, seemingly unaward of being only a few feet away from a wild pack of kids trampling each other. Before the Fall set, Manicured Noise played a very introverted jazzy sort of music (they had also been chosen as opening band by Wire a few days earlier in the same club) which seemed to take the audience by surprise. Since it was the most undanceable series of sounds the Marquee had ever witnessed everybody just stood there. The band did too. They are very young (two boys, two girls) and have even less to do with rock n roll than the Fall. If the Pistols were initiated by the Dolls, Manicured Noise could be said to be the latest offshoot of Sun Ra and Don Cherry. Which shows you how fast some developments are taking place these days.

The Fall had been in London for three or four days before they decided that time was up. So they went in a minimscule North London studio where they spent twelve uninterrupted hours taping the ten songs that make up "Live at the Witch Trials." The next day they came back around noon and spent the same amount of time mixing. They left for Manchester immediately after. Twenty four hours of work, the album was done, and it was back to small gigs on cold winter nights. We spent a couple of hours in the cramped control booth on the second afternoon as the final mix was being done for "Rebellious Juke Box," "Industrial Estate" and "No Xmas for John Quays" (long believed to be "No Xmas for Junkies" by their fans – John Quays is someone they know, that's all). They were very happy with the way things were going and took time off now and again to fool at the piano, push each other around and ask us about the L.A. new wave. While everyone sat in broken chairs and sofas listening to the tapes I realized that what I was hearing was going to stay with me for a long time. It was much more complex than the stuff on the singles, with more layers, more underlying structures that kept poking thru here and there whenever the

singles, with more layers, more underlying structures that kept poking thru here and there whenever the overwhelming drum rolls and explosions would subside. All oddly colorless and hypnotic, with Mark's half-talking half-jeering voice running thru unexpected time changes, abrupt stops, off key choruses, monotonous rhythm tracks that unpredictably because a very delicate riff succession before falling back into painfully atonal side excursions. Experimental no doubt, but also very catchy. Ugly maybe, but attractive. Is it rock n roll? Well, in the introduction to one song Mark drones on about "still believing in the r n' r dream," and even tho the tone of his voice could be called sarcastic I'd say it isn't. Taken separately, all the instruments most of the time perform regular rock n roll progressions and changes. It's only when everything merges that the rock label may appear a bit far-fetched.

But perhaps it's their attitude as much as their sound that sets them apart: after immersing yourself in their songs you come away with the unshakable impression that this is one bunch of musical youngsters that will not perpetrate the tired myths of glamour and good time and will not rely on tried and true musical cliches to make their audience happy. They've been called cynics by some english journalists. I think they're just realists. With a few prophetic touches, just to separate them from your run of the mill "realist" behind his grocery store counter. "And behind our conscious minds/our affections are turning grey/Yet we're part of the Music Scene." ("Music Scene")

But what are the Fall like, as people? All this information and impressions do not amount to much, that juicy human element is still missing, and this fumbling study is almost over. Nothing about their private life, what they do for kicks, what's their fave poson, that sort of rock n roll meat. Since no info was volunteered, I'll fall back (ha ha) on self portraying snatches of songs they have scattered here and there: " . . No stars in the zone/ I stay at home/I live on snacks/Potatoes in packs/ And I like to blow/I like to blow/Like to blow/ CONCENTRATION ZONE."

The have also described themselves as "an aesthetic anesthetic," or "the white crap that talks back (we're not black at all. Don't fuck us we're frigit stars)" and "We're private detectives back from and on a "musical pilgrimage." Everything nice and clear now??

A FITTING (TEMPORARY) CONCLUSION:
"Yeah, yeah, industrial estate/yeah, yeah industrial estate/Yeah, yeah, industrial estate. ."
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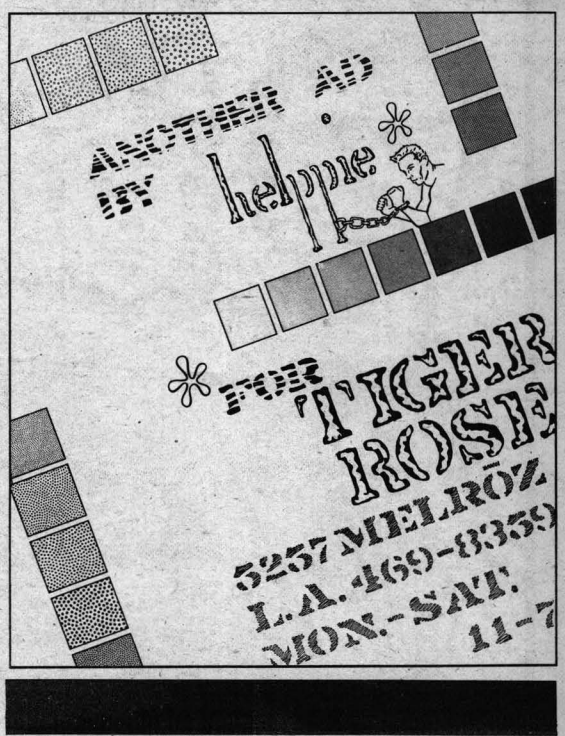

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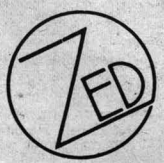

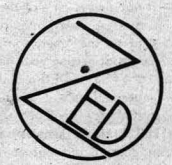

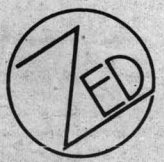

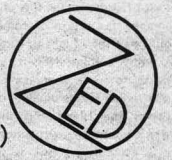

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WHAT'S JAMAICAN:

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You don't have to believe that the king of kings is a rastaman and you don't have to be the proud owner of a one way ticket to Zion on a black star liner to enjoy the real soul music of the 70s. In the 60s you didn't have to live in the ghetto to enjoy James Brown or Sam Cooke, and some of the music being published on the countless reggae labels either in Jamaica or England is without a doubt as moving, exhilerating and influential. So the main problem in being a natty rocker in America today is in locating the bloody records. Even Virgin records (whose Front Line label is one of the most active UK-based outfits – if not always on e of the most discerning) do not seem interested in making a dent on the American market. So your chances of getting your paws on a Hit/Run, Cha-Cha or DEB product are very slim indeed. You will occasionally spot the latest Marley-Island package (but not the still brilliant Jamaican singles Marley continues to put out at home), the Pete Tosh/Rolling Stones sad affair, and that's it. Just like the appalling race records business of the early 50s, innit? Even old Marley was recently quoted as saying there was some kind of conspiracy against reggae music in America. I'm not prone to paranoia, but I'm sure the disco merchants are willing to do everything in order to keep the indoctrinated masses in line and on the strobing floor. So, because of the difficulties involved in purchasing the dread vinyl, it is very hard for us here at the heart of Babylon to keep up with the flow of Jah praises, ganja hymns and electronic freakouts other parts of the world are flooded with. All we can do is keep an eye out on the shelves of certain progressive stores, tape whatever we can off other collectors and wait for an income tax return or something that would pay for a flight to Kingston with two empty suitcases! Then you can always write to your congressman and demand that a Joe Gibbs pipeline be installed between the island and this country but don't count on swift action!

The dread dregs first: Pete Tosh's latest LP ("Bush Doctor") on Rolling Stones' records is soft, unfocused and ultimately pathetic. The attempt to get that crossover success everybody dreams of is obvious and embrassing. He goes as far as bringing Mick Rubber Lips Jagger out of retirement and sing in duo on a lame and heartless version of "You gotta walk and don't look back." Johnny Nash was ten times better, and he never claimed (as Tosh does in another plodding tune on the album) "I'm the toughest." The backing musicians (with the eternal Shakespeare/Dunbar nucleus) do a competent 9 to 5 job on the tunes, the arrangers stick in gratuitous hors and pseudo fluid solos (Keith is there too, well his body is), everything is clean and antiseptic, goes in one ear comes out of the other while your heart does not even notice anything. Reggae muzak for jet set receptions. When Tosh sings about the "financial situation that's causing an inflation upon creation," he does not realize how true it is if applied to his music. A definite case of rhetoric strangling talent. If this is going to be the result, I hope they don't legalize the weed.

Although most reggae still remains the antithesis of disco some critics have lately suggested that it is more and more influenced by the monstrous form. There are moments in the Cimarons' last album, "Maka" (Polydor import) that lend some credence to this. Songs that effortlessly and insidiously slip into a certain bland slickness, moments where the form discreetly assassinates the contents and vacuity reigns supreme. Ethiopia turns into a YMCA. This mainly happens when the song stretches itself beyond reasonable limits, no doubt due to the effects of the herb on the human sense of time duration. Fortunately there are respectable chunks of sweet lovely music left in here to counterbalance. "Truly" is particularly soulful (not unlike their early "Ship Ahoy") and makes for good morning skanking. "Willin' (Rock Against Racism" is longer than on the 12 inch 45 release and only slightly less grabbing.

The Meditations (not to worry, natty, this had nothing to do with the giggling Maharishit and his metaphysical con job) are one of the lesser known vocal-oreinted groups whose smooth harmonies and irresistable rhythms can occasionally compete with the better known Culture or Gladiators. At times they come dangerously close to middle of the road inconsequential ooo aaaaahing but in the masterful "Turn Me Loose" they grab your feet and your heart as firmly as the Bob Marley and the Wailers of the "Catch a Fire" period. The delicate backing of percolating guitars and shuffling bass, the wonderful harmonizing of the singers make this one of the catchiest reggae-toons I've heard in a long time. On other cuts the Meditations create some of the most danceable music since the Pioneers. Listen to "Wake Up," "A Wey Me Do," "Fly Natty Dread," "Get Left" or "Another Plight" and learn to fly too, the Jamaican way. The Meditations are uplifting without being transcendental. (The "Wake Up" LP is a Third World record. I have no idea if other Meditations' albums have been recorded or on what labels.)

"Dread Beat and Blood" was a book. Then it became a movie. Now it is the title of Linton Kwesi Johnson'd Virgin Front Line album. Linton is better known as Poet and the Roots, the first nonrasta militant reggae artist. He is more worried about justice for the blacks in Britain today than Haile Selassie's godhead status, and closer to the thoughts of Gil Scott-Heron than those of Prince Far I. The movie was a documentary about the daily life and the aspirations of this english based black poet and beautifully portrayed the nature of his fight. The music that Johnson uses as a vehicle for his propaganda is bottom-based thick reggae with none of the lunacy and surrealism of other dub products. His rich booming voice complements the oppressive mood of the tunes, and on one cut a stunning female singer (credited as Lila Weathers but on the wrong tune) does some Nina Simone stark wailings to the implacable beat. There may be a feeling of monotony to parts of this album, partly because not enough thought is given to balance of tension, and the gloom is a bit too overwhelming. Also disappointing is the fact that half of the cuts were already released as 45's in the past few months (see back issues of this mag). Still a very important LP, and very probably a pioneer of a new genre.

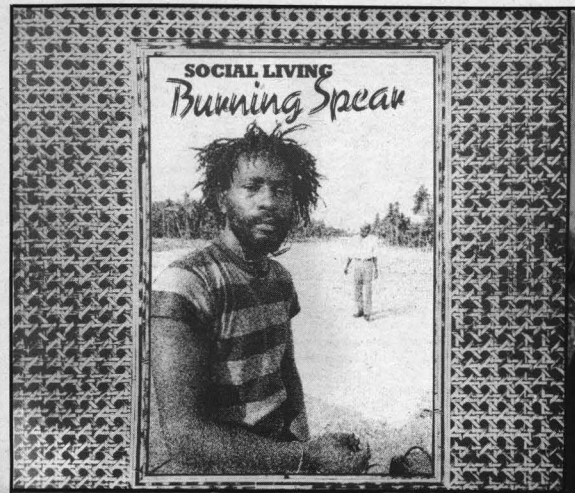
An unexpected Burning Spear album showed up recently at Tower records (the usual 5 copies). It is the "Social Living" LP on London based 1 Stop records, an incredible step forward for what was once one of the most exciting Ja outfits. I do not know if the break with Mango/Island is final but I kind of hope it is, so much better is this stuff to the last two Spear albums. Winston Rodney (who performs a heart stopping a capella tune in the recent Filmex release "Rockers" while sharing a joint on the beach at night with his drummer Horsemouth Wallace) has got to be one of the most impressive and noble voices in the reggae field. I mean the man could give you goose bums just by sneezing! On this beautifully packaged record there is an abundance of tunes alternating between the light-hearted-skipping-across-your-field-of-attention types and the more gut-wrenching throat-grabbing numbers Winston can pull out of his soul whenever he feels the need. It goes from "Nayah Keith" (catchy title, eh?) which features birds chirping (by now almost a Spear trademark), tequila-soaked Mexican horn riffs and African bongo madness to the eerie "Civilized Reggae," a spacey stoned-out tribal chant with harp-like sounds oozing from a mythical reggae-powered Close Encounters mothership, every second of this is an experience and a trip to distant and exotic landscapes with Winston Rodney as the wise and benevolent guide. Even the occasional screams and spooky groans and moans become friendly in a primeval sort of way. Thank god acid isn't too popular these days, otherwise the Spear's doorstep would be invaded by countless zapped-out white misfits wanting to take off for the ultimate trip back to the original swamp. The man is a living vision, and Timothy Leary and his likes are not even fit to wipe his ass.

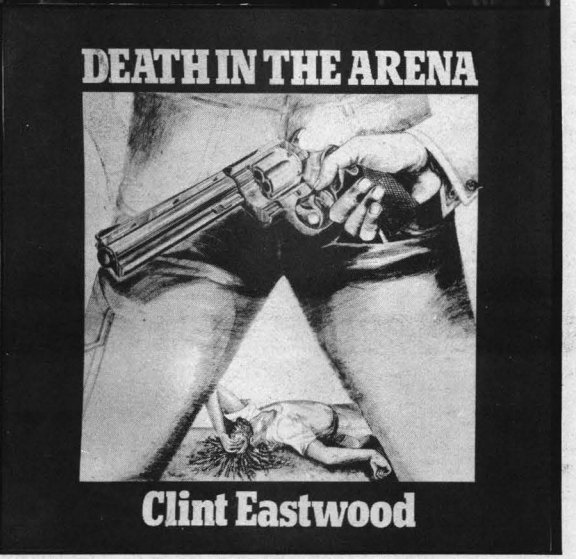
The Gladiators' second album release on Virgin is almost as good as the near perfect "Trenchtown Mix Up," but not quite.)There are chilling rumors around that the very recent third one) also on Virgin – is definitely many notches down – I and I shall see when I and I get a chance to listen). In "Proverbial Reggae" one still finds the superb raspy high-pitched voice of main singer and songwriter Albert Griffiths at the controls and "Stick A Bush" or "Dreadlocks the Time is Now" are just as lyrical and hypnotic as "Mix Up" or "Looks is Deceiving" were in their time, and Sutherland's and Fearon's work on bass and rhythm guitars and background vocals just as tasteful. Perhaps the addition of keyboards and synthesizer was unnecessary and ultimately harmful. The basic naivete and childlike simplicity of the Gladiators' message seems to work better with the raw unpolished type of production displayed in the first LP. Here it comes a bit close to prettiness and lack of real substance. Still full of charm and at times a real heart mover, but a cut like "Music Makers from Jamaica" sounds like a soundtrack for an Air Jamaica commercial. This trio can do a lot better than this insipid crossover shit. Thank god most of the LP is way above that.

Before we take the plunge into the wacky flipped-out world of toasters and dub makers two more meaty vocal-oriented albums should be mentioned. The first is the Abyssinians' "Arise," on Virgin's Front Line (as I said a very busy bunch), a majestic followup to their "Satta Massa Gana" pre-release collection. It is somewhat more uptempo and more polished but just as smooth and rich and definitely less scratchy. The songs kind of shimmer in your head long after the record has stopped spinning and the falsetto voices of the three singers will make you dream of humid late night sessions in smoky shack-like studios. No gimmicks, just music for the open-hearted. Maybe not very in, but that's okay.

The second album is the new "Piece of the Young Heart" by Junior Delgado, a D E B music product. It is a fine piece of lovers rock (a special branch of reggae more concerned with matters of the heart than the salvation of the soul), miles away from the John Holt mush usually associated with the style. Anyway half the tunes are socially oriented (". . . as far as I can see/The Cops can't control 'em/they've got to send for the army") with titles like "Armed Robbery" and "Famine" next to the more traditional "Tonight" or "All I Have is Love." The sounds are quite uptempo and richly textured, with guitars, keyboards and horns laying down solid understructures upon which Delgado wails and croons with much assurance and conviction. And Ja is not even mentioned, which shows this young heart is also a brave independent individual.

Now to the word-crazy fast-talking delirious masters (and imitators), the short-cut artists and the inspired street poets. First on the list is a rare-looking Dillinger album on Magnum records (London) with the man himself sitting on the inevitable bike on both sides of the cover. The title is "Talking Blues" but the actual talking is rather limited, six cuts altogether, each tune leaves Dillinger behind after a couple





of minutes of quite ordinary word-throwing and shifts to straight dub. Some of that is very tasty, bits of flute (no musician credits anywhere – a typical Bunny Lee production touch) and trombone floating through the cruising bass and skeleta drum foundation. At one time someone toys with the Brubeck "Take Five" riff and underemoniously drops it a bit later. Some of these mercenaries would "borrow" from Stravinsky or Vivaldi, Liberace, or Jacques Brel if given the chance. A riff is a riff, especially after it has been squeezed through 12 layers of reverb and 5 consecutive fade-ins and fade-outs! Much less shoddy is the Clint Eastwood's "Death in the Arena" LP on Cha Cha records. Eastwood may be younger than most but the solidity of his tunes and the dynamics of his rhythm have to be heard to be believed. He can rave along the most bouncy tracks without losing one beat and even make punctuating noises while catching his breath. Young strong lungs are quite an asset in the ruthless toasting race.

U-Roy may not be very young any more and his latest releases may lack the energy of youngsters like Eastwood, but not so long ago the man was THE talking artist, and Virgin's release of some of his oldest material (originally issued on Treasure Island) is a first rate document of his former splendor. It's also a hell of a record that moves along at a demented pace.

Most of the cust are true classics, and after hearing "Your Ace from Space," "Wear You to the Ball" or "Happy Go Lucky Girl" you'll wonder where you've been all these years. All of it is in the ska/bluebeat mold, a happier zanier rhythm than the now obligatory rocker beat, but there is nothing dated or quaint about it. The most impossible-to-dislike album in the entire collection mentioned today. Try it you silly snob and thank me after.

Left in the dj sweepstakes are Trinity, Prince Far I, Jah Stitch and Tapper Zukie. Trinity is hot property today, and his "Three Piece Suit" LP on the Gibbs label is an excellent introduction to his talents (and to the crazed production genius of Joe Gibbs). In this platter just about anything goes, and that includes inspired hiccuping, hilarious sound tricks, choirs of wired chipmunks chanting Muhammad Ali's name and other run of the mill touches. "John Saw Them Coming," "Queen Majesty," "Three Piece Suit" and most everything else is hall of fame material. Comes in the nattiest cover ever. Jah Stitch (on the Love and Love label) on the contrary has so far no chance to enter any Hall of Fame, not that he looks at all tempted anyway, judging by his half-passed out pose on his "Moving Away" album cover. It's all very average and uninspired toasting with rare highlights. Prince Far I's latest ("Long Life" – Front Line) still deals with messianic matters and biblical bull, it can be awe inspiring if you've had one spliff too many and very silly the rest of the time. Definitely the Charlton Heston of his category. The backing is tasty but remote. On "Tapper Roots," one discovers that even the greatest can stumble.

Yes, Zukie this time fails to ignite, perhaps with a couple of exceptions, mainly the great "First Street Rock."

There are some funny lines here and there, the lady dressed in macrame and nothing else that adorns the cover is impressive, but all in all it is a long way from "M.P.L.A." and "Man Ah Warrior." May he recover soon.

Before we close this snappy little roots chapter and you can go back to your more urgent spikey hair matters it should be mentioned that accordint to a recent issue of NME, the living legend Lee Perry, also known as the Upsetter, also known as Scratch, may from now on also be known as The Gone One. Perry (an eccentric producer even in his mild moments) was seen destroying his own recording plant with an ax and spraying indecipherable inscriptions over the ruins. If an album ever comes out of this phase, you know it's gonna be THE Dub killer the man has been threatening to create for awhile. The sound effects will just be the dreadest ever.

Chatty Chatty Mouth

Staged Events

photo: Melaine

LEVI AND THE ROCKATS, THE FRONT, SYNTHETIC SOUND
Club 88

Synthetic Sound does Kurt Weill goes Analog routine, trying hard to be decadent little boys playing at progressiveness, but boring the shit out of me with their limp wristed attempts to be DEVO-Reamers. Synthetic as in false, artificial material, lacking any **real** properties, a phony construct. I didn't detect one true move in their whole act.

The Front – dinosaurs in spandex. Ex-heavy metallers making one last stab by jumping on the wagon—sorry boys, you're too late for the train this time. The crowd came to see them because an ex-idols ex-wife managed them. The crowd left with no reason to ever see them again. Now the Rockats, with their screaming rock-a-kitty groupies. Defend these mannequins and call it harmless good time music. Harmless as in backwards—retrogress to the 50s instead of progress to the 80s. Harmless as in erecting false idols—scream and wet panties over the cute boys, all the time creating a distance between performer and audience, erecting the very wall this 'movement' was supposed to tear down. "Good time music." "Party Music"— sounds kind of like "boogie"— you know that thing we supposedly deride our pet peeve hippie hate objects about. Is there any difference between punks and rednecks? (who would certainly enjoy the Rockats, make no mistake.) If you want harmless good time music that makes no demands on your feeble brains, try disco, but don't try to push this trend on me. The Rockats music may present the primitive founding spirit behind a lot of the reasons you and me are the way we are, but when the next night stick strikes will there be room in your head for covers of 'Convicted'? It's fine for anthropologists, but what about NOW?

The Rockats intentions may be good, but their aim is pure Hollywood—the theme is 20th Century Fox and the path leads to the Merv Grifin show. So denounce punk, its the fashion that's important, we follow IDOLS not IDEALS, and when you're sitting in a $10 seat watching the Rockats at the Forum, remember there was a time when we wanted to change all that shit and you sold it down the river for a ponytail and a pair of bobby sox.

Honest Abe

THE ELKS' LODGE CONCERTUS INTERRUPTUS
The Wipers, Zeros and Go-Gos

A lot of ink was spilled over the butch performance of the Downtown Stormtrooper Big Band that night, overshadowing the sets of the first three bands lucky enough to perform before the evening became a 'life-or-death situation.' Trying to fill that enormous neo-greek-with-a-healthy-dose-of-Las Vegas-aesthetics stage we first saw and heard the Seattle based combo the Wipers, an average heavy riffing bunch that didn't wipe anything. Next the ever fluctuating Zeros exploded with teenage angst and emerging class consciousness. The Zeros have refocused their earlier snotty-adolescent-with-growing-up pains attitude and sounds into a more brutal and furious stance. Whether or not this turn to the left will gain them wider recognition is subject to argument, but the sound of their outfit has certainly benefitted from it. Javier Escovedo and friends are not about to disappear, and stand a good chance of surfacing in the 80s as one of the most compelling songwriter/performers. What if the next Springsteen/Costello turned out to be a tough little Mexican American? The Go-Gos are working very hard these days, playing and posing for pictures more than any other band in town 'cept for Levi and the Kittens. And even though there is a growing Go Go backlash creeping amongst some underground - and - determined - to - stay - so elements of the public and even though the day glo overkill has reached a near-nauseous point one must admit that the wildly amateurish musical approach of their early days has been replaced by a very competent barrage of near melodic tunes and singing. There are moments when guitars, bass and drums come pretty close to that great universal pop sound brewing across the globe. The girls are not intent on changing the structures of society, but how many people really are? And if you're going to get dragged off to jail for dancing and drinking you might as well look your most colorful when you get there. So why not be a walking billboard for cheap accessible fun and bring a little color to the drab institution-grey walls of your cell?

NOTE: The Plugz performed a shortened set while the power was cut off, then restored, then cut off again and new wave loving policemen were merrily bopping along to the music and even stepping on-stage to get a few seconds of spotlight sharing. Unfortunately this reviewer was too busy exchanging pleasantries with their pals on the main outside stairway and too involved in testing the solidity of their darling little rubber toys to catch any of it. Typical of Slash, to socialize outside while the music plays!

photo: Kerry Colonna

photo: Alain Saintilix

ULTRAVOX
at the Whisky

To write off Ultravox as merely another bland exercise in electronic Eno-Wanck-music with all the Euro-Kraftwerk trappings and accoutrements of Teutonic spaciness is too easy. Besides, it's a shitty thing to say about a band that's been around for a while working away to polish and refine their instrumentation. So I'm not going to say it.

Wot can you do? Synthesizers are here. They're bound to get used a lot in this 'ere 20th Century electronic age and all that, etc. So are rhythm machines here. Ask KK. So are flanges and all those wee cords sticking into them.

It's SO ELECTRONIC. It looks fucking great.

Back to Ultravox. Some pundits enjoyed their recent Whisky three-nighter debut. Others were loathing it, some were unmoved, some though it boring, terrible, awful, etc.

I desperately want to review it OBJECTIVELY. 'S' my first writing assignment and I wanted to review the gig with open mind and not fall into the true blue Slash writer self-indulgent pitfall of writing about myself instead of the actual music . . . . pitfall of writing about myself instead of the actual music . . . writing about myself instead of the actual music . . . instead of the actual music.

Carless on the night, I rode over with a Slash photographer early in the evening to get a photo of the boys in the band. The photographer got all pissed off 'cos Ultravox's manager wouldn't let us in the dressing room to take one lousy picture of his band.

Ultravox was intensely locked up in the dressing room, sort of rock starry in a way, you know the

MYSTIQUE OF THE UNOBTAINABLE

where you cannot actually get near Ultravox, but only making you want to get near Ultravox all the more . . .

So near yet so far . . . behind that thin door was ULTRAVOX with the recently rehired RADAR guarding them (welcome back, Radar).

Shee-utt, two grown men trying to invade the dressing room of the Whisky to get a photo of an English "Progressive-new wave band."

Glancing uncomfortably at each other like two rejected middle-aged homosexuals vying for the attention of the same boy we split up and I went downstairs.

The opening band never showed. Hours (seemingly) later, a strobe light started flickering. It went on and on flickering, for about ten minutes at least. It just wouldn't quit. Then a prepared synthesized pre-taped loop poop drone (whatever) started up. The strobe was still flickering.

The tension and expectancy mounted within us. It became unbearable. WHERE WAS ULTRAVOX? WHERE WERE THEY? WOULD THEY ACTUALLY REALLY APPEAR ON THAT STAGE ANY SECOND NOW OR WERE THEY JUST TEASING US?? Maybe they were too big to play. Maybe they were trapped in the dressing room.

Finally there they were. Ultravox: right there on that Whisky stage. They didn't have on their early Roxy Music glittery makeup or their little "punk rock" vinyl and PVC coats as on the cover of their first album. The passing of time.

Finally, the loopy drone stopped. Finally that goddanged strobe stopped. Thank god.

Finally Ultravox started playing. The melody lines, guitared and synthesized, were contained within fairly conventional rock structures, sometimes they had a rhythm machine running simultaneously with a good crack whip snare sound, all well thought out, all well rehearsed and well balanced after an obvious long and meticulous soundcheck.

I don't know the titles of their songs 'cos I never got around to actually hearing any of their albums. I don't know if the material was new or not. But it was played with polish. Good credible musicianship. Then a singer came on, whose presence seemed to annoy a faction of that bizarre New Audience, the recently-converted - to - the - New - Wave - three - years - later - by - KROQ - wearing - 76 - Anarchy - Tshirts - stopped - going - to - the - Rocky - Horror - Picture - Show - 3 - times a Week - BUT - STILL - WEARING BLACK - MASCARA - AROUND - THEIR - EYES - BRIGADE.

It seemed as if the singer didn't belong onstage 'cos he didn't project too much of any kind of personality of dramatic theatrical personna commensurate with all the excitement and anticipation that the strobe and the droney loop (digitally sequenced, natch) had built up in us all, but he was passable for a singer, I suppose, for what it was.

After only two songs, tightly disciplined, the band started going all "English Progressive." The drummer started doing those ludicrous flurrying crash cymbal fills, all Genesis pomp style, and those little flurrying crash cymbal fills are one of those fucking annoying little things in life.

Then the Slash photographer started getting all agitated, saying this is fucking boring, let's get out of here.

But what about the review for Slash, my first big new wave assignment, I said.

Be open-minded, give them a chance, wait till the end of the set, don't be so fucking critical, what do you expect, it's only another fucking rock band etc., etc.

Then the bloody strobe started up again. Jeez.

Commandeering the power of the automobile over me, the photographer threatened to leave me all alone with Ultravox at the Whisky, so I weakly allowed myself to be dragged off to a much more trendy ROCKABILLY gig on the other side of town, which is where he had wanted to be in the first place.

The next night I went back with a more open mind, I even took drugs in advance in a desperate attempt to make everything groovy, to make my earholes RECEPTIVE, determined to get down to the whole point of Ultravox music. But Jimmy wouldn't let me in free and I'd blown all the money on drugs, so off I went with Hal to an even more trendy gig on the other side of town, having failed abysmally to make waves as a new star writer for Slash magazine.

Ultravox, I tried. Really. Biggs, I tried. Really. Maybe I should try Flipside, huh?

Sickboy

CRIME, RONDOS, MENTORS
at the Vanguard Gallery

Crime's recent performance at the Vanguard was one of a series of gigs in the veteran San Francisco foursome's latest excursion to the Southlands, their first in almost a year.

Remember old Crime, the band with the coolest most bizarre image around but that could never back it up musically?

Well the poser has now changed. It is this: Crime, Crime, Crime, what are we to do with you? You've totally changed your style, again!

Having chucked out (thank God) the noise-as-art concept, Crime took the Vanguard stage, still adorned in their little security cop uniforms, still accompanied by the banshee siren, still with the same slicked back hair, only this time to blast out a forty minute set of straight-ahead straight up and down rockaboogie . . .

Crime goes straight and plays on . . . nothing new musically, nothing earth-shatteringly original in this new style (or maybe it was simply a case of reverting to whatever they were playing before the advent of the New Wave). Crime are old soldiers. And it shows.

The point being that they actually PERSPIRED while boogying away on that newly-constructed Vanguard stage, why they even put their little HEARTS into their playing. Even Rank Hank shed a few tears of sweat.

The result made for an irresistable, inoffensively enjoyable set.

To the pundits of the "in-in-click-click" I say . . . well, y'know, I tried not to like them, Crime being Crime, but as soon as they started doing that Diddley Daddy beat on one tune, I had to stay until the end and applaud vigorously.

Crime, it's OK, keep doing it. At least it's more FUCKING HONEST than all that droney noise and stuff and that ridiculous cool posturing of the past.

******

The other highlight of the evening, an otherwise dead Wednesday night, was the LA debut (I think) of the RONDOS, featuring ex-Avenger lead guitarist Greg Ingraham with a brand new ensemble comprised of second guitar, bass and drums, all from Orange County where the band is based, all clean cut, fresh-faced with nice clean clothes. . .

No Danny Furious sweat stained hole-in-the-butt oily jeans look for these Rondos. They played a damned good evenly paced set of strong commercial rock. The only thing I would hesitate to rave about is Greg as lead vocalist. It seemed to interfere and underminte his wellknown incredible power as a guitarist. Maybe that can be righted in time with experience or could it be rectified by a frontman vocalist? An interesting band worth watching for.

******

What can be said about the Mentors who opened the show other than that they were absolutely horrible. Horribleness was supposed to be part of it, I understand, since they took the stage wearing pointy Residents' style hoods with cutout eyes, only to play the most excruciatingly atrocious oldfashioned heavy metal with awful guitar solos. The humor of the Mentors from Seattle lies supposedly in vocalist drummer El Duce s obscene lyrics all about analism, buggery, coprophilia and various secretions from the body. But the awful metal guitarring obliterates any "Light-heartnedness" or humorous outrageousness making it boring and annoying after two numbers.

Sickboy

PS—Yay for the Vanguard Gallery and the three guys that run it, Steve, Terry and Craig. The joint is small, clean and virginally intimate. The skeeks, creeps, morons and psychos haven't caught onto it yet. I'm afraid to say anything more. So enough said before I blow it.

However, listen out for word-of-mouth occasional gigs down there. Definitely worth the time and trouble to go downtown. It holds about 150 comfortably without having to be dependent on the wallets of the mass rabble for sustenance since it's used mainly as exhibition space for other types of "art." ■

movies.

DAWN OF THE DEAD

That ghoul-crazy director George Romero has made a sequel to NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD called DAWN OF THE DEAD. The first movie was like an old Twilight Zone that showed how monstrous people can be in the face of catastrophe, but the sequel is more like a comic book (in color!) using grisly puns and macabre jokes in an urban tale of survival of the fittest.

The story begins assuming everyone has seen the first episode in which radioactive fallout caused corpses to rise from their graves in the same state in which they died (i.e., burned, mutilated) to come semi-alive, stumbling around in a stupor in search of one thing . . . warm, human flesh to eat. The scariest part of this syndrome is that people killed by the ghouls come back to life a few minutes later as Living Dead, and their number is multiplying so rapidly things are getting out of control. The first half hour is action packed, beginning in a TV station where a panicky crew is committing mutiny, abandoning equipment, getting ready to run. Emergency numbers flashing on the screen are useless; all the Red Cross workers have been eaten.

Two of the heroes, members of a SWAT team, meet while on assignment to destroy an apartment full of ghouls that are being hoarded by a sentimental religious group in a Third World ghetto. The two cops go on the lam with a TV reporter and his girlfriend in a helicopter and land in a shopping center. This is where the comedy begins. Upon seeing these semi-comatose goons wandering around chewing on hangers, sliding face down on the ice skating rink and walking into plate glass windows, our heroes ponder the strange universal force of habit that leads troubled Everyman back to familiar territory, back to the womb, back to the Shopping Center. Once the heroes have cleared the place out, they barricade themselves inside and indulge in typical American fantasies. The men have lots of guns, ammo and sports equipment to play with; the woman dresses up in glamorous new styles. They fix up an apartment with all the latest appliances, eat gourmet food . . .

. . . but no one is really hungry, and the only thing on TV is an end-of-the-world debate between mad scientists. They get bored, decadent and drink a lot until they are invaded by a gang of renegade bikers who, peabrains that they are, also let in hundreds of living dead who've been circling the shopping center like bees around a hive. The sanctuary is destroyed in a climactic battle of heroes vs. bikers vs. ghouls, a holocaust of gunfire and biting (in which homage is paid to the first movie in another slippery intestine eating scene.)

I can't decide if this is a sociological masterpiece or a vegetarian's revenge, but it demands further study. How about another sequel? Anyone for Brunch with the Living Dead?

V

ROCKERS

Who robs from the rich, gives to the poor . . . Robin Hood?

No, Horsemouth, the drummer for Burning Spear who's the star of this movie. I should say lead, because this movie is dripping with "stars" of the reggae world. The likes of Doc Alimantado, Big Youth and the Mighty Diamonds all have bit parts, but unfortunately don't sing a note . . . quite a tease. Especially since the beginning of the movie throttles right down to Trenchtown with some Rastas sprouting the longest, nattiest dreadlocks ever seen this side of funky Kingston, pounding drums, sucking spliff and testifying in that liting Afro/Anglo jibberjabber that slices through the bullshit of the King's English like a shiv. (Also included at this screening was a real life chorus of those kinky guys calling Jah's name at every climactic moment).

The plot is the familiar story of a musical, undernourished family man trying to put some breadfruit on the table, scaling the music business as a small time record distributor, then as a drummer in a posh, bourgeoisie nightclub. Horsemouth's frustrated deals with Uncle Toms, Rude Boys and a beautiful piece of jailbait end up with the Mafia giving him an elephant mouth and broken bones. There's plenty of comic relief, though, like the scene where he and DJ Dirty Harry sabotage the sound booth at a disco nightclub, dump a Vicki Sue Robinson record and play some "rockers" music, cooly ignoring the frazzled nightclub owner, the cops and the boogie-starved clientele.

Eventually, though, these simple victories aren't enough to satisfy Horsemouth's need to avenge the oppressor, so he and a Rasta gang pull a heist on all those Babylonian bastards who've been vexing his life. Even though it's only a sidewalk skirmish in the war of the concrete jungle, it's a thrill to see the bad guys eat it.

The main letdown of the movie is the music. Something must've gone amiss (contract negototiations?) because the live musical performances given by "Fat Boy" Jacob Miller and Inner Circle, and Gregory Isaac, (who was dressed like a pimp) were tepid, especially when at any second I expected some fiery dubmaster or one of the cameo artists to break into a tune. Even producer Joe Gibbs (playing himself) gave false hope that someone off his label might pop into the film and do some toasting. The exception was Winston Rodney (also of Burning Spear) sitting on the beach singing a capella in a voice so haunting, so resonant, it could float the entire island of Jamaica over towards the Indian Ocean. Other than that and a backing cut of Peter Tosh's "Stepping Razor," the whole soundtrack could have used a couple or more jiggers of rum or one of those foot long "cigarettes" those guys always have hanging out of the sides of their mouths.

JB

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BLACK RANDY, GO-GOs, FLY BOYS
at Whisky

Maybe the speed freak chick hawk that books the Whisky will see that our music has commercial viability now. A *lot* of commercial vability judging from the huge crowd that packed the Whisky for this show. That must have shown *something* to the man who told record co. execs why "punk failed," the man who won't book bands like X or the Bags because they're "not happening." Let's hope something "happens" to him and *fast*!

As for the show itself—the Fly Boys opened and it was a strong beginning. Looking good, sounding good, maybe a bit one-dimensional, but the people dancing were not paying attention to details. I would hope they add a little variation to their set soon.

The Go-Gos offered a more varied menu—they are the musical waitresses that aim to please, serving glossy girl pop baked until all signs of hostility have been glazed over by sweet harmonies, Krazy Kolor and nifty hooks. A perfect crossover band, incapable of offense—they might look a little odd to the tourists but they are as terrifying as mannequins. Having worked hard and gotten a handle on playing their instruments, the Go-Gos never insult or demean, merely chide the poseurs a bit and even if they make fun of the intro to Walking in the Sand (in a cloying aggravating fashion) the sentiments of the Go-Gos are not that much different from those of the 60s girl groups. Lightly chit-chatting between songs, they're relaxed and confident, but somehow I wish they were just a bit more aggressive. Maybe now that we've seen the real enemy at work they might realize that everything is not as bright and happy as they make life seem. So far the evening had been safe, amusing, almost light-hearted (and headed). The dancing was frantic, for sure, and maybe a fight almost broke out once or twice, but all in all, nothing really radical, just another night out on the Strip. Then Black Randy got up there and bent everything as out of shape as one of his smelly beershits that are a part of this lumbering gargoyle's mythology. While everyone else in town seems to be working towards a cleaner, more record co. pleasing sound, this ranting boob from the danger zone comes in to do some housecleaning and completely wrecks the joint in the process. You can love it or stuff it, 'cause Black Randy don't give a good goddamn. These days he's just about abandoned the last remnants of his hackneyed James Brown TAMI show song and stumble routine, and its definitely for the better. The Metro Squad is tighter than ever (this was an incredibly streamlined set) and what you get is the exposed barren, ugly soul of uncle bozo dada in full terrifying force. So take your orderly concepts of 'entertainment' and dump 'em, cuz as long as someone tries to make something dangerous seem safe and tame there will always be people like Randy around to give a swift boot to the most deserving ass.

After an amazingly tight set by the ganja-for-lunch bunch, Mr. B.R. left his followers with a vivid impression of that sociologically significant hit "Macho Man." For this gala encore, the master chose a stunning ensemble of bikini brief, work belt and enema bag. His extremely ample physique should create a new trend and send all those rail-like junkies out to the nearest deli to 'beef it up' for the latest trend—gross poundage. They did the song to the point of totally desecrating it—the only way an evening like this can end.

Z

40 MILES TO CHINO

On Saturday night, March 31, the Brainiacs and the Reactors were scheduled as "entertainment" for the unsuspecting inmates of Chino (State Rehabilitation Facility for Men). Lizzy Frost, the quantum core of the Reactors, had promoted the concert with the prison authorities — via the tele. Had the entertainment director laid eyeballs on Frost, his mind would have dropped to absolute zero. Frost, with her smoldering hog-back hair, stark eyeglasses, and Chicana twang, emanates street corner syndrome. Positively dehabilitating.

This concert was to be my first SLASH assignment.

I arrived at the Brainiacs' warehouse, pen over ear, pad under armpit. I was ready for hysteria, riots, mayhem, mass psychosis, or worse: boredom.

I let myself in. Scot, Jeff, Jon and Shourt were posed behind a dirty glass partition, loungers in twilight ineffectuality, summoning their dread powers of nihil from second rate demons. They conned me into helping them load their equipment.

No one had bothered to find out where Chino was. No one had a road map. While we left the ugly factory district a drunk Mexican smashed into a high power line. The impact rippled down the heavy cables. The borracho slammed his car into reverse, and wheels spun, tractionless on the hard dirt, as the punk caravan limped out through the stinking cloud of tire-smoke.

I loaned Jeff fifty cents to buy a map.

Jeff and I rolled down highway 60 in his toy Honda. The others followed. Jeff was sullen. He confided that his balls hurt and there was dried blood in his boxer shorts. I recommended a gentler stroke or more lubricant. I proposed syphilis as yet another possibility. Secondary syphilis. Jeff almost veered into the center divider. We smoked all of his roaches and forty minutes later we cruised into the punka-phobic community of Chino. We stopped and asked directions from the one man in a population of thousands who didn't know where the prison was. The lying motherfuck. A lowrider told us.

We located the prison gates and drove in, the manicured grounds and squate buildings framed in chain-link, home . . .

A guard told us to park and "await further instructions." The Reactors were in the lot, leaning up against their cars: Frost, Zeno, Montana andUlh. Ulh, the drummer, had his arm in a cast.

We sat around and talked about radiation poisoning while a Gospel group was being frisked and admitted. Then it was our turn.

The guard said no cassette recorder and no cameras. Half-hearted protests trailed off into mutters. I emptied my pockets into a wooden box, and passed through the metal detector, the guard scrutinizing my drivers' license.

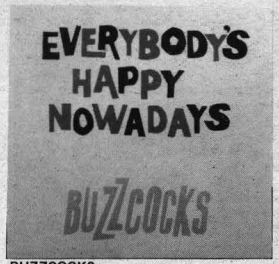
Well, Scot did not have a picture i.d. He had a bench warrant out for unpaid tickets and he thought he could get by with just a social security card. No deal. No Brainiacs. Half-hearted protests trailed off into mutters.

Out of a perverse sense of unity or symmetry, Frost had also forgotten her driver's license. No deal. No Reactors. No mutters even.

The respective band leaders slinked back to their cars, pummeled with epithets like "dumbhit" and "scumbag." For the first time in the history of Chino, criminals were being turned away.

Hook Iswell

FORTY FIVES



BUZZCOCKS
(Everybody's Happy Nowadays/Why Can't I Touch It?)
United Artists import

Buzzcocks are sure getting good and tight and professional and prolific and successful. They're also starting to leave me cold and uninterested. "Why Can't I Touch It" is nifty and devilishly catchy with a beat that won't quit and makes its point halfway thru. "Everybody's . . ." starts real snappy and multi-layered and falls into a ugle 60s falsetto chorus that ruins everything. It then repeats the formula ad infinitum wuntil numbness or anger occurs. No more feel of tension and progression as in their earlier tunes, just a race after the perfect pop hook.

Kick

FILE UNDER POP (???)
(Heathrow, Corrugate, Heathrow SLB)
Rough Trade import

I hated this at first—airplane noises, disjointed snatches of instruments, sound effects, seemingly pointless. But it grew on me—there was a method in all this, the sounds were arranged in interesting progressions. "Corrugate" tells a nice little story of a girl murdering her brother. Is this going to replace rock and roll when it dies? Will we take our cassette recorders into any laundromat, terminal, shopping center, treat the tapes a bit and WHAMO, a new hit on the Stockhausen top 40? Why does that thought seem intriguing yet depressing at the same time?

Z

CLASH
(English Civil War/Pressure Drop)
CBS records import

There are undoubtedly more singles to come from "Enough Rope"; just record company policy to bolster sales of that more mature and healthy vinyl product called an album. Not that they're so entirely out of line in this marketing ploy. All those songs deserve to be hits in their own individual right. It seems funny though that the more obvious choices like "Safe European Home" have been overlooked so far. Does this mean the Clash are having difficulties similar to their "Remote Control" problem? I won't particularly mind as long as B sides like "Pressure Drop" keep coming to the surface. At first, just ho-hum; then the break splits the song into silence, one lone piano echoing chords while Joe whispers for the pressure to drop. But it doesn't; it explodes. The stress subsides as Joe and piano moan on in the same cracked fashion, then suddenly gives way again and again to the same treacherous release of guitar tension.

Chris D.

SIMPLETONES
(California/I Like Drugs)
Posh Boy Services

Fuck, I wasn't even born here. I don't like the sun, the beach and long blond-haired girls. The Simpletones say they do. How can I write objectively about this musical ad for a product I don't cherish. There's a constant nifty fuzz sound, and the words are real clear. Plastic Bertrand should produce this. The Simpletones also like drugs (they look pretty healthy to me) and I've been known as a pharmaceutical gourmet in my distant past but they like stupid drugs. This is for people with funny looking vans and bitchin sound systems in their vehicles. I can't relate. Please don't take my green card away.

imported snob

MENACE
(Electrocutioner/I Need Nothing)
Illegal records import

Gruesomely morbid yammerings coupled with a curiously erotic chill. In short, one of the grisliest records I've ever heard. It isn't so much the lyrics but everything working together, conspiring against you. The singer "aiee, yaie, yaie's" his way into your heart, lovingly savage, a certified voice from hell transforming mundane material into something truly villainous. If Throbbing Gristle were 10 notches or so down the IQ scale and they played rock n roll, they might sound like this. Unfortunately the same can't be said for "I Need Nothing." It's nothing.

Chris D.

RAPED
(Cheap Night Out/Foreplay Playground)
Parole records import

Psuedo (or not so pseudo, who cares?) androgynous teen trash sock it to our sensibilities. Our sensibilities don't notice a thing, 'cept that glitter poppy metal is supposed to be dead and buried. Maybe they're alright at parties.

Kick

U.K. SUBS
(C.I.D./Live in a Car/B.I.C.)
City records import

The old bludgeon trick and once again it works. Multiple contusions around the eyes, ears, and mind from a blunk instrument (musical). Evidence has increasingly come to light of late that this species is disappearing . . . categorized as going the way of the dinosaur by our more "sophisticated New Wave" primates (who seem close to extinction themselves). "B.I.C." fares best, healthy enough in its own desperately primitive, melodic way to survive against the hordes of empty-headed, new music pop stars that have discarded the harder sound.

Chris D.

POP GROUP
(She's Beyond Good and Evils/3.38)
Radar import

A side is many things packed in one, it's one of the most monstrous songs to come out in awhile and there has been no shortage of those lately. Disco meets Beefheart meets Arthur Brown of Hell Fire Fame meets funk meets H. P. Lovecraft. That's not a description, it's a psychiatrists report. A throbbing mutation, an aberration and a hell of a joke to play on delicate souls. The numeral instrumental on the other side is 25th century dub laced with bad acid. Do not ignore this stuff. When the nuclear shit hits the fan we will all need some kind of art form to relate to.

Kick

GERARD HELMUT
(Unter Der Faust/Trapped Like a Rat)

For breezey pop fans. Unter Der Faust, is "Under My Thumb" in German, done at breaknect pace, this week's cute gimmick. What's next—"Satisfaction" in Tagalog? (I'll take the Alley Cat's version anyday.) Side two is a little more sinister, slight Roxy influence, kind of silly scare show lyrics, but all in all nothing I'll ever listen to again.

Z

BLONDIE
(Sunday girl — english and french versions)
Chrysalis

Mais c'est mignon tout plein ca madame. Ca me rappelle les yeyes de ma folle jeunesse, quand Genevieve et moi on faisait toutes les surboums de Passy, avant que la connasse ne devienne enceinte et que sa famille de richards parvenus me force a la marier. C'est un peu plus endiable que Francoise Hardy, mais c'est quand meme pas aussi bruyant et vulgaire que toutes ces conneries punques qu'on entend maintenant. Ca prouve quand meme que la jeuness peut s'amuser en restant raisonnable. Ta gueule Genevive, tu vois pas que je suis occupe?

Visage A Coups De Pieds

THE JERKS
(Cool/Cruisin' Again)
Lightning records import

If Lightning ever puts out a decent record I might pass out from shock. This one doesn't even produce mild paralysis. Where do they get these groups anyway?

Z

BRAM TCHAIKOVSKY
(Girl of My Dreams/Come Over)
Radar import

As the name implies, bloated grandeur. Sweeping, Byrds sounding, twenty five string guitars pushing this over-produced banal pop song to its fitful demise. If any regular reader of this magazine can listen to this song from start to finish, I'll be genuinely surprised (and a bit disturbed.) A total waste of studio time, vinyl and ears (mine for having to suffer through this sappy, sop-ridden non-entity).

Z

THE NEIGHBORS
(Nuclear Family/Punk in Paradise)
Rockin' Room records

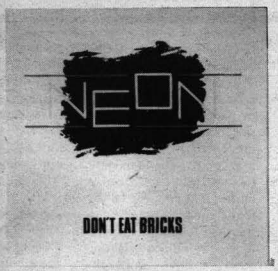
"Nuclear Family" is okay but "Punk is Paradise" is a mighty impresive vinyl debut for this Santa Barbara band that played the Masque awhile back and received a cool reception from the crowd and a nasty live review in these pages as a bonus. Their art background is obvious and openly acknowledged in the liner notes. There are also thick traces of Patti Smith damage in the girl singer's voice and inspiration but none of the bullshit and narcissism of the Poetic One. This girl Jill can sing pretty convincingly, and the band don't exactly fumble with their instruments. It's tight, nervous and snappy, not your usual frontal attack on all senses used by most local bands but why compete with the masters of screeching chaos and Boieng 747 imitations when there are other sneakier ways to be heard? Do not dismiss the outfielders, my brethren. That goes for me too.

Kick

EYES
(TAQN/Topological Lies)
Dangerhouse records

If you're going to play pop this is the way to play it: all raw nerves grating on the ears and no frills to waylay the beautifully off-key melody. Get that pretty stuff in there, but don't muck it up; play it so it's that much more melodic by virtue of its dissonance. As far taking "a Quaalude now" that's of course a matter of personal preference. Taking this seriously or not, the way I've been feeling lately my thoughts run right along those lines. Of special note, the Dangerhouse label design on this particular record is more neurotically perfect than ever, inscrutably perfect mathematical layout done as if the art boys were mapping out their own private detailed battlefield.

Chris D.



NEON
(Don't Eat Bricks/Hanging Off an O)
Radar import

Another Radar hybrid. Radar is obsessed by the future. And obviously according to their predictions the future is a bit more complex than the past. That goes for popular music too, so complex pop groups (that one too) are the thing. Neon is more funk than the Pop group, they'll get airplay first, here at last. In the year 2000. Ted Nugent is a caveman, and prehistoric music rules this land. One day the English are going to land here in flying saucers and we'll be greeting them with spears and clubs. Like the Roxy or Starwood. And this isn't even that heavy or modern. Just contemporary. What do you mean what does that mean?????

Kick

PENETRATORS
(Untamed Youth/Vengeance/Be American)
M.R. records

Another step in discovering and flaunting what the English are busy forgetting or distorting. The straight ahead punk sounding yankee bands are better than the limeys ever were as far as getting the most out of their instruments but they are two years behind in the mood and apparently not interested in catching up with the spearhead of the movement. Which doesn't mean this band is better than the Pistols were or that there are no American bands as advanced as the most experimental combos over there. Playing this record just started me thinking in wild aesthetic generalizations, that's all.

Kick

KLARK KENT
(Too Kool to Kalypso/Kinetic Ritual)
Kryptone import

Studio joke that probes the excellent first single was a fluke. Or that this Klark Kent is an impostor. We are sending Lois Lane on a special assignment. Only she will find out the truth. In the meantime stay away from this Kute and Kreepy rekord.

Kick

THE RESISTANCE
(Kidnapped/Say No to the Macho)

Extremely mellow rock from glitter non-generation leftovers. The group's name signifies nothing, unless you take it out of a defiant context and put it instead into the category of resistance to change. Decadent, lazy and slickly vacant.

Chris D.

THE OFFS
(624803/Johnny Too Bad)
Crack in the World records

Screw the reggae purists this is all right. Recorded inside a corrugated iron shack perhaps but it jumps real good. I'm going to get myself a pint of rum and blast it 'til something happens. The other side with the evocative title is a superb example of the Sky Saxon-one-riff's-all-you-need West Coast school of music. He never said which one though, and everyone is still looking.

Kick

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Chinas Comidas

A number of songs easily up to anyones standards
-George Arthur
The Seattle P-I

Chinas Comidas is an ancient custom for Chinese women dining in traditional red garments
-Robert McGinley
The Seattle Sun

...Seattle's most popular new wave band
-Patrick MacDonald
The Seattle Times

Watching a woman command fear, nightmare, and sexual violence like a musical instrument, an intoxicated male psyche had overloaded. Some will say the violence is in the music, but no one familiar with their own demons could fail to recognize where the musical vibration CHINAS COMIDAS puts out comes from. --N. Wacker, the Weekly Seattle 1/10/79

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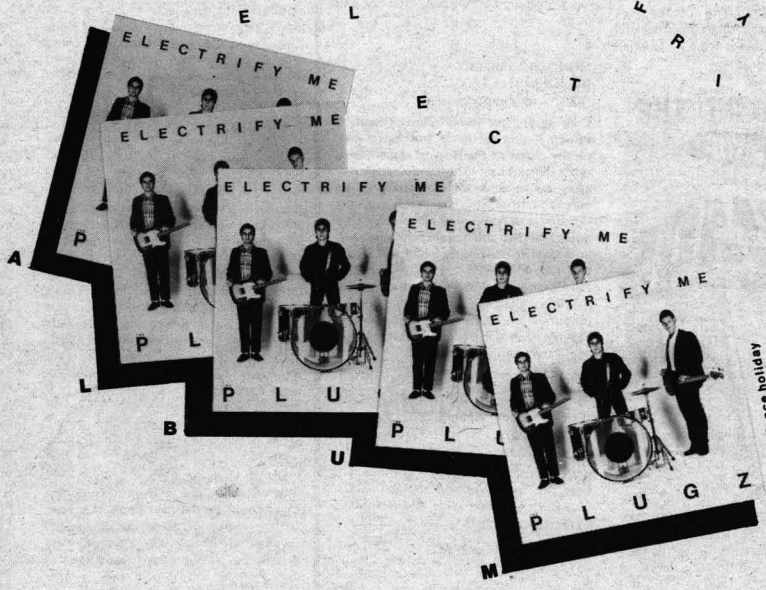

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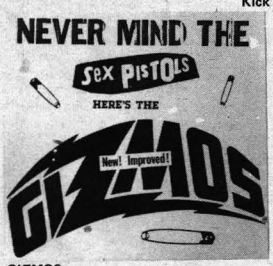
slash page thirty-five

DOLL BY DOLL
(Palace of Love/The fountain is red, the fountain is white)
Automatic import

There is a fuckin' picture of Antonin Artaud on the cover of this single. That's the second fuckin' time I bump into Artaud's ghost this week, the first time was while listening to Last Men's "The Word." It said something about working the night shift with Artaud, 'cept they called him Tony Artaud, which I guess is a way to revive him and give him a shot of new consciousness in the arm. Well, these guys don't say nothing 'bout Tony but his mug is there all right and I'm asking what the living fuck is going on? (all them fucks as here to please Bomp's cultural attache and uncorruptible lackey Sperazza! who bemoans the lack of colorful expletives in these wimpy pages). Is there a conspiracy to launch a new wave revival of the boney nasty possessed madman? Good luck! Anywa Artaud had no use for love, he didn't want to go down to no palace of love, 'cause he had to shit out more demons than you've got blackheads but I agree it makes for a pretty grabbing cover and who knows he might be in the Germs nowadays if he had been born a bit later. Doll by Doll don't sound as possessed as all that but a well-informed source assures me there is more nuttiness and dark sides to them than meets the ear. It's hard to tell with all that efficient rock n roll pouring out. There are faint hints of murky undersides peeking through but who needs faint hints when you got the Pop group?

Kick



GIZMOS
"NEVER MIND THE S.P., HERE ARE THE GIZMOS"
(6 songs)
Gulcher

The Bloomington, Indiana new wave scene is thriving. They even have a band. That's two more than Butte, Montana. And they have an independent label. It even sounds like they have a recording studio, but that's not certain. So they all keep warm in the winter by putting on vinyl every tune they write between two games of pool and flooding the world with their in jokes and drunken jam sessions. It's not that they are bad, and I'd go and see them cavort on a stage any day, but their "who gives a shit" ha-ha philosophy does not stunning records make. Undoubtedly casualties from the Meltzer's stoopid school of thought.

Kick

DIE ELECTRIC EELS
(Cyclotron/Agitated)
Rough Trade import

Sitting in the bathtub. Suddenly this clown comes in and throws a pie in your face while dropping a bare live wire in the water. While you convulse in waves of laughter and shocking distortion the clown might mention that this record is three years old, by Cleveland's original maniac band, and that the familiar sounding drumming is by the rhythm driver behind the Cramps' voodoo powerglide. But you're too busy being assaulted to pay much attention to details . . .

Z

SPIZZOIL
(Cold City: 4 ep)
Rough Trade import

Their first sounded like a soundtrack for a punk hootenanny. This one's twice as good. If the Incredible String Band had grown up in the bleakest refinery imaginable and had never seen a flower, they might have sounded like these two guys on distortion guitar and topical vocals. Enhanced by appropriate studio effects these two observers manage to produce **true** urban folk music that is simple but never simple-minded. Their final report is more than just a novelty. . . .

Z

JOHNNY COUGAR — U.S. MALE
(Kicks/2000 AD/Lou-ser/Hot man)
Gulcher

Since this is a 7 inch record I naturally played it at 45 rpm and decided this was one U.S. male that was not going to replace John Wayne in the heart of macho America. At its indigenous 33 rpm speed it immediately reclaimed its true place at the top of the pile of records that have no reason to exist. Gulcher apologizes in the liner notes and try to tag the "historical value" tag onto these four plodding middle of nowhere rock shit tunes but it's no use. This will remain a gaping nothing way after the end of the universe.

Kick

MONOCHROME SET
(Alphaville/He's Frank)
Rough Trade import

Cool guys on Godard guitars with a smooth crooner doing the existential, calmly narrating the story of some Karina types breakdown. The song gets carried away by its sense of self-parody in the middle, but finishes up strong on the rebound, ending on a nice, soft, grey note. Side two the guitars play ping-pong lines against each other while Mr. Smoothie reminds me of Lou Reed circa 3rd Velvet Underground album (when he was still in a more than functional stage). Co-produced by Mayo Thompson of Red Crayola, who certainly should know about the unique approach.

Z

THE REDS
(Self Reduction/Victims)
Eke Records

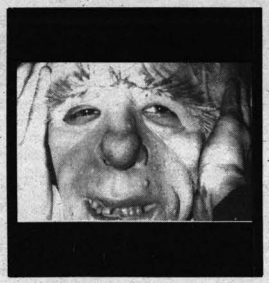
Television in Philadelphia. Medium tempo with interesting riff dragged out two minutes two long, Verlaine strained vocals. My English teacher once said if I didn't have anything nice to say I should say nothing at all. This time I'll follow her advice.

Z

THE GIZMOS WORLD TOUR
(6 songs)
Gulcher

Same as above 'cept it's rawer and more convincing. 1976 forever.

Kick



VINYLLY — by Bo Clifford

KNUCKLE CRACKING:

I figured I'd warm up with a few of the better known UK bands. Buzzcocks' "Everybody's Happy Nowadays" (UA) is another in a long string of fine singles. A bit of a change is the nifty descending riff against nearly falsetto (?) vocals on the chorus. Will the band soon be making different music on another label? Radio Stars have released two in rapid succession now that their label, Chiswick, has signed with EMI for better distribution. First comes their theme song "Radio Stars" and then you can discover "The Real Me" (the real them?!). Both are from their rather leaden Holiday album and are easily the best singles choices sounding much better out of context. The Skids take us "Into the Valley" (Virgin) with their latest. I really haven't been able to figure what it's about, but it sure sounds good! The drums kick in and the record blasts off. Their LP should be a good one. Fischer-Z return with "Remember Russia" (UA), an excellent piece of white dub. The flip, "Bigger Slice Now" sounds more like their "Wax Dolls" debut. I'm already looking forward to their next one.

WITH AN R:

From Radar Records comes several new releases. The very pop sounding Bette Bright says she is "The Captain of Your Ship." Actually, I prefer the flip "Those Greedy Eyes" which has more meat to it. Bram Tchaikovsky returns with "Girl of My Dreams," a very American sounding record. That's OK because it's about an American girl. Again, though, it's the B side that has more bite to it. If you're lucky you can get it with a free live single included. The sublime "Oliver's Army" from Elvis Costello has been discussed at length in many publications, but it's message bears repeating. The sugar-coated music hides the bitter reality that the British could swallow whole. It can't happen here? Dangerously likeable. The brand new Neon, "Don't Eat Bricks" is quite an improvement over their Sensible Records single. Puts me in mind of the Soft Boys or XTC. Music like this always makes me think of angles (geometrically speaking). A good start for Martin Rushent's new production company which will release all their stuff through Radar. One of the most talked about groups in England right now is The Pop Group. Their first single is now available and it is truly indescribable. "She is Beyond Good and Evil" could be the best single this year. Or the worst. I had a bit of advance preparation having heard some early demos, but I still wasn't ready for this one. Walking into it cold will be quite an experience for those curious enough to hear it. Instruments flying in every direction backed by a perverted disco beat; the vocalist sounding like Iggy at voice-breaking age. You'll just have to figure this one out for yourself. I find it fascinating.

FROM US TO YOU

Several fine domestic records this month. In cleveland, the CHRONICS are hollering about a "Test Tube Baby" (Nuclear). The topicality of the subject may have gone by now, but the record survives on its punch and humor. Remember, "daddy said no, but momma said maybe." The Shirkers from Washington DC relate a tale that might be familiar to you. Being found "Drunk and Disorderly" (Limp) is no fun and you can tell by their attitude that these boys are not happy about it. In the time honored tradition they vow that it won't happen again (wann bet?) A good punchy record that's great for drunken singalongs. On the west coast it seems to be drugs that are causing problems. The Eyes' "TAQN" (Dangerhouse) is a well-aimed putdown of the drug mentality. The confusing title explains itself in the lyrics, but I'm not gonna give it away. The around-the-corner guitar solo is 15 seconds of greatness. Moving up to Santa Barbara, we find the Neighbors who, according to their handout, live next to everyone. I'll forgive them that because "Nuclear Family" (Rockin Room) is one of those little records that makes a big impression because it literally comes out of nowhere. A bit underrecorded which accents the simplicity of the band behind a girl who got a C in Patti Smith 101. More live work could tighten them into a very good band. The B-Girls from Toronto have gotten a lot of press based on their looks and stage presence and are finally releasing a record. Although recorded nearly a year ago, it's a good representation of their "sound," though I'm sure their abilities have improved. "Fun on the Beach" (Bomp) successfully combines the girl-group concept with punk/pop/whatever. If you wanted to be simplistic about it, you could say it sounds like four Debbie Harrys. Which leads me to the hot rumor that the blond one is all set to produce the B-Girls album (having already joined them on stage a couple times). Remember, you read it here . . .

FOOTLONGS WITH RELISH

One of England's favorite Stiffs, "Lucky Number" by Lene Lovich is now available on a 12". Backed by "Home" and a dub version of the A-side this makes for a really neat package that won't change anyone's mind, but it's still fun. The Fingerprintz "Dancing With Myself" (Virgin, gr.) is a humorous comment on disco thinking done in an Anglo pop style (hooks and handclaps.) Two mercifully short instrumentals (twice as many as the 7" version) come and go without leaving much impression. The Distractions have released a four song EP called "You're Not Going Out Dressed Like That" on the new TJM label. All the songs show a lot of potential, but my favorite would have to be "Maybe It's Love" with it's clean, Buzzcock feel. This band will make some very good records. The Ze label, which is either based in New York or Paris depending on your vantage point, has released several 12" singles and EPs. The Last Men (from NY) have put "Jimmy Igo" on public display; a sordid tale of necrophilia and the problems thereof over a musical impression of the early Stooges sitting in for the Velvets. It's even good!

SHARPEN YOUR PENCILS:

Now a quiz! What records in this column most resemble: A) Sweet the Beatles, B) Talking Heads thru a bad radio, and C) Gen X with credibility? Entries to:

Bo Clifford
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ALBUMS

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SEX PISTOLS
Virgin import

If you've got past the stage of hopeless idolatry for Malcolm McLaren's merry band of funsters, or indeed if you're the sort of inverted snob who dismisses commercial success as artistic anathema, it may have escaped your attention that the Pistols were unquestionably the best new band to emerge from the second half of this fetid decade.

'Best' is a catchall aphorism which in this case embraces the most original, exciting, crazed, honest and ultimately out-of-control pop combo ever to dupe a record company (or in this case three record companies; an unparalleled feat of outlaw savvy in the annals of bla-bla-bla). The first Pistols album might've been a total ripoff for anyone who'd bought the singles which comprised the bulk of its content, but it was a quintessential rock n roll album when taken as a whole. The Jones/Cook axis produced a rhythm track that knocked the socks off anything before or since — and a million limp plagiarists confirm that indisputedly. Rotten was (and still is if he can stop fooling gullible bimbos like Kick with his throwaway gibbering in Public Image), a shimmering star burning above a sea of shit. And the Machavelian machinations of Malcolm McLaren and production antics of Dave Goodman ensured that the ambiguity of commercially viable anarchy remained intriguingly, if irritatingly unresolved.

What has all this got to do with "The Great Rock n Roll Swindle"? Well, it helps fill space and a few long words are always a neat way to bamboozle the plebs. But there's also a tiny picture on the inner spread of this package that holds the secret of the whole Sex Pistols scam — a picture of a tombstone engraved with the 4th in a series of lessons the album's title is supposed to exemplify: "DON'T GIVE THE GAME AWAY."

Indeed not. The Pistols never did and this album only teases us with further possibilities and a billion contradictions. Strictly speaking it's a soundtrack album for a celluloid epic we'll never see, or at least not in the form originally scripted. The sleeve comprises stills fromthe film and they include McLaren as a rubber fetishist (snigger), Sid Vicious wanking (oooh), a midget in chains hauling a massive stone tablet inscribed "HOW TO MANUFACTURE YOUR GROUP" (typical, huh?) , Steve Jones as Philip Marlowe (clever), the Pistols being burned alive, heads in nooses (prophetic), and classic shots of the band in action (rarity value).

The music, should you be dumb enough to expect anything but the unexpected, is confusing. Johnny Rotten singing "Roadrunner" and commenting, somewhat accurately, in mid-song that it's "Fuckin' awful." Orchestral arrangements of "EMI" and "God Save the Queen," a belting disco rendering of "Anarchy in the U.K.," another version of the same song sung in French by a Dylan soundalike to a tinkling accordian backing, "Something Else" and "Come On Everybody" worked over by Sid Vicious in a manner that all but creams Cochran's originals, a completely out-to-lunch 'Rock Around the Clock,' McLaren crooning a lilting British MOR standard, 'You Need Hands,' Jones spouting filthy adolescent rhymes and just for the purists, a healthy dollop of classic Pistols sneering, incandescent rock that'll bring a tear of regret to your eyes.

With such a conundrum to try and unravel, don't expect to draw any easy conclusions from this two disc set, this reviewer certainly wouldn't be so presumptious as to try such a shtick. But for Christ's sake buy it, even at import prices. In a couple of year's time, it'll be some sort of mixed-media milestone . . . you collectors out there in your bedrooms lined with Blondie posters will prize your original pressings. But aside from such nonsense, Rock n Roll Swindle is chock full of tuff n bitchin rock satire and self-parody that makes the Tubes look like the Monkees.

Mark Williams

VIBING UP THE SENILE MAN
ALTERNATIVE TV
Deptford Fun City import

We're a long way from Sniffing Glue. Mark Perry is not exactly standing still polishing his riffs or streamlining his image. He is taking a holiday from rock n roll and squeezing his dreams unto vinyl. You don't need much, a recorder or two, some percussion hardware, voices, a few friends who decide to form the band's eighth lineup until that phase is done with, an occasional guitar or bass, and if your imagination does not flake out on you, you may end up by communicating a minute portion of your visions to others. In this particular adventurous attempt all the ingredients must have been right because something sure comes across and makes you scream for more. There is a story about the boy who cut out his tongue, another about the man whose girlfriend runs out on him while he is at work and that opens a gap in his life just big enough for his death to squeeze through via the radio set (death announces itself like Albert Ayler in a tight spot), a stark brief love song that neatly sums up 30 years of recorded romantic fumblings and moanings and shrugs the whole legacy off ("Facing Up to Facts"), there are astral sounds and spooky twists and lazy phantasms and not one second of commercially viable rest area. P. Orridge participated on this, but this is the other side of the searching fringe. No technology fetishism, just a stroll thru the otherworld. So stop fuckin thinking "yeah, but is there punk after death?!" Suppose there isn't?

Kick

PARABLE OF ARABLE LAND
RED CRAYOLA
Radar import
(reissue of original IA recording)

Crazy Texan youth in the summer of Sandoz. Having a psycho wigout party, bringing their own noisemakers and their own Owsley truths, having no rules except the ones invented by the whims of a sugar cube. No conventions, no restrictions, and if that sounds like that cliche "anarchy," yes this "rebellation generation" knew the essence of that word a lot better than most of your drugstore nihilists. Through the chaos three crayolas play six 'songs' — leaking and swirling through treatments, shifters, delays, rhythm and structure barely held together by lysergicized hands and voices, finally, inevitably disintegrating into another 'free form freakout.' You can forget those puerile cliche putdowns of 'peace and love' —these people really were making an attempt to destroy any cages of flesh or spirit, they were trying to break down more barriers than most of the current zipper pinned media idols know about. And forget the stupid attempts to recreate the period like 'Hair' — this was a time that could never be prolonged or duplicated. It was too over the edge — only Mayo Thompson has crawled out of the warp intact. A great document, and it sould like they had one hell of a party that night. Wish I could have been there.

Z (sentimental for an experience never had)

LOOK SHARP
JOE JACKSON
A&M

The title of this album is an appropriate warning: Watch out kids, here comes the first of the Elvis Costello copyists.

Jackson spends most of his time trying to convince the British press that comparisons with the Great Bespectabled One are both odious and fatuous, but he don't fool me. I've seen him twice live and apart from his awkward attempts to come across as some sort of spiv (that's a cheap British gangster to you, bub), his whole act is pure Costello. Layering the vocal tracks with a ton of foldback doesn't disguise the man's oral origins and only by keeping his keyboard efforts to a minimum does he avoid giving his band the same spartan piano-heavy sound pumped out by the Attractions. But it's his songs that are cast strongest in the Costello mold. "Is She Really Going Out With Him?" steals its hook verbatim from "Welcome to the Working Week" and fragments of Costello's hitherto unique technique litter the rest of the set with a frequency that boasts incredible gall. And when he stops thieving off our El, he nicks a chunk off Paul Anka's Nature Boy on "Fools in Love"!

Yep, Joe Jackson, despite PR claims that he's paid dues up to here, is the Ral Donner of the late 70s. Work that one out.

Mark Williams

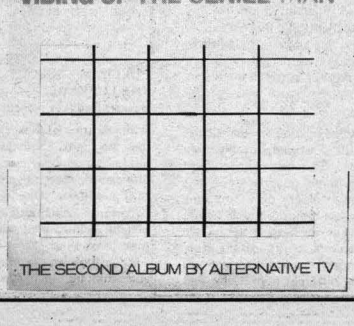
ELECTRIFY ME
THE PLUGZ
Plugz records

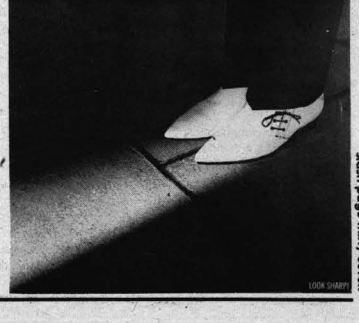
I though this might be good but its a lot better than that. Fast and dry and to the point, with Tito's gripping voice and guitar work resting on Charlie's pulsating drums and Barry's tall bass. With the exception of the ballad-like "Electrify Me" (the most tender song to come out of this scene yet) every cut is up-tempo Plugz frenzy, nothing is blurry or half-baked, I'm impressed I tell you. Recommended list for airplay: "Adolescent" (now the Atomic Cafe is immortalized on vinyl!!), "Wordless" (but not vocalless - and it has a midway twist that will really jolt you), "Electrify Me" and of course "La Bamba," a complete overhaul on the Trini Lopez ditty.

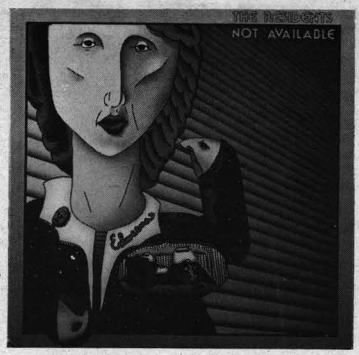
Kick

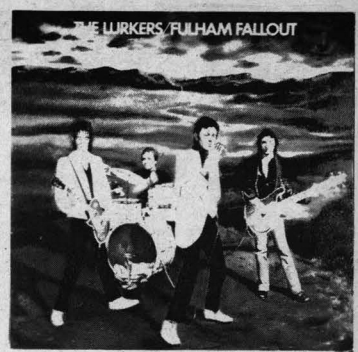
THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING DICKIES
A&M

If one were to judge the L.A. scene from this, the first album on a 'major' by a local 'punk' band, you'd think L.A. had all the soul and depth of a used whoopee cushion. What went wrong with this still-born? Messy production? Wrong headed producers at the mixing board? Whatever the reason, this album is about as much fun to listen to as hearing nails screech down a blackboard. Everything is in that too-rushed tempo, the band is on a speed race to keep with themselves, wacky, zany guys straining the concept of fun to the point of absurdity. It should not have been this way—The Dickies have performed many powerful, tight live sets, but you'd never know it from this simpering, silly annoyingly arch mess. They sound like mildly talented amateur adolescents rushed too soon into the studio by an anxious producer hoping to cash in on the 'next big thing.' And as for









the abundance of cover songs and all the singles being on this album—we knew they were short on material, but not this short! Maybe that's why they're 'shrinking'—they've become so limited in scope they've left no room for expansion and so the Dickies can only invert upon themselves until they fade into never never land. The one attempt to break the mold, an instrumental called "Rondo" is decent enough if you go for ELP outtakes. I wouldn't be so bitchy, but damnit this is OUR scene and one does want to see it represented as being more than a bunch of wimpy, inane goons.

Z

This is a record review. It is of the new XTC album. The new XTC album cover has writing all over it. It is supposed to be CLEVER. So is this REVIEW, which is being done in the same style as the cover of the new XTC album. XTC is a VERY CLEVER band. Maybe too much so for THEIR OWN GOOD. Who else has writing about writing on the cover, which is supposed to be a GIMMICK to lure potential album buyers. It is not a good GIMMICK. The GIMMICK is to ignore the cover and possibly the album. But XTC does not GO AWAY. The cover is CONTRIVED. XTC is not as CONTRIVED as the cover, but they come close. The cover is not an adequate description of the MUSIC—which is futuristic - pop - laden - sophisto - keyboard - dominated - intellectual bubble-gum music. GET IT? That's a SMART DESCRIPTION of XTC. Not as smart as the people who did the cover think they are. Not as smart as XTC think **they** are. Not as smart as me, who is stopping this review before it becomes as STUPID as the style it is emulating.

Z

NOT AVAILABLE
THE RESIDENTS
Ralph records

Upon first listening, this sounds like an eclectic assemblage of somewhat neurotic nursery rhymes. The meanings are obscure, as is the medium they're contained in: a running collage of weird melodic snatches and paper-cutter percussive tracks. But after awhile, if you give it awhile, the musical associations start to click, and the goldfish bowl vocal snippets take on larger meanings, and the whole cryptic conglomeration resembles more and more a religious operetta. It is a charming record really. I find the weird little melodies prancing thru my skull at weird hours of the night, and I wake to discover drool on my pillow. I think it's my drool, but I'm never to sure. "Not Available" makes the perfect gift for the emotionally disturbed child in all of us.

Toots L'Amato

INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL
STIFF LITTLE FINGERS
Rough Trade import

Single mixes of "Suspect Device" and "Wasted Life" could knock you for a loop, the versions here can't. The re-recorded sound got a little too cleaned up and WHAM! that's all she wrote. Too bad. There's some good songs here. "Barb Wire Love" comes across after a few listenings despite pretentious, dull words. "Law and Order" and "Rough Trade" stand on their own as pulse-bursting, non-stop assaults. Then you've got crimes like their version of B. Marley's "Johnny Was" which is actually very good 'til the middle where everyone bogs down in dawdling jams; the tedious length of this particular cut is totally uncalled for and the only reason I can come up with for it's being here is in emulation of the Clash's "Police and Thieves"; "Closed Groove" is yet another example. Anything it has to say comes out (as do most of their other lyrics) as anemic generalizations diluting the eloquent rage that is the music.

Chris D.

VALLEY OF THE DOLLS
GENERATION X
Chrysalis

It's difficult to find the right thing to say about this, Kickboy's imported live comments last notwithstanding, I **believe** the tales of a blonde demi-god basking in the imagined glory of his own rocking image. And that's all the more reason I'm so impressed, perhaps because Billy and crew are walking in a self-created fantasy world, they've come up with a stupefying work of pop greatness. Great because it keeps a harshness around the edges that, in its harsher moments, is reminiscent of fingernails dragging across slate. And it's not pop in the empty-headed Boomtown Rats/Police groove that's been glutting the market recently. When Billy moans, screams, ooohs, aaahs, it sounds genuine, sincere in the same insincere style characteristic of one of Billy's biggest influences, David Bowie. Not to fucking rationalize my position any further; I like this record.

Chris D.

GERM FREE ADOLESCENTS
X RAY SPEX
EMI import

What was always missing in the singles finally rears it's confused, lovably ugly head: how Poly Styrene really looks at the world. In some ways her vision is much bleaker, colder than anything dispersed by more radical political bands. Which isn't to say she has a better handle on the situation or a solution to the problems of the modern world. She just sees things a little different. What she sees won't do anything uplifting for your fits of acute depression. Maybe I'm wrong because a lot of Poly's lyrics are bitterly sarcastic but she seems to be saying that maybe the only ultimate excape from the artifically colored, germ-free "society" of consumer domination is through submission. The music is melodic, deliberately hummable in a midless sort of way that is the perfect counterpoint to her voice (which ranges from Cockney beauty to being akin to cats killing rats out in your back alley), and a perfect foil to her intentions. A quaint pessimistic nightmare in dayglo colors that sometimes takes very personal risks.

Chris D.

A TONIC FOR THE TROOPS
BOOMTOWN RATS
Columbia Records

When this first came into my hands, I fought like hell against liking it. But listen by listen, I slipped into being entertained. Now, having come full circle, I hate it all over again, "Mary of the 4th Form" and "Never Loved Eva Braun" excluded. The outrage/rage exhibited here is formulated in imitative fashion along the MOR lines of Bruce Springsteen. Lead singer/songwriter, Bob Geldof, is so rabidly paranoid of being associated with anything punk I'm surprised he hasn't ordered keyboard man, Johnnie Fingers' spiky cut. It may seem stupid to berate Bob for singing about "Blind Date s" when his fellow countrymen Stiff Little Fingers are vehemently pointing out the horrors of one's home being turned into a police state, but I don't think so. Dwell on the idea a moment. Would you rather have a song dealing in cute, Mickey Mouse puns about romance, or . . . what you have to survive through to see the one you love; if the street where your sweetheart lives is mined, police barricaded, or simply lined with gangs of muggers. You be the judge. I know what I'd appreciate knowing, and it has nothing to do with the pseudo-saccharine alienation of the Boomtown Rats.

Half-Cocked

FULLHAM FALLOUT
THE LURKERS
Beggars Banquet records import

With Arturo Bassick gone the Lurkers lose their guts. That was apparent in their last single anyway, as was my loss of interest. Maybe his departure had nothing to do with it. One good 45 to start, "Shadow," which also appears here completely lacking in its original spirit, and that looks like it's it for the Lurkers. Take a look at the inside picture sleeve and the terminal symptoms of your boredom become concrete. Everyone's into a kind of low brow power pop ego trip, admiring their cocksure handsomeness while fans who don't know any better follow suit. Sorry to sound condescending, but when something is boring, it's boring. You get me?

Chris D.

13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS
Radar import
(reissue of original IA recording)

When Earth aligns with Jupiter, and Mercury aligns with Mars, then peace will rule the planets and love will fill the stars. On the other hand, it could be that some weird alien microsperm enters our atmosphere aboard Voyager II and assumes our identities through Milky Ways and mother's milk. Either way, one thing's for sure: the 1960's was an awfully strange decade. It was almost as if some benevolent extraterrestrials really had infiltrated teenage hearts, making them crazy and sending them into a frenzy of ritualistic pagan alchemy. This record, first released in 1966, may well be a Martian manifesto of some sort. What else could explain liner notes urging the listener to restructure his conceptual hierarchy horizontally? It does not make a lot of sense to this reporter, but then neither do the Dead Sea Scrolls.

WLA

LIVE AT THE WITCH TRIAL
THE FALL
Step Forward import

Let's not beat around the bush with this: this is more than a step forward, it's a giant leap, it's possibly not punk anymore as we know it although the attitude is there crisper and sharper and more threatening than it ever was only the ammunition and the goals have been redefined and improved. I haven't convinced thousands yet but I have faith in the natural order of things, which isn't natural at all but proceeds by odd unexpected jumps to god knows what, this is music and words for insomniacs with a chip on their shoulder and insomniacs could take over if they got organized, this is music for kids with nothing to lose and for musicians with everything to learn, this is the sound of what we all feel but haven't pinpointed yet, this is a map to a strange future we will all try to effortlessly fit into while the rest of our peers are running into each other like blind chickens with their rockabilly disco protest punk techno punk dayglo punk labels and badges falling off in the melee. This is ruthless teen genius for a real better future and Devo are just reactionary comedians with a linear brain pattern. This album is altering my genes better than the Harrisburg evening winds.

Kick boy

JIM3O

...RGUEMENT...
...HOLE PAGE,
...T SHORT. ① AS
...OUR BITCHIN
...BOUT SOME
...ROBLEMS.
② AC

GARS

PANTER

BY THE WAY, while WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT OF YOU, DEAR READER, AS A POTENTIAL MUTANT: NO PATRIOTIC AMERICAN WOULD BE MAD IF YOU, OUR SOCIETY'S VANDALS, THREW A BRICK through YOUR NEAREST CORPORATION THAT INVESTS HEAVILY IN NUCLEAR POWER. (JUST A HARMLESS OBSERVATION MIND YOU.)

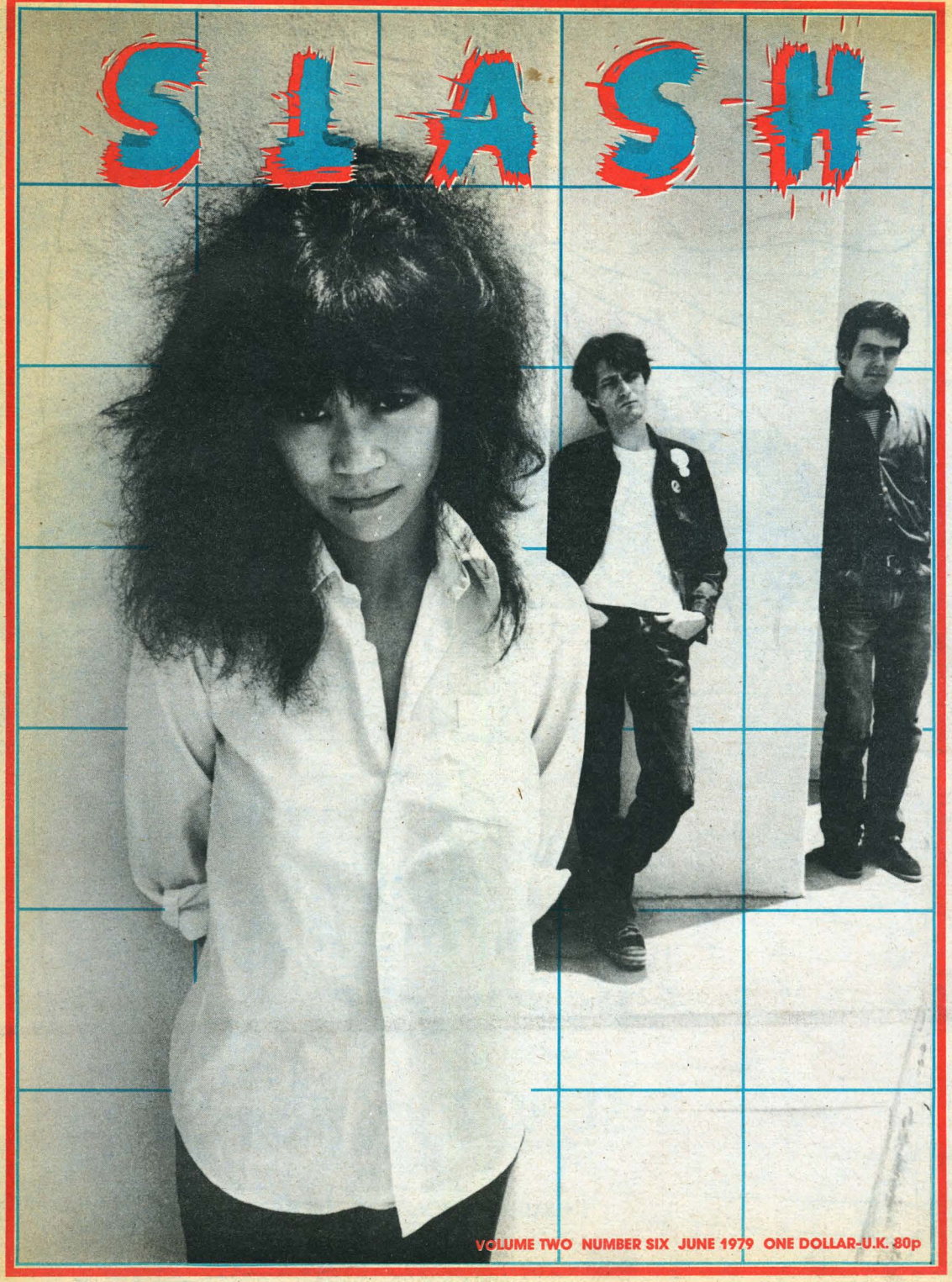
DEAR SAVAGE PENCIL: I SHOULD HAVE the tAPE tRANSCRIBED NEXT MONTH!!!

The Middle Class

Out Of Vogue

Debut 15 On Joke Records
Produced By Billy S. Star

SLASH



VOLUME TWO NUMBER SIX JUNE 1979 ONE DOLLAR-U.K. 80p

YOU MADE YOUR BED NOW LIE IN IT.

TOOTH

AND

NAIL

U.X.A.
MIDDLE CLASS
NEGATIVE TREND
FLESH EATERS
CONTROLLERS
GERMS (GI)

COMING SOON ON UPSETTER RECORDS

THE READERS' CHART

Hey, droogies, not bad at all. You numbskulls woke up after all. And surprise, it is not that predictable. We won't go so far as saying you guys got some kind of taste. But especially stunning were the numerous votes for that reggae stuff, which fared very well (and sometimes above) in the race. There were enough entries to extend the chart to ten choices in both categories, meaning that even the number 10 singles or albums have been picked by quite an impressive number of people. After that it dwindles to a few votes here and there for 20 or so odd choices so we'll keep it to ten for a while. Make sure you send us your choice again for next issue's chart, we all might even learn something (like who to interview next). Now, ladies and gents and hermaphrodites of the jury, the winners ARE...

TOP TEN SINGLES (OR EPs)

1 RASTAMAN LIVEUP (Marley & The Wailers)
2 SHE (The Misfits)
3 THE PRISONER (D.O.A.)
4 NEW STAR (Tapper Zukie)
5 STRANGE TOWN (The Jam)
6 DREADLOCKS..WEDLOCKS (Jah Wobble)
7 MR BASSIE (Augustus Pablo)
IS AND OUGHT (Scritti Politti)
(same amount of votes)
9 HIGHLY INFLAMMABLE (X Ray Spex)
#10 SURVIVE (The Bags)

(Coming close after were the Middle Class, the Sleepers EP, and "New Thing" by the Fall.)

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1 INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL (Stiff Little Fingers)
2 NATURALITY (The Gladiators)
3 ELECTRIFY ME (The Plugz)
4 GERM FREE ADOLESCENTS (X Ray Spex)
5 ALL MOD CONS (The Jam)
6 MOVEMENTS (Ras Michael & The Sons of Negus)
7 PUBLIC IMAGE (Public Image)
DREADLOCKS SATISFACTION (Trinity)
(same amount of votes)
9 PETER GABRIEL (Peter Gabriel)
ARISE (The Abyssinians)
GREAT ROCK N ROLL SWINDLE (The Sex Pistols)

P.S.: You guys won't even give us time to review some of the fuckin' things, will you? What are you, fanatics or something??!

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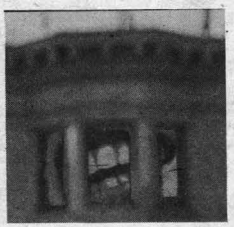

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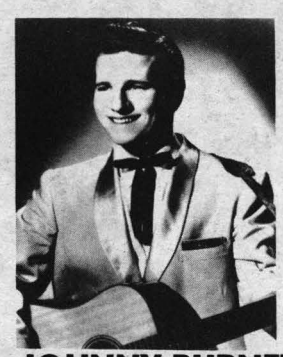

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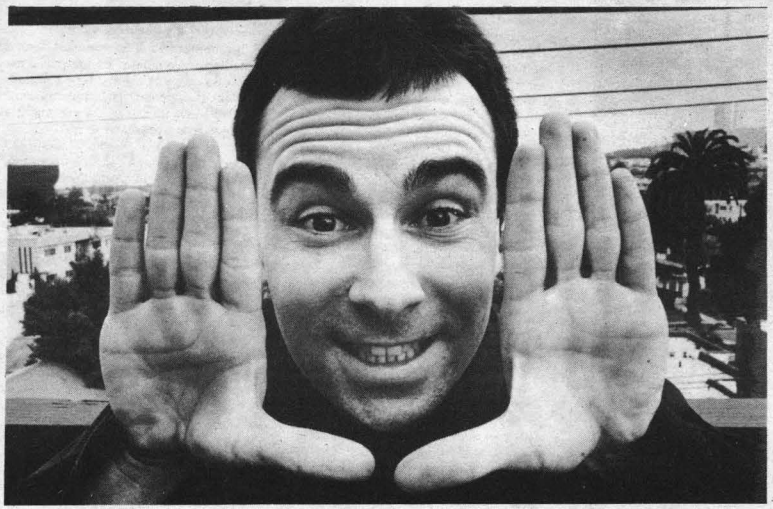
L O C A L

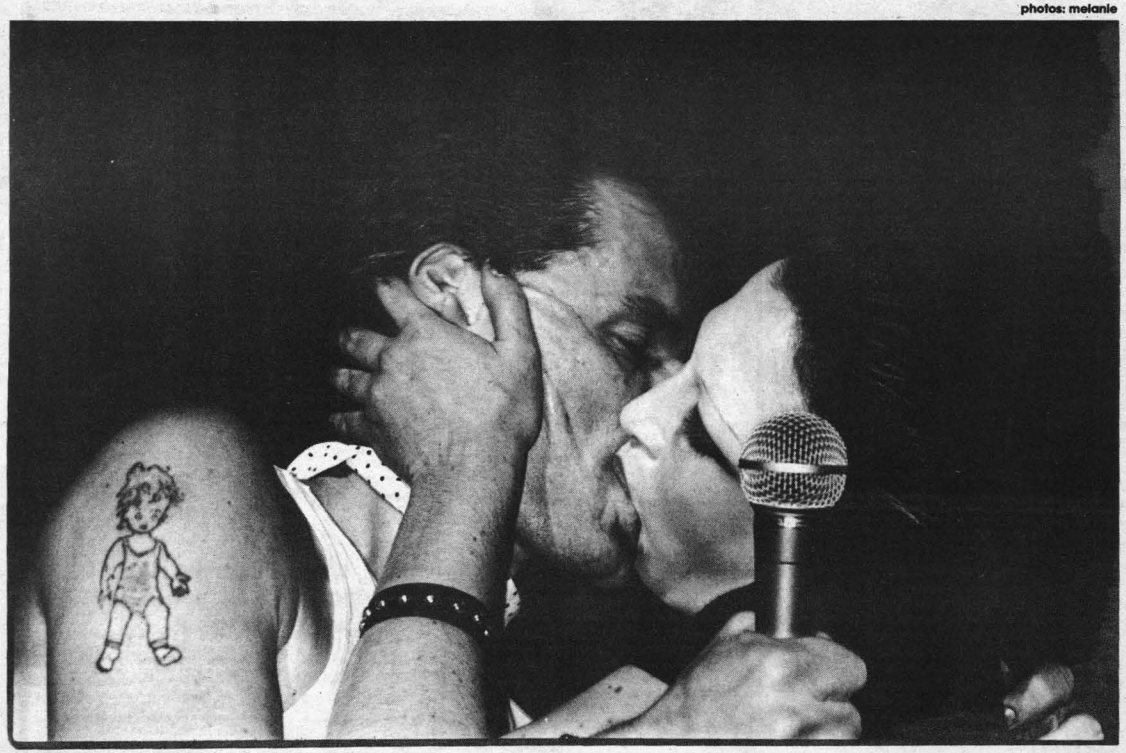


This is Nick Cash of 999. While in town recently, we interviewed him along with the rest of the band. The interview was real "zany," with assorted jokes and peculiar noises. This made it extremely difficult to transcribe, so we didn't. Check back next issue . . .

After a lengthy absence from live appearances, the WEIRDOS are preparing to return to performances at the end of May. The reason for the absence was their previously reported retirement to Earl Mankey's studio to cut enough material for an album and a six-song EP. The "Happy People" EP engineered and co-produced by Mankey is out soon. Presently the band, conconsisting still of the Brothers Denney and Cliff Roman, is auditioning for a permanent new rhythm section to replace the departed bassist Bruce Barf and drummer Nicky Beat.

Transvestite slut divine (star of John Water's movies) "performed" a while back at the ever so busy Vanguard gallery for a roomful of real suckers. The bloated sweaty wigged out bean bag actually did nothing but stage a lousy press conference (at 5 dollars a head) and answer flip-pantly (or so it thought) to the sometimes academic, sometimes frankly hostile questions the audience threw at her. The promised punk video show by Target did not materialize, and the evening would have been a total (and expansive) bore but it was salvaged at the last minute by LA's newest nouveau techno punkeroos Nervous Gender, who twisted dials, shrieked sang and generally behaved as a new band should: uncompromising and fascinating.

photos: melanie



Tomata & Crazy "I Wanna Hurl" Sheila at the Screamers Whisky show. A full review of this affair next issue.

S H I T

The Kipper Kids performance at Otis Art Institute. After covering each other with assorted canned goods, one observer noted, "this isn't art, it's dinner."

WALL OF VOODOO still amassing equipment and preparing to perform a series of live gigs next month on the return from Europe of young Stannard Q. Ridgeway currently on a combination business and promotional visit...

The Germs were banned from playing Gazarro's on the Strip (so what's new) but did play Hal Negro's lavish party at the Masque, along with the Satintones (so what's new) and the Go-Go's. They were superb. The audience wasn't bad either.

A scared-to-death Rodney Bing., thought his four-hour KROQ Sunday special was about to be canned since a newly appointed program director at the station trumpeted his arrival by announcing the elimination of the quasi-New Wave format development of recent months and the canning of all jocks even remotely involved with it. The new format was to be strictly the Boston-Foreigner brand of creech rock. They monitored his show, putting the shits up poor Rodney, then decided he should stay since the show only has the highest rating of anything on the station...
The quetion is ... why the fuck doesn't our favorite little New Wave jock go to another station where they'll treat him nice, or conversely, why doesn't some sharp station director pick up little Rodney and give him something better than the shit end of the stick?

LAST MINUTE NEWS: . . . Let's go to Chinatown again: a new club called the Hong Kong Cafe has opened its insclutable doors to punk acts. No, not nice "neweave" acts, but punk acts. Bite the dust, Mrs Wong! A Dils EP (on their own label) is being released sometime in June. It was produced by John Cale. The Dils are also planning to tour the East Coast this summer. The Screamers' 2 upcoming concerts in San Francisco (where they will be promoted by Bill Graham, according to their new publicist/co-manager Rory Johnston) may not go as smoothly as hoped for as hundreds of fans have apparently sworn to boycott said concerts because of the high prices of the tickets (six dollars and fifty cents, same as the Whisky but we're not too good at spelling that complicated word boycott down here are we??). Everyone involved stresses the fact that it breaks their hearts but principles come first. And finally, the first 4th of July extravaganza we've heard about so far: Levi & the Rockats, The Cramps, The Rockabilly Rebels and Chuck Berry all due to play that evening at the (eccchh!!) Santa Monica Civic.

BRENDAN MULLEN, the ever-charming, affable, self-described "pale-faced seedy Hollywood night club owner" definitely shedding a lot of the seediness these days. Now gets regular haircuts, combs his hair in the morning, goes "on the wagon" for alarmingly long periods at a time, has even attempted to regulate sleeping and eating habits but still persists with the disgusting sexual habits . . .

The latest on the Sewer is that the remodelling will begin as soon as the boy comes up with large amounts of green backs, hitherto absent from his massive Masque Swiss Bank Account . . .

"What was deemed physically impossible is now possible," a strangely sober Mullen told our correspondent. "It was thought by one team of so-called experts that the old rat trap couldn't be modified to provide a second exit.

"Another team of experts disagreed and came up with a plan which was accepted by the City. Now everything has been accepted and finalised by the City, even the parking nightmare has been resolved. All the contractors are ready to go . . .

"So now we're in the final run to legalize an outrageously illicit bootleg nightclub. There is no other obstacle preventing re-opening except hardcore dollars and cents. . .

"I am talking to several people to negotiate an investment deal, hoping that one of them will be acceptable. In that case, the Masque will re-open 60 days after the deal is closed. If not it will close up forever. It's as simple as that . . .

"The interesting sub conscious question is whether a complete shutdown is the natural course of events. Has it already served its function? Is it still relevant? Should I just fly out of LA and call it a fascinating two year experience?

"The last time I remotely suggested quitting out loud at a recent party a large group of people yelled at me 'fuck no!' a big punk grabbed me by the lapels and with eyes an inch from mine snarled, 'don't you FUCKING dare, what are you, chickenshit?

"Obviously, I would like to see the reopening for personal reasns. As far as the public goes, the result of a recent telephone survey from callers over a four day period showed 96 per cent wanting the dungeon to re-open at its original location.

"Of that 96 per cent, 85 per cent thought it was currently relevant now more than ever. An embarrassingly large percentage had the attitude..."fuck you, Brendan ... all we want is the Masque back. How dare they say such things, I thought, but that's the way it is ... at least I TRIED to get people to like me."

"A further 80 percent thought it was a totally needed social amenity regardless of personalities or the relevancy-against nostalgia bit...

"So that's it ... somebody get me the dough and we're in ... $60,000 gets us in the door top top flight ... but $30,000 will get us by, but it would take the enamel from the Brendan teeth. In terms of a night club that's cheap..." And so it goes, and it goes...

NEW YOUTH NEWS -- it's been over 3½ months since the CLASH/ZEROS/NEGATIVE TREND benefit raised $3,640. Since then they've spent $15 on legal fees, $57 on publicity and $147 as "reimbursement of expenses" for things like rolls of tickets, rubber stamps, stationary, etc, leaving $3421 in the account. (Incidentally, 2 people must co-sign for account withdrawals, making it difficult for someone to run off with the cash).

NEW YOUTH is *still* looking for a combination concert hall/cheap rehearsal space/coffeehouse & hangout.... they're having a new BENEFIT June 1 at 330 Grove St with the PUNTS (formerly DAS GASSERS from Zurich), DON'TS, FILLMORE STRUTS (with Michael Waters ex-Negative Trend & Fred ex-Offs), the MUMMERS & THE POPPERS with Deborah & a TBA. Price $2.50. After this (hopefully) last benefit, they'll begin staging Sunday 4pm shows at 330 Grove, starting June 5 & 17, with bands yet to be booked. Anyone can attend the 6pm Tuesdays New Youth meetings at 676 Geary St #208 (phone 474-3925).

The GERONIMO PRATT BENEFIT May 12 was aided by New Youth who loaned $375 front money & helped publicize. Although there are thousands more prisoners unjustly incarcerated, G.Pratt's case is significant because of 1) the *extent* of the FBI conspiracy against him as a former Black Panther leader (they assembled 15,000 pages of files) and 2) he was put in the "hole" (a semi-sensory deprivation prison within the prison) for 8 years without *due process*. Pratt's case could establish precedents for due process as well as retrial which might mean the future freeing of many more cointelpro victims & others framed. You can write: Geronimo Pratt, B40319, San Quentin Prison, Tamal CA 94964. You can even visit if you write in advance -- Penelope, etc have already met him...The benefit with IBEX (local reggae-calypso band), DILS, AVENGERS & THE URGE netted at least $900 which will go to publicize his case internationally.

The MUTANTS EP, *Insect Lounge/New Dark Ages/We Need A New Drug*, should be available now....

The OFFS went to New York & did well despite DON VINIL's accident (see the writeup in INTERVIEW) and so did TUXEDO MOON who now include MIKE BELFER, guitarist/creator from the legendary SLEEPERS. Michael composed soundtrack music for DiEGO CORTEZ's film, GRUTZI ELVIS, while he stayed in New York, & almost started a band with some ex-NUNS....TUXEDO MOON minus STEVEN BROWN played the MABUHAY recently with PINK SECTION and NON MERCY who've added DON PHILIPPI on synthesizer; people were standing on tables & chairs on this standout night....

UXA played the Mabuhay with the BLONDIERS, who featured 17-year-old JENNIFER's uncensored (& amazing) stream-of-conscious interchanges with the audience --

X & ALLEYCATS played with the MUTANTS at 330 Grove on the first warm night this year, May 11 -- a rather spectacular good time organized by Paul Rat, who's also booked some good shows at the International Cafe in Berkeley (like D.O.A. -- one of the greatest -- & the AVENGERS last month). D.O.A. will be returning at the end of May -- SEE THEM!

The DILS US tour begins now -- we'll see if they uphold their "revolutionary" position of under-$4 cover charges & ONLY playing venues admitting minors. They just played the Old Waldorf ($6.50/no minors) to land a record deal...

And the DEAF CLUB was supposed to reopen May 19 (with minimal soundproofing) -- is it still open???

SLASH STAFF CHART

(The gentle tunes all the music brothers and magic shysters of the Enlightened Slash Brotherhood are swaying to.)

BO CLIFFORD

1) Don't Ring Me UP — Protex
2) Hearts in Exile — The Homosexuals
3) Money Changes Everything — The Brains
4) Lovely Crash — The Dazzlers

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH

1) Struggle — The Gladiators
2) East of the River Nile — Augustus Pablo
3) Cry Tough — Alton & The Flames
4) Boom Boom Time — Ray I

CHRIS D.

1) Tooth And Nails — Upsetter compilation LP
2) Horrowshow — The Scars
3) Our Love Passed Out On The Couch — X tape
4) Frightened — The Fall
5) 19 and Mad — The Leyton Buzzards

JUMBO

1) Be Bop A Lula — Gene Vincent
2) Dignity of Labour Part 3 & 4 — The Human League
3) Cycledelic LP — Johnny Moped
4) Chase — George Moroder
5) Live At Heathrow — File Under Pop

KICKBOY

1) Violence Grows — Fatal Microbes
2) Contort Yourself — James White & The Blacks
3) Digital (Tears in their eyes) — Joy Division
4) In Love — The Raincoats
5) Adulthood — Dix and John Denney
6) I know a girl — The Undertones

MARK WILLIAMS

1) Peasant / Slave — Chinas Comidas
2) The Wait — The Pretenders
3) Does Your Mother Know? — Abba
4) TAQN — The Eyes
5) ReBop / Attitudes — Marie Et Les Garcons

MELANIE

1) Civilized Reggae — Burning Spear
2) Damaged Goods — Gang of Four
3) Eeny Meeny Miney Mo — Bob & Lucille

PEA

1) Violence Grows — Fatal Microbes
2) Heat Wave — James White & The Blacks
3) The Closet — Teenage Jesus & the Jerks
4) Sly Wicked & Slick — Sly Dunbar LP

STEVE

1) Praises to the Most High — The Gladiators
2) Again A Loss — The Plugz
3) what Do I Get — Buzzcocks

V.

1) Tooth & Nails — The Upsetter Compilation LP
2) To Mom On Mother's Day — Monte Cazazza

Z

1) No Time — The Sleepers
2) Adultery — The Scars
3) 3E — Mars
4) Opposition Spokesman — The Red Crayola
5) Marthe And The Vandellas' Greatest Hits

ROCK-A-BILLY RAVE-UP!

BE BOPPIN' BOB TAYLOR

In recent Rockabilly uprisings Ray Campi and His Rockabilly Rebels have just returned from an extensive tour of the Pacific Northwest that included a broadcast on Canadian National Television while in British Columbia. The band should be departing for their third U.K. tour sometime between late September or early October, this time with a possible foray headlining primarily college dates in France, Holland, Germany and Scandinavia. Their previous English excursion drew a massive 2,500 boppin' stompers for "The First International Rock 'n Roll Weekend Hop". The three day event was filmed for the flick "Blue Suede Shoes" (described as a "Harder They Come" sort of movie done Rockabilly style) prominently featuring headliners Campi and His Rockabilly Rebels as well as various supporting Teddy Boy bands due for release this fall. Meanwhile, "The Rockabilly Rasputin", Johnny Legend, has been editing his X-rated "Teenage Cruisers", a Rockabilly laced porno production of a few years back featuring members of the band, to a more subtle R rating for probable redistribution. The group's other cross-Atlantic gigs drew admiring notables Glenn Matlock, Iggy Pop, and Joe Strummer for backstage salutations. Radar Records labelmate Nick Lowe has repeatedly expressed an avid interest in producing Campi and company, but is hard pressed for time working with Rockpile and Dave Edmunds to fulfill obligations for his own second solo LP. A possible Lowe produced EP may result in a few months. The long awaited Rollin' Rock/Radar album by Campi and His Rockabillys, "Wildcat Shakeout", has finally been released and a follow-up Campi greatest hits compilation, packaged by the British based Radar people is scheduled for June distribution. Stateside Rockin' Ronnie Weiser has comprised a separate Campi greatest hits disc of entirely different selections on his own independent, Van Nuys based Rollin' Rock Records. Entitled "Rockabilly Rebellion" it features the first color sleeve design for the label and should be available shortly at Tower Records or via mailorder at Rollin' Rock Records, 6918 Peach Ave., Van Nuys, CA, 91406. Incidentally, yet another Campi solo venture of all new material is in the makings. Rockin' Ronnie was a close friend of the late Gene Vincent a d during that association recorded four tracks by Vincent in his home studio that, for years, had sat dormant in Weiser's files till their recent resurrection as Ron's latest project slated for a September release. Included are Gene's interpretations of Sam Cooke's "Bring It On Home To Me", Little Richard's "Hey, Hey, Hey", "Rose Of Love", and the Buddy Knox hit "Party Doll". Featured on the remainder of the album are percussionist Papa Jim Durbin and Vincent's daughter Melody, who reportedly bears a vocal resemblance to her legendary dad. Locally Campi and His Rockabillys have expanded somewhat with the formation of an offshoot aggragation affording more frequent availability for live performances that won't conflict with Ray's other commitments. Campi and His Rockabilly Rebels return for a one-night stand at The Whisky May 29th. The band sans Ray and with the new addition of electric bassist Ken Charles make their debut at Madam Wongs the following evening billed as simply The Rebels. Not to be interpreted as completely severed bonds, the alternate situation is diplomatically amiable with The Rebels tentatively playing the Troubadour in early June and conquering the Palomino stage again with Ray slappin' bass later that month. More rockin' for boppin', be there or be square. In points north, the San Francisco based Solid Smoke Records, that brought you the "Tear It Up" LP of 17 wild Rockabilly classics by the Johnny Burnette Trio, are planning to release an album of Burnette demos circa '57 through '63 in the near future.

classified ads. $4.00

instructions

1. Take a piece of white paper and draw a rectangle 2 inches high and 6 inches long.
2. Draw, write, or type anything you want inside the rectangle (use *black* ink for good reproduction).
3. Put your ad in an envelope and mail it to us with the money.

That's it. Ads will reproduce smaller (1 inch by 3 inches). If we receive your ad too late for the next issue, it will appear in the one after. Make sure your ad is the right size (2 × 6) or it won't fit, we won't use it, and we'll cash your fuckin' check anyway.

REWARD!!! : 40's sunglasses lost at Hal Negro's party at the Masque. Call SLASH (654-2876) . (sorry girls, the original ad got lost. Call us.)

MEN in BLACK

HELP..... I am stranded in central North Caroling without a life jacket.... I need **LIVE TAPES!!!!** of the **SCREAMERS, GERMS, CRIME, X, PAGANS, DILS, CRAMPS, VILE TONES, BUZZCOCKS, Dead KENNEDYS, NEGATIVE TREND, PLUS ANY others. WANTED** I have **MONEY $$$** To: GARY INDIANA, R.T. 2 Box 148, MORRISVILLE, NC 27560

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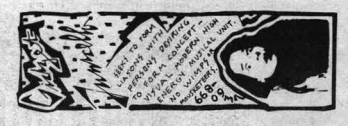

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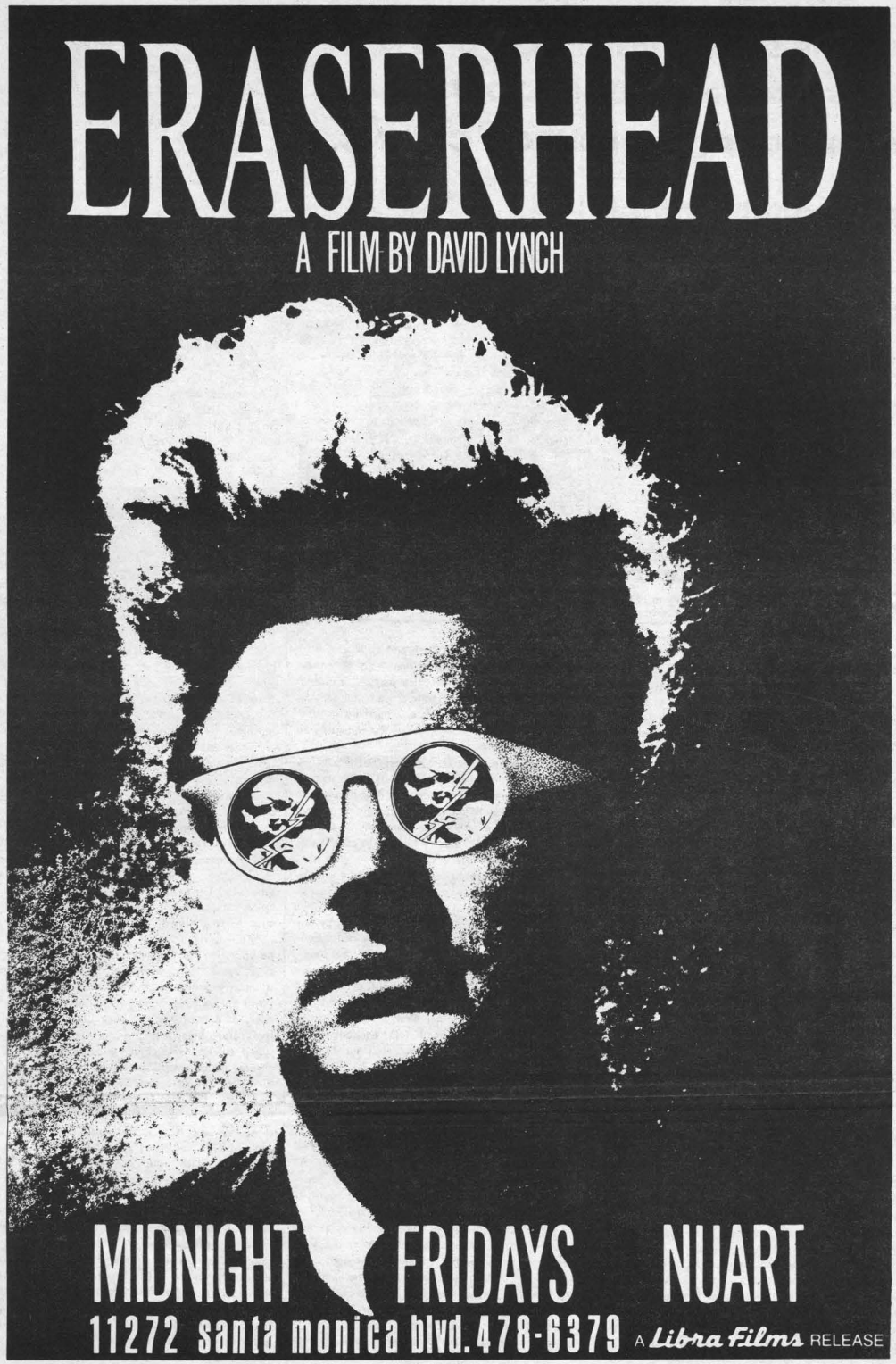
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A FILM BY DAVID LYNCH
MIDNIGHT FRIDAYS NUART
11272 santa monica blvd. 478-6379 A Libra Films RELEASE

this is the second installment of a regular feature RANDOM STOATS. this chapter is titled LONDON CALLING.

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it is splendidly written by MARK WILLIAMS, who has shown himself to be a more sensitive character than the caption editor ever realized . . .

a photo of the group AGAIN AGAIN, who probably paid large sums of money to mr. williams for this publicity

Twenty-five copies of *Slash* arrived in a tote bag held by an American with a French name and a copy of *Soldier of Fortune* – "The Journal of Professional Adventurers" (i.e. hired guns) under his arm. If that wasn't ominous enough, I find my finely crafted scrawl on page 14 referred to by its editor as the work of a "right wanker". Uncertain as to whether this time it was the typesetter or the art director who decided to pass editorial comment (roughly akin to undergoing a rather loose bowel movement), I plump for Samiof, self-proclaimed Anglo-phobe and a man who will soon die a slow and horrible death. Anyway, I'm left handed.

My exit from L.A. was unwisely executed on Friday the 13th aboard a Pan-Am jumbo . . . 'The World's Most Experienced Airline'. Hah. Four minutes out of LAX an engine blows up; fire, smoke, a sudden drop in altitude whilst John Wayne upfront frantically tries to regain thrust and a few surprised foreigners park their lunches. My companion, a British rock photographer named Chalkie Davies, confesses he was an air-frame fitter before he started snapping poseurs for a living, and opined that there was nothing to worry about. 23 hours and two 'planes later, we land at London and he turns white and throws up. "Delayed reaction", he mumbled through his vomit. The man from Boeing confirmed his unspoken fears; "That's only happened twice before in 6,000 million flying miles," he smarmed. (Only for *bona fide* rock stars do they actually crash (em).

Back in London the country is severely rudderless. A general election is planned for May 3rd and the various political parties are slandering each other with a vehemence unknown in recent years. Although tempted to vote for a local candidate fronted by the Worker's Revolution Party with an appealing black visage and the disarming name of Mr Banjo, I can't really get serious about a political system which carries out its parliamentary business in the atmosphere of a school debating society, and a very adolescent one at that.

However the political battle doing on every t.v. and radio station, newspaper and billboard is made vaguely interesting by huge adverts which have appeared in the music press urging the youth of the nation to vote Labour. These have been paid for by Rock Against Racism, a previously worthy organization which used concerts by populist rockers such as The Clash and Tom Robinson to spread an exclusively anti-racist manifesto. That they should be funded by a major political party – or indeed vice versa – contradicts the non-partisan image RAR proudly boasted of yore and puts new meaning into the word propoganda. The next British government will stay in power 'till 1984 . . .

And The Clash are also involved in a nasty little schtuck currently besmirching the good name of *Slash* and its fine upstanding editor-ette, Kickboy. A gutter-gossip column in the weekly *Melody Maker* recently recounted the lad's rough treatment at the hands of the Clash's goon squad, the gist of the story homing in on the callous behaviour of manageress Caroline Coon, who was, predictably, far from amused. She in fact rang up the editor, called the whole story "a pack of lies from beginning to end" and threatened heavyweight legal action.

Such irascibility doesn't become a lady who, some ten years ago when she was deeply entrenched in the London underground would've spluttered loud vocal indignation if the same treatment had been meted out to an alternative press person. In the event her lawyers forced a grovelling retraction out of *Melody Maker* and the following week rival rock rag *New Musical Express* printed a snide story implying that (a) Kickboy was a lying arsehold (faggot, commie, jew, etc.) and (b) Ms. Coon was the latter-day Virgin Mary.

(I should add that Melody Maker's wily typesetter wrought unwitting retribution on the undisciplined editorial braggarts of The Magazine Hippies Love by referring to it in one paragraph as *Slush*).

But on to happier things. Most refreshing new band I've seen in London for aeons were Again Again, which isn't surprising became they come from Portsmouth, some 120 miles away. They were formed by Jeff Pountain (rhythmn guitar) who is clearly not as young as he looks because he garnered the rest of the distinctly un-stylish Again Agains from amongst the ranks of students he was teaching at Portsmouth Art College and taught them to play from scratch. Jeff Pountain thus has much to answer for as they play chords and rhythmns of their/his own making which are virtually incomprehensivle to the untutored (Geddit? Nah? Oh sod off then).

Mid-period Beefheart (when he was real cranky), Pragvec and the Troggs in rehearsal are the nearest comparisons I can draw but when the p.a. system has been tuned to cope with Pountain and Mark Mason's guitars and Roger Payne's bass, they can put across some convincingly strident riffs composed entirely of dispirate elements. What's more they have a singer, Rob Hutchins, who appears to sing *deliberately* off-key the whole time and nervously crumples pieces of paper in his hands whilst so doing. Some stage act. Again Again are currently recording a single for Do It! Records and it will be shot in Kick's direction as soon as possible for his usual obscure interpretations.

Again Again were in fact appearing at a particularly spirited punk vanue, the Archway Tavern and were so worried that in supporting the archly aggressive, rabble rousing Ruts (recently signed to Virgin's Front Line label), they would get the shit wacked out of them by a blood-hungry audience disinterested in anything but raw meat. So they offered to waive their fee if the promoter spent the money on plastic beer mugs instead!

They needn't have worried, the audience were too busy getting pissed in readiness for the Ruts, who are nothing special musically but have a suede-head singer who arrives on stage with the abrupt warning; "Boy, are you lot going to suffer" and it's all top gear bravura from there on. Biblical remedies are about all that could stop the front half of the packed audience from banging each other mercilessly about in the name of the modern dance, which prompted the observation from my companion that the pogo has replaced the football terrace in providing a relief valve for urban tension. Smart, wasn't she?

After having so much accomplished feminine musicianship in L.A., it rewarded my flagging patriotic pride to discover a British all-girl band who could play kick-arse rock 'n roll with neither pretense nor muffed chords. Girls School are a tight four-piece fronted by Kim Mc Auliffe on rhythm guitar and lead larynx and a leonine Kelly Johnson who flies around a Fender fretboard with a venom a lot of her male peers must envy. They are the protegees of Motorhead's notorious avataar, Lemmy, who hauled the girls along on his band's recent UK tour (dubbed the Amphetemine Express by some critics), but I saw them in the unprepossessing (i.e. seedy) atmosphere of the Moonlight Club. In front of an audience that must've been 50% female, they cranked out a roster of material that swung engagingly between new wave and R 'n R of the Chuck Berry genre. When the p.a. system gave them a chance (why is it small vanue p.a.'s are always one step away from the dumper?), we heard magnificent hard-stomping stuff with harmonies, yet. They have a single out, 'Take It All The Way' on City Records which I suggest you buy if you get the chance.

What else? Oh yeah, Iggy Pop's doing a tour and so the Music Machine was full of gaunt-faced look-a-likes stripped to the waist and painted in sweat. He played hardly any old material, an exception being "I wanna be your dog" and instead concentrated on flogging his latest vynel "New Values" which takes some liking even if you're well disposed to Mr Osterberg.

(With my own bleary eyes I have seen the proofs for the cover of the forthcoming Nick Lowe album for which the World's Most Self-Effacing Rip-Off Artist has conspired to reproduce almost exactly the devilish monochrome good looks displayed by the effervescent Ig on his 'Lust For Life' enterprise. Lowe's elpee is called 'Live For Lust', of course.

But the weirdest shit of the month, or rather the fortnight I've been back in this septic isle, was the appearance of SVT, a band fronted by Jack Casady who played bass with groups called Hot Tuna and Jefferson Airplane in your grandad's day. The hippies who crawled out of the woodwork for SVT's London excursions were disappointed to find his lanky locks shorn in *de-rigeur* punk fashion and witness a hopeless mish-mash of new wave plagiarism.

I don't mind watching old men who can't grow old gracefully half as much as listening to those who're evidently so desperate to steal their younger bretheren's thunder that they can't see how stupid they're making themselves look and sound. Avoid at all costs if they have the gall to mount the boards in So. Cal.

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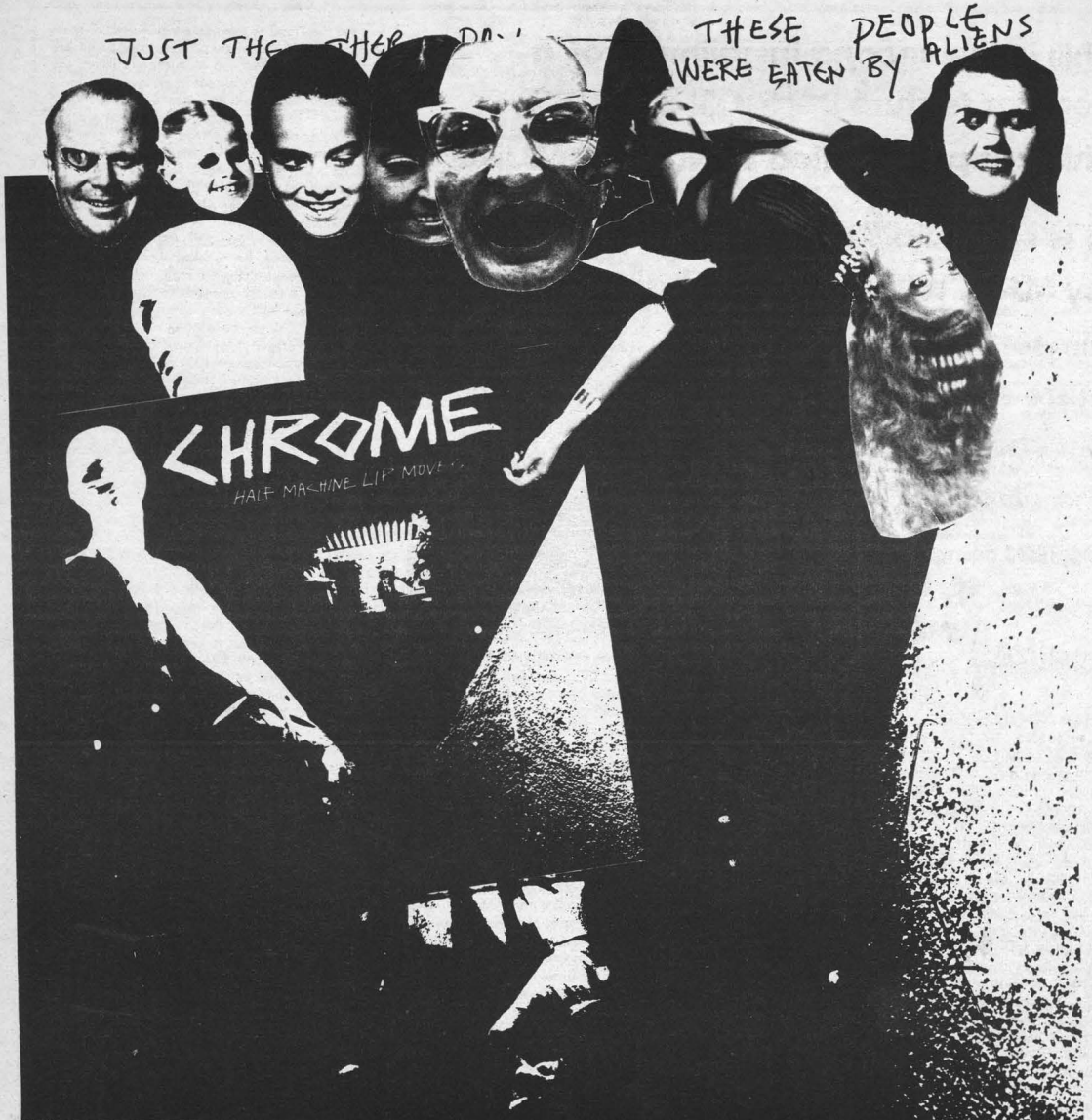


Chrome shine up

CHROME
Half Machine Lip Moves
(Siren import)

The title of Chrome's second album 'Alien Soundtracks' perfectly describes one level on which their music can be taken: the evocation of a fantasy world in which Deathlok the Demolisher gets trapped inside a Philip K Dick plot.

More importantly their music stands on its own account. No way is 'Half Machine Lip Moves' merely the aural adjunct to some SF buff's reading habits. I'm in no sense an addict of that genre, yet I find this the most engrossing record I've heard since 'The Modern Dance' — and, looking back over the year's releases that separate them, that's saying

I have reservations about this. Although the influence doesn't predominate, these tracks are the only ones on which Chrome fail to achieve a blurring of the roles of form and content — an achievement that is, I feel, what sets 'HMLM' apart from its predecessors and makes it a masterpiece.

Elsewhere things aren't as clearly determinist influences — much American rock, punk, Ubu, Hawkwind and the usual European crowd, I'd surmise — are confusingly combined to produce a jarring, jagged, glass-and-metal whole peculiar to Chrome alone. So much is woven together so brilliantly that detailed analysis of any individual track would be an almost impossibly complex and ultimately fruitless task.

mething.
This is the album that PIL ould have made, rather an that stillborn apology ey actually did. Like 'The odern Dance', 'HMLM' mes across initially as mewhat disjointed, an pression derived from the rupt and violent gmentation of many of the cks (very few cases of the track/one riff syndrome e) and from the copious effective use of concerting sound-collage shes and interjections, a ice not much in evidence heir two previous albums. r most of the album the ils are treated in one way nother, often to the point comprehensibility: the -inaudible whisper on 've Been Duplicated', the ured Ubuesque growl of nbie Warfare', the

The only other (rock) artists to achieve anything remotely comparable in this respect are Zappa, Can, Beefheart, Ubu, Residents, This Heat, Faust and Tim Buckley. Which, I reckon, is pretty good company to keep. And none of those are or were completely successful all of the time — either.

Now whether this process of essence-extraction, reapplication and redefinition of basic relations is the end of an era (summation) or the start of a new approach to making rock music (true invention) is far too complex a question to be considered here, but nonetheless one which fully deserves as much time and effort as you can spare. Enough examples have certainly surfaced in the past few years to

nformed dancing
ndertha! grunts of
eature Eternal', and so on.
arly all the instrumental
cks make use of
n-symbolic vocal detritus of
me form.
The only tracks on which
e vocals are anything like
ear — the opener 'TV As
yes', 'March Of The Chrome
olice' and 'Abstract Nympho'
— demonstrate that Chrome
ave successfully captured
oth the contemptuous sneer
nd adrenalin musical attack
f punk (even to the extent of
using the line "I want you to
be my dog" in the latter).

gest that rock
may be undergoing some
fundamental metamorphosis
or even rebirth — to ignore it
would surely be churlish and
reactionary.

Short of This Heat finally releasing an album or The Residents getting "Eskimo" out, "Half Machine Lip Moves" looks set to be the vinyl event of 1979. And short of some enterprising outfit like Beggar or Rough Trade organising a licensing deal, it'll probably remain on import only. But then at less than a quid more than British albums, it's still one hell of a bargain.

Andy Gill

LETTER section

Slash,

Everyone that ever read a Slash review of the Dils is fuckin' blind to write defeding them. What they say is no more stupid than the Clash ... if a band has to be seen 'with their audience' you might as well defend every pathetic performance given out of town. If a group can't get an unfamiliar audience excited, stay at home. You once wrote Slash would be the first to point out new bands becoming dull; why attack the Jam, Marley (after Rastaman Live Up?), Tosh (admittedly shit), Maytalls, etc and semi-defend Clash with lame excuses. Why not? DO what you fuckin' please. You hit the mark often enuf.

Good coverage of Elks massacre. If punks in England, Rasta's in Jamaica get beat up & killed when they threaten the bastards that run things, we can't expect different. All that keeps the US called free are liberal pretensions. They don't stand up against a fascist in a uniform beating you with a club. When enough of the now passive hordes of disco freaks wake up to what we already know, and the rest of the brainwashed millions getting fucked up the ass daily realize what's going on they'll be riots every day. Meantime, we'd better get used to defending ourselves. "Each one's pickaxe stick ready, and a big old buckey."

Whatever happened to Terry Chimes, who gave the Clash the angry sound they traded in for rock stardom? Also: what happened to Pablo Moses after Rev. Dream & what of that Rikki & Last Days group you raved about once?

Hey!

All I said was that I had seen the Clash under better conditions, and that they're still (but for how long?) more of an english "phenomenon" than just an other international rock band. I wasn't making up excuses for them, I was giving some background to my opinions. I'd do it for any band worth a second look.

And I don't have any inside info as to the whereabouts of Terry Chimes, Pablo Moses or Rikky & The Last Days On Earth. If they were all as good as they seemed to be, they'll pop up any day, don't you worry. Aren't there enough new faces to keep you satisfied??

Slash,

KICK

Slash,

Answer me question

What is "Situationism" (mentioned several times in your publication)? Print reply in your rag if you ain't too fuckin' E-Leet for us out here in urban decay.

DJ + Lil Wizard
V 13 / L.A.

Thought you'd never ask. Situationism was started by a bunch of european intellectuals (don't snigger—everybody got to come from somewhere) and malcontents (like that one better??) in the late fifties as the ONLY viable revolutionary alternative to stifling dogmatic "established" revolutionary movements (mainly marxism). Its aim was to CHANGE LIFE ITSELF, not the structures hiding it. In other words don't vote for the lesser of two evils, but tear down the fuckin' machinery that tells you such a choice is freedom. Sounds anarchistic, but the situationists despised organized anarchist groups, who as far as they were concerned were just an exotic fringe of the establishment. They REALLY meant to go to the roots of the matter, but what's more important (for us anyway) is that they meant to have a hell of a time in the process. They believed the ultimate gorl was to PLAY, to DESTROY whatever offended your built in sense of freedom, to OFFEND and to INSULT the forces of repression and death. They are responsible for most of the 68 french student revolt slogans, some of the loveliest ones still floating around today: ("What do you say to your teacher/cop/father/priest . . Die Bitch!) They disbanded (after having been made an outlaw organization) in 69 and nothing was heard from them since. Were they around, they would most certainly spit on punk and everything it represents. But we're here and they ain't, being probably meek and married and pussy-whipped. Still, they're good for inspiration and historical crutches. This is by no means an adequate explanation. Seek it out, if your heart craves for references.

KICK

political commentary:

MOODY PARK 3 BENEFIT

OK, we passed 1979's first quarter already. What did we do? We went through the Clash ritual/pilgrimage with a nod and a shrug . . . wallowed in the Ramparts Billy Club party for a week then fell asleep again . . . took up the post-Canterbury junk scene again for a few weeks, got sick and quit . . . replaced junk with acid dropping at nice old beer bar musicians' hangouts in West Los Angeles . . . observed the emergence of Doug Weston's New Wave Fish Market as the "guiding light" of the New Wave Movement . . . shunned nice early closing Chinatown restaurants for lower energy rock conducive to the chomping of chow mein . . . cursed the Strip rooms who may as well be in the business of selling cheeseburgers than presenting good rock and roll entertainment . . . noted the weekly give away newspapers come into being as a force in which every single shitband in the City is now cutely described as "melodic power rock with New Wave undertones" . . . heard about the signing to a major label of the first of the City's major wimp bands, the yawningly ordinary 20/20 . . . vanguard propagators of the new Madam Wang genre of "skiik rock" . . . marvelled at the excellence of the Plugz, X, Controllers etc . . . and noted with intrigue the definite official arrival of the Germs as a bizarre, strangely threatening subversive cult spreading far beyond their musical frame of reference . . . And, last, but NOT least . . . (finally getting to the point of this litany) witnessed a rather lame call to arms for a revolution in the streets plus the complete OVERTHROW OF THE AMERICAN SYSTEM . . .

Let's call it the New Decadents and Drunken Children Anarchists meet the Radically Red Proles over the issue of actual social revolution. The punks choose (naturally) decadence over actual revolution . . .

THE SCENE: BACE'S HALL, APRIL 1979

THE PURPOSE: A BENEFIT SUPPOSEDLY TO RAISE FUNDS TO FREE THE MOODY PARK THREE, ALLEGEDLY INSTIGATORS OF THE HOUSTON REBELLION (MORE ABOUT THAT LATER)

Following hot on the heels of the St. Paddy's Day Police Riot, a Communist organization called WORKERS FOR THE REVOLUTION (based loosely around a Marxist-Leninist-Mao outlook) invited the Plugz to lunch at Norm's Restaurant.

Committee organizers tole Barry and Charlie the money would help to free the Moody Park Three, three Chicanos serving 20 year sentences on felony riot charges for staging a protest rally in Moody Park, Houston, following a Houston High Court decision to fine six police officers one dollar each after they were convicted of murdering an innocent Chicano just for kicks . . .

Punk rock, they explained, is "rebellious music" intending to disrupt, to stir up unrest and protest against the Shitty System, to voice the protest of the youth of America. Police brutality is just an everyday slice of American life. They mustn't be allowed to get away with it, they said.

Nervously and reluctantly the Plugz agreed to perform at the benefit since the macabre story of a young 22-year-old Chicano, without any political persuasion or political party affiliation whatsoever, getting jumped by six cops outside a Houston bar, dragged away, beaten shitless and thrown in a river to see if this "goddamned wetback could swim" IS ABSOLUTELY FUCKED BEYOND BELIEF . . .

The organizing committee also got the hungry-for-a-gig-any-gig Zeros and the Middle Class (thinking they were to have the honor of playing on the same stage as the DaffoDILS who cancelled out as soon as they heard the gig was to be held in Hollywood, to scared to show their faces around town after their last tantrum when the game was up for the boys when they finally contradicted themselves one too many times).

Come the night of the benefit, the party members seemed more interested in promoting Communist ideas and riots than promoting the gig to raise money to send to Houston to actually spring the presumably innocent Moody Park Three . . .

Outside the hall the Reds handed out their printed propoganda and preached at young suburban punks who listened nervously to speeches on how fucked life is in America because of the system . . .

The street wise punks were bemused to hear that LIFE IS FUCKED . . .

The kids were confused and scared by the word COMMUNISM, not even remotely understanding it, but thinking of it as having something to do with the old spoilsport no-fun Dils, yelling at four dollar concert promoters and cancelling shows and pretending to be the Clash, or something . . .

Those who did have a vague idea of the meaning remained indifferent not wanting to get involved with creepy seedy-looking revolutionaries wantint to fuck up their ENTURR*TANE*MENT who might upset the way of life which supplies all the drink and drug money plus the (Slash reader survey) 40 dollar-a-month spent on punk rock records and the stereo at home on which to play them.

Inside, the hall was adorned with banners and posters suggesting that serious bodily harm should be inflicted on "pigs" and that riots should go on to the point of ACTUAL ARMED REVOLUTION WITH BLOOD ROLLING DOWN THE AMERICAN HIGHWAYS, THE AMERICAN BYE-WAYS AND ALL OVER THE AMERICAN STREETS OF 1980.

Every second word was "pig".

One more vociferous party organizer took the stage to make more rabble rousing speeches causing the room to vacate in less than a minute and a mass outburst of yawning broke out among the 150 or so people present (most other concert goers stayed away, turned off by the party's pedantic heavy-handed revolutionary talk and the rumour flying high that these people intended to try and instigate a riot so that the police would break heads again and the media would, of course, go to town again . . . this time on Communist punks).

At one point the "pigs" did in fact show up to be greeted with the paranoid baleful stares of the organizers . . .

The "pigs" found the organizers had no permit to hold a political rally. Uh-oh. Entirely unaware that these people were plotting to kill them and overthrow the American System on a Friday night, one of the nice piggies, the handsome on eiwht the moustache and the Clint Eastwood cheroot clenched inteeth told Fat Alberto Chris, the 200 pound Bulgarian owner of Bace's . . . "uh-uh . . I get it . . . it's just a buncha political kooks havin' their li'l party, right . . . ?? Look . . . we're gonna pass on the permit this time . . . we don' wanna break up the party but they better get their act together the next time, right?"

Those terrible pigs yawned, stretched, and sauntered out into the night, bored, bored, bored. Bored by punks, bored by Bace's, bored by Chris . . . Outside, the evening dragged on. Inside the evening dragged on. The Zeros, the Middle Class and the Plugz played their sets nervously and got it over with . . .

Finally the thing was over with . . . everybody was out and gone . . .

Touchingly, these people went to work cleaning the place up. They all stayed behind and everybody graciously helped everybody else. Slowly but surely they shuffled around like proletarian country peasants with soulful salt-of-the-earth looks on their faces.

Then I got a voice in my head saying . . . shit, what if these people and their ideology is right, which it is, with everybody working for everybody else instead of themselves, everybody getting paid equally, no elite . . . then the other right wing voice comes . . . nah . . . there's always somebody going to be able to run faster than somebody else, a runner doesn't want to walk just because everybody else is crawling . . ."

SICKBOY

Mailgram Service Center
Middletown, VA 22645

Dear Honest Abe,
Oh, how cheap you are, sitting in the $10 balcony seats. If you were ever to do a constructive review you'd need a $25 seat down front. Kiss my butt

Yours sincerely
Levi Dexter

My dearest Slash,
My anonymity for this letter is designed to protect the innocents involved in and around Ultravox, myself included.
I agree with Sickboy that the singer did not belong on stage. He didn't think he belonged there either, because the band had verbally handed him his walking papers in San Francisco . . . consequently, a bad attitude coupled with no ambition resulted in "passable" warblings. Needless to say they are auditioning for a replacement. Sickboy, in his obvious anti-progressive state of mind, found some of Ultravox's ART "fucking boring" . . . I found parts of Sickboy's review "fucking boring", just as we can find "fucking boring" things in anything. How strange such a dull band got the audience so aroused and ecstatic . . . Too bad you left, Sickboy. Ultravox rallied with a forceful finale. Perhaps next time you'll mature enough to save your drug money for ART instead. Who knows? You may end up with an objective music review rather than writing about yourself instead . . . an objective music review rather than writing about yourself instead . . . writing about yourself instead . . . Honest, Sickboy, I tried. Thanks to Slash for letting me air my grief.

"P"

You're welcome. Since Sickboy is out looking for a prescription doctor I'll answer for him. So what if the audience got ecstatic? We've never condoned the objective approach for any of our writing. That's how we saw it, that's how he wrote it. You saw it differently, many others also did. That's still a subjective point of view. And the band fired the singer. I bet both sides feel pretty subjectively about that. We're just all trying to tell it like we see it, not like it is. Please don't expect "objective music reviews" from us, you'll feel badly let down. But remember, YOUR point of view is more than welcome. Just remember. You're also writing about yourself. There is no ultimate truth. Thank god.

KICK

To ELVIS COSTELLO, CONCERNING EVENTS/ STATEMENTS ALREADY WIDELY REPORTED/ DISCUSSED

Your landscape shimmers

Your quatrains are as much shit-caked gold
So What

You owe more to Buddy Holly than to any droog
(keep it up Delbert, or whatever your name was, and he'll owe it back at you)
You'll suck Beauty's cock like the rest of us,
Max Factor not left standing
'look at all them purty melodies, Jimmy-John . . '

Strange times multiplied by power and no competition, so don't let it go to your gender or your fender

Yesterday I saw a swastika on the sidewalk on the way to a lovely day at the beach
Don't Care? Please don't hurt my feelings

One more thing Mssr. Press Exposure,
don't say anything you wouldn't say if you didn't have a bodyguard/

Hey!
Your entire attitude towards the english scene (Prag Vec, Throbbing Gristle, Cabaret Voltaire) seems healthy (reverence for past forms not interfering with interest in future ones). But Jesus Christ when you get back home! How the hell can you still see anything in the Germs? They can't play, haven't had a new idea in years, and in general represent a form as totally devoid of newness as the Eagles or Frank Sinatra. But it's not just the Germs. It's your stupid sheeplike reverence to forms of the past. You're quick to jump on any form that pre-dates 76, but after that it's like "well punk rock from 76 is as good as any . . . "
Nice 3 years rut!
Punk rock raped rock music (the bitch needed it) in 76 and the so-called new wave is the midwife — but what comes out of that steaming womb in the 80's will NOT have proper respect for daddy or mommy. And you stupid suckers will still be rolling on glass and snidely commenting on Foreigner — but Foreigner today is the Germs and even (real heresy) the Six Pistols tomorrow. Maybe you won't like the new music, maybe you'll be watching punk rock when you're 40, and that's ok by me. Just don't come around spiked and leathered talking about how "moderate" you are — you might get jolted by similicurve electrowaves and lose your orientation, your group ID, your fucking continuation of FADISM (only 2 letters off the mark). Anyway, here is hoping you guys can make it out of the 70's — but I doubt you will.

V 2 N 13/ QNAU

First, lay off the Germs, you fab futuristic snob. You strike me as one of those closet cases that are feverishly awaiting the 80's music for the simple reason that by then it might have become streamlined and stylised enough for any wimp to embrace it safely. I am as eager as you to see new forms emerge from these chaotic days, but in the meantime I am going to wallow in whatever excitement the real roots pioneers are bringing to the streets, not sit home biting my fingernails listening to my esoteric singles and hope this uncouth primitive disgrace stops before I'm too old to PARTICIPATE in anything. You only wish you were part of the spiked and leathered crowd, pal. They're doing NOW what you're hoping to do in a distant future. Ever thought YOU might get to be 40 and still be wondering whether what the fad-oriented crowd is listening to is "new" enough? Yea, we'll like the new music all right. But when you finally decide it's up to your standards and show up one night, we might just ask you what dusty hole you just crawled out from. See you then, chickeh!

KICK

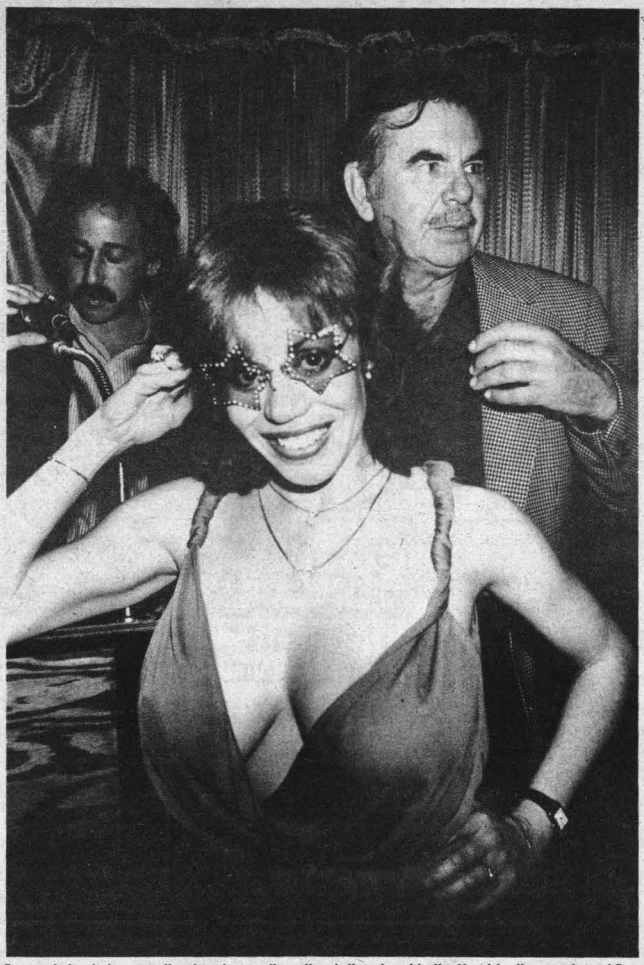


photo: melanie

Forever trying to increase the size of our culture, the staff ventured to the Nuart for the premiere of Russ Meyer's "Beyond the Valley of the Super Vixens." After the film, Russ (above right) took part in a Q&A session with the audience. On Mr. Meyer's right is "his latest discovery," who figures predominantly in the film. Although we've forgotten her name, we'll never forget her face. For more details, visit the mens room . . .

photo: zaloga

subject: robin crutchfield

previously with DNA, now with Dark Day

interviewer: dennis duck

date: february 1979

1. I'm interested in finding out what past experiences in your life seem significant to you now. A brief autobiography would be nice.

1. I was born in Dayton, Ohio. I grew up in Pennsylvania. I migrated to New York. I was a painter. I turned to sculpture. It turned into performance art. I adopted music.

2. How did you become involved in working with sound?

2. The tools became readily available, a friend had abandoned a Univox electric piano, and following in the footsteps of a push-button culture, I found it easy to do what we do easily – push buttons. Actually it was a continuation of my sculptural exploration.

3. Would you discuss some of your observations and ideas regarding the new york art scene in general. What sort of changes, if any have impressed you?

3. In the spring of 1977 the bottom dropped out of the New York art scene, the most viable galleries had closed. Performance art had run itself into the ground, too many banal no-talents were trying to prove they were as interesting as the next guy. Everybody with any sense abandoned the art scene, some diving headlong into music, this, as punk was on the rise, planted the seeds of No Wave.

4. How did you approach your work with DNA?

4. My original goal was to put together a band of non-musicians and do live performances within a month. We did. Then the direction changed. We had conflicts with the band about direction. I wanted to build off of what little we knew. Perfecting the simplest musical conventions, use what you know, even if you only know one note, but Arto, the guitar player, had a very different approach to playing which I never fully understood, which seemed to be more linked in playing what you don't know. We managed miraculously to work together for over a year despite our differences and somehow synthesizing our differences, then we decided that if I left both our approaches would have twice the chance to become stronger, hence Dark Day.

5. Tell us something about your new band Dark Day.

5. Dark Day isn't so much a band as a project. One of the things DNA was founded on was the musical relationship between three people, any three people, it wasn't the people that mattered, it was the relationship between them, the combination, the way they worked together. Dark Day is a catch-all label for whomever I choose to work with from here on out. On the single Nina Canal, ex-Gynecologist, plays guitar, and Nancy Arlen, drummer from the now defunct Mars plays drums. On the next effort the lineup will be different.

6. How did No New York develop?

6. To the best of my knowledge, Nina Canal was friends with some people that Brian Eno knew and was also friendly with. When Brian came to New York he needed an assistant. Nina who was friends with Adele Bertei (then keyboards for the Contortions) knew she needed work and suggested her to Brian. There was at that time a scheduled line-up of new bands at Artists' Space (one of the remaining interesting art galleries). The bands played for a week in the spring of '78 starting with the Communists, Terminal, the Gynecologists, Theoretical Girls, Daily Life, Tone Death, and the week wound up with the Contortions, DNA, Mars, and Teenage Jesus and the Jerks. Brian, whether through Nina or Adele or someone elses' suggestion came and listened to most of the bands. I guess that's the week he made the decision and talked to Island Records about such a project. Island agreed but when they heard the master tapes and discovered what they'd gotten involved in, decided to hush the project by putting it out on the lesser distributed Antilles label.

7. All the music sounds as if it were recorded live (no overdubs, etc.)

7. Brian thought the best way to work with us was to record us as close as possible to the live situations we were all accustomed to performing in, hence the "live in the studio" sound.

8. Describe your feeling about working with Brian Eno.

8. Brian Eno is a terrific person. He's very intelligent and very sympathetic to an artists' needs. He may have been too lenient considering his mediating the wishes of sixteen different people. I can't think of anyone better to have given these bands a start. Some of the bands have been badmouthing him in recent articles and interviews which I don't understand at all. If it weren't for him, probably none of the bands would have been recorded, for at least another five years after "the moment" was dead and gone. Record companies wereNt and still aren't exactly pounding our doors down to sign us up. I think this was one of Brian's main objectives in recording us – to capture the early stages of a band's development, the ripening of the fruits, so to speak. Even so, he may have waited too long.

9. What do you feel are some important concepts being explored in music right now? What would you like to see happening in the future?

9. I'd like to sidestep that, and give some credit where credit's due to two people. The first one is Lydia Lunch, obnoxious bitch that she is, she's the genius, or anti-genius of No Wave. She was my inspiration from the start. She is the mother of No Wave. She coined the phrase No Wave, had the first No Wave band in New York, paved the way for the rest. The fact that she hasn't given a decent performance in months, in no way denies the indelible mark she's made on the history of rock music, particularly at a time when it was needed, at the height of punk and three chord rock. The second person I want to credit is Charles Ball of Lust/Unlust music who's recording these people in a historical documentation preceding the 1980s with the likes of Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, DNA, Mars, Beirut Slump, Dark Day (new singles are on their way from Teenage Jesus, Beirut Slump, Dark Day, and very possibly Mars.)

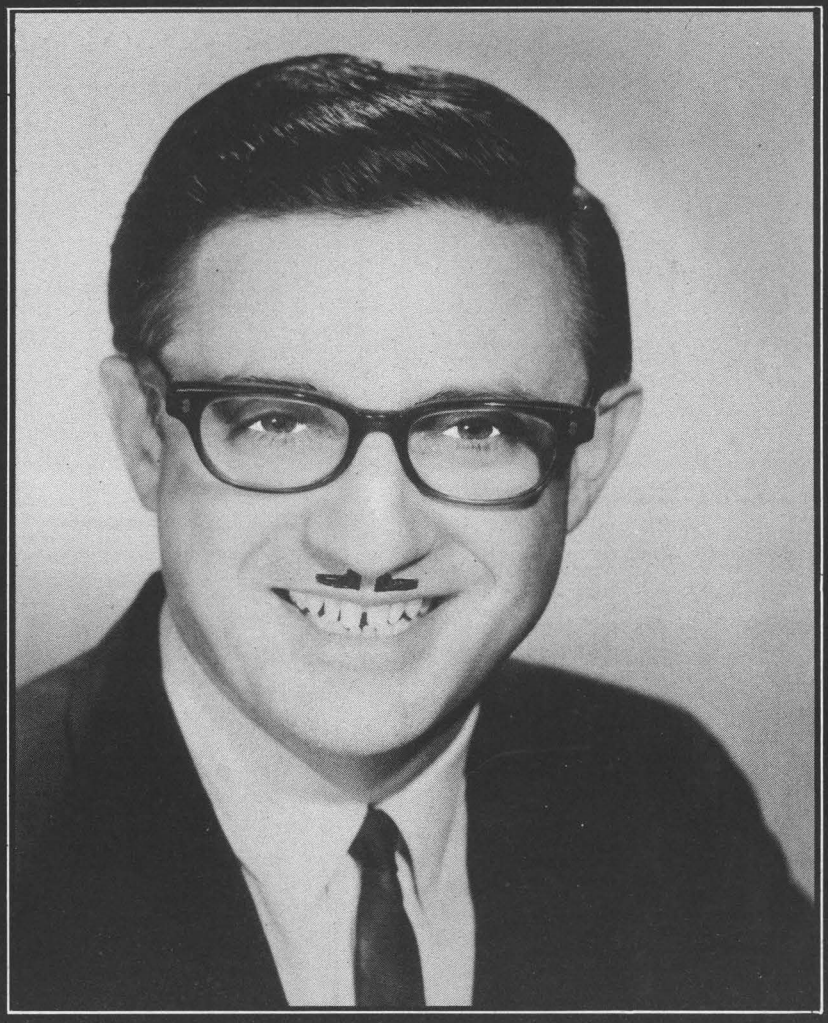
10. Would you talk briefly about other artists, musicians, performers, etc. which you find particularly interesting?

10. Beirut Slump shows a lot of promise. For the most part though, the New York scene is beginning to blossom into the staleness that I left behind in the art scene. There are too many masturbatory Art-Rock bands out there now and they're not giving enough. I don't know what's next but I'm beginning to wonder if there is "No Future."

slash page 12

or apoy nede

The Middle Class



Out Of Vogue

Debut 45 On Joke Records
Produced By Billy S.Star

ULTRASONIC SECURITY

THE UNITS are the first San Francisco band to perform using No Guitars...Their rhythms are very strong, insistently grounded in aggressive rock'n'roll as a base for a whole range of sonic textures that synthesizers can provide. Finally, New Sounds -- live and loud! Their sets are fast and short and full of visual information -- usually 2 films are simultaneously projected on twin screens to the sides of the stage.

The films are satirical industrial-training/home movie/porno/etc collages usually counterpointing the song lyrics. Most were recently edited by TEX NOLOGY but also incorporate home movie footage of fellow synthesist TIM MENACE and drummer RICHIE TWISTED. They recently began alternating slides of images from the movies to further amplify image cut-up -- a primary concern in breakdown & restructuring of used perceptions....

A warning -- their set goes by very fast....

S&D: Why did you choose the name: "UNITS"?
UNITS: We thought the name was very symptomatic and symbolic of our times -- we've been brought up to think in a very One-Directional and *Unitized* way in comparison to other cultures. The *way* we perceive *and create* our environment is largely through the structure of the language we use -- and our language is very One-Directional and Unit-like. It goes: *subject - verb - object. Period.* And our concept of life is much the same: *birth (of subject) - life - death.* It gives one the feeling of being an Immobile Unit that suddenly appears from nothingness, is somehow carried through life, and then stops and disappears back into nothingness! So I think the *structure of our language/perception* really creates the feeling that everything and everybody is boxed off and separate from everything else.

In comparison, a Japanese sentence might go, "The snow falling is" -- instead of "The Snow is falling" -- you get a feeling of things/people existing without the constant threat of finality and separation. You get more of a feeling of Personal Mobility....

Our environment in America is very much a reflection or mirror image of the *Unit Way* in which we talk/think/perceive. City architecture, food and gas station chains, the way we are sorted out and graded in school and afterwards are *material extensions* of the way the structure of our *language* has geared our perception....

I'd just like to see more of a balance -- put the *unit* back in *unity* with everything/everybody else. The sciences now have pretty much done away with the concept of units -- the distinction, say, between matter and energy is virtually non-existent.

This quote sort of applies to what our band is trying to do: *FULL OF LIFE MEANS FULL OF COLOUR. GREY IS THE COLOUR OF DEATH -- AND OF OUR CIVILIZATION, A CIVILIZATION BEARING THE MARKS OF DEATH, A DYING CIVILIZATION. I HAVE NO INTENTION OF DYING WITH IT, AND THAT'S WHY I BECAME A PAINTER. (Hundertwasser)*

S&D: Did you ever try painting?
UNITS: I've just done watercolors, but I became more interested in making films. The UNIT TRAINING FILMS are a sort of revenge & parody on institutionalized teaching, on *forced perception, faulty education exposed.* In a way they're my idea of what the breakdown of the "computer" mind would be like....

S&D: What film footage did you use?
UNITS: Educational, technological, pornographic, family-home movies -- scenes taken out of context and redirected into sections like FRIENDSHIP THROUGH TECHNOLOGY, USES FOR THE HANDS (that went over well at the Deaf Club!) etc. I like to take supposedly *serious* footage like Mel Bay & his charts showing you the "correct way" to sit & hold the guitar next to corny stuff like old home movies of your brother wobbling his knees while playing a cheesy Japanese guitar -- aping Elvis. Or Pete Townshend doing his leaps, only -- due to editing -- never coming down! I also animate similar photos from magazines and books, like yearbook faces, women applying eye makeup, hands handling different objects, etc. These go well with factory assembly line films...as do the home movies of family line-ups at Christmas and birthday parties....

S&D: Did you have to spend a lot of money acquiring your film footage?
UNITS: No -- it's almost free if you have time to do a lot of scrounging. Like, I was walking around North Beach recently on a Sunday morning, the place was deserted, and I found some porno film just lying in the gutter. A lot of tourists buy that stuff on weekend nights & I assume someone just dropped it.

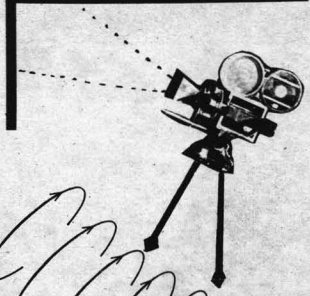
If you're willing to sort through garbage bins there's a lot of good slides & film -- but mostly bad, of course. In the Film Lab District around Howard between 2nd & 5th streets, on garbage nights they set it out on the sidewalks. I'm sure film labs & ad agencies, etc, do the same in other areas. I've also seen films in Salvation Army/Goodwill types of places. One good source is your parents' home movies! I've rephotographed those....

S&D: How do you copy other films?
UNITS: For rephotographing film I set up my projector on a table and my camera on a tripod about 12 inches away from the screen (smooth white paper works well & is cheap). I open the lens up all the way, F1.8 or F.2, & run them both at about the same speed. For TV, I shoot the screen at about 16 fps to avoid crossbars.

S&D How'd you get started making movies?
UNITS: I've been making movies for about 10 years but got started on the "Training Films" when a school threw out a bunch of old films and a friend gave some to me. The films I'd been making up to that point had scripts & actors.& it was a lot of fun just to Edit. I felt I had the film by the balls for a change instead of vice versa....

All my equipment is used and was pretty cheap. Like, I got a hot Bolex for $30 seven or eight years ago.... Our rear screens are shower curtains from Pay&Save that cost $3 apiece. Bell & Howell & Kodak stuff seems to be OK used and cheap....

I've scoured a lot of bookstores for photographs to animate. The best science & anatomy pictures come from medical or biology textbooks from the 50's. They spent a lot more money on the printing process & the paper itself in those days....



SEARCH & DESTROY SUPPLEMENTO

PHOTO: SUE BRISK

WARM MOVING BODIES

Out of six million sperm cells, I came in first
And won a warm moving body, a warm moving body
We Are The Ones, the ones that got the bodies,
The warm moving bodies...

Skyscraper cells, full of water,
A portion of matter, structure & substance
Scientifically different than the monkey...

Look sharp, feel sharp, be sharp, see sharp
Head to foot & cellar to attic....
We are the ones, the ones that got the bodies

Versatile hands & a well-developed larynx
A nose that blows & a tongue that licks....
4

"All our equipment was slowly acquired in the American way -- the installment plan...."
7

"People make vague comparisons of us to other synthesizer groups like KRAFTWERK, TANGERINE DREAM, etc., but we don't really see the connection -- just because we use synthesizers?! We're definitely a high energy rock band in comparison...."
3

"I wanna take your red out dancing, I just wanna take your red out
I promise not to take her to the saxophone cemetery...
I'll even wear a wig, I'll sit on the third-degree sofa...
I'll try to take the questions out of my eyes....
I just want to take your red out dancing!
Don't make me spill your blood all over this lousy carpet!"
5

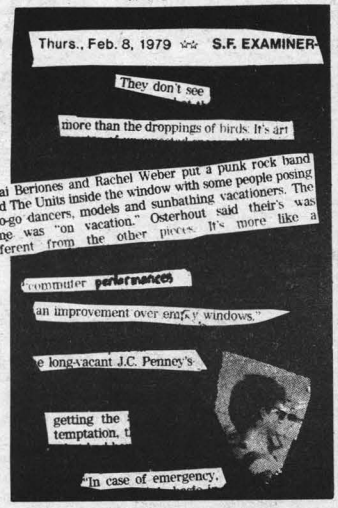
"like the blood in my veins
I drive around the same old lanes
With windows up at a hundred & ten
now no more time, no more space
just energy..until I stop some place
I WANNA BE A BLUR, I WANNA BE GO...."
19

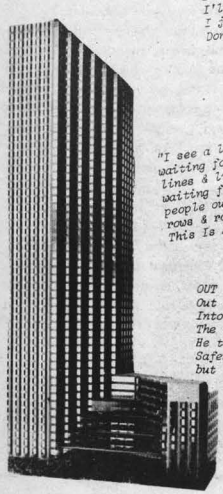
"I see a lot of people lined up in formation
waiting for lively moments..
lines & lines & lines & lines & lines of people...
waiting for a victim
people out there lying, just waiting to be discovered...
rows & rows of graves thinking they'll be uncovered
This Is A Generation Of Cannibals...."
2

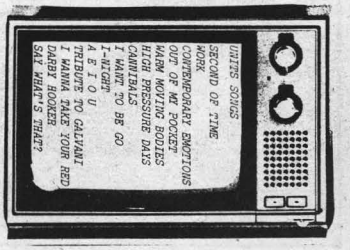
"Some people think we must be rich kids or art students because we play synthesizers and show movies. But in fact -- I'm a tile setter, Richie works in a garage, and Tim does a street act...."
3

OUT OF MY POCKET
Out of my pocket, where does my money go...
Into the pocket of the man with all the dough
The rich man, he never helps the poor
He takes all we have & still wants more...
Safeway shoppers think they're savin' cents
but they don't know where their dollars went...
2+3

"It feels so good to be alive
to feel the push of our times
It goes so fast I could lose my mind!
Con-temporary Emotions,
They grab my soul & take me away..."
1







FICTION ROMANCE

Banana Skin

©Paul Winstanley 1972

Think I'll run down and see if Donna's parents have arrived. My legs are good: I can get to the lounge from here in under ten minutes. Corridor, stairs, corridor.

Donna likes me. I like Donna's parents. They hate me. It's my legs, these very legs. Donna has none. I have two, well articulated, a working ginglymus to each, though one is all thigh and hardly any shin, the other vice versa and some six inches shorter. It's unfortunate that my foot is on the latter and so well formed, as it makes a truly cosmetic job so much more of a headache for the workshop people. They're apologetic about the surgical boot I still have to put up with, and assure me they're working on something nicer. I look wistful and grateful with my very large brown eyes (everyone here has eyes at least), and they feel awful. Still.

Donna's parents don't knowingly hate me. They'd be inexpressibly shocked if anyone put forward – if there were anyone to put forward – such a despicable notion. They say, like all the others, that the community is the most wonderful houseful of beautiful kids that anyone could wish to see. (Some of us are in our thirties, but for the parents time stopped soon after we were born. No thalidomide parvenus we. It never took a laboratory to make the likes of us.)

No, they hate me because deep deep down they wish there was more to Donna, and to me there is more. I'm one of the more complete ones. My own dear parents, now, look at Donna, with her lovely sweet face and soft almost albino hair and no limbs at all, just a vestigial thumb and finger to her left floating ribs, out of sight, and wish that I'd been that perfect. Donna is practically flawless, I'm flaws all over. Not that they knowingly, and so forth.

My extravagant physical endowments are not all that Donna's parents have against me . . . Here we go now. I'll put them through it again.

No attempt to disguise my fatigue: I like them to know I've hastened to greet them. And yes, they're here. Across the lounge I go even faster, bump swivel scrape, bump swivel scrape, bump swivel scrape. I like them so much I can smile without even trying – not like my own parents. 'Hullo Mr. and Mrs. Bonallack,' I effuse, and Donna, because my palate is cleft from guggle to zatch, repeats for them what I am saying. 'Hello Mungo,' they reply in unison.

I make small talk for awhile, Donna's accomplishments, how nice the springtime is, but they know by this stage of our acquaintance what's to come. Because Donna is so fond of me they can't say anything about it.

Not that I can imagine them finding words for it anyway. ('They're just the same as any other children, you know': that's the kind of thing our parents are good at finding words for.) If they knew the whole of it their words would probably come out like mine do. 'Nguh ly engy uhuh khiwgwm' I remark, out loud, just to see; Donna dutifully translates, 'Just like any other children,' and they are startled and profoundly moved.

What they don't know is that the reason Donna is so partial to me is that I grope her. If anyone else wants to do it, I'll willingly share: I'm not possessive. When I say I grope her what I mean is that I feel her up with the palp which grows from my right shoulder in lieu of each arm. I should think it has something to be said for it, actually. It's very sensitive, and smooth, and firm, and soft, and my muscular control of it is considerable. It sure makes her slobber. We spend hours at it; and it may be that our pleasure is the more excruciating for our inability to get into anything more advanced. One of the cooks used to screw one of the ward orderlies in the sluice room; Peter staggered in on them one day, and after that a whole jumble of us used to go to watch. They were shy at first and would beg us to go away, but

when they figured out that we'd keep it a secret in our own interests I think they liked us being there, and went at it with the pride of a demonstration team. Donna and I have tried and tried to work out a position in which we could make it like them, but it's hopeless. It's not so much her having no arms or legs, or even the fact that I can't get her out of her wheelchair, as my own anomalous assortment of half-limbs, aggravated by the condition of my spine. Which is not so much a spine at all as an osseous carapace of fused and flattened vertebrae, massive and inflexible — a subcutaneous tortoise shell. Watching Mac the cook's ministrations to Mrs. P, what I liked best, what I really loved, was that sinuous undulation of his arse, so mellifluous, so obediently at the beck of his buried prick; so incredibly graceful in such a poor specimen of a complete body. ('It's very wicked,' says my mother's voice, 'to say that they're not normal. All they are is different, that's all.) Anyway, what with all this and Donna sitting there with her legholeless knickers, her frail weight pressing — I can imagine — her gentle pink anemone into a stifled kiss against the canvas chair seat, my malice's intention is now fully achieved. Donna's ma keeps her eyes on my face (the poor soul) and talks away nineteen to the dozen as if she could somehow allay it by not pausing for breath; her husband lets his eyes slowly droop to it, each time as if he was just happening to notice inadvertantly, and flicks his glance away the moment it makes contact.

It's not much, my bit of gristle, not half the size of Mac's: but curiously wrought, quite evilly shaped, I like to think, pointed and as curved as a meat banana, so that it makes a peaked little bell tent in my grey worsted customized trousers.

A couple of legs, an arm or so — these can be spared, or sprout wiggling from our trunks like fishes' fins, and their protestations of our normalcy quack on undaunted. But my erections, Donna's creaming randiness (if they but knew!) Oh sure, Matron said in her report (last michealmas, when most of us had been beating our meat or each other's for years and years, each in his, or her, quite inimitable manner): 'Deep boy/girl friendships would be developing about this time amongst other teenagers, and we are happy to see not a few such relationships budding amongst our children. However "different" they might seem to outsiders, there is no reason why, as they enter maturity, they should be bilked of the kind of love any other grown man or woman has the right to hope for. Who knows — perhaps we may even hear wedding bells! Why not?' Dear Matron, most likely she'll get her wish, she usually does, there are plenty here who'll play her game, but it won't be for little Mungo that the bell tolls. Up the aisle they'll trundle on the technology of monsterdom, and there'll always be a matron or a mother to redo the flower arrangements, till they make it to Darby and Joan, if that's their rotten luck. But who would lift Donna onto this urgent prong of mine, or plug the others together, two and two, like doing bent nail puzzles? That's not in the picture.

Why, Mungo, how despondent you are, how ungrateful even. Every day brings you a step, or something of the sort, towards a full complement of limbs, and all you can think about is interfering with poor little Donna, who hasn't even got anything to fix a limb onto! How can you expect to understand the mystery of sexual love when you haven't even got both legs the same length yet? You know that funny little dayglo slogan Dave the chaplain has on his desk — 'The impossible done at once; miracles take time.' Many a true word, you know.

Think about eating with a knife and fork, just like daddy does, eh?

Sorry. Lady Shrubshaw was so delighted when I began to get the hang of my latest arm. I grappled a knife off the table for her and scythed it slaughterously to and fro above the empty plate, red plastic for practice only. 'Oh bravo, Mungo, bravo!' she thrilled, and clapped her hands, little padded yellow palms, pat pat, the nail of each finger coral lacquered. Encouraged ('They adore to be praised'), I sliced with a will at the plate. A steak, a lamb chop, bone and all, would have been no match for my ferocity. Yarrgh! Of course, off went the plate, scuttering across the floor, and Lady Shrubshaw after it on hands and knees among the table legs. The obvious wheeze hit me at once, and I could barely school myself a few swipes in good faith before flicking the plastic disc away again, and again, and so on, you get it, Lady S fielding indefatigably, smiling, first panting and then positively croaking but game as anything, misreading the urgent eagerness on my face. With that elastic, and the bristly hair escaping either side of the gusset, and the pigmented sponginess just discernible through the nylon there, and the spreading hideous seersucker flesh — I'd rather have Mary's and she's incontinent. But by dint of fidgeting and bouncing with excitement in my highchair I managed to get myself in contact with the table edge and eventually I could give Lady Shrubshaw a rest and just rock with the impetus of my now apparently more dexterous strokes until I achieved a fairly comfortable and very copious come. Innocent as ever (and Christ, her olfactory nerves must be atrophied: the sweet smell of success was reeking through my trousers and into my nostrils better than all the incense that every wafted prayers for us to heaven), Lady Shrubshaw took my glazed eyes and inconcealable sigh to mean I though I'd done enough for today (which I had, or for an hour or so at least), and kissed my concave forehead and teetered off to congratulate herself to the rest of them.

That titled minge, remembered cold, has laid me low; and as well that it has, for Donna's mother is now making a suggestion which would not perhaps include me had not a precautionary glance, she couldn't help herself, shown her my lap politely subsided again.

We are going for a walk, and wouldn't Mungo like to come too? Yes he would. Donna's father crosses his legs, making his two equal knees a pagoda, and clears his throat before deferring: 'You push Donna, dear, and I'll push Mungo. That all right, Mungo?' All the better for your reluctance, daddy-o.

How serene these suburbs are, not like the black bricks and white tiles among which I grew, an immobile lump hatching a rancorous brain, till I was eight. Here there is an impregnable calm orderliness, trees lining the broad pavements, porches with coloured glass, sprinkled lawns, and poisonous laburnum, my favorite tree. There is sunshine, and a light breeze blows us the distant chiming of children's voices in a school playground. Donna's parents have been warned about that, and will take us the other way, by the church. And yet I don't mind seeing the children. We all had the same start in life: like me, they were not allowed to die in a kidney dish. The groomed women who pass us, wheeling shopping baskets or with dachschunds like earwigs on leads, are their dear mothers as my dear mother is mine. They smile at us as they pass, so naturally; they know we are there, and, far from objecting, some of them do good works on committees connected with us. Everything fits together. Donna's parents behind us, who have been extolling our sweet natures to each other, fall silent. Donna is singing. A happy moment. She sings in a small sweet afternoon voice, a chance song without words. Sunshine collects in her pale hair, and, singing, she turns her head, she can do that, and smiles at me.

The avid lust that usually barbs the corners of her smile is missing. Then I wonder if it's that I love her.

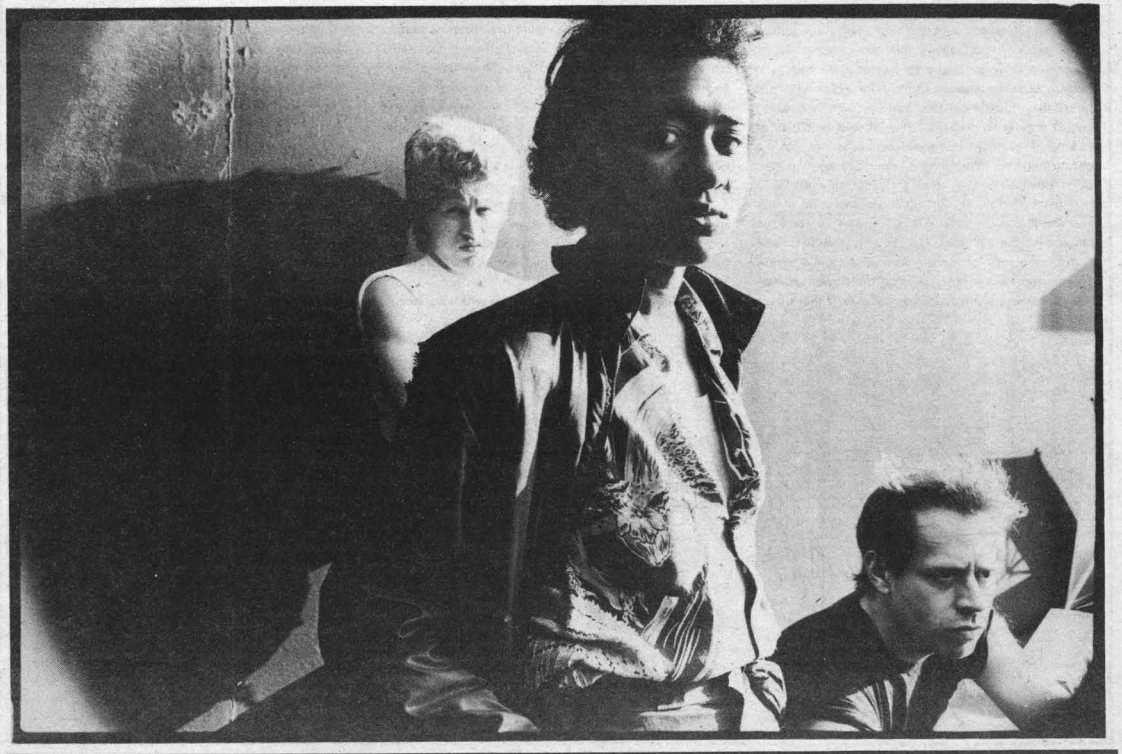
At the thought I close my eyes, I close my eyes and as my prick rears to a ferocious jut I long so hard, so hard, to slide at last, cleanly, supply, between the glistening labia of death.

It's very sensitive, and smooth, and firm, and soft, and my muscular control of it is considerable.

photos: ronn spencer

(A relaxed after dinner conversaion with Kid Spike, Johnny Stingray, Karla Mad Dog. Also more or less present were two on-duty Slasheroos, Nicole (Germs manager), Bruce (No Magazine), Mark (Slash's UK cultural attache), Johnny's kid sister from Michigan and her boyfriend, two black cats.....)

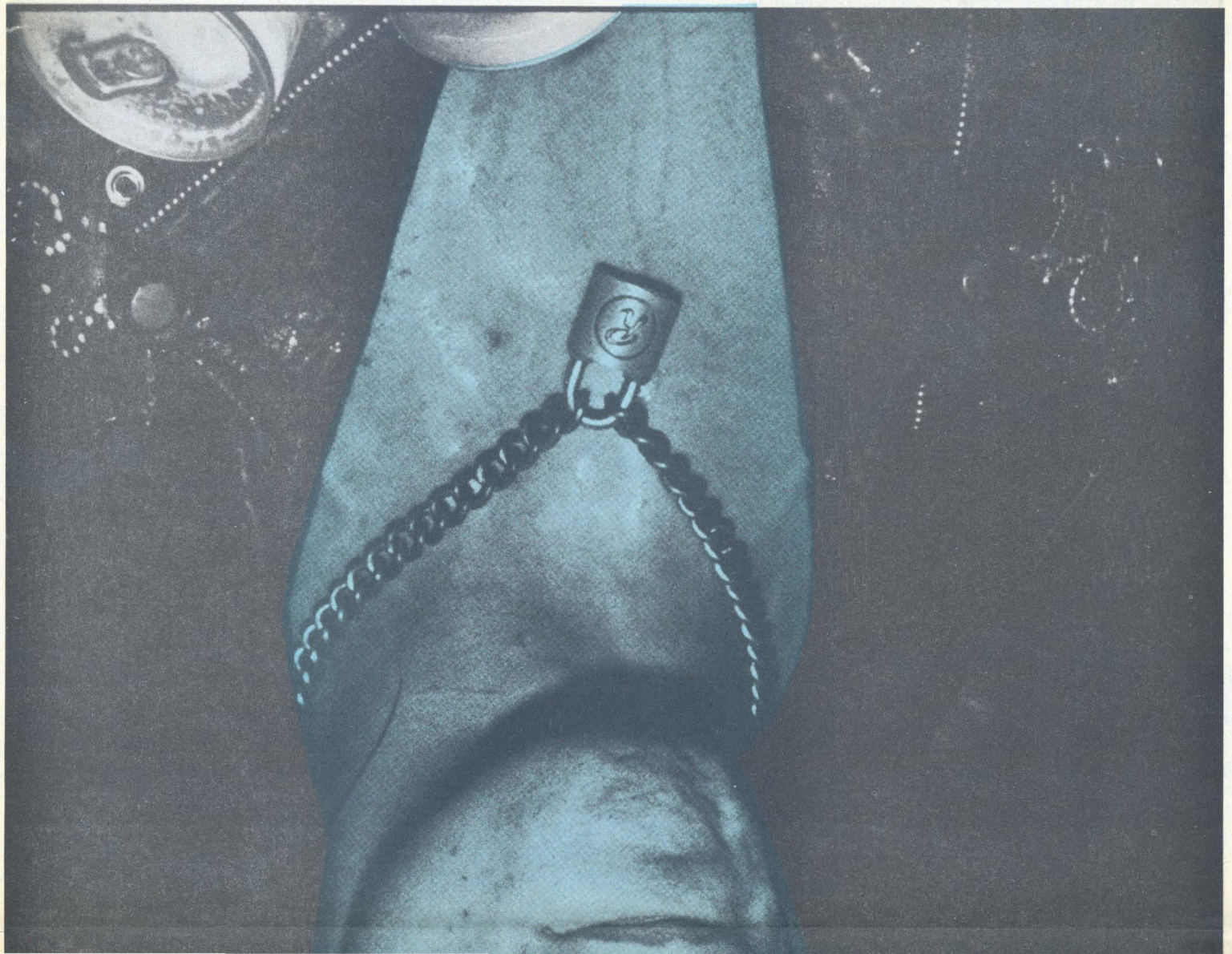
Slash(to Karla): Did you know that before you joined those guys they had a reputation of being the most racist band in Los Angeles? (Karla's black).
Karla: Yeah. I was talking to this guy saying I was going to drum for the Controllers . . . you're gonna try for the Controllers? They hate black people. . .
I said no no, Sting Ray asked me to drum for them. 'No, they're gonna try some trick on you.'
Spike: Danny and Charlie (ex-Controllers) are the big gest racists in the world. . . In their new band there's a song called "Boating not Bussing."
Slash: Is that true?
Spike: It's true!
Slash (to Karla): Is it the first band you've been with?
Karla: Yeah. . .before that I used to just play drums and listen to punk.
Slash: That's a pretty Nazi sounding name you chose for your band, how did you get that?
Spike: We were on acid and we were warching Japanese science fiction, I think it was "Monster Zero." The main head guy is The Controller.
Slash: That's right! They call him The Controller.
Stingray: That's a lie though...it's very closely related to our favorite TV show which is Get Smart.
Slash: Karla, tell us why black kids don't go for punk music?
Karla: I don't know. . . my brother does. It's kind of weird 'cause when the Sex Pistols toured here my bro brother came home from school one day and he goes: "Hey man, all the kids in school are going: 'Yeah, the Sex Pistols. . .they're some bad white boys. . .they play some bad stuff." and all this stuff and I'm going, what??
Slash: What d'you call the ghetto? The community?
Karla: Well that's what it is you know. . .all the kids go out in the same area. . .their conception of white people is TV, soap operas, situation comedies, family shows and if they see any white person that looks different from what they've seen on TV (jive gestures) 'Man!'.
Slash: That's true, I've had black kids come up to me and say, 'What're you doing, what's this about?'
Bruce: Why d'you think you guys get on better in San Francisco than LA?
Spike: Cos we make more money. (mumbles)
Stingray: They like hard rock better up there I think. (laughter) I really think so, I mean down here, look at the bands that've got. . .(everybody talks at once) . . .you've got Black Randy, you've got the Dickies, and you've got the Gogos and the Screamers right. Every one of those bands've got some great gimmick, whether you like the band or not and in San Francisco who've you got? You've got Crime who've got a great gimmick alright, but also you've got Negative Trend and the Avengers and who else. . .?
Slash: Political bands.
Everybody: Dils.
Stingray: Alright but they don't have like these cutesy pie gimmicks you know.
Slash: Anyway, don't you think as a band you relate a lot more to the kind of weird philosophy of L.A. than you do to the humanistic philosophy of San Francisco?



Stingray: We're not as serious as they are, but at the same time we're not into like musically playing all these cute things that we can all jump up and down at the same time.
Slash: What about the Germs? They're popular here.
Stingray: Germs are like, they're popular in San Francisco too, they should be popular all over the United States.
Slash: I don't know how you feel about this but I think you're a lot more AM than the Germs, like your "Suburban Suicide" should be on the fuckin' radio.
Spike: That's not REALLY an AM song. . .
Stingray: But we always wanted to be an AM radio band. My idea of a real good band, of real good music you should be able to listen to it over an AM car radio, in mono, with a cheap bottom speaker. . .'cause last summer when KROQ was playing a lot of punk on AM the Sex Pistols sounded fuckin' great. . .
Slash: D'you have enough shit for a Controllers album?
Controllers: Yeah. . .fuck yeah.
Stingray: We got enough shit for two Controllers albums. The first one is going to be called The Controllers Go To Uranus. We're going to have a picture of somebody in a space suit planting a flag in the middle of somebody's fat ass.
Slash: What's the second one going to be called?
Stingray: The second one is the Controllers Go To Jupiter or You Missed the First Joke.
Slash: Are you guys going to do a song about Pennsylvania?
Stingray: No.
Slash: Because you seem to be one of the most topical...
Stingray: We're trying to get away from that because there's one good reason. . .OK, you write a song about Uganda one day and its there and its new so everybody knows about it, it's funny, ha ha. . . the second day it's gone, we're trying to write about things that are topical that you can appreciate like

five or ten years from now.
Slash: I think if you write a song about Pennsylvania it's going to be appreciated later, because everybody born out there in the next few months is going to look pretty funny.
(popular comment, everyone laughs)
Stingray: That's true. . .
Slash: The Controllers are looking for a singer right?
Controllers: Yeah.
Stringray: It's so that we can play the songs without having to worry about being on mike and stuff like that, it's mostly a technical problem as far as playing on stage.
Nicole: You know, like walking and chewing gum.
Stingray: We want somebody who's real aggressive, sings good, who nobody knows about. . .
Slash: Wouldn't it be easier to get one of you two to get off the instruments and sing?
Stingray: We don't trust anybody else to play the instruments.
Slash: Don't you think it's easier to control an instrument player than a singer?
Stingray: No, because the main thing we are concerned about is the instrument. We try to write lyrics that are interesting but the main thing we're interested in is how the music comes across. . . I think if a band can put it across to like people who live in Charlotte, Michigan (I say this because I'm from Michigan you know). . .and people are into hard rock. . .that's all there is to offer on radio.
Spike: That's what someone said in that No Magazine interview is like I don't care what anybody says, there's a lot of fucking leeches that hang around the scene that want this scene to bee like as small as it is forever just so they can have their own personal little scene, but I couldn't give a fuck, I'd like to turn this thing on to everybody. . .it's got to the people who listen to like Aerosmith and Van Halen and those people and if its ever going to get any place beyond what the fuckin' leeches that hang around this fuckin' thing want it to be then those are the people it's gonna have to get to, the fuckin' people who are out there in the Mid West...
Stingray: Being a Hollywood band you can get a gig anywahere in United States. . .the Farthest we've been out of Hollywood is Austin, Texas and we made $500 in two nights. . .if we'd played our cards right we could've come back fat, y'know. My sister's here visiting me and she says that the owner of this local bar in Charlotte, Michigan (which has got a population of about 20,000) paid ten thousand dollars for four nights for a top Lansing band, Lansing is the city which is closest to Charlotte. . .If I could only count the number of hours I've spent riding around in cars in Michigan listening to Black Sabbath, people are into that and I hated Black Sabbath at the time and everybody is into that nasty kind of music and punk has got that same feeling, you know, that same fuck you attitude that Black Sabbath had in 1970. . .
(conversation goes on to Surfers and Nazi Surfers)
Spike: We used to have a songe called Nazi Surfer Party. . .it went – 'We're going to have a Nazi Surf party, we're gonna be like Jean-Paul Sarty. . .'
Slash: (to Karla) You used to be a surfer? I read there's an article coming up in the next Playboy saying why blacks don't surf. . .
Stringray: It's because it's not cool to ride around in an Eldorado with your surfboard on top,
Karls (indignant): Cadillac!
Spike: It's because (two voices at once) you can't swim with black feet.
Stingray: Spike, what do you think of the world situation?
Spike: I'm bored with the Shas, I don't care about Billy's health, I don't care if Jerry marries Linda. . .
Stingray (humming): I just wanna join the Navy.
(an endless inebriated discussion of homosexuals, Santa Monica Blvd., fat businessmen with small weewees, advantages of being on a Slash cover, the cost of living in Bel Air, Joe Stalin, John Sinclair, benefits for workers and other vital matters follows. In the harsh light of the next day, none of the said discussion seemed to present any itsy-bitsy trace of any kind of redeeming quality. The gruesome tape ends with one Slasher repeatedly shouting to everyone present to "please just shut the fuck up.")

(to be continued when we all grow up.)



John Cale recently played a couple of nights at the Whisky with his latest touring band which includes ex-Contortions bass player Joe Scott and back up girl singer known as Dear France. We talked with Cale the day after the first night he played.

JOHN

Slash: How did it go with your Whisky shows so far?
JC: It was encouraging.
Slash: Is Even Cowgirls Get the Blues representative of a new direction in your music?
JC: Yeah . . . about a year and a half ago I did a European tour and I had about 2 weeks to put a band together, so we picked this band, Davy O'List from Nice on guitar and Judy was in the band.
Slash: Judy Nylon, right?
JC: Judy Nylon . . . so in the middle of trying to rehearse this band, I got fed up with teaching them old material, you know, you can go so far and your patience kind of runs out after awhile, and there's far better reason for writing new material around a new band than there is for trying to get this band to play old material, so that was one of the songs I wrote around Judy, Judy did the scat singing in it. We have another song that she wrote with us called Salome but we don't do that any more.
Slash: Since you have a pretty hard core audience of old fans, how do they receive the new stuff like that?
JC: They are very enthusiastic and its difficult to understand why, they've never heard the stuff before.
Slash: Is it a hindrance if the audience wants to hear the old stuff?
JC: No. The one thing that they appreciate I think is when somebody's uncompromising.
Slash: About half of the songs you sang the first night are new aren't they?
JC: Right.
Slash: Are they going to be recorded soon? Is an album coming out or what?
JC: Well we're trying to get a band together so we can record live, because in the past we've been better live than on the record. We're going to go up the West coast and then back down and then work our way back across the country again and somewhere along the line we have to find like three whole hours of three days where we can record it. Out of three days I think we should should have the finished product . . . Illegal has a single of mine they want to bring out of "Jack the Ripper", but we just haven't gotten a B side together for it. . . I want to do an instrumental version of Memphis.
Slash: How come you've been on so many labels?
JC: I dunno. . . Steve Miller's been on . . .
Slash: That's true . . . it seems more striking with you because each time a record comes out the image is different, the cover picture and all that. You went from extremely soft focus, "Paris 1919" to "Guts" and "Helen of Troy," with a straight jacket and all that.
JC: It was important at one point to always do something different in every album.
Slash: D'you see yourself going more experimental or more rock n roll?
JC: Experimental.
Slash: Those old numbers that you did had more lead guitar, less piano, less floating notes . . .
JC: That's what happens when you go on the road, you get involved in doing a little rock n roll rather than. . . Cowgirls is about the only place in the set where we really get a chance to slow down and think and listen and everybody has to pay attention to what everybody else is doing 'cause it's like this tension that you build up.
Slash: Don't you think the set could take more of that kind of sounds?
JC: Yeah, I do. See I tried to do it with Chorale but Chorale doesn't quite give you the same, Chorale is still like, a verse and a bridge and a chorus. Yeah, it could, that's what I mean about going more experimental. "Sabotage" has that but I didn't do Sabotage in the second set. Sabotage has exactly the same elements as Cowgirl, where it can sort of collapse right in the middle . . . you know what I mean? picks up again.
Slash: That's what I loved about that song, it really kept you hanging. . .
JC: Sabotage has more tension than Cowgirls and is a real rock n roll song, sounds a bit like Beefheart but it's got holes in it, sometimes it breaks up entirely.
Slash: D'you see yourself continuing to produce new groups?
JC: Well, yeah, I mean for Spy Records. I've done a bunch of things, we've got them, but because Spy Records is very limited in its funds, we haven't just brought them out. If we had more funds I'd produce more.
Slash: Did you start Spy Records?
JC: Yeah, it's been going for about a year and a half.
Slash: What ever happened to Harry Toledo?
JC: He's got a band in New York, he's still going.
Slash: What about Marie et les Garcons?
JC: Yeah, we did that one single . . . you know they're in the studio now with Jacques Morali, it's a disco album . . . they were interesting.
Slash: Why are they getting involved with disco?
JC: 'Cause they're signed, that's part of the deal.
Slash: What do you think of disco?
JC: I think it really sucks . . . as a movement it's athletic. . .
Slash: Would you like to produce some kind of compilation album?
JC: No . . . you know what's going to happen, every band is gonna be . . . I wanna be first on side one and I wanna be first and there's going to be all this bickering and you're doing it anyway cheap, it's a rip off. Hopefully we'll be able to do good by the bands that we have . . . we've got EPs and singles, it's all we have, we've got one on the Sic Fucks, the Sic Fucks've broken up. They did 10 songs in one afternoon that're all one minute and 20 seconds long, really great ones like Tony Tennille Sex Appeal, real dirty, we couldn't put Tony Tennille out, I don't think.
Slash: What other people have interested you in the new wave?
JC: Mark p . . . the B52s.
Slash: They've just been signed, haven't they?
JC: I don't know, they've still got another single . . . Devo hasn't progressed very far because they didn't have a single.
Slash: What d'you think of Devo?
JC: Well, it's part of the style, the passionless style, B-52's art part of it too. There's Devo, there's Brian Eno, that kind of cold, I don't particularly go for that at all. . . kind of mechanical.
Slash: D'you think of yourself as a romantic?
JC: Yeah. . . I guess . . . What's a romantic? Someone who lives poor and dies young. . . that was the definition of being a classical musician.
Slash: Speaking of classical music, there seems to be hardly any traces left in your work.

photos: kerry colonna

CALE

JC: That's why I think I should get experimental. . .
Slash: To get some more classical back in there?
JC: Well to get something else in there. . . somewhere along the way there's a meeting of the two things that can happen. . . I can't think of it objectively and make a decision, if I do this that will happen, but it's probably going to come up my blind side you know all of a sudden there it is.
Slash: D'you think the band you have now on the road will just as easily go in that experimental direction?
JC: Yeah.
Slash: D'you enjoy touring?
JC: It's a lot of fun, strange things happen. . . when you get into sound checks . . . we've got sound checks pretty much down, don't have to go and run through every song. So the rest of the time we've got left is when you have a few beers and you mess about and that's when somebody in the band is messing around and they come across this idea then you've got a song, so the more you do go on the road like that, the easier it becomes to communicate with the people in the band.
Slash: I don't suppose you do a song like Cowgirls at a sound check.
JC: No. You can't rehearse it, you've gotta perform it.
Slash: How is it? Is there a couple of places in the song that remain the same and then you weave in and out of the rest or what?
JC: Kinda yeah, but it's better when I break, if you keep doing it that way then it doesn't work so it's better when I throw a loop to the band, a snag. It may be undisciplined now but the more undisciplined it becomes, the better it is.
Slash: How does it feel to be playing to an audience 80% of which is much younger than you?
JC: I don't know, I never notice. . . we did a tour of Europe, though, where we played the Paradiso. . . we'd driven from West Berlin straight to Amsterdam. I got out on stage, blitzed. . . and I looked down and . . . holy shit these people are short, and they are all young kids and I thought Christ we're gonna get slaughtered here, you know they've never heard these songs before; but they want bananas, they went crazy. . . we opened for UFO in Tulsa, they didn't advertise us, nobody knew we were gonna be there so before I went on I thought oh no this isn't my audience, what the hell am I going to do? and I tried to gear the set to the rock n roll numbers which is a big mistake and I got out there and I did the set and I just felt totally miserable, I had no interest in doing the set you know . . . it's better to do the stuff that is representative of you, you don't understand what they want, you've gotta convince them of what they want and if you're not really interested and involved in doing your own thing then you're never going to convince anybody else that you are. That's a loser's game.
Slash: What is rock n roll for you?
JC: It's not as much as classical music is for me. . . it's no the be all and end all of music.
Slash: D'you still play classical music for yourself?
JC: I don't have a piano so I don't get to do it. One of these days I'm not gonna be able to play it at all if I don't practice. One of these days I'll get myself like an 8-track Teac and I'll write a symphony you know. It's one of those things that I want to do badly. . . I mean I want to do a Mahler cycle of a Brahms cycle and conduct it but if you're going to enter the classical music field, you gotta do it on their terms, you can't go in there as a rock n roller and expect. . . you know like the London Philarmonic, they would do it just for the money but they wouldn't do it out of respect of what you're capable of doing or that you have a particular love for this kind of music. So the only way that I'd get involved with classical music again is to do it on those terms. One way of doing it is to write a symphony but I can't write. . . sit down and, you know. . .
Slash: When do you write your songs?
JC: In rehearsals usually. . . if you've got a band there you just get it done, faster and that's the whole point of getting an 8-track tape machine, if you're doing a symphony. . . you can sit down and write symphonies 'til the cows come home, getting them performing, an orchestra and all that, is not. . . but if you do them on the machine, you've got it right here.
Slash: Quite a long time ago I remember reading an interview of yours, you were working for Warners I think it was, had an office and all that and you said it was extremely satisfying after the rock n roll life, d'you regret those days?
JC: No, I mean I learned a lot, I was a company freak anyway, Van Dyke (Parks) was there before me.
Slash: What about the theatrics on stage that people still seem to expect from you?
JC: I have thought of a bunch of things to do but it takes a little bit of organization to do it. There are certain things that are dangerous to do, like I've gotta get hold of a stunt man to teach me. . . I wanted to get a crossbow and get shot you know, with an arrow in the middle of Heartbreak. . . there was this cab driver who used to pick me up in London and he used to work at Sheperton and Pinewood so I was talking to him that I wanted to do this and he just went crazy, he said 'You're nuts, you move just a little bit, you're out there on stage and you lose your balance. .' (pointing to his check) They put like blocks of wood. . . but it still could go through. There were a couple of other things that I figured out that would be great to do. . . I wanna get a blow torch you know and blow torch a mannequin.
Slash: Didn't you do that once?
JC: No, I went down on one....
Slash: Speaking of going down, Peter Ivers was really cooking last night! (Peter is a friend of Cale who joined him onstage for some intense harmonica blowing and mad stage antics, including a solo performed right against Cale's crotch. —Ed)
JC: (laughing) A whirlwind! He does karate, you know, and when he came on stage I looked and he was going. . . (Cale makes a hissing sound and a karate gesture). . . holy shit!
Slash: How do you feel about the english scene?
JC: There's a lot of energy there and there's more energy in New York than in the rest of the country. . . I'm sure there's a lot here in LA, but I just don't. . . I'm not aware. . .
Slash: There's nowhere to play now. . . the Whisky, sometimes. The Starwood has shit.
JC: The Starwood was the Great White Hope once wasn't it?
Slash: They did try once.
Slash: Can I ask you how old you are?
JC: 37.

photos: colonna

CAPITALISM, COMMUNISM // HOLLYWOOD, PAWNSHOPS & POVERTY // U. X. A.

Dee Dee: " I played in punk rock bands four years ago in Detroit, bands like Curbstone Beauties, half original and the rest mainly Stooges material. Then, I put my own band together called Streets, then I came out to SF."

Richie: "I had a drum set when I was real young. I started playing jazz when I was 16. I recorded my first album then. For a long time I missed out on the psychedelic revolution, except maybe for Jimi Hendrix. I ended up being a roadie in the 60s for a big rock band, got real fed up with that and dropped out. Just studied Brazilian and African music and stayed home. Then I moved to San Francisco."

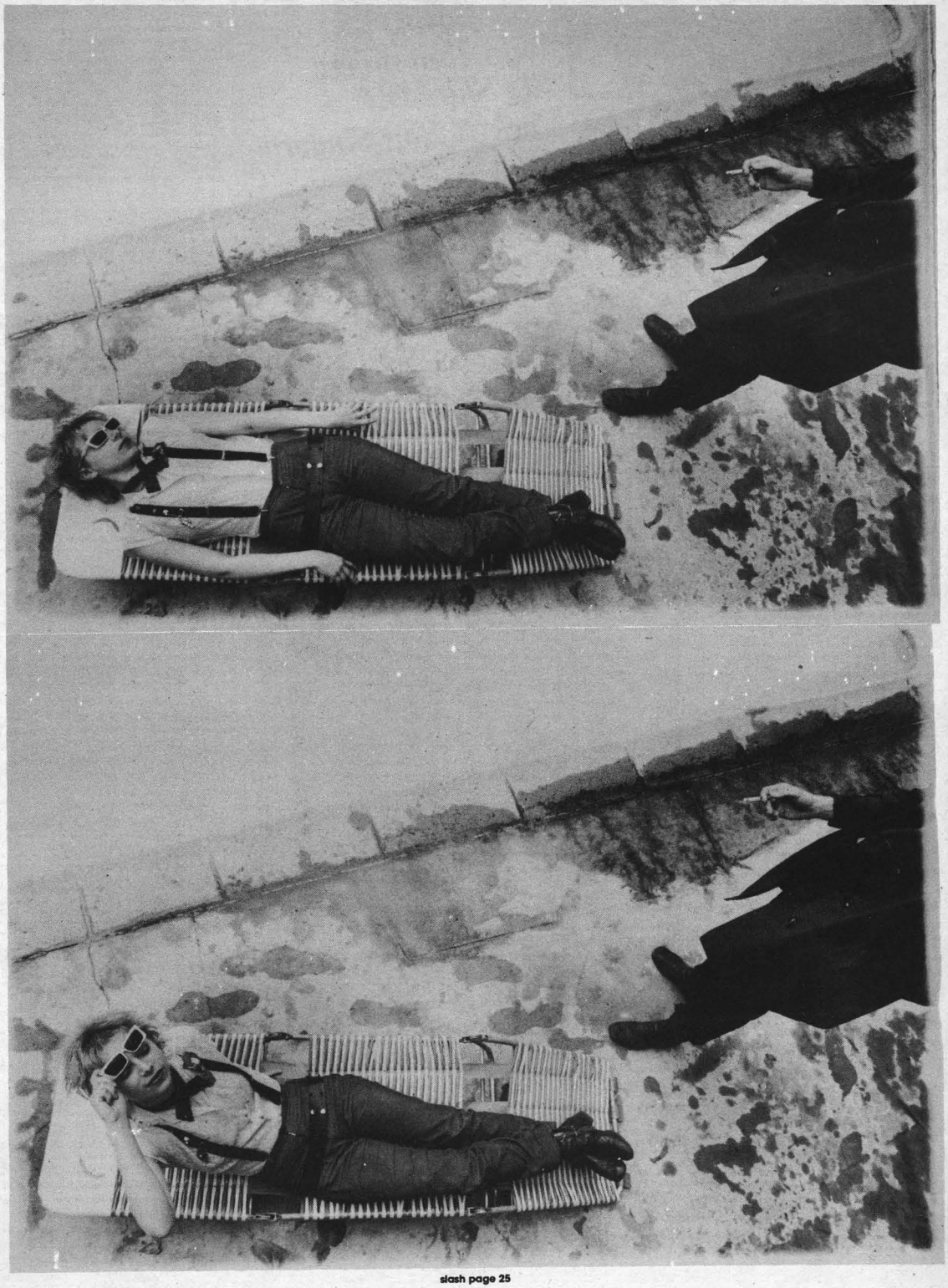
Patrick: "I started listening to Jimmy Reed and Muddy Waters in the 60s, then I met Richie and got turned on to John Coltrane and jazz. Mostly I played in blues bands in high school as a harp player. Last band I was in was a rock n roll band two or three years ago. Then I took some time off. Then I met Dee Dee last August and saw these guys play their last gig."

Billy: "I had a band when I was 13 then it just disbanded and I lost interest. Later I bought a guitar but never really got it together, but last year Rick Wilder and I started putting a band together. We dropped it after two months of trying to rehearse at the Masque. We'd just get drunk and fuck off. It was when he was trying to start the Mau Maus. Then he went up to SF, met Dee Dee, and later she asked me to join."
[U.X.A. are Dee Dee on vocals, Richie on drums, Billy on guitar and Patrick on bass.]

Slash: Why did you leave San Francisco after being based up there for almost a year?
Richie: Well I left 'cos I was sick of S.F.
Dee Dee: And I was sick of it too.
Richie: Actually I got sick of S.F. and the band.
Slash: How recent is this lineup?
Dee Dee: As far as the four of us getting together, November.
Richie: It was just the three of us for awhile, we couldn't find a bass player – then one day I walked into rehearsal and there was this guy, who I had known for a long time anyway. I thought "oh no, not another band with this guy!
Slash: So what was wrong with SF?
Dee Dee: Everybody was preaching anarchy and practising capitalism and communism, or what they call communism, which to me is a very failed type of government anyway. I don't believe in it.
Billy: Lots of Reds up there.
Slash: Do you think that since you've moved down here you've regained the sizeable audience you had up there?
Billy: I don't think we have the audience yet. I think people in SF are more serious about the music, they knew all our lyrics, the meaning behind what we were doing. Here you have to come on, look a certain way, be more flash to get the point across. We still have to work out a few things, like self-confidence, to get them to hear what we're saying. Once they hear the words . . .
Slash: Did Michael write most of the old songs? (Michael is one of the founders of the band. He died last year. Ed.)
Dee Dee: We wrote them together. He was definitely a creative element. Now he's gone but there is no reason we can't go on. Anyway he's still around as far as we're concerned.
Richie: The fact that Michael died is one of the reasons I almost gave up on the band. He was an integral part, he was really in there all the time. Only after I got down here and talked to Dee Dee I felt that we could keep the name, that U.X.A. could go on, and still have Michael here in spirit.
Slash: You've been around as long as most bands, yet you don't have a single out yet . . .
Richie: Long overdue!
Dee Dee: We just don't have the money, and we haven't been offered anything we like.
Patrick: We have a demo that turned out pretty good.
Billy: It's not that good, the sound phases in and out all the time. The tape player got stolen after we made the tape so the mix was done at University Stereo.
Dee Dee: (obviously following her own train of thoughts) I think Hollywood is the heart of America right now. This is where the energy is.
Slash: Wouldn't you say the heart of America is having a hard time finding a club to play in?
Patrick: L.A. got the most exciting new bands, but in SF there is a kind of dedication, and that's why they got a couple of clubs . . .
Billy: Last time we played SF I couldn't believe it, we were late for the Deaf Club 'cause Dee Dee got arrested, so around one o'clock we got on stage, played two songs, and the next day people come up to us in a restaurant and say "we really liked you guys last night" and I thought "you must be thinking of somebody else."
Dee Dee: I want to go and play Texas and New Orleans.
Slash: Last time I saw you you were telling me about getting your instruments out of the pawn shop.
Dee Dee: It's just recently that we've had to do that. We still got enough equipment to play a gig.

slash page 24

Richie: Shit, I'll never pawn my drums. This guy came around here two weeks ago and wanted to blow my head off and I still wouldn't pawn my drums.
Slash: So are you going to play at Santa Monica College?
Patrick: We did this audition there, there were a lot of people in the audience and they loved us. There was also a Mexican band and all these Mexican kids loved us. Everyone was bouncing around, so the guy in charge said yeah, you guys are good, I guess well book you. A week later they call Dee Dee and say, "I.m sorry, we did a survey and the students here don't want punk rock."
Dee Dee: Which is bullshit. Just because HE didn't like it. I'd like to go and smash his face . . . wish I had his P.A. though . . .
Billy: It was strange out there: all these latin jazz-rock bands, and this heavy metal band . . .
Richie: On the way out I heard these kids talking about the bands, and one girl said to another, "the punks were the best." It was a little girl, you know.
Slash: Why do you think U.X.A. seems to have some kind of outcast reputation?
Dee Dee: It's probably poverty. We've been moving around a lot, we haven't had a phone . . .
Richie: I think it's true, about our reputation . . .
Dee Dee: We're not trying so hard to do like the others, get our picture out . . .
Patrick: Without money it's really hard to keep a band together, and when you don't have transportation . . . my van broke down . . . we haven't played enough in this town, two or three gigs.
Billy: We've had bad luck.
Richie: What we have to work out is the business end of things. The music is coming along nicely.
Patrick: What I'd like to do with this band, there are a lot of sound textures that haven't been explored. I'd like to see us get as progressive musically as we are lyrically.
Dee Dee: Our songs are like nursery rhymes. I'd like to give the kids ideas.
Billy: I'd like to have a dangerous sound . . .
Richie: Horror music . . .
Slash: Like who?
Dee Dee: I think the Germs do it pretty well.
Billy: And Negative Trend.
Slash: Any 9 to 5 workers in the band?
Dee Dee: We do what we have to do to keep our instruments.
Richie: I always used to make a living with music, even if it was only a bar mitzvah or whatever kind of shit, but since I'm with U.X.A. it's hard to do that now. It's a new attitude, I'd rather sweep a floor than goout and shit all over myself!
Slash: What about those rampant accusations in certain circles that you, Dee Dee, are a fascist?
Dee Dee: We went up there (SF) and we were going to play with the Dils for free on something they were doing, and Peter Urban said, "we know Dee Dee is a fascist." I told him I'm not a fascist, I'm just faster.
Slash: Why would you get such a reputation?
Billy: Might have something to do with running around with SS caps and swastikas . . .
Dee Dee: I did that on purpose, it was a joke. I was really tired of bands who were supposed to be our friends who we played with and they would not give us 2½% more each from the profits. Both these bands have money from their parents, they were going to make all kinds of money that night. These people say they are communists, but do they want to divide the money evenly? NO! So I wrote vegetarians=hippies=communists=San Francisco all over the place, and I added swastikas. But I am NOT a nazi, and I am NOT a racist.
Billy: I think there is now a little bitterness when we go up there.
Dee Dee: There was always a lot of manipulation and ass-kissing around the Mabuhay scene . . .
Patrick: They organize benefits for striking workers in Kentucky. . .
Dee: That was cool.
Patrick: Sure it was worthwhile, but then they shit on a band that's playing right along with them.
Dee Dee: But we still have a lot of friends there. Anyway I think the bands down here work together more. Like the Plugz and others, they're more willing to be fair. So now I got a bad reputation. I don't give a shit.



The Evansville Courier, Evansville, Indiana, Saturday morning, October 20, 1956.

Wild Teen-agers Rip Shirt Off Rock 'N Roll Singer

Twenty city policemen and auxiliary police rescued a young "rock 'n roll" singer with Elvis-like gyrations from a mob of screaming teen-agers last night at the West Side Fall Festival.

The teen-agers—mostly girls who had been sent into a frenzy by the performance—ripped the shirt from the singer's back as he struggled to his car with the aid of police.

Tomatoes and other missles were thrown onto the platform during the show, concluding the night's entertainment at the festival.

The singer who caused the commotion is Johnny Burnette, a wild-haired 21-year-old youth from Memphis, Tenn. He was accompanied by brother Dorsey Burnette on bass and guitarist Paul Burlison.

Their recording of "Honey Hush" was reported to be out-selling any other record in New York and Boston.

All during Burnette's performance, the crowd of about 2,000 persons kept up a continuous howl that all but drowned out the singer's voice.

Burnette, who went to school with Elvis Presley, concluded the performance with a wild rendition of "Hound Dog." Then he threw down his guitar, ripped off his coat and ran for a trailer behind the stage.

Police had been alerted for trouble. They immediately poured onto the stage and surrounded Burnette's car which was parked a few feet away.

Crowds of teen-agers massed behind the platform to wait for Burnette. He came out with a police escort a few minutes later, but his path was blocked by the teen-agers.

It was during the struggle to get to his car that some of his fans grabbed Burnette's shirt and ripped it off. Some of the girls then tore his shirt to bits for souvenirs.

The singer, who had all but exhausted himself in the performance, was in sad shape when he reached the car.

"I shoulda laid off that last 'Hound Dog'," he panted.

Rock 'n Roll singer JohnnyBurnette leans over the stage to get a closer view of his teenaged fans during last night's Nutclub Fall Festival. The entertainer had to have police to get him to his car. (Staff Photo: Wichser)

JOHHNY BURNETTE: The Rock & Roll Trio

by BE BOPPIN' BOB TAYLOR

Through a somewhat muddled media blitz, the fifties have been cast with rather exclusive stereotypes. Latter-Day "Blackboard Jungles" are portrayed as "Happy Days" of hickies, Fonzies and Brylcream bliss while Sha Na Na mechanically doo-wop the "golden oldies" to imagery as shallow as a stolen hubcap. Primarily, the themes are urban. Not to negate the validity of many fifties' urban artists, no matter how many K-TEL re-issued packages bombard the market, there was still a hell of a lot more happening during this era than the Platters crooning "Great Pretender."

Perhaps the greatest underdog in the music of the fifties was a form known as rockabilly - a fusion of hillbilly country boogie and basic black rhythm and blues. As of late though, there has been a burgeoning Rockabilly renaissance in effect, particularly in England, where Charly Records, Columbia, Capitol, Mercury, and the Polydor-MGM labels have re-issued series of compilation albums from their Rockabilly archives. However, while in its heyday, when the Rockabilly hybrid set the precedent for what more popularly became noted as simply rock 'n roll, the music industry, with its ever-prevailing short sightedness, promoted diluted saccharine-coated product successfully enough to bump rockabilly and its chief exponents into relative obscurity.

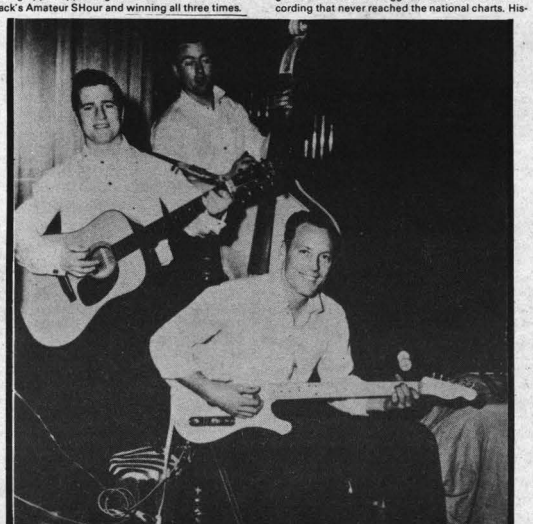
Purists such as Gene Vincent, who died from bleeding ulcers aggravated by alcoholism, suffered immense emotional traumas for this art. Elvis made the compromise, later to build an empire that destroyed him. Johnny Burnette and the Rock'n Roll Trio, one of this genre's principal innovators, (whose material has been covered by The Yardbirds and mainstreamers such as Foghat, Fleetwood Mac, and Aerosmith) never received their due recognition.

The Rock'n Roll Trio - brothers Johnny and Dorsey Burnette and Paul Burlison - were residents of Memphis, home of Sun Records, a low-budget label whose roster included Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and the "Hillbilly Cat" himself, Elvis Presley. As high school cronies, they shared mutual interests in boxing and music. Between winning local bouts, the trio performed country and western material in the area at dances and socials.

They parted ways after graduation, with Paul Burlison entering the Navy and Dorsey boxing semi-pro. But they reunited in 1952 when they were employed by the Crown Electric Company. Paul, at this time, backed the legendary bluesman Howlin' Wolf on KWEM radio in West Memphis, Arkansas. Also employed by Crown Electric was truck driver Elvis Presley, a novice singer-guitarist who knew all of two chords when he jammed with the Trio once.

The Trio was officially formed in 1953, still performing country and western, but experiments with faster tempos with a shot of rhythm and blues garnered them more receptive audiences, the formative period of rockabilly. In a weird twist, it was two-chord Elvis who broke open the market for people like the Trio with the release of Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup's "That's Alright Now Mama" on the Sun label. The Rock'n Roll Trio followd suit, cutting some tracks at Sun, but producer-owner Sam Phillips, who had recorded blues artists such as Wolf and Little Walter had been harboring the concept of a young white artist performing blues-based material and having found the proper chemistry with Presley felt The Trio's differings were too country flavored and never released their sessions. During this period recordings by black artists were referred to as "race recordings", affording a comparatively regional or unprejudiced and somewhat limited market as opposed to Elvis' more lucrative ethnic appeal - especially in the South.

After Elvis hit New York to make television appearances on variety shows hosted by Jackie Gleason and Steve Allen, the Trio made a beeline to the Big Apple, appearing for three occasions on Ted Mack's Amateur SHour and winning all three times.



The Rock & Roll Trio--(front to rear), electric guitarist Paul Burlison, Johnny Burnette on acoustic, and brother Dorsey on stand-up bass at their first recording session, May 1956.

A nationwide Ted Mack-promoted tour followed. By the time Elvis had switched to the RCA label, every other major record company was frantically seeking their own Elvis type. Capitol got Gene Vincent and Decca signed Johnny Burnette and the Rock'n Roll Trio. Their first single, "Tear It Up" b/w "You're Undecided," on Coral was not a smash hit bur registered enough notoriety for them to make a tour that included TV spots on American Bandstand, Steve Allen's Tonight Show and Perry Como's Kraft Music Hall. Around this period, the Trio took on another member in drummer Tony Austin (Carl Perkins' cousin) for added impact to emphasize the beat.

Their next release came in 1956 with "Train Kept a Rollin' " backed by its clone, "Honey Hush." The two were recorded a day apart. Intense and maniacally driven, with an infectious, hypnotic guitar groove, it was their biggest hit and a historic recording that never reached the national charts. Historically, it is relevant as the first taping that featured the distorted guitar-fuzz effect, predating Link Wray's "Rumble." Guitarist Burlison had accidentally knocked a tube loose in his amplifier while carting the equipment on tour. The fuzz sound proved to enhance the composition and afterwards he would intentionally loosen the tube for the desired effect. It is also significant to note that it was the Trio and not the much aforecredited Yardbirds who first released this tune. An album later followed.

By '57, Elvis, who had opened the door for the widespread popularity of rockabilly, made a departure from his original mold to a comparatively pop-oriented, slickly-produced sound complete with doo-wop choruses by the Jordanaires. The Trio, still in quest of that big hit, made an identical transition with the single "Butterfingers" b/w "If You Want It Enough." "Butterfingers" paled in comparison to "Train Kept a Rollin' " and possesses a melody line suspiciously similar to "Jingle Bell Rock." Although not one of their finer cuts, it proves interesting.

Perhaps it was this stylistic crossover that provoked animosity within the ranks of the Trio, specifically between brothers Johnny and Dorsey Burnette. Bassist Dorsey finally split after a backstage scuffle with Johnny in Niagra Falls while on tour. Replaced by Johnny Black (brother of Elvis' bass player), the band completed their touring commitments and appeared in the Alan Freed flick, "Rock, Rock, Rock." Coral Records kept releasing singles but with no success. Drained and disgusted, Johnny Burnette and Paul Burlison finally called it quits in the Autumn of '57.

Johnny relocated to LosAngeles and made amends with Dorsey, who had previously situated there, and the two collaborated on more commercially oriented material. Rick Nelson recorded their tunes "Believe What You Say" and "Waitin' in School." By 1960 both brothers separately scored their own commercial hits. Dorsey first with "Tall Oak Tree" b/w "Hey Little One" on the Era label. Johnny mellowed into offerings such as "Dreamin' " and "You're Sixteen" (the one Ringo covered) and a succession of similar product on the Liberty label. He had finally made it, but not by the route of his choosing. In August, 1964, Johnny Burnette drowned in a boating accident on Clear Lake in California. Dorsey resides in the San Fernando Valley performing exclusively C&W music for the Calliope label although while attenting "The California Country and Western Jubilee", headlined by Jerry Lee Lewis in Northridge a couple of years ago, he was coaxed onstage for a rousing rendition of the Trio's "Tear It Up."

Paul Burlison became a businessman in Walls, Mississippi and heads a local country swing band, the Southerners.

Over the years, the legendary rockabilly recordings by the Trio gathered dust in the MCA files and great demand from connoisseur collectors, who paid as much as $40.00 for the Coral singles and $200 for the original album pressng. Marty Arbunich and Rick Tolmock, who have been catering to this selective clientele via the Used Record Shoppe in San Francisco, have recently compiled the series of master tapes released from MCA Records for distribution on their independent Solid Smoke label.

Re-packed in its authentic original monaural form, it is entitled "Johnny Burnette and the Rock'n Roll Trio Tear It UP - 17 Wild Rockabilly Classics". Included are "Train Kept a Rollin'," "All By Myself" (a Big Bill Broonzy offshoot), the wino's anthem "Drinking Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee" and other raw rockabilly selections like "Eager Beaver Baby" (a double entendre for a bobby-soxer with wet panties), "Rockabilly Boogie" and "Rock Therapy," the latter three currently prominent features in the repertoire of rockabilly survivor Ray Campi & His Rockabilly Rebels' live shows. The album cover is a graphically superb foldout featuring rare photos, informative and detailed liner notes, listings of recording dates, studios, producers and additional percussionists that sells for $7.98 plus $2.00 for postage and handling. California orders require a 6% sales tax.

The intricate notes are a bonus, for even if it were wrapped in cheesecloth, the music itself is the basis of Solid Smoke's concept. What seems especially striking is how a sparse instrumental lineup like Johnny Burnette and the Rock'n Roll Trio project such a booming fullness. Paul Burlison once recalled entering a recording session to find a 32-piece staff orchestra at the band's disposal. They kept the drummer and dismissed the other 31 musicians. Considering the crude recording facilities and primitive, embryonic stage of the rockabilly sound, it is the passionate conviction of the Trio's performance that may be attributed to the overall elements involved.

Although the country influence is prominent, Johnny Burnette never assumed the stereotyped twangy vocal nuances, instead fluctuating betwen aggressive growls, spontaneous screams and an emotionally desperate, high-pitched and strained hiccuppy delivery of unparalleled urgency.

Paul Burlison's guitar riffs fill in all the spaces, his fluid textures weaving in and out between crisp country licks to the brooding blues runs - no doubt an influence from his apprenticeship backing the Wolf. Dorsey holds up the bottom, utilizing the resonant stand-up slap bass technique that has become the trademark of rockabilly. Interspersed between it all are intimate inclusions of studio patter between producer and musicians. The record closes with producer Owen Bradley telling the Trio, "Come on, let's just keep singing and then we'll go home."

It is ironic how Johnny Burnette's singing is currently held in higher regard now than when he was alive, but through it all he does keep singing, via this re-issue, and maybe somewhere he knows and is still smiling.

The Johnny Burnette and the Rock'n Roll Trio album can be obtained by contacting Solid Smoke Records, P.O. Box 22372, San Francisco, Calif. 94122. Buy this album or don't ever use the term "rock'n roll" like you know what you're talking about. I wonder what ever became of those unreleased Sun tapes.

999
at the Whisky

I went to see 999 expecting it probably wouldn't be much more than a night's entertainment. Nothing to upset or excite – maybe something to hum to afterwards. It was a little more than that, but not a lot. Before being treated to that dubious pleasure, we had to endure a set by the Mick Smiley Band, whose weak-kneed forte was a stylishly dumb robotish stance, a patently decadent keyboard player with a black X made of electrician's tape on her and too much eye shadow, and music that was no doubt conceived by an ageing studio musician desperately trying to give it a NOW sound. PRIME TIME PUNK. Thanks to the community-minded Whisky for giving the local bands some exposure.

It didn't take much after that to put the audience neatly in the palm of 999's well-tuned hands. From the first note, they're good performers (actors). One surprise: They're not the young slick Mods they are made out to be on their album covers – they've obviously had more than a few years to work out their act. The lead singer, beer bellied, unshaven, his mod shirt hanging out to his knees, managed to both mock his lyrics and deliver them at full capacity simultaneously, rolling his eyes like a demented clown, easily guiding us into a state of semi-dirty fun. The bass player, not himself a young one, shed a cupful of sweat in the first ten minutes without missing a note.

Though the music itself is predictable (that's what power pop's about), they do it with enough cynical-comical aggression to make it work. You find yourself reacting to every hook and melody you've heard a hundred times before. Subtract their parody and you'd get a limp rock and roll skeleton. Their act is strictly ROCK AND ROLL SHOW BUSINESS, complete with quivering leaps in the air, frantic zips from one side of the stage to the other, and commands from the lead singer like "Come on MOVE, it's the MUSIC ya came for, ain't it?!!" Something which usually makes me sit down as fast as possible. In this case it was just funny, an additional prod that worked. Played live, their songs reveal themselves to be just that: fast, memorable prods calculated to make you bounce and sing along. On a couple of numbers they use another favorite cliche – hold the mike out to the audience when the chorus comes around. But there has to be something to their audience participation ritual if they can get you to yell "HOMICIDE" with a grin on your face. I suspect that's what they're after. Maybe. That's that makes them worth seeing. Will their next tour find the audience screaming "LEPROSY" with equal joy?

JC

VIEW FROM THE LEDGE:
X, PLUGZ at Ricky's Easter Eve

Ricky's was a warehouse of misfits and misplaced persons (read: quacked hippies, bourgeosie runaways on a night on the town, well-meaning art swingers and the straight-jacketed hard coterie, including a crippled victim of a pogo siege at Bace's Hall. . . a sucker for punishment, I came back for more.)

The Plugz were speaking more of a romance language tonite than they were at Bace's Hall, but they still kept a remarkably conspiratorial edge to their uncompromising material. It's electric switchblades and salsa at 78 rpm. See them, buy their album, they're getting better at it.

X's set was more like a house party than the apocalypse at Bace's Hall, even though the cops stifled the encore. No harm done, though John Doe was pulled from the stage a couple of times, and Exene was threatening should the mob nick the pale skin of her paramour. Billy smiles, Don beuiles, we'll all soon be in the FBI files – although Ricky is convinced that a 2 AM encore is too risky with the Venice PD. Between hysterical newspaper columns and whispered legends, the X cult is mushrooming at a radioactive pace. It's no fluke.

V/D

DELL AND THE SENSATIONS
and THE PRIVATES
Club 88

Somebody once referred to reggae as "the only music you can dance to on a full stomach." Dell and the Sensations took it one step further. You could have conceivably danced to their music while eating your dinner or taking a bath. Just chewing to the rhythm and sloshing to the beat, pretending your little toy boats are banana trawlers for an extra authentic touch.

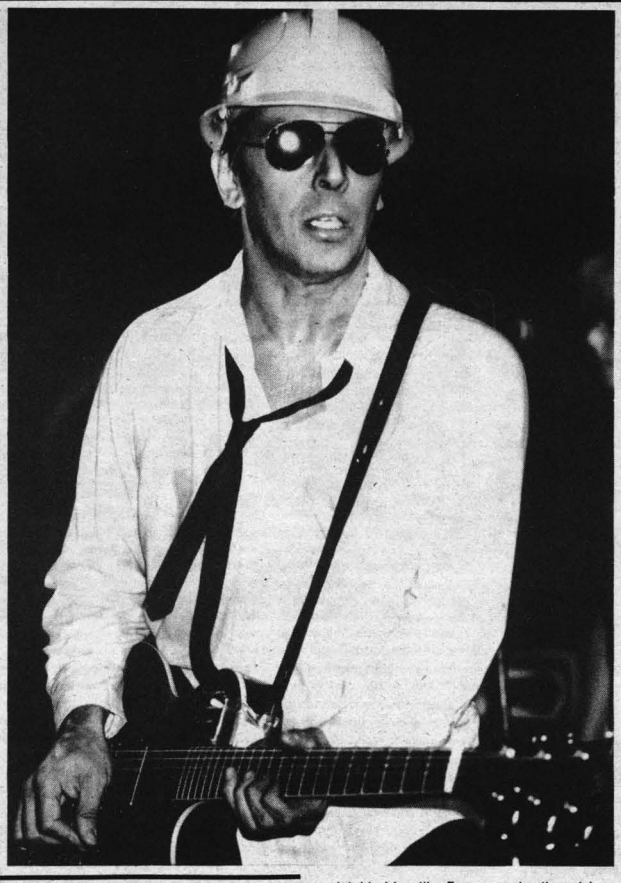
Dell and the Sensations are a ten-piece band, who claim to be "Jamaican-based." It's a pretty fishy piece of bait, a flimty line, a moot hook. The roots, after all, are not the flowers. Motown isn't Kingston either. They started their set with a sedate "Ass Shaking Music" and ended with a choreographed "Shake Your Body Down to the Ground," neither of which displays particularly clean rasta sensibilities. Their prevalent R&B leanings made the inclusion of an extenuated "Roots Rock Reggae" seem like a token bastardization, devoid of any meaning save the beat that drives it. A beat made for feet.

Maybe I'm being a mite too cynical, a bit too nasty on principle. The dichotomy between reggae and other dance music is not necessarily inclusive – any more than the dichotomy between punk and other rock music. If you don't see any dichotomy at all and just want to go out there and shake your ass below the ground, then this band provides ample opportunity to do so. What they lacked in passion and creative juices they almost made up for in down-home enthusiasm. And who knows, if I had been more juiced myself I might be enthusiastic too. (No way, we tried it. Ed.)

After Dell and Co. left, so did a lot of the crowd. I heard disgruntled mumbles that the Privates were crappy. When I saw the guitarist's layered locks and lil' silk kimono, I almost left myself. My god, I thought, Heavy Metal has risen from the iron lung of antiquity, but as soon as the set jumped into full swing and the singer vaulted up on stage, things markedly improved. The Privates don't fall into neat categorical trappings. They have songs in all sorts of shapes and colors – from blue spatial dirges to upbeat catchy pop thrills. There's nothing particularly original about their approach, but just about every song had an interesting asset – accessible but never quite predictable. The band was well rehearsed and loose, good musicians all. (L'Amato, what are you saying?? Ed)

What made The Privates stick out was their singer, one Bill Loveless. The guy has all the markings of a pop star: restles charisma, Bel Air good looks, jaunty exuberance. His performance is on a definite theatrical bent, combining Jaggeresque campiness and Chaplinesque pantomime into a strangely riveting lunacy. Self-obsession is normally a boring and depleting activity, but in Loveless' case it was the source of his power. He knows how fuckin' obnoxious his antics are, he knows about his ego damage and he is glad to show you the scars. Anyone who brushes off his pants when he falls down is quite aware of his own joke. Anyone who writes a song of apology for having paid more attention to the mirror than his date's new dress is trying to get at something. His lyrics were the product of an intoxicated visionary – murky romantic images of demons and delilahs, sterno bums and space probes. While not performing, he seemed bewildered and confused (we all are now, L'Amato. Ed.) A lot of people will undoubtedly hate the Privates but I was quite impressed. If Loveless can keep from being swallowed by his own psyche, they might even be a hit.

BIG DEAL L'AMATO



JOHN CALE AT THE WHISKEY

Some people I know are still quite willing to shell out hard-earned month to catch Lou Reed's latest insulting antics and self-indulging revamped routines whenever the pasty midnight maggot oozes his way to our part of the world. Me, I just don't care. Last time I saw the creature was at the Civic in S.M. many full moons ago, he was about as thrilling as a dirty cotton stuck to the bottom of a charred teaspoon and the overall impression we all carried home afterwards was one of cold blooded exploitation and ruthless cynicism. Give the peasants a mere trace of what they're thirsting for and let my music-hall persona carry the rest of the load. Later, much later, I heard tales of more stubborn suckers literally falling asleep at his shows or fleeing under the vulgar repeated assaults of a Tower of Power-like horn section. Whatever, the "legend" has bit the dust. But his once-partner in musical crimes, John Cale the Welsh dark cloud has never stopped fascinating me, intriguing me, annoying me. His songs STILL can make me dream, clench my teeth, throw projectiles at my reflection in the window or simply scream along. I have tasted all their moods, their threats, their romantic promises from anything on "Vintage Violence" to "Animal Justice". As opposed to Lou, Cale never had to struggle (and lose) to keep his soul relatively (we ALL have to let go of some chunks in emergency moments) intact. The musical vehicles were varied and sometimes contradictory, the moods went from resigned to quasi-mystical to rabidly enraged but the man and his heart were the same always, the passions (or lack of) were real and true. I always had for Cale that kind of awe and respectful distance most of my partners and pals in the new music brotherhood seem to keep for an extraterrestrial like Bowie, a celluloid vision like Ferry or a dazzling trickster like Eno. Up to a few months ago I didn't even think I would see Cale on stage ever again, which didn't exactly stop me from sleeping very soundly. His songs still trickled thru my brain whenever the need was felt, there were occasional press reports of his performances in the music papers, the man and his music were still alive somewhere, there had been no obscene turnarounds such as new disco-id versions of old classics, there even seemed to be a sustained interest on his part in some of the new wave (and not always the best — but never anything embarrassing or abysmal) and all in all it could have remained that way quite satisfactorily: a fan keeping a prudent distance from an old idol, lest the idol turns out to be another schmuck with an unjustifiable claim on your heart. Then surprise: Cale and his latest band are making the long cross country trip (in station-wagons, no less) to our shores to play a couple of nights at the still (sometimes) useful Whisky. This, along with the fact that lately some of my favorite new music has shown obvious or hidden (or just nonexistenc but one always has to refer, compare our emotions, classify our rare aesthetic breakthroughs, don't we?) traces of the man's work — I am thinking of Alternative TV, the Fall, Subway Sect — and wham bam here I am buying some over-priced tickets again, not knowing if I am headed for a (personally) historic disaster or a joyful reaffirmation of faith or just another so-so evening with the ghosts of the past and the promises of the future wrestling for my attention on another goddam rock n roll dance floor. Well, patient reader, it was none of those.

First of all, Cale is A PRESENCE. Not a romantic presence as a sizable portion of his music would suggest, at least not romantic in the Lord Byron wisp-in-the-willows-tuberculosis-in-the-marrow style, not even romantic in the totally-wasted-out-to-burn-his-life-with-a-blow-torch approach one could be inclined to deduct from his latest public image. He is just THERE, he may have shades on but he's also got a fuckin' hard hat, and he may have a skinny tie but he also got a sizable tummy coming out of his jeans, so everything kind of negates, 2 points for being contemporary, minus 2 for being reactionary. Back to the presence. (fuckin' stupid this image dissertation, but what can we do, we're not sophistico classical music afficianados who have come to commune with the maestro, we're just rock n rollers and other cultural offshoots with an important section of our psyche forever ruled by images, looks, appearances — THEY made us that way) Well, the presence is there all right. Anybody looking this way ON PURPOSE must mean some kind of funny business. Anybody looking this way must rely on something pretty special and undeniable to trust his public fate to the volatile night club winds.

Cale and his new band started their set from way our right (left would have been one of the atonal experimental numbers, center would have been one of the rockin' classics) with a gospel-soaked number that went on a couple of minutes beyond curiosity's sake. It was super-soulful, almost caricatural and slightly nerve-grating in its open-hearted sincerity and naivete. I braced myself for a deadly serious roots n country set. Having (almost) successfully tested their audience's attention and respect they then forcefully exploded into one of the many "typical" Cale rockers that would make up the majority of the evening's entertainment. The band (with an ex-Contortions on bass and a tasteful back up girl singer on harmonizing and tambourine) rocked solid and square without ever "getting down" and "getting funky", remaining hot and forceful without sweating or grimacing, and Cale awkwardly commuted between guitar and electric piano every two or three songs, invariably building up each and every song until the music took over, gave him a chance to sway like a bear while the riffs enveloped him for a couple of minutes and gather the torn fibers of energy left inside to bring the tune to a growling screeching nail-tearing crescendo of chords and words colliding to a breathless halt. It could have been a formula approach 'cept for the nature of the songs and the very un-rock'n'roll-stud attitude of the man in charge: There was no other way to get them tunes out in an efficient MOVING manner, if there had been they would have been performed that way, Cale didn't look especially at home with a guitar on his hip anyway. When the chance came he sure jumped on it: "Even Cowgirls Get the Blues" (and I hate that book) was performed with no concession, no glance backwards, and no second thoughts as to whether the rocking jumping public would throw their dancing shoes at the performers. Strictly atonal, all touch and go, stark repetitive wailings and aborted riffing. The girl carried most of the vocalizing on her frail shoulders while Cale and the band punctuated the audio explorations with strictly uncatchy outbursts. Let it be said that nobody in the crowded club squeaked a trace of a protest. The set then terminated with three or four soul-pulverizing better known tunes (hardly any of the earlier "gentler" material was offered throughout), my personal highlights being "Chorale" and "Leaving It All Up To You". Cale's mesmerizing voice went back and forth from ominous whispering to blood thirsty howlings and not once did the shades or the hard hat come off. Which to this unshamed fan suggests that what we saw that night was only one of the John Cales in existence, a tasty if somewhat incomplete picture of the real thing. Perhaps the price one must pay for writing such soul-tapping tunes is making sure they are NEVER performed the way they were REALLY meant to be, lest one's OWN soul suddenly ends up split into hundreds of shiny splinters drilling thru each spectator's cranium, leaving one empty and deflated as a rubberized puppet on a darkened rock n roll night club stage. Peter Iver's guest performance on one tune halfway thru did suggest such a possibility, so drained was the man after his gut wrenching harmonica solo, so thoroughly emptied of aggression his abandoned surrender to the SONG left the little karate menace. Cale knew better. And that's why we still don't know that much

KICKBOY FACE

HAL NEGRO AND THE SATINTONES, CAMILLE O'GRADY, X, AT THE VANGUARD

The Satintones start out the night with enough perverse humour to warm us up and give us time to get anxious and drunk. They play about ten songs, some of which are funny because Hal Negro is the perfect cocktail lounge gigolo with a dash of contemporary audience-baiting tactics (done with a smile and a Milton Berle wit). He succeeded in aggravating one woman to the point of half-heartedly hurling beer cans and soliciting threats from her boyfriend by a not too offhand mention of her Alice Cooper T-shirt and her not too skinny build. When kitch music and leopard trimmed tuxedos can offend, we are truly dead. They couldn't possibly want more than a laugh (is that the "New Cool"?), and that might not be enough for some of us, but it sure beats what came next.

Some macho gay man is slicing her butt with a cat o' nine tails. She's cooing, ecstatic with her grasp on the contemporary scheme of things. (Neither one of them come—it's just role fullfillment). Meanwhile a semi underground photographer is taking polaroid snapshots of the scene. When it's all over she spreads the photos out in front of her. "Golly! Is that what I looked like? NEAT!" Anyway that's one conjecture about her. Her: Camille O'Grady. Pretense: POET of the darker side of New York cum Patti Smith in leather fag imitation, warbling falsetto imitation NICO voice, pseudo street wise lyrics dealing with what? S&M of course, what else? Her "Band": One lonesome droop-faced, intellectually bearded keyboard player playing adequate synthesizer. Is this too advanced for us? No, it's too stupid. Looks like she saw SUICIDE in NY and thought, "Gee, this IS 1979, I'm getting rid of my finger cymbals and getting me a synthesizer player!" Dear Camille: Your songs carry on forever and sound like HEART played at too slow an RPM. Your hand gestures are reminiscent of Merv Griffin singing "I Gotta Be Me". Also, those were beer bottles being thrown your way, not roses, something you might have been more inclined to notice had you payed attention to anyone in the audience beyond your zealously devoted goons who cordoned off the front row. Admittedly, their fists flew with expertise when the real audience finally booed their appreciation of your sets ending, but don't you think you'd have served them better by requesting them to direct their fists into their own face, or into the face of their lovers, say, in the privacy of their own home, somewhere far away?

Which is probably where she and they went immediately after her set. The air stayed sweaty but was significantly less sour. X couldn't have asked for a more lubed audience, which they deserved. In 5 or 6 years when the air in L.A. is as thick and brown as a half chewed chocolate and every fifth pedestrian is a nuclear mutation I hope X's music comes screaming out of every passing car window. They've been called the best band in L.A. so many times now it's not only redundant it simply isn't the point. the point is what they do and how they do it (no show biz, no stylishness, no artifice) — suffice it to say this was the most perfectly honed feat of animal urban jungle music to make an audience quiver around here in a long time. Not only are they "tight", as one is bound to say, they're by this time an unconscious (very loud) organism with 4 separate parts joined at the center. each one of these parts works separately to suck the daily poison from under your pores, which they in turn spit back at you, not without joy either. X isn't a band you go and "watch" or "listen to" — they poke a finger right at the center of your solar plexus and you sweat and shake involuntarily. Billy's guitar playing is the most concise and aggressive around, Don's drums are a continual and clear explosion, Xene's voice is the most confident and crystal snear you'll ever witness, and coupled with John's voice and Bass . . . why go on. See them next time they play. You might find out how pain becomes pleasure.

J.C.

celluloid

THE PUNK ROCK MOVIE

It is impossible to describe this movie in regular movie terms. It's visually raw, out of focus and smeared with color like an abstract painting. The soundtrack is murky, undefined pounding. For the uninitiated, it must be like watching TV inside a washing machine . . . but, for the fans, it's the next best thing to seeing Johnny Rotten-Lydon gnaw on those old tearjerkers "Anarchy", "Problems" and "NY" (Sid's close-ups aroused lots of noise from the galleries).

The key was if you could fathom what song was being performed from having heard the record. Then you could pick up a thread in the soundtrack, and with the live action get an idea of what the bands were like. All the bands were jumping lively: Generation X, Eater (with a pig's head on stage with them), and X-Ray Spex. The Slits lead singer's panties kept falling down (sorry, tights on underneath!) as she keeled back and forth in a cave woman stomp. The swinging Clash were riding around in a bus with a Rasta driver and leopard skin seats, having pillow fights with the Slits between shows.

One scene showed some pink-cheeked pump sitting on a toilet popping some scag, then cut directly to Siouxie and the Banshees doing "Bad Shape". Siouxie is too much, with that voice, that face . . . and how she manages to maintain her beauty despite her grueling performances and washing down handsful of pills with straight gin is a secret I'm sure we'd all like to know.

One of the silliest parts was a Rasta guy trying to teach Alternative TV how to get the reggae beat. Between musical sets, the camera cut back to the rehearsals to see how TV was progressing, which wasn't very far. Also in between acts there were cultural innuendos such as bobbies raiding a boutique for having a "shocking" punk window display of torn T-shirts, and plastic fingers and ears with red ink on them. There was also a tense sequence where a young boy sliced his torso repeatedly with a razor blade. (Someone in the audience yelled, "Oh, how punk!" to which Lorna of the Germs replied, "That's nothing, that's easy ...") So-o-o much more entertaining than television.

To complete the cultural experience, the Middle Class and the Mau Mau's attempted to settle an old feud with a brawl in the lobby after the show during which Barbara of the Xerox twins pummeled those ex-brats as only a woman scorned can do. Someone also doused some theatre chairs with a fire hose and, for the grand finale, someone tore the curtain down. Now come on, you wankers, why not trash something deserving, like COP CARS?

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X, PLUGZ
at Bace's Hall

Another night out at a Masque affiliation. Yeah, you have that blase attitude until you realize that everything is so fucking temporary and that nights like this are, to use a sentimental cliche, precious. Also this was X's first gig in months, their previous ones always cancelled, cut short, or otherwise marred by law enforcement officers with an out-of-control will to power. Bace's Hall had a carnival atmosphere inside, streamers hanging from the top of the long inoperative bar, and a crowd that could only be found in this East Hollywood Yankee ghetto.

I caught only one song of the Controllers (charismatic as usual). The sound was horrible. Guitars and drums weren't miked so if you wanted to hear them in proper balance with the vocals and bass drone you had to be directly in front of the stage. And in front of the stage was a harrowing place to be (as one of my associate Slash reporters still mending foot bones can testify). The Plugz didn't let this acoustical problem phase them. They were out there on stage for at least half an hour wrecking their instruments in a wide-eyed, almost innocent frenzy. These guys look so happy when they play. And the contrast between their sometimes angry songs is what makes their debut album such a classic.

X came on very fast. Imagine giving a fifth of Scotch to an alcoholic who's been dry for months and you can guess the fervor John and Exene poured out into the audience. Everyone loved them and there's no mystery why. It's something that many superficial A&R men have been missing. SOUL. And it's because those A&R guys don't know what soul is. It's been missing in commercial music for so long, they wouldn't know it if it came up and bit them on the face (which happens at an X gig). It has nothing to do with disco or R&B either.

There's no other group that can conjure up the feeling of being in a smoky den of thieves: one lonely woman on stage, alternately breathing words of love and screaming merciless threats at wrongdoers; a boyfriend who looks like a jungle savage but is a center of concentration (no matter how wild it gets, John never misses a beat) counterpointing everything with his bruised voice and abused bass; drummer Don creating a whirlpool of rhythm that inflames everyone, including smiling straightman, Billy on guitar. When they left the stage we all had to shuffle out to face the dreary streets.

Chris D.

A Brain-Scan of the Club 88
by Hook Iswell

Where silicone-breasted maids once ground their hips on the stage to the drip of saliva from lonely males, the Club 88, formerly the Kismet, now dishes up acts of a different sort: the puling-puking-punks of Greater Los Angeles (greater than what?). It features groups like the Alley Cats, the Bags, furious misfits who straddle the skin-thin zone betwixt homicide and music whilst the pale audience forms a tangled mass of glow worms in the dark. The bathrooms (not a band) are no less pernicious and the bartender is so slow that what is poured from the bottle as wine is beetle-juice by the time it reaches your table.

On Thursday, night, April 26, I went there to review some local boys called the Brainiacs and a "new-wave" import from Santa Barbara tagged the Spoilers.

A couple of years back the Brainiacs made their debut at the Rock Corporation. The opening song inspired a murder, if the stabbing death of a sub-normal biker can be considered such, or anything worse than mere sanitation.

So I sat drinking my flat beer. I had taken the precaution of getting drunk beforehand. The place wasn't very crowded. An odd gathering of rather wholesome looking coeds, Spoiler groupies, I assumed, tugged at the crotch-climbing seams of their tight Levis. Across the room a handful of hardcore punks cringed in the cobwebs of their drug hangovers. I knew the Brainiacs would not be expecting a murder tonight. it would be sheer luck if someone popped a hemmorhoid.

The Brainiacs shambled onto the stage like discarded donors from one of Dracula's cocktail parties. They dove into their theme song, "Don't Tell Me Why,' which plainly states: "Keep your hands away from me, keep it to yourself, I don't want your sympathy, or the pain of anybody else." The Merzy beat drove the lyrics home. They've got a lot of punch, these Brainiacs, real up-tempo material tempered with genuine disgust and alienation. The coeds looked uncomfortable, like acne victims staring at a plate of greasy french-fries. The third song was particularly apt: "One! It's a treatable number. One! Crying like a cucumber. Alone inside with magazines. One! I can be with the Beauty Queens. One! in the nighttime it goes away. One! Alone in every way. One! I reach out for luxury. One! When it's over, no sympathy."

No gloss, no cryptics, straightforward despair with defeatist pride. The masturbation theme is a Brainiac trademark. Another song states: "I got a favorite toy, I call him Action Boy. Can't wait till I get him home, put him in an Action Pose."

Alone in their vortex of pain they played into a frenzy, oblivious to the half-filled house, the titters of Santa Barbara girls, the screeches of the rats in the walls. They finished their first set with Susie's So Unsure. Shourt, the bass player, took the lead guitar and played a superb rendition of a pig being disemboweled with a broken bottle. I was impressed.

At intermission I went out to my Valiant (the official Slash car) and drained the remainder of my Irish Whiskey. The sky was clear and the stars glittered insolently. I thought I heard someone scream and was nervous until I realized it was me. I reminisced about the old Kismet (Turkish for destiny) and this one Mexican girl in particular. Then my "action boy" went into an "action pose." I went back to the 88 with the Mexican girl lubricating all over my mind's eye.

The Spoilers hit the stage. They were young and healthy and husky and cute. They sang real harmonies, just like the Who, but they had the collective stage presence of a dried sponge. Their lyrics were insipid, their material unoriginal, and their frosh retinue bounced in an unseemly version of the pogo. You can't lose when you bring your audience with you.

Well all this nonsense inflamed the Brainiacs. They really outdid themselves in the second set, plunging their musical phallus into the cultural vacuum, grim crusaders. The girls went nuts, clawed, yanked hair, grabbed the mike stand, showed some promise. The Brainiacs had given them something real, something hard and ugly and useful, something you can take out of the drawer when no one is looking. The evening was restored to an improper balance. The Brainiacs had done it again.

I drove home, lay down on the couch, and unzipped. I fused past and present, pictured the Santa Barbara coeds on the stage of the Kismet, pumping and grinding to music that angels will hear when God is dead, music played by groups you will never see on the charts, music that can drive the rats from the walls, music that isn't music.

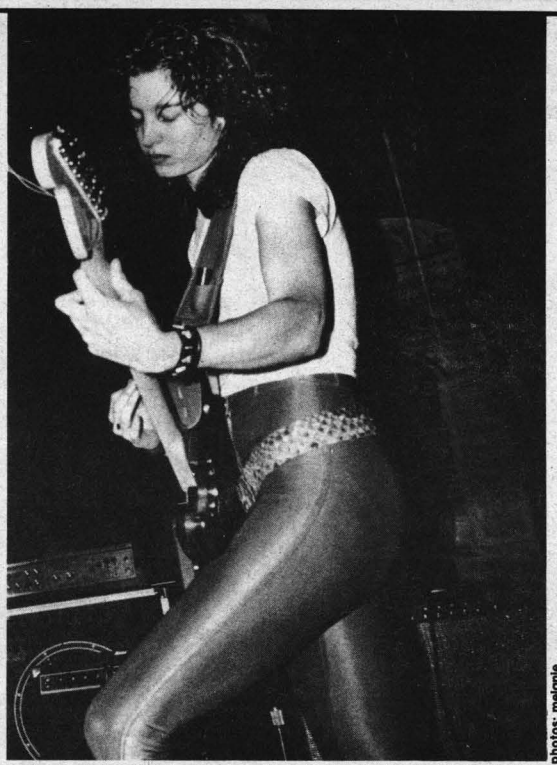
SISTER ANGELICA FURIOSA, CHERI GAULKE, NERVOUS GENDER, ANN MAVOR, FENDER BUDDIES, TRACERS, at the BENEFIT FOR LOS ANGELES WOMEN'S VIDEO CENTER

Nervous Gender was supposed to play on Good Friday and they sort of did, passing up an offer to open for the Plugz in order to play this benefit. They had been excellent a month before at a Science Holiday event and I liked the idea of them playing for the women's building. There was a time when lesbians got together for heavy swaying concerts where feminist folk singers sang songs that make the Modern Lovers sound pessimistic, but these women are wild and crazy guys and Lace Gallery's Punk Meets Art show a year ago inspired this full moon Easter ritual. The feminists didn't have $2500 for the Heaters (!) so they got the Tracers and Fender Buddies for $100 and Nervous Gender for free.

At first girls disco-danced in one room while punks stood around in another. Then the lights went out, and a Patti Smith tape came on while Cheri Gaulke and Sister Angelica Furiosa performed a skit where a masochistic monk turned into a cobra on the cross and slept with a blind nun. This was followed by the best art of the night, a 20 minute video tape of a vagina laying colored plastic eggs full of toys. One woman commented: "Did you see how many eggs there were? That's how many times a woman can come!"

Then Nervous Gender's Phranc announced "We're not nervous" and the band performed "Suburbia Diptheria" and "Berlin Redhead" for a half-pleased half-offended audience. A member of the Tracers had his fingers in his ears while a girl was dancing and yawning at the same time. Punks and separatists cheered when "Do the Gestalt" was dedicated to Dr. Toni Grant, and Phranc swatted her head with an L.A. Weekly. Later her guitar didn't work for "What Can I Do?" and "Poets" was all noise. Then producer Annette Hunt announced that the 40 minutes were up and she didn't want to stay all night. 'Pussies!" screamed Phranc to the audience before doing their last song, "Mommie's Chest." She left the stage snarling about the "goddamn dykes" while Gerardo, Michael and Edward seemed to take it more philosophically. Nervous Gender toys with being the first "out" punk band, "but people think we're weird 'cause we're queer." Their brand of electronic chamber music and their sense of humor makes them one of my favorite bands. By the time artist Ann Mavor emerged from a paper mache egg as a tap-dancing chicken Nervous Gender had left for Bace's Hall while their fans went home to watch tv like intellectuals. As opposed to Gender's music, the Blondie type rock n roll of the Fender Buddies made people want to dance in the worst way. They encored with "House of the Rising Sun"!!! And the Tracers have two lead singers, one who looks like Little Lulu and another who tries to look funny-weird instead of funny-ha-ha. Who knows? They'll probably do an album and be around forever. However, when I learned to draw, tracing was cheating.

So the woman's video center made money, a group of boring people got their Rocky Horror-like thrill but punks and feminists certainly did not connect politically, and Punk Meets Cunt was a failure.



photos: melanie

Holly of the Italians. The absence of a written review is a direct result of the fuel crisis. (Our reviewer was stuck in the long lines at the Thrifty's liquor counter.)

AVENGERS, FLY BOYS, TOASTERS at Bace's Hall

Toasters did a nice version of the El Costel and the Animals "It's My Life." I only saw three songs, and it was well played, not bad at all. Two weeks later I saw a full set and went to sleep. These boys need to put some punch in there – it's all too lightweight, it flies into the pleasant clouds – maybe they should see Greg Shaw. I'm sure he'd know exactly how to handle them. The Fly Boys came out expecting the red carpet, but got fly paper instead. A big problem set, with lead John Boy attempting to ressurect their deceased keyboard member. The seance backfired. Poor sound mix, new guitarist adding little more than a wall of distortion and an uncomfortable face, diffused, just not with it, these suave young men are rapidly becoming a bland flash in the pan.

There was a time when you saw the Avengers and felt like you were standing on the peak of an electrical iceberg. They were so cool, perfectly formed, as inevitable as your next breath. But this group was not that band – these Avengers were sloppy, shiftless, aimless, they might have enjoyed themselves, but you never felt they were the One. Penelope's lackadaisacal (and surprisingly out of key) performance lends credence to all those nasty rumors of her being more interested in becoming a movie star than remaining an Avenger. The new guitarist is adequate, but his street punk animal attack is not contest compared to the dynamic tension release tactics of his amazing predecessor. Is it too late for the Avengers? It was for me. I found my ticket to oblivion and escaped, preferring not to humiliate the memories of a tough little street band upstaging the Pistols at their own game, in another time, not too long ago, but seemingly a hundred eras past.

Z

DIANE HARRIS AND THE TUFFTONES, THE ALLEYCATS AT THE TROUBADOUR

Strange things are happening at them Troubadour gigs. Like some of our fave new music combos are encouraged to play there, zillions of free admissions tickets are passed around, no one has to bug the bands with the guest list ritual, everything's real groovy, almost like Xmas, then you get there and surprise, the joint is packed wall to wall with young adults and their deodorized dates, so you can't get in the showroom, your ticket means zilch to the hippie at the door, only thing to do is hang around in that first room (where very conveniently and by pure coincidence the fully equippped bar is not doing too bad thank you) waiting for a chance to squeeze thru to the other side where some antiquated show-biz shit is being copiously flung at impassive rows of seated rock n roll connaisseurs. See, even that haven of good vibes (whenever I hear or see that troubadour word I get visions of Renaissance fairs, flute-playing faggots dressed in stupid bloomers and earth-mother types reeking of patchouli and hysterically torturing tambourines in clouds of soap bubbles and puddles of Almadeen Rose – I know, what's a fuckin' name, the Masque never was a Commedia Del Arte center and the Whisky's only drinkable potions are dry martinis – I just had to get it off my chest okay?) . . . as I was saying even that place has its own Catch 22, which is either you get in fairly easily with your complimentary ticket and then have to ache thru a couple of undescribable sets by dusty MOR outfits with as much relevance as a rock n roll festival in Disneyland or you come in time to catch your type of music (which never goes on before midnight) and you find it very hard if not impossible to get within visual reach of the stage, the heavy bunch that got there before you showing no intention of vacating their beloved ringside armchairs. And that brings us to cute point number 3 (or 4, I lost track): THERE ARE STILL FUCKIN' TABLES AND CHAIRS AND WAITRESSES WITH TRAYS BETWEEN THE BAND AND ITS AUDIENCE AND IT'S A FUCKIN' AFFRONT AND PROVOCATION AND RUTHLESS DENIAL OF WHAT OUR BANDS ARE ABOUT AND WHAT WE ARE HERE FOR IN THE FIRST PLACE! It's a sad fact, Mr. Weston, but the kids came to dance, not to rest their elbows on a sticky table top. I'm sure there are enough other nights for all that civilized glass-clinking and subdued chatter without imposing the bloody decadent formula on the occasional two-hours-a-month a real rock band invades your boards.

But that's enough advice and dictating to the world for one go (somebody's got to do it, and we don't especially mind, do we?). Let's talk music, let's talk sounds, let's talk rock n roll. Which means let's not talk about Diane Harris and the Tufftones. Theirs was the type of ludicrous shit that a few years back made me look towards Jamaica as the only musical path of salvation. Soul-less heartless exhibitionist crap for rich kids with Corvettes and Penthouse wet dreams, a would be glossy caricature of real life and real energy, a true wax museum collection of youthful cliches, these people made me realize that there is a whole section of "young" people out there that are already ten times worse than their parents. Somebody protect us from the Ken and Barbie rockers!

After this nightmare the Alleycats (got bless their innocent purity) tasted like a tall ice-cold mug of Tecate after a day-long trek in the Yucca valley (now don't ever say we're not the poetic kind). It was quite shocking to see REAL people on stage, the preceeding hour had made us forget what is could be like. The Alleycats snapped everybody awake in a matter of minutes. These three have enough electricity stored within to keep every air-conditioner in the valley running for a whole summer and probably every jacusi motor as well. A genuine (and yet undiscovered) new national source of energy. In the fifties they would have been heroes. In the sixties they would have caused the british invasion to peter out. In the seventies they're buried deep under layers of mass-consumed audio pollution. Fortunately it's not affecting them one bit. But their sound is affecting their audience all right, and there were more than a few previously-seated spectators who found themselves bopping and jumping and totally forgetting to re-order their drink. And in this day and age, that's almost as significant as instant mystical conversions used to be, before THAT kind of thing became as easy as writing a check.

KICK

VINYLLY..

by Bo Clifford

June is busting out all over and records fill the air.

OVER HERE:

The JETS are from Minneapolis and exhibit heavy 60s influences "Lover Boy" (Twintone) is punchy with several good lines ("There's more to life than taking off your pants") and "Paper Girl' (pronounced "Papeh Gell ') is clearly Badfinger inspired. As pop as it gets! Meanwhile, in Atlanta the BRAINS have been honing their interesting Cars/Buzzcocks mix. "Money Changes Everything" (Grey Matter) has a very British feel to it that's quite appealing. It's very well recorded, too. Sounding English isn t enough for the FANS, also from Atlanta. Their "Cars and Explosions ' has been released on the UK Albion label. Very much in an Eno or Ultravox vein, it still sounds inventive and interesting. But then any sucker can . . . The New Orleans scene has produced its first records. The Electric Eye label has released the SKINNIES "I'm a Dullard,' fairly standard pogo-thrash circa '77 done with wit and flair, and "Almost Ready ' by the NORMALS who sound like a less speedy Ramones. Both records are fun and mindless in all the right places. A good start for N.O. In Houston a portion of the populace worship PLASTIC IDOLS and their 45 "I U.D." (Vision) Seriously, a very good record with an intriguing cantilever construction. The flip 'Sophistication" is also very strong, but in a much different style. Definitely a band with potential.

OVER THERE:

With the Mod revival in full swing, the DAZZLERS "Lovely Crash ' (Charisma) comes in right on cue. All bright colors and ringing power chords, it s a better record than their first one. The WASPS return with "Rubber Cars" (RCA) a vision of future motoring that's funny and touching at the same time. The Sparks influence is apparent (as in a number of recent bands) but not annoying. Continuing their indifferent attitude toward America (and especially California), the SMIRKS release "American Patriots" on their Smirksongs label. A good record, but the production lets em down. Soggy when it should be sharp; toothless when it should be biting. I really didn't think SQUEEZE had it in them, but their latest is truly their greatest! "Cool for Cats" (A&M P) is catchy in the extreme, though the words are blurry. The non-lp flip "Model ' is a good tough rocker (not easy for these guys). A band better taken in single doses.

KNOWN:

I really like the way some British bands crank out single after single without relying on album material for new 45s. The JAM's 'Strange Town" .(Polydor) is certainly their most adventurous Bruce s bassline really gives a great foundation for the amazing use of dynamics throughout the song. How the mediocre "Butterfly Collector ' became the US A-side is beyond me (well. . .not really) SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES "The Staircase" (Polydor) reminds me of a 40s murder mystery with the atmospheric sleeve photo and its dark, melodramatic music. The B-side is a sloppy, loopy Bolan cover job. Both are non-lp, of course, and their U S. album does include "Hong Kong Garden. ' X-RAY SPEX continue in a more melodic direction with "Highly Inflammable. ' This is so bouncy you might mistake it for Lene Lovich with a head cold. The truly bizarre "Warrior in Woolworth's" positively rekks of acid (dig those Blue Cheer guitars) Being the second best song on a really bad album is not much of a distinction, but the new GENERATION X "Valley of the Dolls" (Chrysalis, ugly color) does sound better at 45. The B-side makes it really worth the bucks, though. A live 'Shakin' All Over,' that also includes a nifty Eddie Cochran quote, that's wild, rockin' and shows that Gen X can (could) cut it when they want(ed) to. They should want to more often! The only "Silly Thing" (Virgin) about the new SEX PISTOLS (really?) single is the atrocious " ..Bambi" B-side. Otherwise the remixed A-side sounds fine.

UNKNOWN:

I don't quite know how to put this, but one of the most inventive records this month is by the HOMOSEXUALS. "Hearts in Exile" (Lorelei) uses pop hooks, dub production touches, and unusual lyrics to become quite memorable after a few plays. Those crazy limeys! A new one from Fast Product is always interesting and SCARS with "Adult/ery" is no exception. Not as immediate as some, but slowly insinuating. Menacing, brooding, that sort of feel. The flip "Horrorshow ' more so. SWELL MAPS return with the best pogo (still?) of the month. "Dresden Style" (Rough Trade) is tough and convincing for being straight up and down. They'll have an album full of surprises soon.

THIS TIME WITH A G:

Easily the best label in Ireland and, perhaps, the best straight punk label in the world, Good Vibrations has released a string of hard, clean records that is most impressive. In conjunction with Rough Trade they've re-released the "Don't Ring Me Up" single by PROTEX. It sure proves that great records can still be made with just three chords. Simple, direct, and done with feeling. The label's newest release is a double single package called "Battle of the Bands" featuring four different bands. First, the OUTCASTS and 'The Cops are Coming." A rather black comedy about murder and being on the lam. The IDIOTS want to know if we really like our "Parents." a less than subtle put-down of all the things that we ll probably turn out to be, too. Next, the only one of the four with a previous single, RUDI is "Overcome by Fumes." A direct attack on the practice of spray can sniffing with a blunt warning to those who might be tempted: that stuff can kill you! Good one, lads! Lastly, SPIDER invites us to go "Dancing in the Street." Not the old Motown heater, but the same idea. Get out and have fun!

CONGRATULATIONS:

Even though there weren't any correct entries in the sweepstakes last month, thanks for the response. New ideas, records, whatever to:

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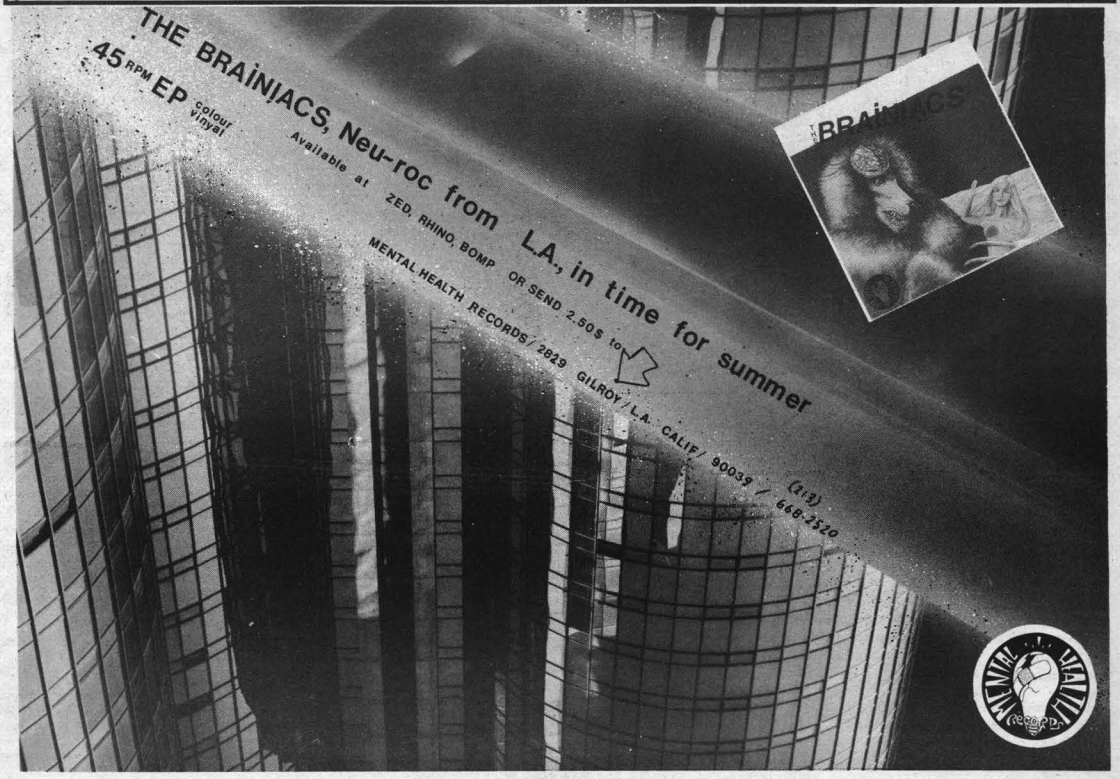
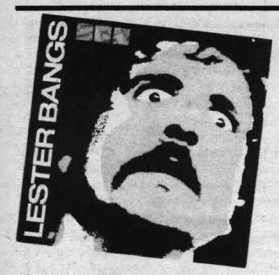




LESTER BANGS
(Let it Blurt/Live)
Spy records

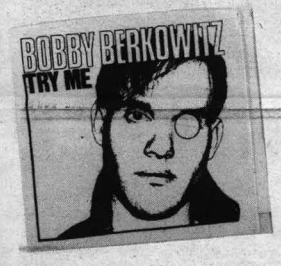
Old fart at play. And having a hell of a time, this noted and antidoted beergut does the Voidoid accompanied by CBGBs finest. But when he does that chorus on "Blurt" (bitch, bitch, bitch I wish your ass was dead) I crack up. I bet he already did long ago. Only problem is carrying on, but put a frustrated rock critic on stage and who knows if he ll ever stop. Well Lester you did a good one, now go get a drink and leave me alone, gravel voice.

Z

JAMES WHITE AND THE BLACKS
(Contort Yourself/Tropical Heatwave)
Ze records import

All disco records should be like this, though this funk-a-groove owes more to basic rhythm 'n' black and blues than it does to that bland m.o.r. that keeps straight faggots humping polyester butts in a strobe lit vacuum. In a surprisingly humanitarian move, Mr. Chance provides us with an excuse to divulge in that tribal necessity — the dance craze. Instead of being mechanical and de-humanizing "Contort Yourself" suggests a great new liberating novelty step, in the tradition of the Fly, Jerk and Swim. "Heatwave" is the old Monroe sizzle number, done in a neo-vaudeville shakedown style. Starting with a mullatto sounding hipster doing a camp and croon, the song is accented by ivory tinkling from Mump Xtian and Pat Place playing her loony tune slide guitar. After a slight break Miss Place duets with some doe voiced feeme fatale who stepped out of a 40s cigarette jingle. Finally Mr. White Chance wraps up this anti-revue with a sax solo extrapolating all the essence of humor and zaniness. For a supposedly hostile, antagonistic group in the vanguard of a non-form, anti-music movement, this bunch certainly has made an appealing disc. Guess they have more than one ethic up their sleeves.

Z



BOBBY BERKOWITZ/BEIRUT SLUMP
(Try Me/Staircase)
Migraine Records

Berkowitz isn't his real name. It's Bobby Swope. Right? Maybe not. Maybe he suddenly got proud of something we didn't know about his family lineage. Maybe it's a cute joke about David "Son of Sam." Anyway, the Teenage Jesus bag all over again. Same label, some identical personnel, and, although this is slightly accessible, one can only envision that this is THE wimp of New York City speaking. It's nothingness might be entertaining if it all didn't mean nothing.

Chris D.

CHINAS COMIDAS EP
Exquisite Corpse records

Christ, you think, not another self-proclaimed woman rock 'poet.' Not after that recent Camille O'Grady folksinger in leather stupidity revuew, not after Patti Smith's total fall in posturizing, you think they'd be ashamed to call themselves writers. But you don't judge rhymes by their meters, and Comidas is certainly not in a self-indulgence race with herself. I mean, she really sounds fucking tough. Running against a wall of sex, violence and death, our daily bread. I don't like the side of her reading poetry while some jazzbo wops the doublebass, it's strictly goatee and coffeehouse set, but the rock side has her sounding like she's fighting, crying and dying with each breath. I bet she can be a captivating live performer, but all these women 'poets' should follow the example of someone like Exene who doesn't have to advertise the fact she writes, just gets up there and DOES IT. Credentials are useless, just be there or fuck off.

Z

JOHN AND DIX DENNEY
(Adulthood/Skateboards to Hell)

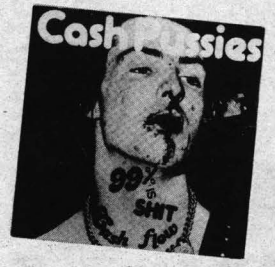
Or two thirds of the legendary Weirdos outfit keep in shape while waiting to come out of hibernation. And take the opportunity to quietlyslip out of the mighty headbanging Weirdo machine to do some personal explorations into less sweaty side alleys. In other words, nothing here to "Do the Dance" to. Unless you're twisted beyond belief and have been gulping that psychedelic poison some idiots are peddling again. Adulthood is a mumbled introspective groan about life's intrinsic misery with a hiccupy muffled soundtrack a la Rolling Stones in the Satanic Majesties tribal jam (can't remember the title but some of the older or more educated ones in the class should know which one).
Skateboards is a disemboweled guitar's last agonizing moments on a background of stainless steel flak. It is also brother Dix's very own contribution to this thorny unclassifiable little package. And stop worrying, you unadventurous fans of the Weirdos' classic period, 'cos a rather rich Bomp package is comin' your way any day.

KICK

"THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND" CRASS
Small Wonder import

A bit of a surprise this. First of all it's a 12 inch 45 with some 18 cuts crammed in it (I call that an album, fuck the speed) but mainly it's the TONE ot this thing that kidn of sweeps me away. As if the definite mellowing and sophisticating (?) of the pat year hadn't happened but instead the bitching, raving and cursing of the initial punk phase had gone on unchecked until THIS. An amazingly hateful, negative, exacerbated collection of foaming wildeyed anarchist threats and insults backed by the most one-dimensional music you'll ever hear. They make Middle Class sound like the Philharmonic. Nothing is left unsoiled: communism, religion, police, punks. This monstrous overkill can make you numb and unaffected within minutes, especially since it's all flung at you like a riot chant amidst machine gun fire. Yet I keep mumbling along to some of the more moderate sentiments expressed in this formless and grotesque manifesto: "Do they owe us a living/course they do/course they do/Do they owe us a living/course they do/course they do/Do they owe us a living/of course they fuckin' do!" (repeat 20 times). Thing is, will they take the next logical step and start shooting at random? A follow up album just wouldn't be the same.

KICK



CASH PUSSIES
(99% is Shit/Cash Flow)
The Label Records import

Meandering mess totally lacking in the usual Dave Goodman dynamic thrusts, parries, and bloody connections. There's something there in the music that could have been awesome had someone only cared enough to adjust a few dials in the mix. But everyone had this all too clever inside joke planned about how they were going to subvert the established pop music business with these cloyingly vapid female voices singing obscene and cynical lyrics about how lucky "Sidney" was to have a front page spread the day he OD'd (among other things). Sid's ramgling discourse (segued into the mix) on the "scum" that is the general public is virtually the only worthwhile thing about this. The other thing is the title (which I love). 99% is Shit. Unfortunately, and no doubt intentionally, the Cash Pussies' 45 is in that percentile.

Chris D.

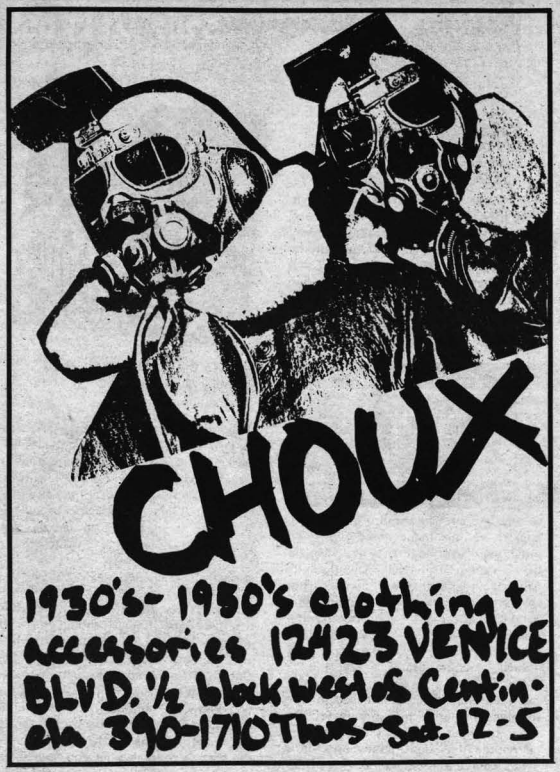
SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES
(Staircase/20th Century Boy)
Polydor import

Attempting a metaphysical hat trick, they forget the rabbit. Gumming up the soundtrack with a gimmick a minute doesn't disguise the fact that the Sioux's neurotic fantasies about spatial relationships really don't (to quote her predecessor in ice, G. Slick) mean shit to a tree. A drag tempo waltz, "Staircase" seems to possess all the pretensions that bands like this allegedly were created to do away with.
Side two might seem like the most energetic, straight forward rock song this band has done (funny it should be an old glitter M Bolan ditty.) But don't harbor any fantasies about 'getting off' — the Queen of Sophomores isn't having any. She'll sing deliberately flat tones to let you know she consistently takes a non-consistent approach. There is a subtle raspberry disclaimer at the very end after the song is over, making you feel like a nerd if you dared to enjoy yourself. One wonders if this band is becoming the very thing they set out to eliminate.

Z

MODEL CITIZENS EP
Spy records

They dress like stockbrokers and society debs on silly cybin. They sound like a cheerleading squad of anglo Yoko's, popping goofballs and getting raped by schizo sophomore poetry majors. In other words deliberately kooky, marimbas click-clacking tinny farfisa organ while the rhythm section goes nuts for polyrhythms. A concise perfect of a perfect society in perfect disarray. Silly, selfindulgent, fascinating, twice as good as, say, Rod Stewart's latest, but then so is a fart in the wind. That they are better than that doesn't really mean they're prime for the adulation of the in-crowd they're so obviously aiming to impress. They still have yet to find a totally distinct voice — theirs has too much David Byrne walking around. You can play count the influences B-52s, Devo, Talking Heads, Zappa, Beefheart, they've all graduated from Euro



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Techno High. Great for a critic's parlor game, but that does not a necessity of existence make. Still, an incredibly impressive revue. Now, when do we get to see them?

Z

R.L. Crutchfield's DARK DAY
HANDS IN THE DARK b/w
INVISIBLE MAN 45 RPM

Synthesizer starts out being picked like an organ in a cheap horror film. In a few seconds you believe it and picture yourself sitting in some attic, where you've been for years with no sight of the outside world. The singer's voice comes in, it's doomed and insidious. Hands in the dark/touch and depart/fingers probe/then return to the glove . . ." You might say the music begins to build, but it doesn't really, just sort of variates slightly, slow and nauseaus. Second side could almost be a continuation of the first. Same slow defeat, only thing different is the beat. "Something's about to disappear," he says. This record is the kind of thing you listen to when the end is imminent. None of the former violent pounding Crutchfield used with D.N.A. — instead a slice of contemporary depletion with blindness. Get this record then go out walking the street pretending you've got it made.

J.C.

THE SKIDS
(Into the Valley/TV Stars)
Virgin Records Import

The opening chords grab you and keep you on the edge pretty much to the end. Simultaneously hummable and hard-core with the so-so production holding this back from being great. Voices don't cut like they should except on the shouted choruses; additional evidence of overproduction being underproduction. The live "TV Stars" can't stand up well, being more of a half-formulated idea than anything else. But despite the Skids' shortcomings, they're keeping a spirit alive that's been burning low the last couple of months.

CHRIS D.

PRE-TEENAGE JESUS
(The Closet, Less of Me, My Eyes)
Ze records import

TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS
(Baby Doll, Freud in Flop, Race Mixing)
Migraine records

BEIRUT SLUMP
(Try Me, Staircase)
Migraine records

The earliest and latest from the queen of grate, Lydia Lunch. 12 inch on Ze is early band with horn honkey James Chance livening up things and this three song is the most varied and listenable set this group has recorded. A good introduction to Lydia's demanding, arrogantly hostile style of tension terror. (The fact that Closet and Less of Me appear on other discs should not discourage. Both are mixed better and sound great, Chance s squeak sax off-setting Lunch squall.) Vastly superior to the Eno compression botch job. "Baby Doll" is the new story—more out of line, more non-tonal, more a progression (or retrogression depending on your viewpoint) towards total anti-music. Downsliding guitars against ominous bass rumbles and the occasional cymbal crash, while in her harshest vocal yet, L.L. terrifies the shit out of cutey poo romance. Side two instrumentals have the same effect as too-much-methedrine induced teeth-grinding-for-hours.

Put on Beirut Slump and I jump off the bandwagon. Lydia pains the guitar in the slide while someone plays phantom of the opera organ and a presence-less Tomata tries too too hard at being the maniac. Maybe the vogue nouveau play it in their lofts and glare at each other for hours but I say silly self-indulgent horror show shit. I'll pretend I'm a reviewer for the straight press and throw in a few cheap shots: "They should include two aspirins with every single. That they succeed magnificently at trying to be non-musical is no major achievement." There, now these people can have another scapegoat to be self-righteous about.

Mr. Lee

TRIBESMAN
(Rockin. Time/Astrodub)
BOA records import

Lightweight but very infectious formula reggae. B side is quite spiffy, with buried vocals, nifty high-pitched organ (or synthesizer) whine lacing it from beginning to end. A perfect soundtrack for a Jamaica-based adventure movie. I keep superimposing a very tasty chase sequence on it, complete with slow motion falls and breath-taking shots of the hills.

CHATTY

RACHEL SWEET
(I Go to Pieces/Who Does Lisa Like)
Stiff import

If you're an avid reader of Slash, you're not supposed to like this. Well, I am but I do, and a lot. Rachel Sweet is no punk (well, she is really, though not in the "Traditional" sense) but she brings as much conviction to Del Shannon's "I Go to Pieces" as say, the Dils do to Roy Orbison's "Only the Lonely." Rachel is very young and she sounds it, but she uses her youth not as an excuse but as just one of many weapons in her vocal arsenal. This is a great record.

Suzi Sixteen

THE PRETENDERS
(Stop Your Sobbing/The Wait)
Real records

If this was 1966 this record would be No. 1. It may still have a chance 13 years later. The lead singer's slightly imperfect, yeraning vocals are the difference between her influence Sandie Shaw (barefoot misfit soul) and contemporary Lulu (bubblegum sumb.) Mabe she's styled pseudo-punk, but this is pop through and through, and a classic example of the genre. It shows its emotions on the table instead of surface sweetening. Spotless Nick Lowe production featuring reverberating folk-rock guitars, memorable double delay vocal hook, and a lesser known Ray Davies song taken to Olympian Heights.

I'm an inherent gloss-hater and I'm impressed so they must have done something right. Side B grit rocker has the right offbeat timing and the proper combination of earthiness and slickness that a prefab construction like Dyan Diamond can only dream about. Class A, totally.

CLB

KUNG TANG
MNW records import

Progressive Swede rock. As boring as it sounds

Z

THE RAINCOATS
(Fairytale in the Supermarket/In Love/ Adventures Close to Home)

Impressive, but it doesn't really gel. The band is new and they sound it. Choppy and crude, they feature a female Cale on scratchy, searing violin – "In Love" is the musical granddaughter of "Heroin." Palmolive ex-Slit clumsily thumps her drums and the singer often sounds like she's talking to herself. Poorly recorded, there is still an undercurrent of neurotic tension running through this record, enough to make it something that refuses to go away. As grimy as its cover, the songs are jagged fragments languidly falling together like a bunch of old newspapers lying on the floor. Possibly recorded a bit prematurely, I'd like to hear what these girls are doing two months from now. Because I can't get a fucking handle on this record, but I know that it's kind of great.

Z

RIK L. RICK
(Meathouse/I got power)
Posh Boy records

B side is a bit too Generation X-like for my taste but Meathouse is rather good, although quite different from the other Negative Trend version. It's less tortured and aggressive, but Rik's voice has been captured better than ever before. Actually, it had never been captured at all! Smooth unobtrusive wall of fuzz throughout. Now give the man a band so we can get some real action.

KICK

THE SCARS

(Horrowshow/Adultery)
Fast Records Import
"Horrowshow" lurches thumping and thudding headlong out of darkness into a kind of bare bulb light, echoing off the tiled walls of modern London catacombs up onto the street. When it hits the surface, it's like that cliche breath of fresh air. Strings get bent backwards over warped frets and something screaming for recognition is yanked bloody and awful out of the singer's uncompromising throat. Music that comes from hanging around claustrophobic mental crypts. Very good therapy for those cathartic bouts with your "inner self".

CHRIS D.

R.L. CRUTCHFIELD'S DARK DAY
(Hands in the Dark/Invisible Man)
Lust/Unlust Music

ARTO/NETO
(Pini, Pini/Malu)
Ze records import

The DNA trio split and recode in a different alignment. Mr. Arto meet Mr. Neto and proceed to confuse with a maybe fake patois voice telling some Brazil type folk tale about lovely girl name Pini who gets split by her husband the bullcow. Accompanied by single cymbal beat and occasional splattering guitar burps. Ha ha ha. "Malu" has a lot of strings rubbing cricket legs against each other while this low disconnected voice intones from a different planet. Maybe I'm intrigued, but not all that really. For avant-thrillists and maybe infuriating for everyone else. Not the case with Mr Crutchfield. He has the surprise wax, coherent in structure, pleasant listening for those who would be disturbed by more than a scratchy annoy.

In other words no shock for shock s sake but a supercool intense – employing full bodied electrode piano on resonance, single simple guitar lines on opposite tangents, and beatnik dream Nancy "Mars" Arlen on understated drums. May be new, young male Nico, imagining the subconscious cries of a mute, easily evoking the eerie, which may not be for your taste if you're in the Sham army, but then these folks aren't trying to uphold their status with that set anyway. For those who live the difference, Dark Day is a suitable soundtrack for mysterious evenings when you need to be alone and intense.

Z

POISON GIRLS/FATAL MICROBES
EP Small Wonder/
Xn Trix records import

Poison Girls don't do anything for me, but I have not tried very hard 'cos I haven't stopped playing the mysterious Fatal Microbes. Their song "Violence grows" is one of the most arresting tunes I have heard this year, a real minute masterpiece that will penetrate you upon first listening. Try it immediately. Their other song is more nouveau traditional but just as good. Could it be the birth of the new and improved X Ray Spex?

KICK

SWELL MAPS
(Dresden Style/Ammunition Train/ Full Moon)
Rather Records/Rough Trade import

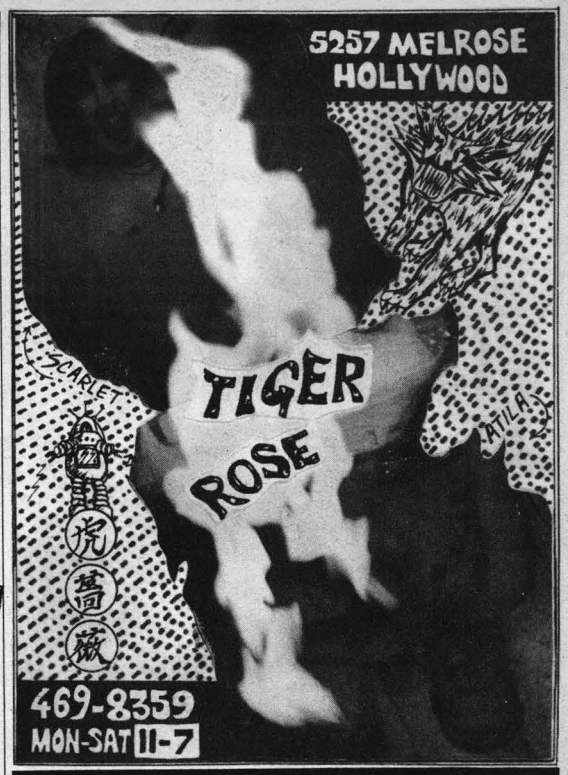
This is what good old rock'n roll can sound like after all the wiring and machinery has been yanked out and left dangling there. Dresden Style is all innards and severed nerves, Ammunition Train is archetypal garage rock brought to perfection cept the lyrics are a long way from the quaint sixties. This band (and many others) may yet bring its aesthetic outlaw status back to rock. Unfortunately the addition of a little private freak-out (Full Moon) detracts from the snotty statement of the 2 main songs. When you become cute and clever, you sure become less disturbing.

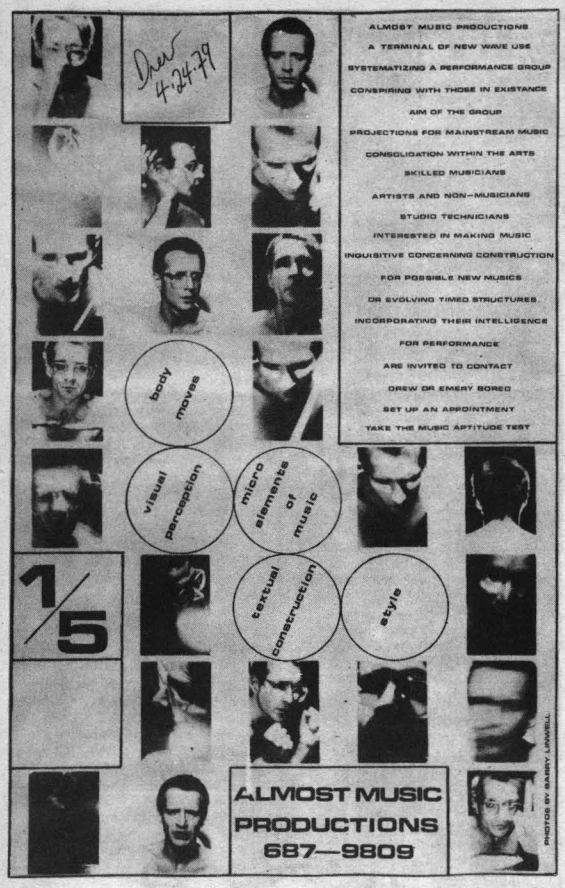
KICK

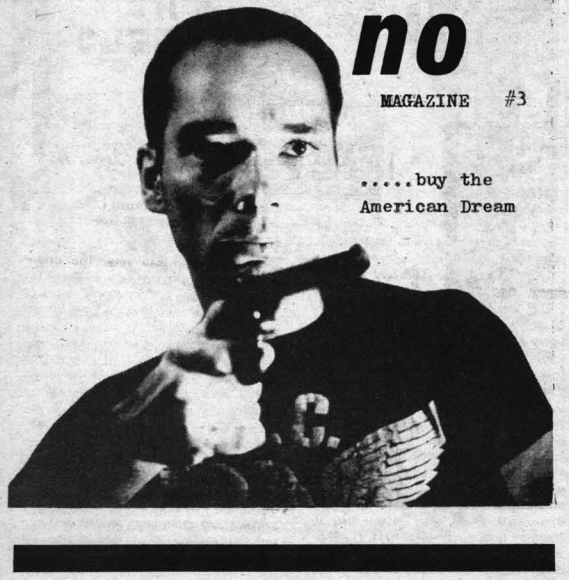
BLACK FLAG EP
SST records

Horray! We got our very own Sham 69. Same hardware clanking behind a real street wise toughie snarling his street wise lyrics. For a first record, it found its goal pretty quickly. Others hesitate, fluctuate between the rock'n roll traditions and the punk barrage, try to fuck around with the vocals, adda depth, all that sissy crap. Black Flag just kick the door off its hinges and run around the room until everything is overturned and ripped. Totally into the holy tradition of the 1 2 3 4 maestros. They do it faultlessly because they believe it a hundred percent, and you can go back to art school. Whatever happened to Skrewdriver?

KICK







THE MOLESTERS
(Commuter Man/Disco Love)
Small Wonder Records import

Mischievous guitars chug lethargically behind humdrum vocals that do get catchy here and there. Manages to say little in the time expended on both sides except that there was an incredible amount of overdubbing. Overdone. However, this does have one of the best sleeves I've seen in months.

Half-Cocked

MAGAZINE
(Rhuthm of Cruelty/TV Baby)
Virgin import

Magazine's talents are undeniable. They know all about structures, atmospheres, image, balance, all these fancy your average punk bunch has never even dreamt about. And they use everything they know. And it seems to work on most people. And me I keep listening and appreciating and admiring and aching to slam something a little more crazed and endearing on the turntable. I don't think I want to know them at all. People who are too sure of themselves give me the creeps.

KICK

THE WALL
(New Way/Suckers/Uniforms)
Small Wonder records import

Political punk rock was a musical style once known for its energy, honesty and urgency. There was a time when this style seemed as if it would become a revolutionary force in modern music. That was before it became diluted and diffused by too many of the groups being derivative think-a-likes and sound-a-likes. Like this one.

CLB

EBBA GRON
Swedish import. No apparent label.

The Swede Pistols. Good for Berlitz students planning to visit Stockholm, but meaningless for everyone else, whose heard the chunky riffing music too many countless times before.

CLB

SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES
(Staircase/20th Centure Boy)
Polydor records import

Intriguing crisscrossing spiral of a riff with lyrics a little too oblique for even this obvious attempt at some hidden personal meaning. About midway the Banshees falter and from then on everything's weak-kneed. Another single which can't compare in fidelity, imagination, or pyrotechnics to their terrifying album. "20th Century Boy" sparks things up a bit but in a nondescript way that's not typical of this band. Why are so many British records nowadays so lacking in energy and that cutting-loose edge?

It's not just this . . . almost everything I've heard lately is in the same mediocre boat. What electricity-eating monster is sapping everyone's strength? Who put out the goddamn fire?

Chris D.

TEENAGE JESUS
(Baby Doll/Race Mixing/Freud in Flop)
Migraine records

Lydia Lunch has her own guitar sound and with five minutes practice I'm sure that any one of us could achieve a similar effect. Does that sound too snobbish? Old Wave? No worse than Teenage Jesus. I still get off on their self-image even though this is more like baby squall; cold, egocentric beatnikisms that kill humor and end up going nowhere.

Chris D.

REZILLOS
(Cold Wars/Flying Saucer Attack)
Sire

Live recording and postmortem for a band that never did much for me, their tight amphetamine pop-punk seeming a bit too superficial and clean for my liking. This doesn't do much to change my mind, sounding like it was recorded from the back of an airplane hanger, the Rezillos go one last time in their home town. The crowd is ecstatic, they play incredibly well, but the overall effect is that the Rezillos are one defunct band I'll shed no tears for.

Z

X-RAY SPEX
(Highly Inflammable/Warrior in Woolworths')
EMI

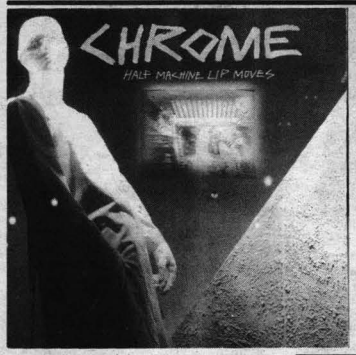
Through lilting clouds of syncopating horns and phase shifted organs steps our sweet cockney angel to tell us of romance crumbling under pretentious role playing. The music might be sprightly, but the message is as refreshing as a rotting corpse. Once again Poly's schizo sensibilities rear their dual head – she satirizes the very life she leads. This post-breakdown Styrene is going in a more "musical," less grating direction. The diehards will probably bellow 'sell-out' and refuse to follow, but guess whose loss that is.

Z

THE BRAINIACS EP
Mental Health records

Local group #84 goes vinyl (yellow). Main problem is that either they know too much or they know too litt e Technically way above average, but it dilutes itself by a constant lack of focus. Each song starts neatly and promisingly then falls back into a more predictable groove. The exception is "Stummed", which could take off to great heights of tension but gives up a few years from the start.

KICK



ALBUMS

KIM FOWLEY
SUNSET BOULEVARD
Illegal records import

Get out the bags of garlic and the crucifix here comes monster face with his latest. Criticizing this would be as easy as shooting a lame duck tied to a post. Actually they do shoot horses, don't they, and this one's track record is quickly being reduced to a no-run, no-contest, so use your imagination and act accordingly. This is a textbook in form without content — glittering productions waiting for a vocalist to step in — one was never found. Sunset Boulevard is hilarious — pompous Kim Adam meets nubile blond Eve and walks the garden of Strip, both ego-boosting and posing for each other. What's that sound? Me retching in toilet. Take it off, please, I'm sorry master, I'll lick your boots, I'll comb your pubic hair, I'll personnaly wipe your nose, anything, just TAKE IT AWAY!!

Dorian Grey

ROCK N ROLL HIGH SCHOOL SOUNDTRACK
songs by Ramones, Eno, Paley Bros., Nick Lowe, etc.
Sire records

Why does everything turn out this way? So diluted that it makes no sense to even bother. Most of this has been strained through a sugary sieve that stinks of MOR manipulation. What happened to the good, old Roger Corman of the 50s with his genuinely savage satires such as "Bucket of Blood," "Attack of the Crab Monsters," and "Not of this Earth"? When you realize that the director of this movie had to explain to Roger the difference between disco and rock and roll you get the drift. The sole exception here is the live five song medley that showcases the Ramones at full concentration.

Half-Cocked

MAGAZINE
SECOND HAND DAYLIGHT
Virgin import

This record gains after a few listenings. As opposed to some records where that's a fruitful proposition (Magazine's first album included), you realize that's just what you're supposed to do with this stuff. In other words: see me feel me hear me and my complex operatic exploits. Sorry to say that what came off as cool intelligent hatred on the first album comes off as forced obscurity on two thirds of this. As for the other third, it's better than almost anything around. It seems that sometimes they can't help but be good, other times they drown themselves in the attempt. At his worst Devoto sounds like a fake dramatist trying to be the enfant terrible, other times you get a glimpse of his drugged casual agony, something which makes you want to crawl inside your TV set and visit the demons that live inside. If you can wade through the self consciously artistic mistakes and influences (Pink Floyd, Roxy Music, David Bowie — "I Wanted Your Heart" is direct from Alladin Sane), you might be able to use this as a primer for more original and immediate things to come.

JC

THE UNDERTONES
Sire records

Musically the Undertones take up where the Pistoleros left off in the teen anthem department. Other bands competently chronicle the dilemmas of life in the urban zoo with as much or even more venom, but these boys can actually play their banjos. Also, John O'Neill must be the Brian Wilson of the New Wave, having jotted down some of the toughest, stripped-down melody lines heard this side of Radar Records. This album is full of them, spewing out one after another like bingo balls; 'Jump Boys', 'Jimmy Jimmy', 'Here Comes The Summer' (nothing to do with Jerry Keller) and 'Girls Don't Like It' are all his and all great for relieving gas-line tensions or pummelling your girlfriend's cat with a baseball bat after you've had that final showdown . . . good, all-purpose, unforgettable riffs.

My only problem with The Undertones is rationalising the high contralto of Feargal's vocals — until the seminal 'Teenage Kicks' boisterously elbowed its way into the British singles charts and the pop press hurriedly started making up for lost column inches, I really thought their lead singer was a girl. 'Course he's not and he'd very likely punch out anyone who confronted him with such an opinion, but I think some of the songs would have little dramatic clout if they were sung with a harder edge or ahuskier thrall. "Lilting" new wave music somehow offends the pleasure zone a tad.

But the album, right down to its characteristically cheapskate Sire sleeve job, is an absolutely classic of charm, style and economy — with strong crossover potential for Billboard subscribers.

MORK WILLIAMS

"HALF MACHINE LIP MOVES"
CHROME
Siren Records

A more professional outing on this aggregation's third offering. A noisy rocker blows the first grooves off the disc, but subsides into an electronic mishmash that is recommended for those listeners who have the time for protracted study. Not bad if you're alone and have a lot of your usual introspect out of the way. Tiny bits of jagged rock continue to surface, keeping the less patient amongst us satisfied until we've grown accustomed to what's inaccessible here. Warrants further investigation.

CHRIS D.

BUSINESS UNUSUAL
ZigZag-Cherry Red Records Import

A very uneven batch of single sides, some of which were available here at one time or another. Rocking side 1 lets loose the U.K. Subs. Leyton Buzzards, Dave Goodman (in an abominable mix compared to the single), the Vice Creems etc., to do further damage. And they set a torch to everything while water-on-the-brain groups like the Dole simper around withing they had the guts. Avant side 2 starts off with one of the best cuts, the Tights' "China's Eternal" and most else, except for the marrow-chilling "United" by Throbbing Gristle, walks in its shadow. A fair collection . . . an okay assortment as these repackagings go.

CHRIS D.

WAVES, VOLUME 1
Bomp records

Greg Shaw has a very precise vision of what he likes to hear — what amazes me is how many bands fit the bill. I never realized there were so many british invasion influenced mohaired-suited Rickenbacker-playing nice vocal harmony groups around, enough to fill every 60s wet dream. And ther lies the problem with this collection — it sounds as if it were released ten years ago. And it's supposed to represent the best of NOW — well now is kind of brittle and angry and bored and frustrated, now kind of rants and is crude, but you'd never know it listening to this. The cover liner notes informs us that there is a great diversity of styles — wrong. Other than the Last's garage experiment, the Human Switchboard's Minnie Mouse tinkering, JJ180's short psychedelic burst and Blitzkreig Bop's original crude version of their first greatly overlooked single, this album has an alarming tame routineness to it. The Marshall have a great drum beat, but the singer sounds too much like Billy Joe Royal. The Flashcubes are incredibly dull wimps, lamely singing about some equally dull girl.Permanent Wave should permanently dissolve — but why go on. You know Bomp!s taste. If you go in for clean pop harmonies and 12 string guitars you'll love this record. And you'll love Greg, now you two get together and leave me alone, there's something slightly dangerous I'd like to do and I know you wouldn't approve, so go listen to the tape deck in the Mercedes and I'll never see you later. A few la las won't kill me, but they might put me to sleep.

Honest Abe

"ESKIMO"
THE RESIDENTS
Ralph records

I hope you are familiar with the music of the RESIDENTS because I don't have time or space or the brains to explain it. Just go get some and listen to it. Then get ready for the new releases from the RESIDENTS and SNAKEFINGER. First is ESKIMO from the former. ESKIMO is a wonderful album. If you spent your youth in Aunt Nancy's attic buried alive in NATIONAL GEOGRAPHICS you will go wild for this album. It speaks not in the language of technological man but in the language of cold survival. It is anthropolitical in the best sense of the word. This is not PUNK music. It is an accomplished vision of POLAR REALITY AND RESIDENCY. An apparent contention of the RESIDENTS is that vision and survival will out over identity...and three or four cute boys with guitars could only dilute what they have called up in ESKIMO. I won't describe it further, you should hear it

At this time SNAKEFINGER's album is still being built, but if the first tracks he has down are an indication of what's to come I'll buy the first album and listen to a fine pop mode.

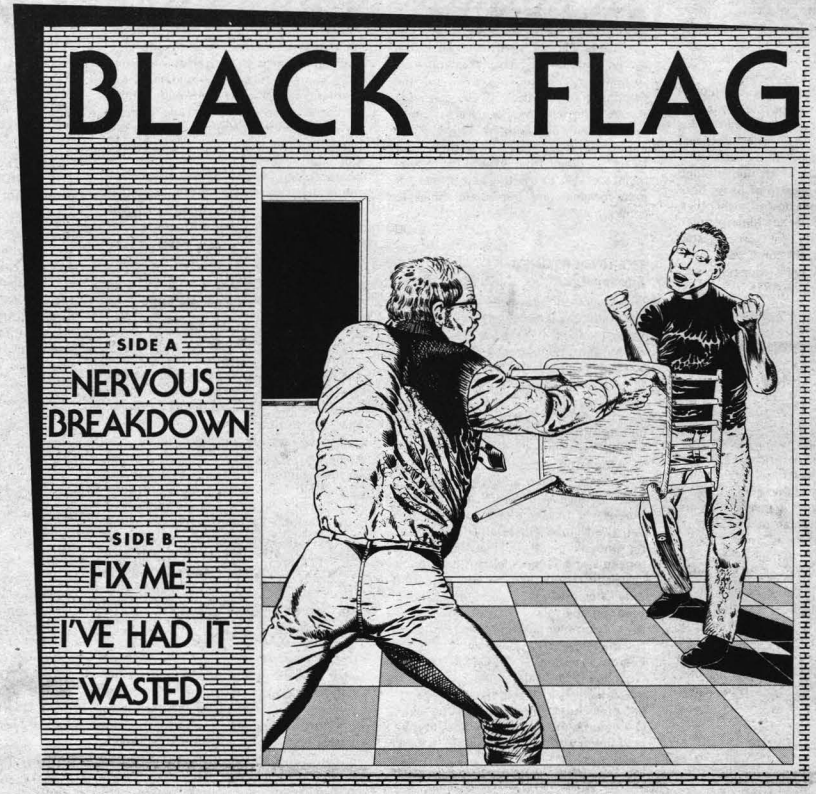
· PANTER ·

"A FACTORY SAMPLE"
(Joy Division, The Durutti Column, John Dowie, Cabaret Voltaire)
Factory records import

Here come the cold yets. The urban industrial technology-saturated commandos of an imminent musical 1984. The grey numbers that make Devo and other pranksters sound like chorus girls. They only exception is the Dowie character who has studied the Bonzo Dog Band very carefully. Best of the three others is Joy Division, with a couple of gripping jerky numbers that will make you dance and shiver at the same time. Definitely for existential androids and other suffering mutations. The Durutti column produce a more fluid sound but the ominous heavyhanded lyrics of alienation and hopelessness effectively prevent any attempt to escape and trip out. Cabaret Voltaire are as charming and jolly as usual.

KICK

BLACK FLAG



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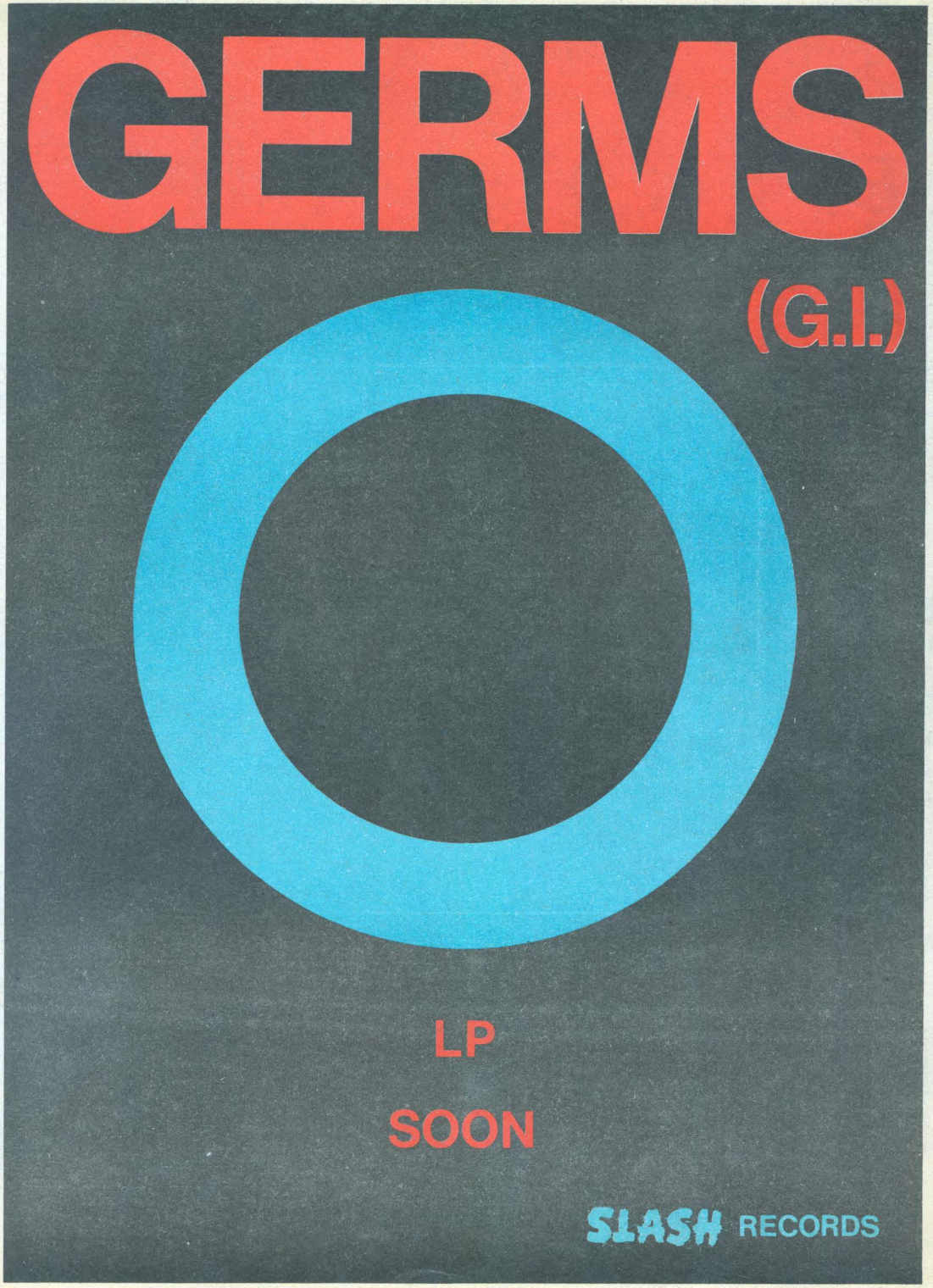
G.PANTER '79.
O.K. JIMBO she's INNARESTED... DON't BLOW IT.
this is like MY PAD MAN.
JIMBO: The HERO & idiot who dares to FALL IN LOVE At the end of the 20th century.
J.JIMBO
OH YES! MARS DEFINITELY NEEDS WOMEN.
DO WOMEN NEED MARS?!
I GOTTA KNOW,
the ANSWER IS OCCASIONALLY.
ARE YOU A BOHEMIAN ? I WAS HOPING FOR A Bohemian.
MARS NEEDS WOMEN?
JIMBO! SNAP OUT OF IT!!!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SLASH

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 7 AUGUST 1979 ONE DOLLAR • U.K. 80p

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GARY WEIS

THE READERS' CHART

This is what you oddballs have picked as your favorite records of the past few weeks. Of course there are a couple of smartasses who thought it would be cute to falsify the chart by sending as many replies as possible. Not that smart though as they kept using the same dirty typewriter or the same pen on all their entries. They were found out (one of us used to be a private dick who specialized in handwriting and typewriters), their cards thrown in the garbage and their efforts wasted. Come on guys, let the kids decide. This is a chart for and by the people, not a few rich brats with nothing better to do than type endless lists of the same records over and over again.

TOP TEN SINGLES (OR EPS)

1 RASTAMAN LIVE UP (Bob Marley & the Wailers)
2 THE PRISONER (D.O.A.)
3 SHE (The Misfits)
4 STRANGE TOWN (The Jam)
5 BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (The Pop Group)
6 THE SLEEPERS EP
7 PRESSURE DROP (The Clash)
8 NEW STAR (Tapper Zukie)
9 SURVIVE (The Bags)
10 OUT OF VOGUE (The Middle Class)

Four new entries here (underlined). Possible contenders in next chart (all immediately following Middle Class) are the Negative Trend EP, the latest X Ray Spex, the Misfits EP, the Black Flag EP and the Jah Wobble single.)

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1 INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL (Stiff Little Fingers)
2 ELECTRIFY ME (The Plugz)
3 NATURALITY (The Gladiators)
4 GERM FREE ADOLESCENTS (X Ray Spex)
5 ALL MOD CONS (The Jam)
6 DREADLOCKS SATISFACTION (Trinity)
7 PETER GABRIEL (Peter Gabriel)
8 ARISE (The Abyssinians)
9 AFRICA STAND ALONE (Culture)
10 PUBLIC IMAGE (Public Image)
11 THE BELLS (Lou Reed)

Only one new entry here. Everything pretty much the same. Out of the chart but close are the Clash's 1 st, Costello's Armed Forces, the Yes L.A. compilation and the Saints' Prehistoric Sounds. (The Saints???? Good for you!)

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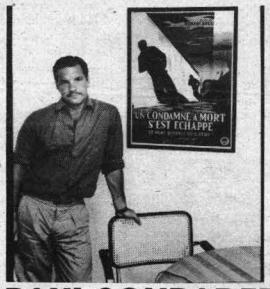
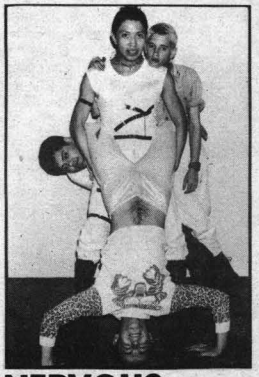


PAUL SCHRADER

PENETRATION



NERVOUS GENDER

NICO

X INTERVIEW

LOS ANGELES BAND UPDATE

JIMBO

...AND THE USUAL FEATURES

PUBLISHED & EDITED BY Steve Samiof & Melanie Nissen SENIOR EDITORS Claude Bessy & Philomena MANAGING DIRECTOR Robert Biggs CONTRIBUTORS David Allen, Will L'Amato, Judith Bell, David Brown, Bo Clifford, Kerry Colonna, Christ Desjardins, Gary Panter, Gorilla Rose, Mark Williams, Z FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT Tony D. SLASH Magazine is published monthly by SLASH PO BOX 48888, L.A. CA 90048. All contents Copyright 1979 by SLASH.

L O C A L E X C R E M E N T

Asshole-of-the-month award goes to the bitter old closet case that wrote "A Conservative Looks at a Punk Rock Party" in the latest free issue of Gosh! magazine.

Behind a supposedly 'cute' wimpy style of alledgedly witty writing, the author goes out of his way to ridicule and degrade those who refuse to be cultural stereotypes. In particular he saves a large dose of venom for Phranc of Nervous Gender, calling her a hermaphrodite among other things.

Naturally he never bothered to ask her why she prefers not to be one of those cuddly plastic Baby Dolls he sticks his withered conservative pee-pee in — the rejection of feminine cliche obviously pushed too many of this man's buttons — we should push his face in too, might give him that new outlook he so desperately needs. What is even more ironic is that this outraged diatribe is preceded by an article that claims to be a look at the "New Wave" concerts in town. It begins by saying that one can only really hear this music in England — and proceeds to list some New Wave favorites as Graham Parker, The New Barbarians and the Beach Boys! Christ! Gosh! is a free magazine — feel free to take every copy you see and throw it away...

The Germs (hurray! groan!) have completed their studio sessions for the upcoming eagerly awaited LP Slash records. Produced by ex-Runaway part time Pistolette Joan Jett, this awesome monument (cool it! Ed.) to the genuine insanity of some of us should be available late August. Throughout the proceedings the Germs proved to be the tireless dedicated workers we all knew they really were. The package will include around 17 songs, the complete lyrics (worthy of a hardcover numbered edition all by themselves) and the definitive version of Shutdown. Following this shimmering offering to world culture we all feel an unlimited grant from the National Endowment of the Arts is the least this country should present us with. Of course, we will no doubt be seriously disappointed very soon.

MR. CRASH

It's been a long time since we've looked at other mags and rags dedicated to what's new and shaking the old world. So, briefly: FLIPSIDE has come out with its best issue yet (the one with Exene on the cover). Their stand is as uncompromising as ever, the picture reproduction is good and the gossip is still the best. A real gutsy stubborn little mag. If only every local scene was covered so thoroughly....NO magazine has come out with its long awaited 3rd issue. Silk screen cover, Suicide, U.X.A. and Holly & The Italians interviews, poetry and terminal graphics. I like to leave copies of NO on the counter of health food stores, awareness centers and other gentle living hang outs. A new San Francisco/L.A. paper called DAMAGE has just appeared. Many band interviews, a look at subversive art, a study on promoters, arty/punky cut ups and lay outs, not bad for newcomers although I wish it had more personality and subjective writing. Out of Williamstown (Massachusetts) comes HIGH ROLLER, a pretty intelligent look at the new culture. Lots to read, a bit academic and dry but the heart is in the right place. An unlikely but most welcome publication called REGGAE NEWS comes from San Fracisco. A bit muddled in their endorsement of everything that's reggae but still useful. In the xeroxed wonders department we've run into HONOLULU BABYLON, a very funny new wave fanzine from you guessed where, full of contempt for the paradise they're stuck in and the music that gets played out there in Don Ho country. Then coming from some forsaken hole in Florida there is the prolific MOUTH OF THE RAT, another raving and geographically resentful sheet that makes you glad you live where you do. These guys REALLY have it hard. Mouth of the Rat is free. Finally (for today) there's something (also from S.F.) called PUNK GLOBE but we haven't seen it yet. And don't forget: if the reading material that's available around you leaves you dissatisfied, angry, let down or culturally hungover, it just might be time to start your own rag. At first, there's really nothing to it.

Bit of a rumble the other night at new hot spot in town the Hong Kong Cafe when a couple of Weirdos challenged a couple of Mau Mau's to a showdown. It may have had something to do with an old accusation made by the Mau Mau's that the Weirdos were a bunch of has beens, but everybody was too drunk to know for sure. Vague punches were traded, threats were exchanged, Rick Wilder's girl friend Charlotte tried to calm everyone down (see picture), later there even was a car chase and some bloody noses but the incident was over the next day after everyone involved agreed that things had gotten out of hand and made peace over the telephone.

More Routine Violence Dept: NO Magazine Magnate Bruce had an argument with a glass door following a Mau Mau (not again) related gathering and lost. His punching arm was cut up so deeply it required a couple of hours of surgery before he was allowed to go home and lick his wounds. Other gentle being Helen Killer (Germs entourage and menace in her own right) also met with recalcitrant glass panes at a recent Human Hands/B People/Nervous Gender private show and suffered various cuts on her foot. Seems even her heavy duty cowboy boots were not enough to prevent serious lacerations. Next day same Helen was roughed up by minority-oriented gang members. No tears please. Helen herself sees it as your totally average daily lot of incidents for anyone who lives on the fringe.

It's time to take a stand — David Forest of the Whiskey has already taken his. No first generation punk bands will play the Whiskey without a recording contract (an obvious ploy — the screamers black Randy?) So when we go to see Penetration, the Damned and 999 for exorbitant prices we will have to sit through this weeks nauseating power sop band. This situation has got to stop: in case you were wondering why bother with the place, its simply that the bands you know and love need the exposure playing a place like the Whisky gives them — its also a chance to hear the bands play with decent sound on a real stage with real lighting — you know optimum conditions. Thus call the Whisky every day and demand to see the bands you want to see. Write — circulate petitions. Boycott, Picket. In case you don't know what bands can't play there, here is a partial list: X, Plugs, Bags, Controllers, Alley-Cats, etc. ad. infinitum. All right you lazy fat asses, get up and do something. It means a whole lot more than throwing bottles in front of Club 88. Let's see if you have any real power or if you're just worthless rich kids with the stereo at home.

WEIRDO (Dix) vs. MAU MAU (Rick). Photo Philomena

Those who think the homo population's musical taste runs the gamut from disco to disco are in for a rude surprise. The One Way, a somewhat murky leather bar on the wrong side of town has live d.j.s who, instead of playing "Ring My Bell" and Donna Summers, feature a heavy dose of — hold your breath — P-U-N-K. (You can exhale now, if it's worth it.) Typical fare the evening we checked it out: Siouxsie, P.I.L., Eno, Devo, Ramones, 999, Bags, Wire. The clientele looks like dress extras for the Village People, but the music's great, the beer's cold and some of the songs take on amazingly different connotations in this environment — hearing Devo sing "You got your — left hand, you got your — right hand" as a man grovelled on the floor, licking another man's cowboy boots created a special new significance for the lyrics. Definitely for those with a lack of homophobia — the place has possibilities: bring your own party and it could be fun. Rumour has it the owner wants to open a punk/leather after hours club. The idea makes the head swim.

THE DILS. Photo M. Jang

THE DILS VS SLASH: Last chapter of a non-existenc war. It had to happen, and we're glad it did. Chip Kinman of the Dils pais us a surprise visit at the lush Slash headquarters, intent on clarifying once and for all the rather confused relationship between this rag and his band. Looks like we somehow became a playform for various anti-Dils attacks, some emanating from our ranks, some from our Search and Destroy San Francisco supplement. More than once the Dils' sincerity of purpose was questionned, and they took it to be the result of a general Slash policy. It took hours to assure Chip that appearances were not what they seemed and that our openplatform policy had been the cause of this pseudo vendetta. Chip also seemed convinced that LA audiences were distrustful of every word they would ever utter again, which we assured him was not necessarily the case (see readers' letters of the past two or three months). We finally agreed that the best way to terminate the matter would be for the Dils to play this town again and see for themselves that there was more to the new music and new audiences than bitchiness being flung across printed pages. And so expect a mid-summer Dils concert, one not connected with the Moody Park 3 Benefit organizers (who Chip professed a profound disgust in) or any other political cause that might send anyone into fits of reactionary paranoia.

As to the well publicized price scandel of the Clash thing in Santa Monica, Chip realistically stated that "we change this kind of thing whenever we have the power to, but we don't have the power to every time". Fair enough? (PS: the Spy Records Dils EP, which is to be recorded on the East Coast at the end of their tour, will most likely include "National Guard", "Gimme a Break" (dedicated to us??), "Not Worth It" and "Love House". And I for one can't wait to hear some of their new tunes never before performed in L.A., such as "Poor Woman", "Red Rockers Rule" (still the Dils, innit??), "Golden Gate", "Sound of the Rain" or "Before the Law". I hope we all find more worthy enemies in the future. This was Kick speaking.)

Getting-ever-so-younger Tomata Of The Plenty threw his annual birthday party a few Sunday afternoons ago in a remote West Hollywood public park. Plenty of vino and other liquid delicacies flowed as punkettes spent most of their time getting their spiked heels out of the soft turf and punks disentangling their spiked mops from low branches. It looked like something Fellini would have invented, so stunning was the contrast between the bucolic surroundings and the scattered groups of greenish night creatures littering the area. The juiced up mexican parks and recreation official in charge of the 2 acres in question was not amused (what do they wear fucking helmets for anyway? Falling walnuts??). Obviously not his idea of what daytime boozers should look like. Next time wear overalls and hard hats and pretend you're a City Council delegation doing a routine investigation of the Garden of Eden! As Panter would say: "We declare the remaining years of this decade to be our official amusement park". (Very approximate quote) Speaking of Panter (Jimbo's creator for all you ignorami), the man has recently brought the art of yandalism to a new height by spontaneously spray-painting his own car with unsightly scribbles and other defacing features. The retail value of the vehicle is of course now close to zero, but Gary sees it as mainly "an other vote for rapid transit." Partner in crime Jay Concom followed the trend and sprayed big fat unsightly slogans on his car like "La Bamba", "Well, La De Da" and some colorful sketches of his genitals. A good way to brighten up the traffic lands, and of course you didn't do it, some little hoods in your neighborhood did. Officer, can't we do something about law and order?

FASHION POINT: THE "LITTLE RICHARD LOOK" (CIRCA 1958)

TRUDIE

Wayne of Club 88 reports three broken pool tables, 52 demolished pool cues and "over fifty missing balls". (What do you guys do? Eat them? Stuff them in your pants?) That's all in addition to numerous smashed glasses and a large crater kicked in the wall. May we suggest as a more viable demonstration of selfassurance the placing of plastic explosives in a Kim Fowley burger, or the relentless harassment of unsympathetic radio programmers? (This was public service announcement No. 279).

Only in So. Calif: A new game was invented at Maicol Sinatra (Extremes) party: Pool hopping. Objective: Find apartment with swimming pool, remove clothes, jump in and swim around until startled building manager discoveres naked mutants thrashing around in the chlorine. Among the participants in this water answer to streaking were Screamer Du Plenty, Nervous Gender Phranc, and raven-haired Jenny Lens documented it on film for a disbelieving future.

TRUDY'S BARFDAY CELEBRATION
by Hook Iswell

Right where Ocean Park Blvd. peters into kelp and smashed beer bottles, an assemblage of punkish pariahs gathered in celebration of the birthday of one Trudy, twenty years old that Tuesday, May 22. Trusty reporter, I was the first to arrive. Anon came Paul of the Screamers wit his goil, and I was dispatched to buy intoxicants for the fete. When I returned the notables were oozing over the picknick tables near the children's playground: Darby and Pat of the Germs, Di Di of UXA, KK of the Screamers, Sheri the Penguin, ex-Runaway Joan Jett, the dipso-dizzy Rosetta, and other Untouchables too skum-struck to mention.

Two hours late, Trudy arrived in a pink cotton dress with lacework pleats. In her freckled paw she held a parasol to shield her from the sun's effrontery. I told her she reminded me of Henry James. "Who's he?" she inquired. "A writer." She then asked: "Did he used to wear dresses like this?"

KK produced a picknick basket filled with imitation mayonaise, jaundiced mustard, simulated white bread, and lethal lunchmeats: a corpse's idea of Soul Food. The food was quickly devoured as the stench of urine wafted from the restrooms in whose dusky recesses slavered the sperm-suckers. Surfers skulked at the outskirts, hugging their skateboards like teddy-bears. One particularly ill-bred surfer (a redundancy?) told sweet Rosetta she was ugly and menaced her with his wheeled plank, primitive as his sodden brain. Beneath the stunted palms sundry vagrants had parked their shopping cart mobile-homes filled with old shoes, plastic trains, crushed beer cans, spatulas and filthy oddiments. The bums sprawled across the picknick grounds in muscatel delirium, dreaming about used-to-be's that never were, while the punks achieved their own amalgamated highs, formulating never-to-be's-whenever-with-whoever-fuck you.

The booze and poison ran out so the merry-makers moved down to the water's edge. Cries arose for rum and coke. Rosetta lay insensible on the blanket: too much too fast. Someone slipped a sand crab in her crotch and she said: "Feel kind of good." She then kissed the little bugger. In a fit of envy one thin hobledehoy grabbed the crab and stomped it into a mass of jelly and shell. Fully clothed, several people ran into the cold water. Two punkettes even wore bikinis.

Skiles and Karen presented Trudy with a cake, which was heart-shaped, marbled with pink-bloody streaks, and emblazened with a cross. Trudy ripped off a chunk and there was a tampax inside. Sheri the Penguin, up to her usual mischief, siezed two handfulls of cake and attacked Trudy, knocking her to the ground and smearing the pink and brown mash over her face and hair. Rosetta was carried off to the bathroom puking her surfeit of liquor. Things were moving along nicely. Some rollipathetic machoman on roller skates became indignant, punched out a few of the party goers, a small riot ensued, and the festivities moved to West Hollywood, where the happy-go-lucky boys and girls proceeded to demolish the neighborhood. Ho hummm.

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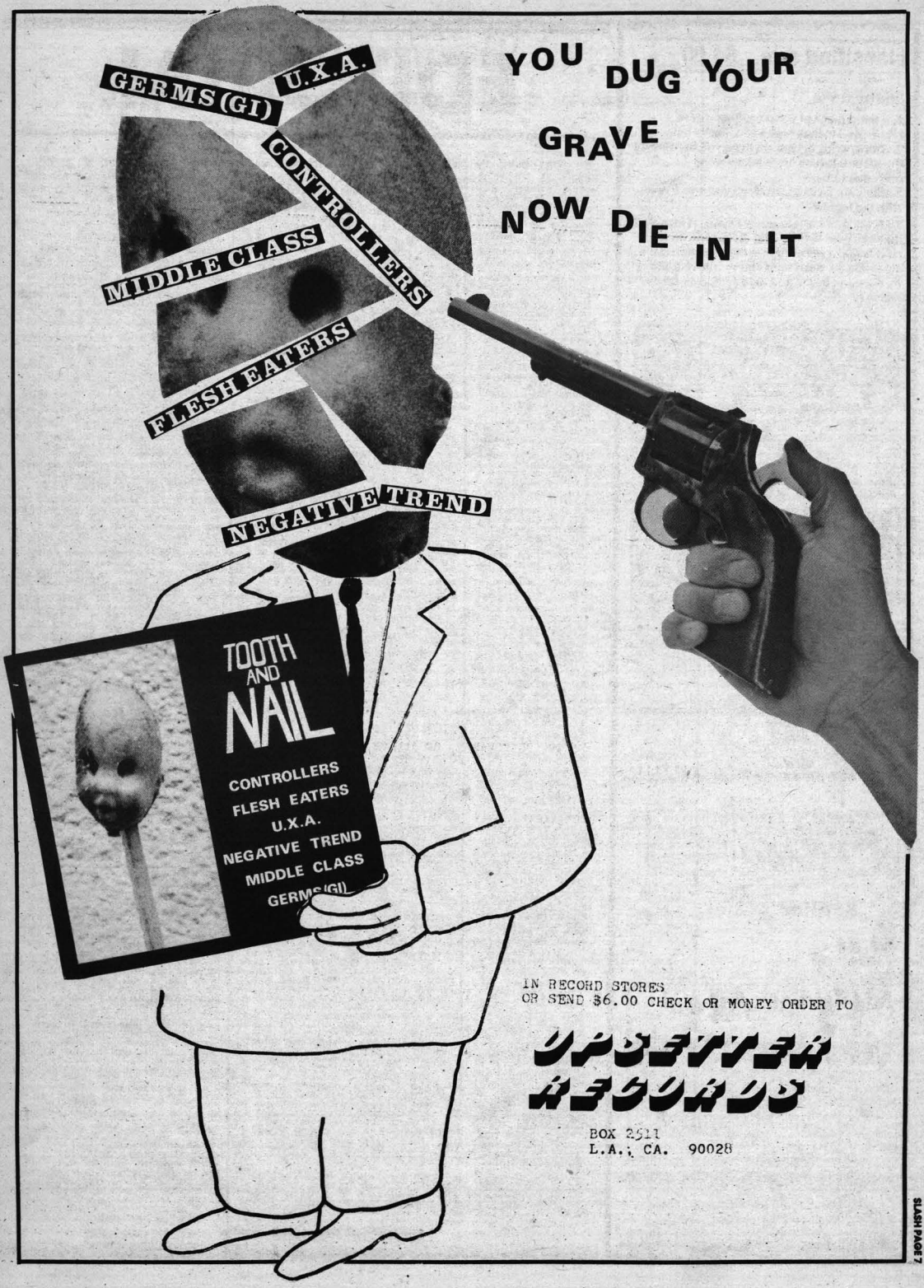
EDITORIAL

SO THEY WANT AN EDITORIAL??! OUR READERS WANT AN EDITORIAL, OUR ENEMIES WANT AN EDITORIAL, MY MOM WANTS AN EDITORIAL, LINDA RONDSTADT WANTS AN EDITORIAL, THE VATICAN PRAYS FOR AN EDITORIAL (SEEMS THEY'RE VERY KEEN ON THE "CATHOLIC DAMAGE" CONCEPT WE CARELESSLY TOYED WITH ONCE - THEIR PR PEOPLE FEEL IT JUST COULD BE THE BREAKTHRU THEY'VE BEEN NEEDING), MY DOG SPOTS WANTS AN EDITORIAL AND SOME OF ITS FLEAS WOULDN'T MIND ONE (THE OTHERS DO NOT CARE, THEY ONLY READ FLIPSIDE). LOOKS LIKE EVERYBODY'S MISSING THE FIRE AND THE BRIMSTONE, THE CURSES AND THE PROPHECIES THAT USED TO GREET THEM ON PAGE 2 OR 3. WE ROUTINELY THREATENED THE REST OF THE WORLD WITH TOTAL WARFARE, SLIPPED A MANIFESTO IN BETWEEN EVERY TWO LINES, REGULARLY ANNOUNCED THE IMMINENT END OF MUSIC-AS-WE-KNOW-IT (AND OTHER FORMS TOO), NOMINATED A THOROUGHLY UNKNOWN COMBO AS THE ULTIMATE-ARTISTS-OF-ALL-TIMES-WITH-NO-POSSIBLE-SUCCESSORS, PROMISED BODILY INJURIES AND DAMNATION AFTER DEATH TO ANYONE WHO WOULDN'T SUBSCRIBE, SPIKE THEIR HAIR OR REACH NIRVANA AFTER ONE SPIN OF "GARAGELAND", WE CHEERFULLY MADE A RACKET OF APOCALYPTIC PROPORTIONS EVERY TIME A FIFTH-RATE TAMBOURINE PLAYER SOLD OUT, ANOTHER MAG PUT A QUESTION MARK IN THE WRONG PLACE OR ANOTHER VINYL PUSHER ISSUED A SINGLE TWO MONTHS BEHIND SCHEDULE, AND EVERYBODY WAS HAPPY! SLASH WAS REGULARLY OPENING ITS BIG MOUTH AND EVERYTHING WAS ALL RIGHT WITH THE WORLD, BECAUSE WE WERE THERE TO SAY THAT NOTHING WAS. SPOKESMAN, VANGUARD MOUTHPIECE, FINGER ON THE PULSE OF THE GENERATION, MINORITY REPRESENTATIVE CREST OF THE WAVE AND BURSTING POINT OF THE ABCESS, ALL THAT STUFF. THEN NO SWEATY RED-FACED EDITORIALS FOR 3 OR 4 ISSUES IN A ROW AND IT'S GLOOM CITY, UNSPOKEN FEARS OF SLOW AND CUNNING SELL OUT, RUMORS OF HIDDEN PROFITS, LETTERS OF RESIGNATION FROM OUR PRINTER AND SUICIDE NOTES FROM LONELY READERS IN ALASKA AND WARSAW. WHICH TO OUR POPULARITY-ORIENTED-WHENEVER-THEY-ARE-NOT-TOO-FOGGED-IN MINDS SLOWLY SPELLS : IT'S EDITORIAL TIME AGAIN. PASS THE BUCKET OF BRIMSTONE AND THE CARDBOARD LIGHTNING STREAKS, BRING THE BAZOOKA OUT OF THE ATTIC AND WATCH THEM MISSILES WOOOSH TO THEIR UNSUSPECTING TARGETS. PROBLEM IS, WHAT OR WHO ARE WE EXPECTED TO WORK OVER THIS TIME? POWER POP PASSED AWAY VERY QUIETLY AS A BLOATED CONCEPT OUGHT TO, RECORD COMPANIES STILL HAVE NOT BEGGED FOR FORGIVENESS AND CLEMENCY BUT BY NOW EVEN LITTLE OLD LADIES THAT READ THE L.A. TIMES HAVE FATHOMED HOW HOPELESS AND UN-HIP AND WHAT A BORE MOST OF THEM ARE SO WHY WASTE AMMUNITION POUNDING OUT CLICHES ?, BAND WAGGON JUMPERS JUMPED OFF A FEW STATIONS AGO AFTER REALIZING THAT IF THERE WERE MEGABUCKS IN PUNK IT WAS BETTER HIDDEN THAN THE ATLANTIS AND A COLLEGE EDUCATION WAS A USEFUL THING AFTER ALL, CLUB OWNERS WITH THE SOUL OF GROCERS..... HOLD IT! I BELIEVE THE WORD "PUNK" WAS USED SOME TWENTY WORDS AGO.... YES, IT WAS. WELL, THAT LIL' OL' WORD HAS BEEN DANGLED IN FRONT OF OUR NOSES QUITE A LOT LATELY: NOT AS A COMPLIMENT, NOT AS AN INSULT, BUT AS AN ACCUSATION. AS A SYMBOL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT WE HAVE SUPPOSEDLY DEFILED. SEE THIS MONTH'S LETTERS. WE ARE GUILTY OF HAVING SLIPPED UN-KOSHER MATERIAL IN OUR ONCE PURE AND INSPIRED PAGES. WE HAVE REVIEWED AND OCCASIONALLY APPROVED OF DECADENT, ARTY, PRETENTIOUS, ENTERTAINING AND REVISIONIST RECORDS, PERFORMANCES AND PRIVATE OPINIONS. WE ARE TRAITORS, OR FOOLS, OR FAKES, OR COWARDS, OF ALL OF IT AND THE SHAM ARMY IS GOING TO GET US. WHAT DO WE HAVE TO SAY TO THE COURT? NOT GUILTY. AND, IF I MAY ADD A WORD, YOUR HONOR, FUCKIN' PROUD OF EVERYTHING WE'VE DONE 'CEPT FOR SOME OF THE READERS WE'VE LANDED WITH. WE MAY BE INTOLERANT, BUT WE ARE NO BIGOTS! WE'VE SEEN AND HEARD OUTBURSTS OF INTELLIGENT, FUN, SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES THAT PERHAPS WERE ONLY INDIRECTLY CONNECTED TO PUNK BUT THAT DESERVED ATTENTION, SUPPORT AND CRITICISM BECAUSE THEY MEANT SOMETHING TO ONE OR SEVERAL OF US IN TERMS OF ALTERNATIVE EXITS TO THE INFERNO OF POPULAR CULTURE AND DAILY LIFE. ALTERNATIVE TV MAY NOT BE YOUR IDEAL PUNK BAND BUT THEY CAN DO MORE TO DISTURB, JOLT AND RATTLE YOUR SLEEPY LITTLE PSYCHE THAN THE RAMONES EVER WILL. THE FALL SWING BETTER AND THREATEN BETTER THAN THE DEAD BOYS AND THE POP GROUP WILL KILL YOUR PLANTS FASTER THAN THE LATE PISTOLS (BUT NOT PUBLIC IMAGE). WHAT'S MORE, SOME OF THESE RESENTED INTRUDERS AND INFILTRATORS ARE WHAT'S KEEPING THIS HOLY PUNK CONTROVERSY ALIVE AND THINKING. YOU STOP THINKING FOR TOO LONG, MY FRIEND, AND ONE DAY THEY (THE ONES PLANNING YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW) WILL POGO ALL OVER YOU. ADMIT IT: YOUR GOLDEN AGE PUNK MYTH IS IN TROUBLE IF IT CAN'T COPE WITH NEW AND STRANGE ADDITIONS. J. ROTTEN DIDN'T SING ALICE COOPER'S "SCHOOL'S OUT" FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE. YOU WANT IT TO BE LIKE ROCKABILLY, OR WHAT? PUNK WAS NEVER MORE THAN AN ATTITUDE AND A STAND. AT THE TIME, AND OFTEN NOW, THIS WAS AND IS BEST EXPRESSED IN THE 1 2 3 4 I HATE YOUR GUTS FORMAT. BUT THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO GET THE LOVELY MESSAGE ACROSS. AND THERE ARE OTHER LOVELY MESSAGES TO GET ACROSS. IF YOU'VE CONFINED YOUR HATRED AND NEGATIVITY TO THE SAME OLD 1977 TARGETS AND STYLE BROADEN YOUR SCOPE. DON'T REJECT SOME OF TODAY'S EXPRESSIONS OF CONTEMPT, DON'T CONSTANTLY CLASSIFY, REJECT, DISMISS. WE'LL DO THE CLASSIFYING, REJECTING AND DISMISSING! BUT SERIOUSLY NOW, STOP FUCKIN' WORRYING SILLY ABOUT LOST IDEALS AND FORGOTTEN CAUSES. YOU'RE STILL HERE, AREN'T YOU? AND IT'S STILL ALL THERE, GROWING, SPREADING, INFECTING. IF IT SOUNDS ODD, READS FUNNY OR MAKES NO IMMEDIATE SENSE TO YOUR REBELLIOUS MIND JUST STAY WITH US. WE WILL NEVER FORCE SHIT DOWN YOUR THROAT. WE NEVER TOLD YOU BLONDIE WAS PUNK AND WE WILL NEVER TELL YOU WE'VE MET JAH EITHER. NOW GO AND FIND SOMEONE WHO CAN HONESTLY MAKE YOU THE SAME PROMISE (ABOUT WHAT GOES IN YOUR THROAT)!

THIS EDITORIAL WAS FOR AND ABOUT THE VARIOUS READERS AND STRANGERS WHO HAVE QUESTIONED THE SINCERITY OF OUR BELIEFS, THE DEPTH OF OUR COMMITMENT AND THE RELEVANCE OF THEIR PUNK FAITH.



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LETTER section

DEAR ITS,
SO MUCH FOR PUNKROCK. ALL THE PROGRESSIVE, MELLOW-DIC, EXTRAVAGANZA SHIT THAT WE (I?) ONCE HATED NOW IS GETTING RAVE REVIEWS IN ALL THE NEW MUSIC SHEETS (SLUSH INCLUDED). I HAD THOUGHT THE IDEA BEHIND PUNKROCK WAS TO CUT OUT THE BULLSHIT THAT HAS INFECTED MODERN MUSIC FOR TOO LONG, TO GET TO THE HEART OF ROCK AND OUR DAILY LIVES. TO PERMANENTLY SAY FUCK YOU TO OBSCURE LYRICS HIDDEN IN "EXPERIMENTAL" MUSIC A LA GENESIS, YES, ELP, MAGAZINE, THE FALL, SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES, ETC. TO PERMANENTLY SAY FUCK YOU TO NICE & MEDIUM TEMPO ROCK AND BOOGIE ROLL WITH LOTS OF NOTES BY YOUR FAVE LEAD GUITARIST A LA AEROSMITH, STONES (OKAY IN THEIR DAY), LED ZEPPELIN, MOTT THE HOOPLE (OKAY IN THEIR DAY), CLASH, GENERATION X, DILS, ETC (THE LAST THREE OF WHICH, OR AT LEAST THE FIRST AND THIRD, STARTED OUT FAST INTENSE AND NEW SOUNDING). TO PERMANENTLY SAY GOODBYE TO CATCHY RIFF NICE MELODY-OH SO LITERATE LYRICS BY PEOPLE LIKE THE BEATLES, BILLY JOEL, ELTON JOHN, ELVIS COSTELLO, TALKING HEADS, ETC. TO FIND SOMETHING NEW, EVEN IF IT MEANT CRUDITY AND A HEALTHY DISRESPECT FOR ALL RULES AT FIRST (SEX PISTOLS), OR FINDING A UNIQUE SOUND GEARED TO A MILITARISTIC DRUMBEAT, SPARSE GUITAR, AND YELLING OUT YOUR FEELINGS (CLASH), BUT ALWAYS MAKING SURE YOUR MUSIC WAS THREATENING, THAT YOUR LYRICS WERE DIRECT AND THREATENING. LISTEN TO THE SPEED AND ANGER OF FIRST ALBUMS OF THE CLASH, PISTOLS, JAM, DRONES, HELL EVEN THE SHODDY BUT FULL OF LIFE AND REALITY SOUND OF THE RADIATORS. BUT BEFORE YOU THINK I HATE MUSICAL PROFICIENCY (OVERINDULGENCE?). LISTEN TO THE TOUGH, FAST PUNK SOUND OF THE ALLEY CATS, PLUGZ, BAGS AND OTHERS. THESE ARE THE GROUPS WHO, IF THEY DON'T OPT FOR THE EASIER, MORE PROFITABLE, AND REGRETABLE CHOICE OF SOUNDING LIKE SOME ONE OUT OF THE PAST, WILL FORGE A TRULY NEW SOUND THAT KEEPS THE ORIGINAL IDEAS OF PUNK WHILE CREATING NEW ONES (NOT ADDING OLD ONES). THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT EVERYTHING ELSE IS SHIT, MUCH OF IT IS PLEASANT, INTERESTING AND ENTERTAINING, BUT NOT VITAL. WE NEED A RESURGENCE OF EXCITING, REAL, DIRECT MUSIC. IT CAN BE AN IMPORTANT FORCE IN THE DAYS TO COME, BOTH IN THE FIELD OF MUSIC AND BEYOND. THERE IS A FUTURE, IF WE MAKE ONE.

RESPECTFULLY (HA!)
JANIE JONES, THE BLACK HAIRED GIRL

OH NO, AN OTHER NOSTALGIC ONE!
OKAY, OKAY, WE GET THE POINT. THE MUSIC ACCORDING TO SOME OF YOU, GETTING PRETENTIOUS. MAYBE IT IS, AND TOO MUCH LIKE BEFORE. MAYBE SO, IN SOME CASES (GEN X AND OTHERS).
I STILL FIND THE WAY YOU LINK ALL THESE DIFFERENT PEOPLE A BIT SIMPLISTIC ANYWAY, DON'T TELL US TO LISTEN TO "THE FAST, ANGRY, DIRECT SOUNDS" OF THE PLGUZ, ALLEYCATS, BAGS..... WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU THINK WE'VE BEEN DOING FOR THE PAST 2 YEARS ? STARING AT DEVOTO'S PICTURE EVERY NIGHT ? WE KNOW HOW GOOD THESE BANDS ARE, AND WHAT HOPE THEY REPRESENT FOR THE FUTURE OF THE MUSIC WE ALL YEARN FOR.

KICKBOY

SLASH,
AFTER SEEING THEIR MUGS SPLASHED ALL OVER TV AND THE TIMES I WAS REALLY GLAD TO HEAR HONEST ABE'S REPORT ON THOSE ELVIS/JAMES DEAN ROCKABILLY REBELS DUMB FUCKS - LEVI AND THE ROCKATS AND THEIR LOUSY "LET'S SCREW EVERYONE REALLY GOOD AND MAKE MONEY ATTITUDE"! AS FAR AS LEVI SINGING "CONVICTED", SOUNDS MORE LIKE "CONSTRICTED" TO ME. NEXT THING YA KNOW THEY'LL BE SPORTING WHITE JUMPSUITS AND PLAYING BUDOKAW.

ENNUI

(NOTE: THIS LETTER IS TYPED THE WAY IT CAME TO US, SPELLING AND ALL ED.)
DEAR SLASH,
ARE YOU STILL USING THE LOCALE SCENES IDEA? CAUSE WE MUSTERED UP SOME PITHY ACTIVITY LAST WEEKEND. ACTUALLY WE'VE BEEN DOING FUN STUFF WITH A BASS PLAYER FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS, BUT HE WAS A REAL PUNK, A STOOGES WERE HIS FAVE BAND IN 69, AND HE LIKES FIOLENCE (WELL HE GARRIES AROUND A GUN) AND OTHER EGO-PUFFY ANTICS. ANYWAYS, JACK AND HIN ENDED UP AT ODDS (JACK DONT PLAY GUITAR WELL JUST TORTUREDLY, BESIDES, THE BASS PLAYER WAS REAL TROUBLED WHEN HE FOUND OUT THAT JACK DIDNT CONSIDER HINSELF A PUNK) SO HE QUIT AND I LEFT WITH HIM. BUT SOON I DECIDED TO QUIT TOO (BASS WANTED TO START A GROUP CALLED SYNDROME I WANTED THE SYNDROMES AT LEAST, AND HE S PLANNING TO COME UP LA WAY SOON AS HE CAN, WANTS TO MAKE OUT BIT6) ANYWAYS, JACKS ON THE COLLEGE NEWSPAPER STAFF, AND THEY HAD A PARTY, AND COULD NT DENY US. JACK AND I PICKED UP OUR FRIEND JEFF WHO USED TO SING BADLY, LIKE SOMEONE TRYING TO KNOW THE WORDS, BUT SINCE THEN HES GOTTEN INTO TAPPER ZUKIE AND BIG YOUTH AND JUST JABBERS AND GROWLS AND ITS MUCH BETTER. WE ALSO BROUG ALONG NY LITTLE BROTHER FROM PHOENIX AND HIS QUITAR. HIS NAMES DAMON. WE GOT THERE ABOUT EIGHT, HOPING TO USE THE FREE DRUGS ON HAND BEFORE PERFORMIN WELL, WE DID, WE HAD TO WAIT UNTILL TEN BEFORE THE GUYS WHOSE HOUSE IT WASS PARENTS TO LEAVE SO WE COULD BE LOUD (WE WERE OUTSIDE AGAIN). BY THAT TIME WE (I ANTWAY) WERE SMASHED FROM THE LO ENBRAU KEG THAT EXISTED WITH THE BACKYARD. THERE WAS ALSO A JECUZI. I SPENT THE TIME BEFORE THE SHOW TELLING PEOPLE THAT WE HAD STOPPED FOOLING OUR SELVES WITH OUR PREVIOUS PUNK PRETENTIONS AND MERELY PLAYED TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY NOWADAYS. WICH TURNED OUT TO BE THE BIGGEST CRACKUP OF ALL CAUSE I WAS SO DRUNK I COULDNT HERE I THING. BUT WE ROARED THROUGH ALL THE NUMBER THE THREE OF US (JACK JEFF ME) KNEW ANYWAY IGNORING ENDING TOTALLY, JUST STOPPING WHEN WE PLAYED ALL THE PEIF AS PIECES OF THE SONG WE KNEW AND RECIEVEING OUR DEFINATELY NOST ENTHUSIASTIC RESOPSE EVER, THOUGH IT REALLY WASNT THE SORT OF THING THE PARTIERS CALLED MUSIC. WE PLAYED THE FOLLOWING (IT DOESNT MATTER BUT STILL YOU CANT HEAR US SO THIS WILL GIVE SOME INDICATION OF WHERE WE STAND ALTHOUGH PLAYING COVERS LIKE A BAR BAND OR SOMETHING ISNT EXACTLY THE COO EST IN SONG CHOICES, BUT WE JUST RARELY COVER THE FUCKERS ANYWAY):
GUT FEELING, CRETIN HOP, INCENDIARY DEVICE, JOHNNY B GOODE, AROUND AND ARO UND, SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE, PRETTY VACANT LOUIE LOUIE, MONEY.
THEN JACK AND JEFF QUIT AND NO, FIRST JACK AND THE HOST DID A BLUES, THEN MY BROTHER DIS THE VACANT SONG AND MONGOLOID AND SOME WILD INSTRUMENTALS, THEN SOMEONE CROWED FOR LOU AND I RAN OUT ENTHUSIASTICALLY TO FIND FELLOW VELVET FREAKS, THEN CAME BACK WITH THEIR REQUEST FOR WHAT JAM, PERFORMING SOLO IY HE ON GUITAR. THEN JEFF CAME BACK AND SANG A TRIBUTE TO TAPPER ABOUT THE GREAT LUNCH HE"D HAD THET DAY WHILE I PLAYED CHINKING DISCO CHORDS (NO LOVE) OH YEAH, IX WE ALSO DID ANARCHY IN THE UK.
THEN AFTERWARDS DAMON AND I DROVE TO PHOENIX WHERE I RESIDE. PHOENIX IS FUCKING BORING INDIAN TUCSON. FACT WE WAW THE POLICE TODAY THE THE SCOTTSDALE WORLD RECORDS. I ASKED THEM (STEW ART ACTUALLY) IF THE FALL"S ALBUM WAS GOOD (I LIKE THAT ARTY SHIT BUT NOT THE WORDS SO MUCH, I LIKE ATV AND WIRE) AND AKSED ABOUT CULTURE WHO" VE YET TO BE SEEN ON THE RECORD SHELVES THIS CITY, THEY SAID THERE KIND OF POLISHED, THEY LIKED TAPPER SUKIE BETTER. AND REMINDED BURNING SPEAR AND THE AFRICAN DUB SEIRES (WHICH WAS NO SECRET ALREADY). ALSO, THEY CANCEL LED IN TUCSON, AND SO DID THE DICKIES AND LSM PISSED.

SLASH,
THIS LETTER IS DIRECTED NOT SO MUCH AT THE MAGAZINE AS AT A CERTAIN PORTION O F YOU READERSHIP. I'M REFERRING TO THE APPARENTLY LARGE NUMBER OF INDIVI DUALS WHO BUY SLASH, BUY PUNK OR NEW WAVE RECORDS, AND THEN STAY AT HOME (PROBABLY WATCHING TV OR MASTURBATING) WHILE OUTSTANDING LOCAL BANDS SUCH AS THE CONTROLLERS OR PLIBOYS PERFORM BE FORE ONLY A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE. SHIT HEADS SUCH AS LED ZEPPELIN FANS FLOCK TO HEAR THE "MUSIC" THEY PRIZE SO DEAR LY, SO WHY DON'T MORE OF US PUNKS, RE BELS AND OTHER DISSATISFIEDS QUIT OFF OUR ASSES AND OFTEN AND SUPPORT THE MUSIC WE BELIEVE IN. I REALIZE A FEW LOCAL BANDS SUCH AS X AND THE ALLEYCA TS CAN DRAW A GOOD CROWD, BUT OTHER BANDS SUCH AS THE CLASS, ULTRA, AND THE SILENCERS DESERVE SOME ATTENTION ALSO. BESIDES THE LOYAL GROUP OF PEO PLE WHO CONSISTENTSLY SHOW UP, WHERE ARE THE REST OF YOU?

Steve Stiph
(Long Beach)

SLASH,
A NOTE ON POLITICS:
AFTER THE ELKS INCIDENT, A PRINTED SHEET WITH DEFIANT PUNK LYRICS APPEARED AT VA RIOUS LOCATIONS. IT HAD THE HEADING ON TOP "PUNKS FIGHT BACK" AND AT THE BOTTOM : "REMEMBER ELKS LODGE". IN BETWEEN WERE EXCELLENT QUOTES FROM THE DILS, SCREAMERS, BLACK FLAG, STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, DEAD KENNEDYS, PLUGZ AND CLASH. I FIRST THOUGHT SOME ANGRY YOUNG PUNKS HAD PRINTED IT, BUT SAW THE SLICK TYPE SETTING AND QUALITY OF THE PAPER AND KNEW DIFFERENTLY. THERE WAS NO NAME OF ANY INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION CLAIMING CREDIT FOR THE PAPER.
A SHORT WHILE AGO, IT CAME TO MY ATTENTION THAT THESE SHEETS WERE PRINTED UP AT NO SMALL EXPENSE BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY. ADD THE NOCDY PARK BE NcFIT SPONSORED BY THE WORKERS FOR THE REVOLUTION AND FLIPSIDE'S ENDORSEMENT OF THE RCYB AND WHAT DO YOU HAVE? A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF LEFTIST ENERGY GOING INTO CO-OPTING PUNK ROCK TO THEIR VARIO US CAUSES, I SAY VARIOUS CAUSES RATHER THAN "THEIR CAUSE" BECAUSE IT MUST BE POINTED OUT THAT DESPITE A COMMON USAGE OF WORDS LIKE "COMMUNISM" "SOCIALISM" "MARXISM, MAOISM, LENINISM (ONE OR MORE OF THESE IS REAL CHIC)", THESE GROUPS HAVE CONSTANTLY FOUGHT TOOTH AND NAIL FOR WHAT LITTLE POWER COULD BE GAINED BY BEING AMERICA'S PREMIER LEFTIST GROUP. IN ADDITION, WHILE VARIOUS VAGUE TERMS LIKE "A DICTATORSHIP BY THE PEOPLE, A WORKER'S STATE, A STATE FREE FROM THE EVILS OF CAPITALISM" ARE OFTEN BANDIED ABOUT, MOST OF THESE GROUPS HAVE AS THE IR "ROGRAM A MARXIST-LENINIST OR MAOIST CONCEPTION OF A "VANGUARD PARTY" TAKING POWER ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE. THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED IN RUSSIA, (USSR, OKAY?) AND CHINA. THESE NICE HARD-WORKING PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARIES OVERTHREW CAPITALISM, OR MORE ACCURATELY PRE-CAPITALISTIC ARISTOCRATIC RULE, AND TOOK PO WER IN ORDER TO LIBERATE THE PEOPLE TO A COMMUNISTIC STATE IN WHICH THE WORKER WOULD RECEIVE HIS FAIR SHARE. WELL, IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR THESE REVOLUTIONAR IES TO BEGIN ENJOYING THE POWER THEY HAD TAKEN AND TO DECIDE THAT SINCE THEY ALO NE CONTROLLED THE DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH THEY MIGHT AS WELL DISTRIBUTE A LITTLE MORE AMONG THEMSELVES. AFTER ALL, IT WAS THEIR REVOLUTION, AND THE WORKERS WERE FAR TOO DUMB TO RUN THINGS, SO, WHILE THEY DID TALK OF LONG TERM ECONOMIC, (GOOD WRITER THAT KARL MARX, OF COURSE REAL SOCIALISM JUST ISN'T PRATICAL) THEY PROCEEDED TO INVENT A NEW SYSTEM, EQUALLY AS REGIMED AND CONTROLLED AS CAPITALISM. INSTEAD OF BIG BUSINESS AND A REPRESSIVE GOVERNMENT, THEY HAVE A STATE-OWNED AND CONTROLLED SYSTEM. NOT MUCH DIFFERENT FOR PUNKS AND THE REST OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE STILL GETTING SCREWED. THIS IS A WARNING TO PUNKS WHO SEE LEFT IST REVOLUTION AS THE ANSWER TO THE CUR RENT SHITSTEM WE LIVE IN. TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THEIR PROGRAM, SEE WHERE THE POWER ENDS UP. LOOK AT THE USSR, CUBA, CHINA, IRAN, AND OTHER PLACES WHERE MANY DIED ONLY FOR SUPERFICIAL CHANGE AND MINOR IMPROVEMENT.
THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT REVOLUTION IS WRONG, OBVIOUSLY THIS SOCIETY MUST BE DESTROYED. BUT DON'T EVER GIVE THE POWER TO SOMEONE ELSE. IF THERE'S GOING TO BE A CLASS WAR, MAKE SURE THAT WHAT COMES AFTERWARDS IS SOMETHING YOU, AND WE ALL, HAVE A STAKE IN.

THE RED ROCKER

DEAR SLASH,
SO I'M SITTING HERE ON A RAINED-IN FRI DAY NITE THAT PROMISES TO GO ON FOREVER AND ARTFUL DODGER'S FIRST LP ON THE BOX AND WONDERING WHAT AM I DOING, AND HOW SELF-CONSCIOUS I AM, LIKE I SHOULD HAVE SOMETHING BY THE CONDITIONER OR THE PLUG Z SCREAMING IN THE NEXT ROOM - BUT TO TELL THE AWFUL TRUTH I'VE NEVER HEARD THEM. BESIDES THAT, I SHOULD, ONE SHOULD, PROBABLY NEVER HAVE TO APOLOGIZE FOR WHAT RECORDS/THEM, AND AFTER ALL MAYBE SUMBODY ELSE LIKES THAT DODGER RECORD, BUT IT MOST CERTAINLY DO REINFOR CE THIS HIGH AND HARD PRESSURE IN MY CHEST AND I'M SURE DON'T FEEL LIKE JUMPING UP AND DOWN TO SUM LIVE MUSIC BUT THIS IS DENVER, KIDS, REALLY THERE'S NO REASON TO BE COMPLAINING. I MEAN, WHEN YER DOWN, THE DOWN. NOTHING SOUNDS QUITE LIKE MAYBE IT IS, IT STRESS'D THAT MAYBE, YES, YES, VERY MUCH SO, ANYWAY, PICKED UP YER LATEST AT WAX TRAX EARLI ER THIS EVENING, FIRST TIME EVER IN COW TOWN, USA (I WANNA INTERJECT SOMETHING TOTALLY IRRELEVANT BUT IT SCARES ME NO NETHELESS - AT PRESENT I'M WORKING HALF TIME FOR THE DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY, BE ING THE ONLY MALE IN THE CIRCULATION CONTROL DEPARTMENT'S THAT'S NOT WHAT GETS ME BUT WHAT DOES IS ALL THESE WOMEN TALKING ABOUT ALL THESE OPERATIONS THEY HAVE HAD/WILL HAVE OR THAT THEIR FRIENDS HAVE HAD/WILL HAVE AND IT'S NOTHING TO THEM, THESE PERPETUAL TRIPS TO THE HOSPITAL AND ALL BUT ALL BUT ONE ARE UNDER 30 AND JUST WHAT IS HAPPENING OUT THERE ANYWAY?? THE WAY THEY ACCEPT THIS KIND OF NONSENSE, PIECE BY PIECE THEY'RE CAPITULATING, GIVING UP AN ORGAN EVERY FEW YEARS & THEY SMILE AND LAUGH RIGHT THRU IT ALL - IS ANYBODY WRITING SONGS ABOUT THIS KIND OF HORROR ??)..AND IT WAS REAL FINE TO GAZE UPON YER PRESS AFTER HAVING LEFT SOUTHERN CAL. BEHIND LAST DECEMBER & AND IT'S SO SHARP, WELL, REALLY, IT'S QUITE STRANGE QUITE NICE, ACTUALLY, CUZ THE WRITING IS OFTEN SUPERIOR TO THE MUSIC YER PUSHING, OR SHOULD I SAY THE WRITING CAN GRAB ME MORE THAN THE MUSIC GETS ME EXCITED, I GO OUT AND TRY TO FIND A TRACK OR TWO THAT YER RAVING ABOUT (IT'S NOT EASY HERE), TAKE IT BACK TO THE OLD STEREO AND WELL, THAT'S OK, BUT, UH, WHAT DID THEY SAY ABOUT THAT AGAIN, SCRAMBLE BACK TO THE PAGES FOR THE SPECIFIC REFERENCE, GET CAUGHT UP IN THE STYLE AND PACE AND PRETTY SOON I'VE RE READ HALF THE ISSUE FOR THE NTH TIME. IT'S WEIRD, I'M TELLING YOU, PERHAPS IT TELLS MORE ABOUT ME THAN ANYTHING ELSE, I CAN'T SAY, ANYWAY, THANKX FOR THE CREATIVITY & PERSEVERANCE AND WHEN I FEEL LIKE I'M SEVERAL SUMPLACE, ONE OF THESE DAYS, I HOPE, I SHALL PUT SUM MONEY IN THE MAIL FOR DOOR TO DOOR R & R WRITING MADNESS SERVICE FROM YOU OK POWER, UNTIL THEN I'LL HAVE TO RELY ON THE READINGS BACKDROPPED AGAINST MY FAVORITAS ON THE TURNTABLES, THE OLD STANDBYS, ARTFUL DODGERS AND ALL

SLASH, I'M FUCKING TIRED OF:
READING THE LATEST PUT TOWN OF THE DILS FROM THE MASQUED MAN'S IGNORANCE IN HIS POLITICAL REPORT, TO SEAGRIN & DESTROY'S CONSISTANT REVENGE FOR BEING SLAGGED OFF BY THE DILS. ENOUGH OF BANDS PUTTING DOWN OTHER BANDS, FANZINES PUTTING DOWN BANDS, AND EVERYONE ELSE PUTTING DOWN EACH OTHER. MIGHT AS WELL BE THE BIG TIME RECORD BUSINESS FOR ALL THE BACK-STABBING.
SEEING CUTESY SLICK INNER COVERS WITH PICS PLUGGING INSIDE FEATURES. JUST LIKE LIFE OR PEOPLE. WHATEVER HAPPENED TO OPENING THINGS WITH A BANG: AN EDITORIAL THAT SAYS SOMETHING RELEVANT. SHIT I DON'T CARE IF YOU GOT THEIR EXCLUSIVE STATE-OF-THE-SCENE ADDRESSES, THINK OF SOMETHING FUCKING ELSE TO WRITE. WRITE ABOUT POLITICS, TV, BUS RIDES, BUT FUCKING WRITE SOMETHING. THE BEST THING ABOUT SLASH IS ITS EDITORIALS. THERE WAS A STRONG STATEMENT, WHETHER YOU TH OUGHT IT WAS SHIT OR THE GOSPEL TRUTH, IT GOT YOU EXCITED. NOW, WE GET ROLLIN G STONE/MELODY MAKER/NEW MUSICAL SHEET THE FUCKING THIN LINE BETWEEN WHAT IS "ACCEPTED" AS "PUNK" AND WHAT ISN'T: TOO MANY FUCKING FOOLS I KNOW WILL LIS TEN TO CERTAIN ARTISTS WITH A MORE THAN MAINSTREAM SOUND JUST BECAUSE A) THEY CAME FROM THE "RIGHT CLUBS AND WERE ASSOCIATED WITH NEW WAVE OR B) THEY ARE NEW ENOUGH NOT TO BE OLD WAVE OR C) THEY STARTED OUT SOUNDING "PUNK" AND EVEN THOUGH THEY NOW SOUND LIKE 1,000,000 OTHER GROUPS, THEY'RE STILL "IN". NOTE ESPECIALLY HERE: ELVIS COSTELLO, ALL THE CBGB ORIGINALS, THE BUZZCOCKS AND CLASH AND GEN X.
WELL, GUESS I'VE RUN OFF QUITE ENUF, OH YEAH, TELL THAT MARK WILLIAMS CHARACTER THAT UNEMPLOYMENT IS 2% HIGHER IN US THAN GREAT BRITAIN, AND THE TERM JOBLESSNESS HERE IS AT ABOUT 20%, NOT TO MENTION THAT JOB BENEFITS IN UK ARE VASTLY SUPERIOR TO THOSE IN THE US. THE ONE THING I HATE IS A SNOB, AND IF NOWAYS BEING PATRIOTIC MEANS DEFENDIN THE IDEA THAT YOUR COUNTRY IS REALLY SHITTIER THAN THEIR COUNTRY, WELL, SO BE IT.

FLAT BORED

HEY KICKBOY, AND WHOEVER ELSE IS AROUND!

WHEN SLASH STARTED, IT WAS QUICK TO POIN T OUT BANDS THAT SOUNDED TOO MUCH LIKE THE 50'S AND 60'S. THOSE BANDS WERE COPYING A SOUND THAT HAD BEEN DEAD FOR 10 OR 20 YEARS AND ADDED NOTHING TO IT. SO, IT WAS HIGHLY RELEVANT OUT THAT THEY WERE NOT PART OF THE TIMES. NOW, I KNOW TIMES MOVE QUICKLY, BUT I GET SICK READING ALL THE PUT DOWNS, HOWEVER SUBTLE AT TIMES, OF BANDS STILL IN THE 1977 TO SOUND GREAT BEAT THAT SOUND OF TODAY'S MUSIC, MUCH MORE SO THAN THE BRITISH PARTS WHO HAVE "PROGRESSED" BEYOND IT (AND BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL? OR BEYOND GOOD AND BAD) BY BECOMING BORING. IF THE STIFF LITTLE FINGERS LP CAME OUT AROUND THE TIME OF THE PISTOLS/CLASH IT WOULD HAVE EARNED A FULL PAGE REVIEW BY THE KICK. NOW IT GETS ONE OF CHRIS D'S MUDDLED RANTINGS. WHETHER AS GOOD AS THE SINGLES OR NOT, IT HAS SOMETHING TO SAY AND IS PUNK ROCK AT ITS BEST. REMEMBER: "THIS MAY NOT BE A GOOD ALBUM BUT IT IS AN IMPORTANT ONE" SHOULD BE HUNG UP ON FORM AND NOT THE CONTENT. EVEN THE PLUGZ GOT A QUICK, THOUGH CORRECTLY GLOWING, NOTICE, WHILE HUGE PARAGRAPHS ARE SPENT TRYING TO ILLUMINATE THE FALL. KICK, IF YOU STILL CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT, HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT THAT MAYBE IT DOES NOT MEAN ANYTHING? DID YOU SPEND THE SIXTIES TRYING TO READ DEEP MEANING INTO THE BULLSHIT RAVINGS OF DYLAN AND THE BEAGLES?
COME ON, LET'S NOT BECOME BORING OLD FARTS QUITE SO QUICKLY. GIVE THE NEW ANGRY YOUNG BANDS THEIR DUE. PUNK, REAL PUNK, ISN'T DEAD YET.

STICKY AND THE PAST DAYS OF PUNK

HEY STICKY BABY,
CHECK THE EDITORIAL AND COME BACK IN 3 WEEKS. SORRY YOU DISAGREE ABOUT THE FALL (AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, THEY ARE RIGHT NOW MUCH MORE OF "AN ANGRY NEW YOUNG BAND" THAN THE CLASH.) AS TO WHAT I DID IN THE 60'S, LET ME TELL YOU IT WASN'T QUITE AS WHOLESOME AS WASTING TIME TRYIN TO DECODE THE POP PROPHETS.

KICKBOY AND THE FUTURE OF PUNK

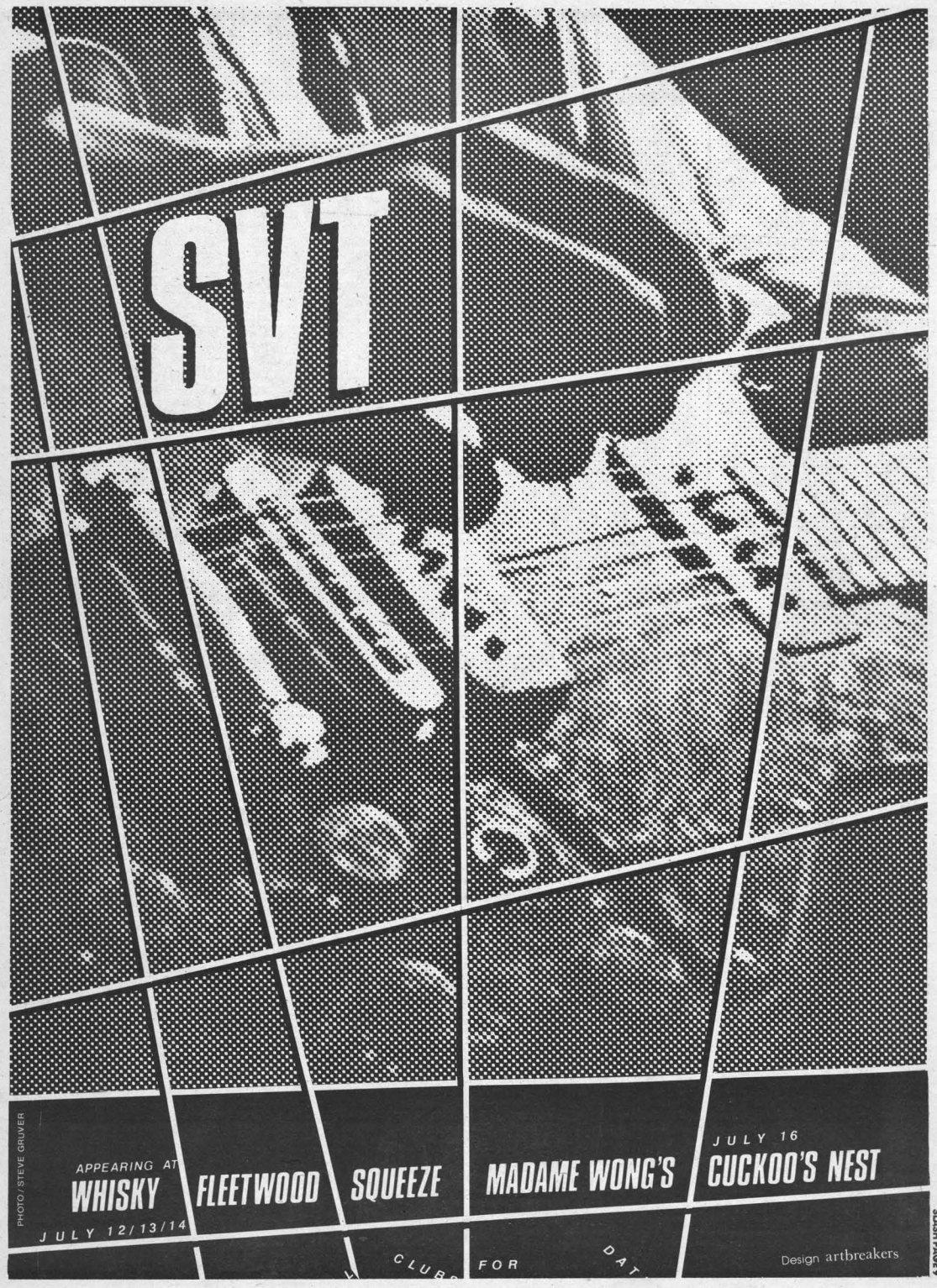

SVT
PHOTO / STEVE GRUVER
APPEARING AT
WHISKY
JULY 12/13/14
FLEETWOOD
SQUEEZE
MADAME WONG'S
JULY 16
CUCKOO'S NEST
CLUB
FOR
DAT
Design artbreakers

PHOTO: PHILOMENA

PENETRATION: OR HOW WE FAILED TO PENETRATE

Ready for a silly story? (please don't say no). We was due to do an interview with British band Penetration when they came to town a while back. Had talked to the Virgin office in New York about it, everything was set up, real smooth, real press like, we'd see the band perform and do the interview the next day in their hotel room. We already had talked to Pauline and the band last winter in London, it was okay but a bit dry and remote, we were not very familiar with the band and their music and it showed. In other words we had decided not to use that interview but rather wait 'til we could talk to them when they came to L.A. and perhaps put more life and more incesive questions into it. So far so good. So we show up at the agreed time and immediately run into a wall: the lady in charge of publicity matters opens the door, stares at the four of us clutching our camera and tape recorders and very bluntly inquires as to why there are so many of us. We try to explain that we've been known to show up en force in case of hostility on the part of the interviewees, make a joke about it (shit, we still consider most interviews to be FUN, so the more the better — it's not supposed to be like tiptoeing in Dylan's presence to inquire about the meaning of the universe, is it???), but she is not amused. Anyway there is some lady from Australia talking with Pauline and one of the band right now and we're going to have to wait. We do. A long time. Comfortably crouched in a fucking plastic hotel hallway. Studying the shag rug and the cottage cheese ceiling. Feeling like kids waiting for autographs. The buffer lady comes out after a while, asking why the 1st interview was never published. We explain. She carefully examines our latest issue (not a sign of approval or appreciation — guess it's uncool to acknowledge other creative ventures) and disappears again. By now we're feeling about as welcome as a militant Palestinian at a Bar Mitzvah but we wait. And wait. And start thinking about why we're doing Slash in the first place, in the second and in the third. And no matter how hard we dig (separately, not exchanging notes with each other), nowhere can we find anything vaguely resembling star worship, humility in front of the new powers or gratefulness for being almost treated like the old establishment. In other words if we are not going to be treated as equals there is no reason for us to be there. The australian journalist leaves but still no signs of acceptance into the inner sanctum. We look at each other and split. SIMPLE AND UNAVOIDABLE.

No hard feelings toward the band. They were probably grateful to be spared another session with inquiring strangers anyway, which is understandable. Anyway whoever was scheduled to face us was most certainly unaware of our plight, being already probed and grilled by someone from the "regular" press. What bothered us and eventually led to our sudden departure was the realization that the old rock n roll idols game of keep-the-stars-at-a-distance-use-all-the-company-buffers-you-can-get was being pulled on us. We don't mind waiting to talk to someone. We fuckin' mind being treated like a nuisance and a necessary evil that has to be put up with. We don't have to be put up with. We are not the old press, and if somebody don't want to see us we don't want to see them either. We've waited for others before, but they didn't make us feel like shit about it. That publicity lady didn't think we were worth it in terms of publicity. Maybe she's right. Anyway here are extracts from the London Penetration interview, cos they're a band worth knowing in spite of the machinery that surrounds them. But please, band spokesmen, representatives and p.r. persons, don't be rude to us. You don't mean shit to this movement, and your invisibility (if your cooperation is too much to ask) will be greatly appreciated.

Pauline Murray: Vocals, Fred Purser: Lead guitar, keyboards, Neale Floyd: Guitar, Gary Smallman: Drums and percussion. We did the interview at Virgin records. Penetration have been together 1½—2 years.

Slash: When you first started, what band did you support?

Penetration: Well we were based in Newcastle so we used to support bands that were touring such as The Vibrators and The Stranglers ... We had a different guitarist, first we were just a four piece. The first single 'Don't Dictate' came out with the old guitarist.

Slash: I read somewhere that you added a guitar player for the album, was it some kind of vicious hint?

Penetration: Yeah, it was a rumour and I don't know how it started.

Slash: Would you say the press gets out of hand, the way it covers the scene?

Penetration: Yes it's gone totally out of hand ... build them up and then knock them down. It's just no good doing that to bands, a lot of people do believe what they read, it just creates turmoil.

Slash: So the press does have a lot of influence here?

Penetration: I think as long as a band is strong enough musically, which I think we are, the band's going to win through in the end anyway, no matter how much slagging-off you get. The general music press is based in London therefore we haven't had a great deal of

coverage anyway.
Slash: Does it pose problems being based out of London?
Penetration: We like it better that way — I'd rather live outside of London, you don't get involved in the sort of hipness; like it's fashionable to like certain bands at certain times.
Slash: Are there a lot of venues in Newcastle?
Penetration: It's pretty limited, the venues are either universities or Technicals (High School extension for selective studies ... educated editor) or there's the City Hall which is like 2500 capacity, it's a seated venue.
Slash: What d'you think is happening with this whole new music? Has it gone pretty much back to the same old rock n roll or d'you think a lot of things have been changed for good?
Penetration: The thing that it has done, it's given bands like us and kids who haven't been involved before an opportunity to get on stage even though they haven't mastered more than a few chords, to get up, have a go and progress.
Slash: 3 years ago did any of you think you'd be in a rock n roll band?
Penetration: No . . . Fred was already a guitarist before the band but us three, this is our first band.
Slash: D'you think of yourselves as rock stars now?
Penetration: Na.
Slash: D'you get that kind of treatment in the streets?
Penetration: Yeah ... It's nice when people come up and ask you for your autograph and things like that ... We went up to see Devo in our home town in Newcastle the other night and kids were recognizing us ... it's a bit embarrassing.
Slash: Did you ever do Top of the Pops?
Penetration: Never did Top of the Pops ... we wouldn't turn it down but we've never been asked to, it didn't really bother us one way or another. I think hit singles don't really mean very much to us, we'd rather be successful as an albums band. When you start getting hit singles you get a totally different kind of audience, you get the kids who watch Top of the Pops you know, 13 years olds, you're always tied down to your next single ... You can gain a real big audience like Buzzcocks but you can lose a lot of your hardcore fans who were with you from the beginning because they think you've just turned into a singles band for all the kids and if you have one hit single and no more after that, the kids forget you anyway and then you still lose your sort of hardcore fans, it's a weird situation really.
Slash: What would you say the majority of your songs are about?
Penetration: Some of them are personal experiences, a lot of them are about things that people experience ... that happen to everyone ... they're not political.
Slash: Have you played Europe?
Penetration: Yes, we've been to Italy once and France once ... Italy was awful, really heavy political, the kids tried to get us to say Don't Dictate was a political song.
Slash: What d'you feel about experimental bands like Cabaret Voltaire, and Throbbing Gristle?
Penetration: The new wave has given bands like that a chance because Cabaret Voltaire were going before the new wave started.
Slash: D'you see yourselves as a rock n roll band or new wave or punk or d'you just hate all that kind of labelling?
Penetration: Yes. (laughs)
Slash: D'you feel a responsibility to be a certain way for your fans?
Penetration: We haven't changed ... You've got to keep to your own beliefs ... Groups like Sham '69 aren't doing really what they want I don't think, their fans are dictating to them; so we just do what we want to do and if people don't like it, fair enough, if they do, great.
Slash: (to Pauline) Do you find yourself in an odd position being still one of the few girl singers in a band?
Pauline: It draws attention to the band if there's a girl in it 'cos it's unusual, but when it comes down to it, I think it's all down to the music.
Slash: D'you find people compare you a lot to other girl singers?
Penelope: We used to get a lot of comparisons with Souxsie and the Banshees just because I have dark hair and I'm a girl and that is the only comparison you could possibly make.
Slash: There was a couple of reviews in the States about ... I think when Don't Dictate came out, saying the new wave might have its own version of the Jefferson Airplane ...
Penelope: Yeah, we've had a lot of that, we've never listened to them, people have always got to be looking for comparisons you know.
Slash: Were you influenced by any rock n roll girls?
Penelope: Well I was influenced by Patti Smith before I was even in a band.
Slash: Which is why you do Free Money?
Penelope: Yeah ... well we used to do that right from the start.
Slash: How d'you feel about what Patti Smith is doing now?
Penelope: I don't like her as much as I did but I still like her. I seen them live not so long ago and they're so fickle live, a good gig is great and a bad gig is lousy.
Slash: Before you were in a band who were you listening to?
Penelope: Directly before it was Patti Smith and Bruce Springsteen.

Celebrate
WED FEAR
July 4

FLY BOYS
and
SATINTONES
HONG KONG Cafe

PAUL SCHRADER

Interviewed by Judith Bell, Clarissa Ainley, Chris D.

Paul Schrader wrote the screenplays for THE YAKUZA, TAXI DRIVER, OBSESSION, ROLLING THUNDER, OLD BOYFRIENDS, and the upcoming RAGING BULL. He wrote and directed BLUE COLLAR, HARDCORE, and the near completed AMERICAN GIGOLO. SLASH talked with him at his office/editing room at Paramount.

PAUL S: The Tuff Darts had a song called "Slash" about three or four years ago . . . "I'd rather slash my throat and slit my wrists than spend the night with you." It's a wonderful song. . . . I was going to film a scene at a punk club for "American Gigolo" but when it came down to actually shooting it we decided to use The Probe. Are you familiar with that?

S: You rejected punks for fags?

P.S.: No I had more control over this club . . . for shooting. It's one of the most wonderful clubs. It's a high tech disco. The doors slide open into an octagonal aluminum corridor. Lights strobe as you walk along this metal corridor, then you go up these cement stairs, then you go in and out of a kind of rough hewn cement labyrinth. And you're moving in the dark and all the time the music's getting louder. Then you walk out and below you is the dance floor. And you walk down this other set of stairs to get there. It's great because the way it's designed it takes you over a minute to get to the heart of the club.

SL: Oh, yes, I've been there. It's terrifying. I had a horrible experience there. Did you find it instantly erotic?

PS: Erotic? No, I don't really think of high tech as erotic.

SL: I don't know if I know what you mean by high tech.

PS: It's an architectural style . . . where it's all metal, porcelain . . .

SL: Like hospital fixtures, bathroom, fixtures . . .

PS: Instead of plastering over the metal you leave it out, you leave it out to be seen.

SL: I've seen a lot of your movies . . . and I'm trying to see the correlation why you wanted to do an interview with SLASH.

PS: I like the anger, the heat . . . the feeling you used to have in CBGB's that you could be stabbed and no one would know for fifteen or twenty minutes because it would be so packed with people you couldn't fall down. I like the music, the lyrics . . . on records it isn't always the same. But live it's that gut feeling . . you're actually being hit in the chest by these sound waves. On a lot of punk records I think that feeling is lost, the impact . . . I'm interested in the life-style; how attitudes are fashioned. There's an Oriental club that I've heard about I want to try . . . Madame Wong's?

SL: Oh, well, it's a beautiful place, at least the bar is anyway, but they are down on punk rock there . . . it's pretty pop. There is a place opening right across the street from it called the Hong Kong Cafe that'll be booking punk bands.

PS: My sister-in-law who's Japanese writes poetry and songs and she wrote this kind of ballad called "Two plus Three is Six" and it's about Taxi Driver. It opens up with these three or four gunshots . . .

SL: I've read that one of your ideas about film and life in general is one of purging guilt through either violence aimed outwards towards others or inwards towards oneself and achieving some redemption, a transcendence through it.

PS: It's a kind of nihilistic fighting back . . . fighting back for its own sake. I will strike back at society even though it won't help make me a better person or society a better place but I'll strike back anyway. It's a sentiment of Taxi Driver and one of punk rock.

SL: What do you think about television?

PS: About all it's good for is eating up your brain cells.

SL: Then you wouldn't work in TV?

PS: No, I didn't say that . . . I don't like what I see on TV but that doesn't mean I can't try to do something good for it. Also once cable really takes hold we'll see a whole new market opening up. The only thing about TV now is the size of the audience you need to be successful. It's like anything else. For instance with a book to have some kind of commercial credibility the writer has to be able to sell at least twenty thousand. For paintings it's considerably less, maybe a thousand. For records it's at least a 100,000. In movies for a "product" to be economically viable you have to have an audience of at least two million; for TV you have to have an audience of about 30 million. You have to depend on this size of audience to make your thing economically viable, then you have to downgrade it to achieve the widest accesibility.

SL: Which is an unpleasant fact of life.

PS: Once cable really comes in with forty channels and each one is wired to its own market, you can presell the "product". Say you pay a subscription each month to watch a certain amount of documentary or dramatic programs. You can have a much smaller audience to make something economically possible, maybe an audience of one million instead.

SL: I don't like the way TV looks . . . the quality of the image.

PS: Well, that's also got to change.

SL: In Europe they actually have many more scanning lines in the picture tube so you get a better picture.

PS: Scientists have in fact developed perfect resolution TV. It's a screen about six by seven or eight feet . . . its cost though is so astronomical they're trying to figure out how to mass market it. A half a million individual dots that are wired up and glow at certain intensities. And you run this fibre optic into it and phoosh! you get perfect resolution. And it's just run through a cable. There's a record of things in the past . . . if you can get the price down and there's a market for something . . . intelligent merchandising . . . TV's are incredibly cheaper today than when they were first introduced.

SL: What kind of gun is this?

PS: A rubber band gun. I did have a lot of real guns but I'm allowing them to rust.

SL: As far as using L.A. in "American Gigolo" . . . was it just a random choice?

PS: No, it was a conscious choice . . . it's kind of the reverse of "Taxi Driver". They're book-end pieces. You take a similar situation and rework some things. We take a man who is inarticulate, the "Taxi Driver", and build towards an explosion. In "American Gigolo" a man who is quite articulate and who can move around extremely well within various social boundaries but has absolutely no contact with his inner life. "Taxi Driver" takes that inner life and explodes it out onto the world whereas the "Gigolo" allows the world to implode onto him. His transcendent act, the act which allows him to escape himself, is one of acceptance. He accepts another person's love rather than rejecting the world. The gigolo walks alot here in L.A. where everyone drives and the taxi driver drives in New York where most people walk. What happens to the gigolo is that he has overtrained himself in a way. . . . he wants to be perfect in everything he does. What happens is that he overtrains himself, he studies and prepares himself so well to become the ideal companion . . he's used things such as say a passage in Dostoyevsky about being the perfect party guest to train himself and ultimately that, what's really being said by Dostoyevsky, sinks into him even though he read it at first for the wrong reason. Finally after three or four years of studying for these more superficial goals he ends up a changed person. He's no longer the cocksucking punk he once was. And that's where we find him when the movie starts, better than the people he associates with. So two things happen. One is that he has fallen in love with someone, the second he's framed for sex murder because his society doesn't really care about him. By accepting these two things he accepts the changes in his life. He accepts the overbearance of fate, the fact that something can happen to you that you can't control. Switching metaphors, but talking theologically, if you accept a certain amount of guilt . . . in "Taxi Driver" that's expiated through bloodshed, through a violent act and then comes redemption. But in this film there's the whole notion of grace . . . there's three fundamentals of theology; sin, redemption and grace. Guilty, you get saved then exist on another plateau. There's two notions of grace; universal grace which we all have — the kind of grace that means we're alive and allows the sun to shin . . . the definition of grace is external good, something good that happens that we do nothing to earn. No one has worked for this, you either accept it or reject it. Are you above that first principle of grace, can you accept this external good that you did nothing to earn? As soon as you accept that, it becomes an act that is transcendentally strong that makes you strong than the act of rejection.

SL: And in his case it's love?

PS: Life has its own course and one does not control life. He finally accepts that he's going to be framed; this is what's going to happen to him. It's not a weak sort of change though.

SL: Do you think it's possible to reject what is wrong and the wrong that's done to you, and accept it at the same time?

PS: Well, you'd have to splinter it. Technically you could say yes. I live a contradiction. To be practical you have to make certain distinctions. I reject this culture, but do I drive a car? I reject the American automobile . . . but does that mean you drive or don't drive? (laughs) There are certain practical decisions. As far as pain goes . . . it's defined by its negative . . . there's no pleasure so great as pain's relief. There's nothing I can do that gives as much pleasure as relieving some pain. If you're in real pain you take morphine. That's just the most wonderful feeling in the world because . . . recently I had to have an operation and I had to take morphine and I had the sensation of going back to the womb . . . I was in this very painful world and the pain was in my head . . . as the morphine would take effect and people would come and talk to me, I had the feeling of closing up. All of a sudden they'd be gone and I'd be back inside.

SL: I wanted to ask about what you felt went wrong with "Rolling Thunder"?

PS: I've an argument against what they did with that story. I originally intended it to be a movie about a racist . . . a guy who was in Viet Nam, went out in a plane, got shot down and spent a couple of years as a POW. He came back here and was proclaimed a hero; he didn't do

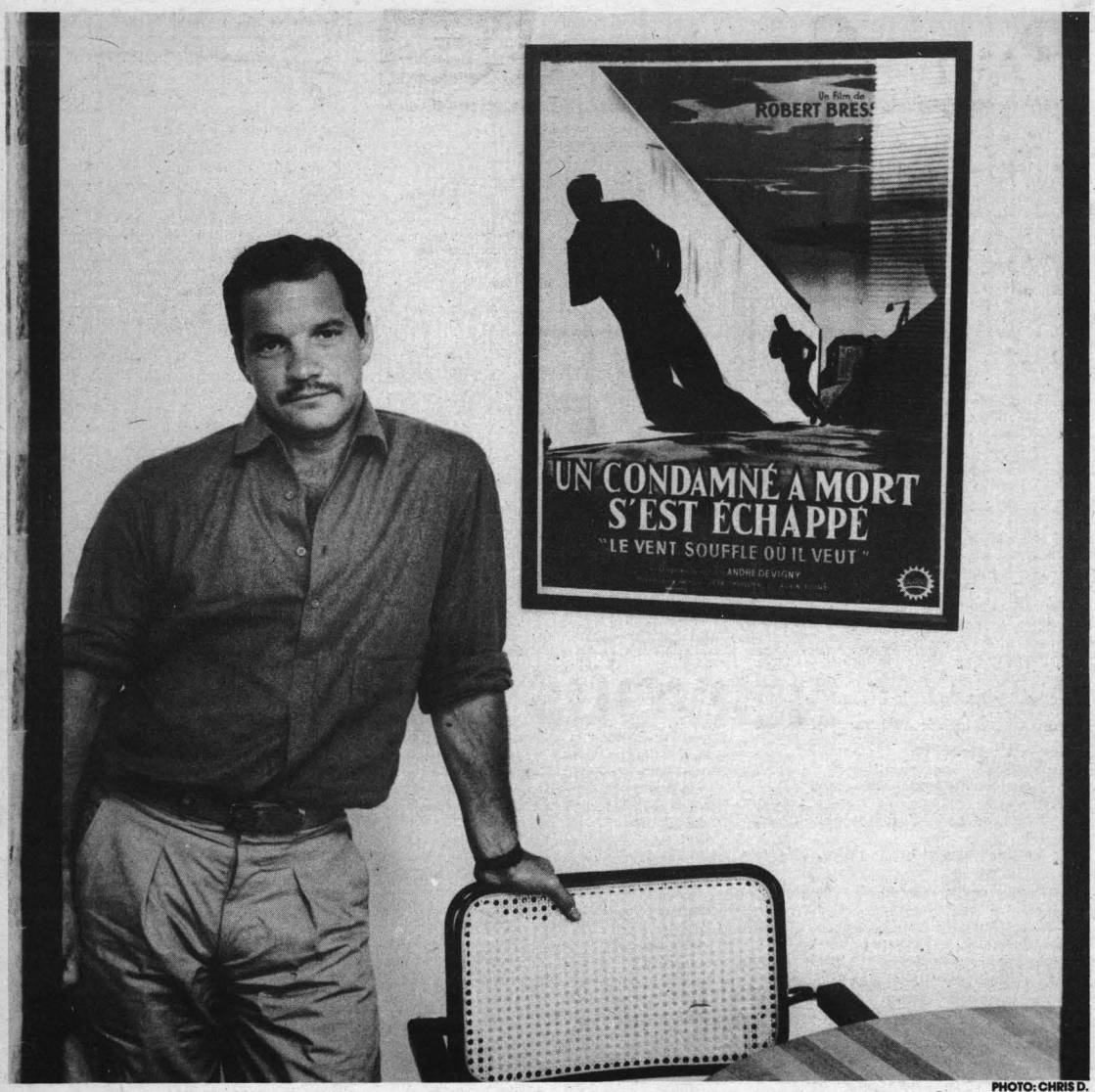


PHOTO: CHRIS D.

anything to become a hero, he didn't even kill anybody over there. So he's living again with his family in Laredo, this border area. And he ends up looking at the Mexicans around him as the Viet Cong, with this resentment and hatred for the Viet Cong who had tortured him and he never was able to strike back at. After some burglars kill his wife and son and mutilate him, he goes out and uses this as an excuse to kill Mexicans, and the white people in the community look at him as a big hero. That realism got toned down and out of it . . . it's the equivalent of if they had given Travis in Taxi Driver a dog that follows him around. When you write borderling material, dangerous stuff, the studios are attracted to it because there's nothing else like it. It's unique. Then they get scared and try to make it less borderline, more middle-of-the-road, and they end up with bad MOR material. And they would have been better off to buy good MOR material than transforming something that was never meant to be that way in the first place. What they don't understand, are afraid to understand, is that when you go with borderline material you go with it all the way. which is one of my complaints on "Hardcore" looking back on it . . . I changed the ending and I wish I hadn't. I was really unhappy with it, and I'm not going to do it again. The ending has the father finding his daughter who's become a fifth rate porno star. The original ending has her die . . . not being murdered or killed but dying accidentally off someplace in a car crash. And he's left out there after having gone through this search, and it's given his life no meaning. He leaves the other girl who's been helping him, goes back home and just tries to figure what's gone wrong with his life.

SL: What about him being so cold, undaunted or tempted by this constant exposure to sex?

PS: That's something that was there originally and I kept. I like that.

SL: It's very perverse.

PS: I know. I like the idea that he wasn't titillated.

SL: You seem to have this terrific understanding of women over 35 and under 18 but the middle are all very stationary.

PS: (laughs)

SL: You're very perceptive about this kind of insecurity that many women grow into.

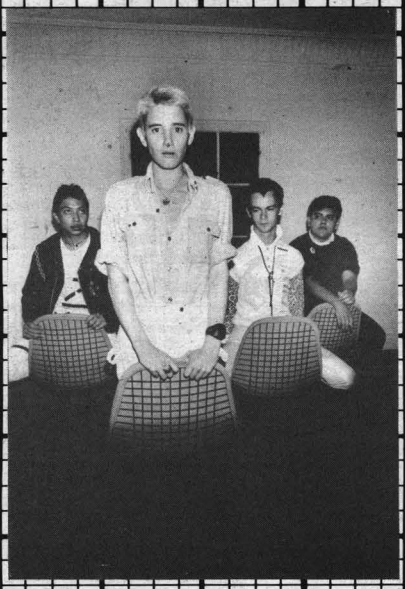
PS: I think perhaps I'm intimidated by women my own age . . .

PS: I think perhaps I'm intimidated by women

my own age . . . Do you want to go see the opening monologue of American Gigolo?

SL: OK.

(In this monologue actor Richard Gere as a jet-set gigolo stares directly into the camera temptingly describing the levels of ecstasy to which he can bring women. The camera swings around, and he is propositioning a middle-aged rich bitch in an expensive restaurant . . . we wanted to see more!)



NERVOUS GENDER

PHOTOS: MELANIE

NERVOUS GENDER
Phranc, Michael, Edward & Giraldo
Interviewed at the Atomic Cafe,
Downtown LA

Slash: Phranc, how long have you been playing guitar?
Phranc: Oh a long time, since I was about 10, but I was a folk singer, I can't play advanced guitar, I can only play folk music, I would cheat, just play C, F, G over and over.
Slash: How d'you get that strange sound out of your guitar?
Phranc: Never tune it.
Slash: (laughs) What are some of your song titles besides Mama's Chest?
Phranc: Diptheria, Gestalt ... (pause)
Slash: D'you want to become one of the popular LA bands or would you rather just go on experimenting?
Edward: I don't think we even see it as experimenting ...
Phranc: That's what comes out when the 4 of us get together you know.
Slash: What about recording and stuff like that?
Phranc: We made this tape for this record that's supposedly going to come out.
Slash: What is it, a compilation album?
Phranc: Yeah, it's supposed to be called Fun Ahoy and it has a number of different bands on it.
Slash: Where d'you think you fit in the LA scene?
Phranc: In the geek section (laughs) ...
Slash: What did you do before you were in the band?
Geraldo: Sat around and vegetated.
Slash: (to Giraldo and Michael) You were in another band? Which was it?
Michael: They were called The Snappers. It was just basic punk, I was playing bass and synthesiser and we had a guitar and drums.
Phranc: I was a lesbian folk singer, I played acoustic guitar with all women sponsors ... all that ... I got really sick of the scene down here, I was with women all the time, it got to be too much and I moved to San Francisco.
Slash: Are you some kind of a renegade now as far as the women's movement?
Phranc: (laughs) I don't know, they're very wary of me now I think, especially since this last gig where only the other band got paid. (Nervous Gender played at a women's movement benefit type of thing. Ed) I stay away from them now. I used to put my foot down on a lot of the songs, I wouldn't sing, I wouldn't have anything to do with 2 of the songs, I just went up on the side and sat on an amp and smoked a cigarette. When we played that benefit we were supposed to sing this song called Die Woman Die and I refused to do it and then when they cut our set after the first song, we were trying to decide what our first song was gonna be, I said 'Die Women Die'.
Slash: Do you think there's a lot of sexism in the punk scene?
Phranc: There's some ... I think in the punk scene the consciousness is a lot higher than in a lot of other scenes, it's definitely different than the basic rock n roll scene — course there's always assholes ...
Slash: D'you see yourselves touring soon?
Phranc: That'd be fun.
Slash: What band would you like to tour with? What band d'you feel kind of close to?
Edward: Human Hands.
Slash: Have you heard yourselves compared with the Screamers?
Michael: We were expecting that.
Slash: How do you survive otherwise?
Phranc: By the skin of my teeth — I sell T-shirts, I usually have an art sale the day the rent's due.
Edward: I work, I design clothes for Penney's and Sears.
(Michael and Giraldo said they get social security)
Slash: Did you get paid at all at Club 88?
Phranc: We made a little money — it's the first time we've gotten paid for anything ... Although when we played that benefit a friend of mine boycotted the door and collected $20, she ran around saying, 'They're not paying Nervous Gender, don't give your money at the door!'
Slash: Where d'you get your inspiration? Everyday life or what?
Nervous Gender: Yeah.
Edward: Television.
Michael: Every piece of shit that's on TV we watch.
Slash: What radio shows?
Edward: Just Michael Jackson and Dr. Toni Grant.
Slash: Who's that?
Edward: She's a psychiatrist.
Phranc: She's too much, she's a call-in shrink.
Slash: What about books and stuff?
Michael: No, we're too young to read.
Slash: Have you already been called 'art damaged' by anyone?
Phranc: Art damage?
Slash: (tries to explain) ... I've a feeling that eventually everybody that you see around at gits

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eventually everybody that you see around at gigs in LA is going to pop up in a band.
Edward: We were hanging around a lot. Nobody would talk to you ...
Phranc: Nobody ever would.
Giraldo: Nobody'd talk to me either.
Phranc: (to Slash) I saw you the first time when the Bags played at the Lace Gallery. That was the first time I saw the Bags play and they quickly became my favorite band.
Slash: (to Phrace) I used to see you — now that you're blonde, you're not so incognito.
Phranc: Blondes have more fun.
Slash: (laughs) Are the Bags still your favorite band?

Phranc: As far as local bands, yeah.
Slash: D'you try and set up gigs yourselves?
Phranc: Things have kind of been happening.
Slash: D'you think of yourselves as the new babies on the scene?
Michael: Yeah.
Edward: I first thought we were hard-core, we were gonna be the new Fear.
Slash: (laughs) Then you got kind of slick ...
Slash: Oh yeah, we overproduced ourselves at Club 88 ... We'll have lights, we'll have costumes ... I think the color scheme is the best 'cos we decided we'd all wear white and it turns out in 4 totally different geeky whites.
Slash: Are you going to get a manager or anything?
Phranc: I'm wary of managers — I just keep hearing horror stories from other bands.
Slash: What are the instruments you use?
Edward: 2 arp synthesisers, 1 morg satellite, 1 rhythm box, 1 untuned guitar.
Phranc: We wanna play in front and have 5 platforms behind us, all the guest drummers at once — a drum quintet.
Slash: Who's going to be your guest drummer?
Phranc: Karla.
Michael: Bruce from Middle Class.
Phranc: Tom Haychon?
Edward: Don from the Germs.
Edward: (later) You should tell them about our fans out in East LA.
Phranc: Oh yeah, god, our little baby Chulos, this one guy, he wanted my sunglasses, 'Hey Phrankie' (I didn't even knew he knew my name), 'I want some of them punk rock glasses!'
Edward: At first they were real hostile.
Michael: After the massacre at Elks Lodge, there must've been something on the news, they saw me the day afterwards, they started saying 'punk rockers!'
Phranc: And then they started coming, they'd stand outside the house through our entire set, and scream songs that they wanted to hear, one time a guy screamed, 'Let me sing, let me sing!' I was ready to go and grab him, his other friends made fun of him, we yelled through the microphone what did he want to sing ... then he shut up. If he does it again ... We want them to come to the concerts ... great hairdos, y'know, white T-shirts and leather jackets, just great, they looked really cool.
Slash: You should get them to go to the gigs.
Phranc: Oh yeah ... but they're not old enough to drive yet.
Giraldo: They didn't start hearing the end of our set until we started practicing earlier.
Phranc: And then they used to run around and sing the lyrics ... 'Hate my Mommy, hate ...' The lady in the back made us turn it down. I kept forgetting she can speak English; I'm so used to being able to say anything at Giraldo's house, 'cos his mother doesn't speak English. But we were practicing while his sister was over ...
Giraldo: At her friends.
Phranc: Yeah ... and they all speak English real well so we couldn't practice Jesus Clone ... 'Jesus is a cocksucking Jew' ... you know.
Michael: A lot of people misinterpreted the chorus of that as 'homicidal nymphomania' whereas it's 'homosexual nymphomania'.
Phranc: Shows what they wanna hear.

A NERVOUS GENDER SONG: "DYPTHERIA"

("Parts of the song were lifted verbatim off a conversation overheard in a restaurant ..." Phranc)

Sittin' in a burger joint
Feeling hungry and mad
Sittin' in a burger joint
The smell of shrinking fat
I order a hamburger
I order some fries
I order a pizza
And I bite it hard
Then a two-ton white trash lady
Drags in her fat son
Nudging him and bossing him I could have sworn
Before I looked again that she was popyline black
BLACK BLACK
BLACK BLACK
BLACK BLACK
BLACK BLACK
chorus:
DYPTHERIA
EVERYONE DIED EXCEPT MY MOTHER
SUBURBIA
LET'S SPLIT A MILKSHAKE
MAYBE IT WILL SETTLE MY STOMACH
I'll have a short stack
And a milkshake
Set that down go back and get the coke
You always love to fix things
I don't want no pancakes
I don't want no grill cheese
No English muffin
Please please please
Now look here you're not in the school cafeteria
Use your fork, lean over, sit up straight
I'm not a baby anymore, not a baby anymore
MORE MORE
MORE MORE
MORE MORE
MORE MORE
chorus ...

Other N.G. songs are: BERLIN REDHEAD, GESTALT, POETS, BUSYBODY, ROCK N ROLL MUSIC (Chuck Berry), SCANDINAVIAN DILEMMA, WHAT CAN I DO, MISCARRIAGE, SLAVE (Carly Simon), MOMMY'S CHEST, JESUS CLONE and GEORGY GIRL.

NICO: THE CONCERT, THE INTERVIEW

The woman coming down the stairs at the Whisky was no Parisian model turned moon goddess and underground rock/film star. She was a Medieval Mama Cass, wearing the same shapeless burlap sack for a blouse and those baggy at the top of the boots pants she wore on the cover of "Marble Index" five or six years ago. She was also obviously drunk. Well what kind of mysterious idol is this: She smied and said into the microphone: "Is this really me?" You wondered — then her feet began working the tiny harmonium, she put her head forward and let out this piercing wail sob: "I have come to lie with you, I have come to die with you" and the light caught her cheekbones a certain way, and her hair feel a certain way and the organ was issuing waves of doleful cathedral sound, and bam! the harsh reality of fat, chemically altered wash-ups was suddenly swiftly booted out the window on the tip of a hard teutonic heel.

This Nico was no Germanic frigid bitch. She acted as if the whole Whisky was the living room of some good friend and she was casually playing for a few guests. It was the most intimate performance I'd seen, completely devoid of any artifice, any hip show biz bullshit — maybe she's totally incapable of putting up any artifice anymore but it was for the better — first set at least. Three new songs, the last dedicated to Sid Vicious with lines about collapsing bridges and 'his purple lips'. Then a young guitarist with long, blond hair and Berlinic ambisexuality stepped out of a sixties time warp to accompany her on a new pretty song "Henry Hudson" ("he was a great navigator".) Two Velvet Underground faves ("Femme Fatale" — "Lou Reed Song. Devil!") A Song that maybe Dylan wrote for her "I'll Keep it with mine" and John Cale's "Childs Xmas in Wales"." Each song building more of a mood the audience seeming to get quieter with each performance, Nico was relaxed, happy to be performing then the guitarist left-she asked for request, a million shouted out, she covers her ears, then begins to play a slow, repeated phrase on her funeral machine and she cries "This is the End, my only friend."A definitive version featuring her bizarre death rattle primal.

A brief intermission as she introduces Tim Hardin, an old friend and an old man, once a wirey, troubled, intense troubador, now a stand-in for Burl Ives still singing in a misty voice about misty roses. A bore but it was brief. She reappears, dedicates a song to Andreas Baader-finishing by saying it was really for Manson. That's what I like about Nico — she's into all the right people, haha. She does Deutchsland Uber Alles, theme for the Third Reich. (I like it for its melody) Finally "Janitor of Lunacy ("the last two lines are about nuclear power") I could have gone on for much longer — I sensed most of the audience felt the same. It was just fucking great, she was burned out around the edges, but she seemed a survivor. She didn't know how much some people need her brand of gloomy psycho-music. She doesn't know the Whisky fleecd people for $6.50 and that they pushed them all out for a new audience who would have to suffer a second set by Code Blue, a torture band with one of the most indistinctive personalities (or lack of it) that I've ever seen. They play an irritatingly trebly and bland kind of mundane rock and rool that passes for 'new wave' these days — though what is new about tedium, no one has been able to explain to me. The difference between a performer like Nico and a band like Code Blue is that Nico exploits tedium as an essential part of her performance — creating a mood, hypnotizing. Its an element shes in control of. Code Blue just unwillingly produces sit on your ass boredom in the name of securing big record contracts and mega-dollars. Bands like this made me very cynical, very fast.

Nicos second set was a burned out shambles. You want your cult idol, well suffer her cult performances as she does a routine reminiscent of Judy Garland meeting Lenny Bruce in the last days. Stopping songs to complain of the noise generated by a much drunker, much less reverent crowd. Interesting heckling (I didn't pay $6.50 to support your habit!) (One girl shouting "We love you, Nico, We love you" until the Nico turns to the mike and says "Do you really think that makes me feel any better?") A request for an old Jackson Browne number that he wrote for her when he was her guitarist and new young lover brings forth her wrath (He is a pig. Jackson Browne, arrogant pig!) When no one offers her a drink she throws a glass across the stage and says "Isn't there any dope in this damn place? Great theatre, cut the tension with a knife, like the smash-up on the street you can't turn your head away from, watching her looking in space, asking for "Sid, Sid, Where are you, Sid?"

Next day Interview took place Tim Hardins house. Mr. Hardin, shit faced and stumbling around, hurt himself about four times while we were there. It was one of those dark sixties type hippie houses with art deco posters in the bathroom and a pot of beans on the stove. Nico had just been crying — former manager Paul Morrisey had taken her money so she wouldn't spend it on foolish indulgences. She did seem too old for a babysitter, though. She is bothered by the people who have come to interview her — too many: One C. Bag, one Philomena, One Gregg "New York Rocker" Turner, One publicist Tim Hogan. Several people wander in and out of the house and her attention span. She doesn't have trains of thought, she has slow tug boats forever making their way to port through the fog. She conveniently doesn't hear questions she dislikes and her attention span is impossible to hold down — there are long gaps in her sentences whie she searches to translate her answer into English and the right terms. The unique thing is her voice, as low and throaty as her wind tunnel singing. Incredibly expressive it places accents on unexpected syllables, constantly making seemingly routine sentences ironic, full of secret meaning. She might have been totally de-mystified in the harsh daylight. I might have seen certain disturbing paraphenalia in herpurse as she rummaged for a Sid button, but her voice and her eyes haunted me the rest of the day. The mystery remains: the legend is intact. It might be sort of gross and polluted around the edges, but Nico appears to know it and doesn't seem to give a shit, so why should we?

Slash: How was last night?
Nico: Oh well, I thought that the first show was o.k., but the second was a little bit . . .
Slash: The audience seemed stange —
Nico: No, no not at all, I didn't think that . . . Well, according to my mood — I wasn't in such a . . . *great mood*. But the first show was o.k. It was very intense somehow. I couldn't control my . . . my voice. I could control it better in the second.
Slash: How do you find playing Los Angeles again, after such along absence.
Nico: Oh well, I was . . . delighted!
Slash: That was the first time you've played since the Velvets?
Nico: Since the Trip, yes. (The Trip was a pioneering psychedelic club. Andy Warhols Exploding Plastic Inevitable featuring the Velvet Underground and Nico was the last show to play this notorious club in 1966.)
(Nico rummages through her purse, look for a Sid Vicious button.)
Slash: You dedicated a song to Sid Vicious last night?
Nico: To vicious Sid ? (grim laugh)
Slash: Did you get a chance to know him?
Nico: No (smiling) . . .why do you ask?
Slash: Did you dedicate the song from a distance or a closeness?
Nico: Well, I was *very concerned* when he was in jail. I was in Paris . . . It upset me, really. (Quietly laughing) For a guy I *don't even know?*
Slash: Do you like the sex pistols?
Nico: Yes, . . .Of course.
Slash: What was your favorit song?
Nico: Oh — I don't know. I couldn't tell you. Because I don't buy those records. I only listen to classical music.
Slash: I read that you hated punk rock.
Nico: Oh, I love it! I like *The Clash* a lot.
Slash: Siouxsie and the Banshees?
Nico: (bored sigh) Yes, I use to tour with them, Last Year. She wounds like a hammer!
(Someone offers her a joint)
No, thank you, I've had enough. I can't get smashed because I go *crazy*. (laugh) No on pot . . .
Slash: Have you worked with John Cale again?
Nico: Poets! (laughs) I mean . . . I had denied the fact in a way . . . that I could only work with him. But . . . he's so fast. And he's not finicky at all. I mean he's very . . . *insane*! (smiling)
Slash: He wants to do classical music. Do you want . . .
Nico: I want to sing opera! Verdi . . . I love opera. My mother used to take me to the opera every weekend, to the Berliner Opera . . . (knocking a beer over) Oh my goodness, that's the second time today . . . what's wrong with me . . . first at Barneys Beanery, the whole glass, now here . . .
Slash: Do you have plans for a new album?
Nico: In conjunction with Cale?
Yes, with Cale and also . . . there's another one who's going to co-operate — but — because *I* really want to do the production . . . because I have much better taste than all these guys. Maybe I want to get Paul Rothchild (Doors producer) if he's not too . . . too good for it.
Slash: I heard you were interested in doing a project with the remaining Doors — Morrison music —
Nico: No, I just would like to *become* Jim Morrison. I think I'm a little too old yet.
Slash: Do you think the spirit's available?
Nico: (Smiling) What? Oh, absolutely. It's right here. Can't you feel it?
Slash: Are you convinced he's dead? Physically?
Nico: No — of course not. I mean, bones have bones and bones are just this (holding out her wrists) As alive as limbs, you know . . . a body.
Slash: But his limbs have stopped.
Nico: No, I don't see it that way.
Slash: How do you see it?
Nico: Well . . . I'm a robot. (Laughs) (unintelligible murmur) . . . but I lose my key.
Slash: Do you mind giving up your privacy to be a public performer?
Nico: My privacy? I wouldn't say that my songs are indecent. They are . . . very intimate. What privacy do you mean?
Slash: *Are* the songs spontaneous? Do you work on the music, the words for a long time?
Nico: I think about . . . you mean for each song or in general?
Slash: In general.
Nico: It can happen in six months. Oh, I prefer a year. I couldn't do two in a year.
Slash: How does your inspiration come. Is it quick?
Nico: No, it just coincides with my present state (laughs) of whatever — so many thing — states I mean.

PHOTOS: KERRY COLONNA

NICO: THE CONCERT, THE INTERVIEW

Slash: Do any of your songs [illegible]s?
Nico: Some. But some of [illegible]es — I look at the movies [illegible]rite a song about the Sea Wolf [illegible]ack London. Edward G. Robinson — he's so incredible an actor. I'm in love with him — but he's already dead.
Slash: Who's your favorite movie actor? (a leading question — I already knew the answer)
Nico: Who do you think?
Slash: Montgomery Clift?
Nico: Yes! How did you know (thanks Nicole)
Slash: What is it about him?
Nico: Because he looks —
Slash: A certain intensity?
Nico: Yes, of course, but because he *sees* — you know, conciously. But there are other actors — you want to ask me?
Slash: Any actresses?
Nico: Yes . . . Bette Davis.
Slash: Are you still interested in acting? In making films?
Nico: Yes, but only with Phillipe Garrel (stills from his films are on the covers of Nicos last two albums.)
Slash: We'd like to see them but . . .
Nico: I know someone in New York now who is going to distribute them in America.
Slash: Who'se the other actor you like?
Nico: I guess . . . uh . . . Robert Walker. You've seen "Strangers on a Train?" (Hitchcock movie about a psychopathic killer) That is Robert Walker. It's not Farley Granger! I really like the story. I'd like to do that.
Slash: Anonymously kill someone? There's a lot of power —
Nico: Yes, but it's so intriguing.
Slash: Do you find life now intriguing enough?
Nico: It *could* be more intriguing. Because I like *theatre.*

Slash: You seem very comfortable performing.
Nico: My favorite singer is Om Khatsum (Egyptian singer who died several years ago.)
Slash: I read you like Yma Sumac.
Nico: Yes, but she's not around anymore. She's old — I really like odd art singing in a sense of uh — you know like . . . uh . . . tightrope walking, or ballet or — it has movement — by movement, star movement — there are so many ways.
Slash: Do you ever listen to Indian singers.
Nico: No. I like Turkish. I'm part Turkish.
Slash: As well as French and German.
Nico: Russian and German. I live in Paris. Ever since I was sixteen. I think about going back to Rome, just for a while. Besides they said I could sing there. The last time the organizers there called me (unintelligible) so I said something against the Communists, so it didn't happen.
Slash: What did you say?
Nico: I don't know . . . (to her guitarist) What did I say?
Slash: Is there any place you can't sing?
Nico: Communists are just common. They don't wash, they don't bathe, Siberia . . . No, I mean that is stupid what I just said. They're not common. I prefer Karl Marx. what did he say . . . (her guitarist says something) oh yes, I never remember that word. Dialectic . . . because it makes me think of dialect . . . you know a dialect of a language.
Slash: What was dialectic?
Nico: Oh . . . it's philosophy. Two parts — you contradict yourself. But you know it's really important to . . . you can't have your principal and stick with it. Oh my god, it's so boring!
Slash: Do you think when you play that it hypnotizes the audience?
Nico: Well it hypnotizes me — if it din't it would bore me to tears.
Slash: Do you like doing two sets a night? Would you prefer one?
Nico: No, two. But I wasn't very well. (second set)
Slash: What was wrong?
Nico: I won't tell you. It's private.
Slash: Do you still keep in touch with Lou Reed?
Nico: He doesn't keep in touch with me! He had a bad conscience. Because in Berlin, he really screwed up his own song.
Slash: Which?
Nico: All Tommorrows Parties. he was playing it twice as long, as slow. It was awful. I guess it's just a bod conscience.
Slash: How long ago was this.
Nico: Two years ago, I guess. Just before Xmas. You know, he's not that popular at all. You know why? Because he puts too many of his posters out. It's being . . . pretentious. You should have seen in Berlin. Everything was full of Lou Reed.
Slash: Do you think they resented that?
Nico: No, but what I mean to say is that . . . what were we talking about — yes, and only half the room was filled. It was terrible. The poster was hypnotic. It was like a wolf — you know that poster?
Slash: Is your son "Le Petit Chavalier" (a song sung by a child on the "Desertshore" album.)
Nico: Yes.

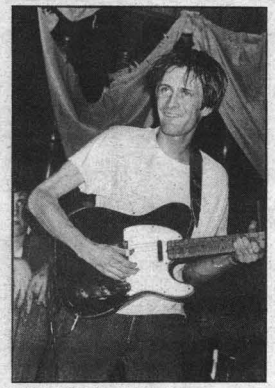
Slash: Where is he now?
Nico: Well, he's not in the cavalry yet.
Slash: Where is he, Nico?
Nico: Maybe he would prefer the Marines (very quietly) like his father.
Slash: Are you interested, Surrealism?
Nico: Isn't that obvious? It's so obvious.
Slash: Somtimes obvious things aren't what they seem.
Nico: (quiet laugh) ohh, that's true. I've met things like that. Situations I've had . . .
Slash: What are your plans for the near future?
Nico: (Laughs) I thought I was going to Toronto. And then my manager decided that I shouldn't. I don't know why.
Slash: Who's your manager?
Nico: Jane Friedman. (formerly Patti Smith, now John Cale and Nico.) I'm going to be in New York three or four days. Reno Sweeneys. I don't know the place. I like CBGB.
Slash: Do you find when you play that you can change the atmosphere of the room.
Slash: I can't answer that question.
(outside)
(to the photographer)
Nico: Don't come too close please. Is that color?
Slash: Black and White.
Nico: That's o.k. But could you just wait five minutes. Oh my god, my eyes are really pink!
Slash: Future plans.
Nico: I'll probably just do my album.
Slash: Do you have a label?
Nico: No.
I have to decide which one is best.
Slash: Can we expect an album from you next year?
Nico: Oh no, sooner. In the fall.
Slash: Do you work fast in the studio?
Nico: Yes . . . normally, yes.
Slash: If the album comes out will you tour again?
Nico: Yes. Because I like to sing in public. I didn't use to . . . in the beginning.
Slash: What changed your mind about performing.
Nico: It's ecstacy. I didn't know before. I never thought about it that way. Until I moved . . . I had to find out. (laughing)
(She becomes distracted with someone combing her hair.)
Slash: How is your outlook now, as opposed to when you were performing with the Velvets . . . the audience . . .
Nico: Well I just don't — it — they need the artist, but it's the other way around. Well it's both ways really, but if you're the artist then it's the other way around. I found it was easier to be a dictator.
Slash: Do you prefer performing alone or with other musicians?
Nico: Oh I like to perform with other musicians. But only a few — only Eno, John Cale and —
Slash: Your guitarist.
Nico: But, of course — and who else. For percusion — I like — Moondog!
Slash: He's dead, though.
Nico: (surprised) He's dead?! When?
Slash: About five years.
Nico: I love that record he did.
Slash: Do you think Eno is insane?
Nico: Oh no.
Slash: Would you say he's a genius?
Nico: (she smiles, nods her head no.)
Slash: John Cale?
Nico: (Nods her head no)
He's too you know — that term 'genius' is used too — much too loosely.
Slash: Do you think there's a parallel between genius and insanity?
Nico: Yes — almost — absolutely every time. That's elementary, anyway.
Slash: You had said John Cale was insane.
Nico: (to herself) Schizophrenic. He has terrible things on his walls. Clippings of faces that have been operated on. Morbid.
Slash: You have no interest in morbid things?
Nico: No, not that sort of thing. Not that! Have you ever seen a movie — "The Brain That Could Not Die" — a man was holding the head. I got so freaked out on that movie . . . film, in the beginning.
Slash: Unnattached talking heads. Some people like that.
Nico: I thought I was going insane!
Slash: You use to drive a van around Europe — wherever you wanted to go?
Nico: Yes. I'm a truck driver! . . .
Slash: Last night you dedicated "Valley of the Kings" to Andreas Baader. You're interested in terrorist gangs?
Nico: Yes, obviously.
Slash: And you said the song was to Charles Manson, originally.
Nico: Well, it was the same thing, really. It's a way —
Slash: What is it about terrorists organizations that appeal to you?
Nico: Terror!
Slash: The freedom to create terror?
Nico: Everybody can create terror if they weren't so lame.
Slash: Should they?
Nico: (Enigmatic laugh) I'm a little terrorist sometimes.
(Talking about creating terror on the street)
The sooner the better. That's why I must make a lot of money.
Slash: To do what?
(She laughs to herself) Would you like to create your own terrorist group?
Nico: No . . . not by myself.
Slash: Do you think the Velvet Undergound, in the early days, was a terrorist band, in the way they upset people —
Nico: Oh, absolutely.

LOS ANGELES BAND UPDATE

"If punk is dead I guess I'm just a necrophiliac..." (a reader)

WARNING

this relatively elaborate look at the L.A. scene does not pretend to be THE exhaustive survey future rock n roll historians will be able to confidently rely on. A number of bands (some good, some awful) have been left out, either for geographical reasons (most beach bands like Suburban Lawns, the Crowd and others), aesthetic choices (most pop, all power pop, rockabilly, plain all rock n roll) or simply because there was no information available and no time to seek it out. Included are the all-out punk bands, the new wave/experimental/rock n roll bands with a definite punk following and the out of town bands that either helped shape this scene or have played enough tiems in this city to be considered part of it. If your group, or your fave group isn't included, don't scream bloody murder. There WILL be an update on this update, we will fill in the holes, and we will feel very guilt in the meantime.



THE ALLEYCATS

Totally unaffected by petty politics and power plays, this band should be renamed L.A.'s Good Conscience. Unanimously voted by everyone as the nicest people ever to lose themselves in the universal rock n roll swamp, they also happen to tirelessly churn out some of the most rootsy amphetamine rock n roll that has every been played and sung. Except it's caffeine that seems to fuel them. Diane should sing more, and someone should start handling out the concert flyers for them, cos they have done it long enough by themselves. Are already in that mythical american rock n roll hall of fame and don't even know it. (Excellent cuts on Dangerhouse single and compilation LP)

ARTHUR J. AND THE GOLDCUPS

One of the most lunatic outfits to hit the scene, but unfortunately one of the flakiest. Made up of various outcasts from other bands, the Goldcups also featured some inspired fringe cult figures. In limbo at the present, but if everyone involved (all 250 of them) ever learns to show up at rehearsals at the same time their long promised come back may add a welcome touch of madness to concert nights. Probably forever unrecordable.

THE BAGS

Early hard-core combo that went from high speed noise explosion to sophisticated high speed noise explosion with unique melodic touches. Singer Alice is still one of the great shouters of the scene and has recently started to mess around with keyboards. Live, the Bags are a punk purist's dream come true, yet an album of their material would probably reveal a richer variety of sounds that anybody suspects. So far, only a good single and a cut on the Dangerhouse label are available.

THE B PEOPLE

Have very recently resurfaced (complete with obscure new name) from the ashes of the defunct Strict Ids. Mike's twisted presence is missed, but their sound is as hard and offbeat as I hoped it would be. Definitely an acquired taste, but so was everybody else's sound two years ago. Do not ignore.

BLACK RANDY AND THE METRO SQUAD

Everybody's favorite punk/funk cosmic joke may be in serious trouble, judging by his latest Hollywood appearance. The band still cooks and struts nicely but the man himself (once Jah's own white son) is tired and disinterested. Nothing new happens, even the tacky stage gimmicks have been discarded. Take away madness andirreverence and you're left with very little. Once, this bunch had a lot to offer. Still, there must be a way out for such a multi-talented group. (Various good tunes on Dangerhouse EPs and LP)

BACKSTAGE PASS

Main claim to fame is to have been there in the very beginning. Went from not so good to worse. Lost more members than the Russians lost civilians in Stalingrad. Directionless in spite of famous friendship and support of a certain Jake Riviera. Spock deserved better.

BLACK FLAG

Still unknown as to now but for one Slasher who swears by them following a recent show at a North Hollywood spot. If the man is right, these outfielders will soon redefine the true meaning of hard core punk all by themselves. Singer already famous for general hard core behaviour. Excellent EP out on own label.

THE BRAINIACS

Patiently making room for themselves in the crowded spotlight. At times more than interesting. The In crowd hates them, so they may be doing something right. Have always managed to have one staunch supporter in the Slash clique (3 in a row so far). Play their instruments better than many. Okay EP on own label. (Their fliers are classics)

THE CONTROLLERS

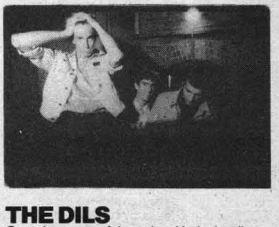
Have quietly (well, loudly!) gone from average punk outfit to awesome power punk trio, steadily improving what is today one of the meanest and tightest rhythm machines in town. Will invariably knock you off your feet in spite of legendary PA and microphone problems. Drummer Ms Mad Dog in a class by herself. Currently shopping for a singer. If they find it, they will be soon untouchable. Uneven singles on What Records, but their 3 tunes on the Upsetter LP make up for it.

THE DEADBEATS

Extinct but not forgotten. The Deadbeats' problem is that they tried to do too early what almost everyone now takes for granted (or was that OUR problem??). Experimenting is now okay, two years ago it was a sure way of getting excommunicated. The Guerin brothers have vanished, but Pat Delaney appears to have found a (temporary?) home with the B people while Geza X is still playing the erratic resident genius. Now that L.A. is ready for the Deadbeats, do they care at all?? (Superb Dangerhouse EP)

THE DICKIES

Our token success story. Were never taken seriously in the local know-it-all circles, which does not bother their rabid english followers a bit. Genuinely tried to pull other less lucky L.A. bands along the success trail. Currently still immersed in the 12 inch/ picture disk/limited editions world of commerce and product. Main question: will they EVER write a new song? Were also recently turned down by drummer extraordinaire Nicky Beat. (Countless releases on A&M — A matter oftaste)



THE DILS

Our token case of desertion. Undoubtedly a smart move, as they are on all accounts one of THE San Francisco punk bands. Have made themselves very scarce in L.A. (which they call Hollywood). Earned the ultimate punk Medal Of Honor by opening for the Clash, and spat it out in disgust. Have regularly become the target of every accusation imaginable (we should know) and in so doing have almost succeeded in making everyone forget what an incredible band they can be. Almost, but not quite. The Dils backlash stops here. (Two very raw unfair releases on Dangerhouse. A John Cale-produced EP on Spy Records is the most immediate project.)

THE EYES

Still a question mark after all these years. Many personal changes. Main man Joe Ramirez one of the most elusive musicians around. Occasionally brilliant. Joe Nanini on drums is excellent and even more elusive. Add David Brown on keyboards and you end up with one hell of an elusive bunch. They breathe sarcasm like the rest of us breathes smog. Not for everyone, but they never claimed to participate in the popularity sweepstakes. Not too concerned with regular exposure either. (very good record on Dangerhouse) Prediction for the future impossible: lack of available data.

THE EXTREMES

Ambitious little pack. Very image con-

scious, and sometimes good at it. Try harder than most for that ultimate fusion of disparate styles, which may or may not lead them to a cherished spot in the "rock as a genuine art form" hall of fame. I saw this pubescent Roxy Music three times. It totally worked once. Have appeared on TV and in movies, which to them may be more important than records. Will surprise us all by becoming the biggest band of the eighties.

EDDIE AND THE SUBTITLES

Competent newcomers with low profile and slightly derivative sound. Too early to analyze. 5 points for being a new band.

FEAR

Good natured sleazos with more energy and guts than should be allowed for only one band. Can spit burning charcoals and piss beer to put them out faster than you can say 1 2 3 4. Have to be felt to be believed. A few find them distasteful and crude. Have never had a dull show so far. Will play anywhere, anytime, with anyone. Have also decorated the city's most influential men's rooms with the most twisted and elaborate "confessions". One extra raw single on own label, with no immediate designs in a follow up. Too busy kicking ass for wimp studio activities. A truly favorite band of this writer.

THE FLESHEATERS

Never truly appreciated during their lifetime, the Flesheaters gave us some of the most exasperated (exasperating some would say) sounds we ever heard. Frontman Chris D. has since gone on to bigger things (like writing for this rag and producing a L.A. scene compilation LP) but there is word that the Flesheaters shall live on, on vinyl at least. The band also was a fertile breeding ground for other now major outfits. Fair single on Upsetter label.

THE FLYBOYS

Have constantly suffered from a lack of identity. Can be very good in an uptempo manner and can also be less than that. No true following of their own yet although other more lightweight combos have the little fuckers in the audience screaming and bouncing throughout the night. Have to yank themselves out of the opening band trench even if it means sacrificing a bit of the old tastefulness. (Good poppy single on own label.) The sax was a good idea.

F-WORD

Early very hard-core pioneers that died a slow and unbecoming death. Fortunately their soul and heart broody Rik L. Rik is made of rawhide and will resist the tides of time. Some are already betting he will eventually emerge as one of the major forces of this hazy scene. There have been some later appearances with San Francisco's Negative Trend that indeed suggest such a possibility. Problem is, Rick seems in no hurry to do anything. How long are we going to have to wait? As to now, this singer gets the "lasting potentiality" award. Rest of the band out of circulation. Various recordings on Posh Boy label. Very mixed values.

THE GERMS

An experience unto themselves. No known equivalent in the Western world. Can trigger either instant hatred or blind worship in the most unlikely spectators or listeners. Live, it ranges from an ugly mess to stunning explosions of musical brilliance, depending on the position of the moon, the quality of chemical poisons available that week and other obscure factors. On record, it is generally superb, although weak hearted witnesses have been known to run out of the room screaming. Nobody, absolutely nobody can even attempt to do what the Germs do. Some think it's a blessing. Chaotic master Darby Crash is a visionary lyricist and an unusual vocalist. Bassist Lorna Doom is the queen of Cool, Guitarist Pat is the next Jimmy Hendrix and drummer Don is too many things to start listing them here. Together, they also have the worst reputation any band ever had. One or two brave clubs excepted, the only venues that will readily book them are the various jails around the county. Yet, in spite of the odds, the disease is steadily spreading. They are either killing music as we know it or laying the foundations for some monstrous mutation. (stunning singles on What and Slash records, amazing cuts on Upsetter LP and an upcoming entire album on Slash records)

THE GO GO'S

Much maligned all girl outfit that went from nowhere to a semi-respectable position in the race faster than anybody expected them to. Morality: yesterday's joke bands will be tomorrow serious contenders, occasionally. Learnt to play their insruments (not all of them) in public, and the public loved them for it. Have never tried to pretend to be what they were not, but constantly gave everything they had. Have been pushed around and fought back. Recently dumped manager and took their future in their own hands. Currently slowly leaving the cult band status behind. Singlehandedly made day-glo a dirty word and have no regrets.

THE GEARS

Partial offshoot of the L.A. Shakers, just starting to come out of the garage. More rock n roll than most (with surf undertones) they should be a good opening band for hot summer night concerts. Snobs and progressive buffs will cringe.

HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS

Rare appearances make it hard to evaluate their worth. Frontwoman Holly is a good rocker, but something was always missing. In limbo at the present.

HUMAN HANDS

The most promising of the new new bands. Experimental but not at all self-indulgent, their sound as if they mean business. Will rapidly gain an moprtant following, and New York will be green with envy. I do not plan to miss one performance.

THE MAU MAU'S

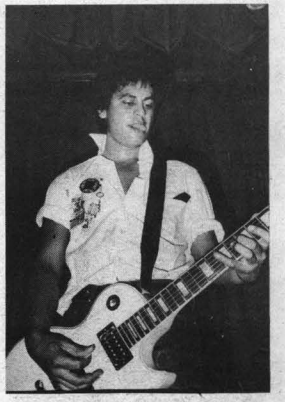
Have been known to take some time off from scribbling their name all over every flat surface available in town to actually play some classic punk music. Genuine bad boys with no redeeming qualities, they also have more sense of humor than their sore detractors suspect. Too much exposure to their music will eventually make you look just like them. It's known as urban trash chic. It will get you bared from every circle you care to name. The Mau Mau's are our best defense against the health fanaticism sweeping the land.

MIDDLE CLASS

Very intense bunch from the land of blandness (Orange county). Performances are a shrieking blur, but experts who have deciphered sections of their lyrics speak highly of the message. Nothing special at all about their looks, which makes them very special. (Very successful and very representative EP on Joke records)

NERVOUS GENDER

"And now, in the geek corner . . ." (their expression, not mine). Electronic baby combo for the more adventurous amongst you. Everyone sings in turn, and everyone dabbles with knobs and switches and toy machinery. Some of it is great, some of it painful. Michael is a very scary singer. Androgynous Phranc has a strange relationship with her guitar. Typical audience comment overheard during one of their sets: " . . .so this is what music has come to?"



THE PLUGZ

Have in the past 2 months become one of the most exciting live bands around. The more they are loved, the better they get. Every new song is great, and their sweaty enthusiastic audience has a higher percentage of "regular" people than any other band, X excepted. Have gone an incredible distance in a short time, and don't show any sign of slowing down. to be carefully watched. Something's got to happen. (very good first LP on own label).

RHINO 39

Very young band from Long Beach determined to keep the pure flame of punk as we knew it alive and burning in the great american wasteland. Idealistic and sincere, they remind some observers of the initial musical bravado of The Damned, cept they're too young to remember that far.

THE ROTTERS

Unexceptional but entertaining valley band whose fame almost spread due to a naughty single that said things about one of the Fleetwood Mac mamas. The song was banned. The Rotters have been cruising off that incident ever since.

2 YEARS of PUNK in L.A.

COMPILED BY KICK DRAWINGS BY SHAWN KERRI THANKS TO BRENDAN, DAVID BROWN & EVERYONE ELSE.

THE ZEROS #1
APRIL 77 TO MAY 78

JAVIER ESCOVEDO (GUITAR) VCLS | HECTOR DENALOSE (BASS) | ROBERT LOPEZ (GUITAR) | BABA CHENELLE (DRUMS)

THE ZEROS #2
MAY 78 TO AUG 78

JAVIER E. (GTR./VCLS.) | GUY LOPEZ (BASS) | ROBERT L. (GUITAR) | BABA (DRUMS)

THE ZEROS #3
AUG 78 TO SEPT. 78

JAVIER E. (GTR./VCLS.) | GUY L. (BASS) | BABA (DRUMS)

THE ZEROS #4
OCT. 78 TO NOW

JAVIER E. (GTR./VCLS.) | HECTOR P. (BASS) | BABA (DRUMS)

(SOMETIME BETWEEN #2 & #3 THE ZEROS MOVED TO SAN FRANCISCO)

THE CONTROLLERS #1
JULY 77 TO AUG. 77

KID SPIKE (GUITAR) VCLS | JOHNNY STINGRAY (LEAD GUITAR) VOCALS

THE CONTROLLERS #2
AUG. 77 TO SEPT. 77

K. SPIKE (GUITAR) VOCALS | J. STINGRAY (LEAD) VOCALS | D.O.A. DAN (BASS) | HILLARY (DRUMS)

THE CONTROLLERS #3
SEPT. 77 TO MARCH 78

K. SPIKE (GUITAR) VOCALS | J. STINGRAY (LEAD) VOCALS | D.O.A. DAN (BASS) | CHARLIE TRASH (DRUMS)

THE CONTROLLERS #4
MARCH 78 TO APRIL 78

(LINEUP FOR THE MASQUE BENEFIT)

K. SPIKE (GUITAR) (LEAD) VOCALS | J. STINGRAY (LEAD) VOCALS | BRUCE BARF (BASS) | P. ROESSLER (DRUMS)

THE CONTROLLERS #5
APRIL 78 TO NOW

K. SPIKE (GUITAR) VOCALS | J. STINGRAY (BASS) VOCALS | KARLA MAD DOG (DRUMS)

* THE REPTILES
JUNE 76

TOMMY NATION (GTR./VCLS.) | D.O.A. DAN (BASS) | ? | CHARLIE TRASH (GTR.) (DRUMS)

*AFTER ONE LIVE GIG D.O.A. & CHARLIE MOVE TO SAN FRANCISCO & WHERE THEY BECOME THE VANDALS.)

DIANNE WITH ALLEY CAT

DARBY CRASH

THE DILS #1
MAR. 77 TO APRIL 77

JEFF SCOTT (VCLS.) | CHIP KINMAN (GUITAR) | TONY KINMAN (BASS) | JOSEPH MARC (DRUMS)

THE DILS #2
APRIL 77 TO SEPT. 77

CHIP K. TONY K. ENDRE ALGOVER (VCLS.) (VCLS.) (BUDDY HATE) GUITAR BASS (DRUMS)

THE DILS #3
SEPT. 77 TO FEB. 78

CHIP K. (VCLS.) GUITAR | TONY K. (VCLS.) BASS | RAND MCNALLY (DRUMS)

(THE DILS MOVE TO SAN FRANCISCO, RAND STAYS)

THE DILS #4
FEB. 78 TO NOW

CHIP K. (VCLS.) GUITAR | TONY K. (VCLS.) BASS | JOHN SILVERS (DRUMS)

THE BAGS #1
ALICE BAG (VCLS.) | JANET (GTR.) | GEZA X (GTR.) | PAT (BASS) | JOE NANINI (DRUMS)

THE BAGS #2
ALICE B. (VCLS.) | JOHNNY NATION (GUITAR) | CRAIG LEE (GUITAR) | PAT (BASS) | RICKY (DRMS)

THE BAGS #3
ALICE B. (VCLS.) | JOHNNY N. (GTR.) | CRAIG L. (GTR.) | PAT (BASS) | NICKY BEAT (DRMS)

THE BAGS #4
ALICE B. (VCLS.) | ROB GRAVES (GUITAR) | CRAIG L. (GTR.) | PAT (BASS) | TERRY BAGHDAD (DRUMS) | KEY BRDS

*(NICKY BEAT WAS ALSO PLAYING WITH THE WHIRLS)

* THE CONSUMERS #1
MAR. 77 TO JULY 78

DAVID WILEY (VCLS.) | PAUL CUTLER (GTR.) | GREG JONES (GTR.) | MIKE BORENS (BASS) | JOHN PRECIOUS (DRUMS)

THE CONSUMERS #2
JULY 78 TO AUG. 78

DAVID W. (VCLS.) | PAUL C. (GTR.) | GREG J. (GTR.) | † ROB RITTER (BASS) | JOHN P. (DRMS)

*(THE BAND GAMES FROM PAKAITY, NOID, AND MOVES TO L.A. IN MAY 76, IN AUG. 76 WILEY QUITS AND IS BRIEFLY REPLACED BY DON BOWLES, GERMS DRUMMER. THE BAND LEAVES TOWN SOON AFTER.)

†(ROB ALSO PLAYS WITH THE BAGS)

HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS #1
AUG. 78 TO FEB. 79

HOLLY (GUITAR) VCLS. | JOHN RICHEY (BASS) | STEVE YOUNG (DRUMS)

HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS #2
FEB. 79 TO APRIL 79

HOLLY (GUITAR) VCLS. | BRUCE LIPSON (BASS) | STEVE YOUNG (DRUMS)

HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS #3
APRIL 79 TO NOW

HOLLY (GTR./VCLS.) | STEVE YOUNG (DRUMS)

(HOLLY AND STEVE OFF TO ENGLAND TO LOOK FOR A BASS PLAYER AND CONTRACT)

THE GERMS #1
APRIL 77 TO JUNE 77

BOBBY PYN (D. CRASH) VOCALS | PAT SMEAR (GUITAR) | LORNA DOOM (BASS) | DONNA RHIA (DRUMS)

THE GERMS #2
AUG. 77 TO OCT. 77

B. PYN (VOCAL) | P. SMEAR (GUITAR) | L. DOOM (BASS) | CLIFF HANGER (DRUMS)

THE GERMS #3
OCT. 77 TO JULY 78

B. PYN (VOCAL) | P. SMEAR (GUITAR) | L. DOOM (BASS) | NICKY BEAT (ALSO WITH WEIRDOS) DRUMS

THE GERMS #4
JULY 78 TO NOW

DARBY CRASH (B. PYN) VOCAL | P. SMEAR (GUITAR) | L. DOOM (BASS) | DON BOWLES (DRUMS)

THE SKULLS #1
AUG. 77 TO NOV. 77

MICK WALLACE (STEN GUN) (VCCALS) | DANNY DEATH (GUITAR) | VICTOR BISETTI (DRUMS) | JOHN MANSOUR (BASS)

THE SKULLS #2
NOV. 77 TO JAN 78

BILLY BONES (S. FORTUNA) VOCALS | MARK MORBID (GUITAR) | CHAS GREY (BASS) | S. GUN (DRMS)

THE SKULLS #3
JAN. 78 TO MAR. 78

BILLY B. (VOCALS) | MARK M. (GUITAR) | CHAS G. (BASS) | KYLE C. KYLE (DRUMS)

THE SKULLS #4
MAR. 78 TO JULY 78

BILLY B. (VOCALS) | MARK M. (GUITAR) | BRUCE BARF (BASS) | DON BOWLES (DRUMS)

DEATH BY DEATH
NOV. 77

DANNY DEATH (GTR.) | MARGARET GUZMEN (VCLS.) | JOHN MANSOUR (BASS) | VICTOR BISETTI (DRMS)

ARTHUR J. AND THE GOLD CUPS #1
NOV. 77 TO DEC. 77

SPAZZ ATTACK (VOCALS) | GEZA X (GUITAR) ARRANGER (DEAD BEATS) | MARC MORBID (GUITAR) (SKULLS) | SCOTT GUERIN (ALTO SAX) | PAT DELANEY (ALTO SAX) DEADBEATS | ANDY GERVAY (TENOR SAX) DEADBEATS | HAL NEGRO (TRUMPET) | BRUCE BARF (BASS) | BRENDAN MULLEN (DRUMS)

ARTHUR J. AND THE GOLD CUPS #2
DEC 77 TO JAN. 78

SPAZZ (VOCALS) | GEZA (GTR./ARRNG.) | PAT D. (ALTO SAX) | ANDY G. (TENOR SAX) | HAL N. (TRUMPET) | BRUCE B. (ORGAN) | SCOTT G. (ALTO SAX) | BRENDAN M. (DRUMS)

ARTHUR J. AND THE GOLD CUPS #3
FEB. 78 TO MAR. 78

SPAZZ (VOCALS) | ANDY G. (SAX) | GEZA (GTR./ARRNG.) | BRENDAN M. (PRUMS)

ARTHUR J. AND THE GOLD CUPS #4
MAR. 78 TO MAY 78

SPAZZ (VOCALS) | GEZA (GTR./VCLS.) | PAT D. (ALTO SAX) | ANDY G. (TENOR SAX) | HAL N. (TRUMPET) | DAVID BROWN (ORGAN) | HECTOR PENALOSE (BASS) | BRENDAN (DRMS)

KATHY CUPCAKE, CHRIS FORTUNA (METRO SQUAD) (ZEROS)
(THE CUPCAKES - BACK-UP VOCALS)

ARTHUR J. AND THE GOLD CUPS #5
MAY 78 TO MAY 78

SPAZZ (VOCALS) | GEZA (GTR./VCLS./SAX) | PAT D. (SAX) | ANDY G. (TRUMPET) | HAL N. (PIANO) | KELLIE QUINN (BASS) | HECTOR P. (DRMS.) | BRENDAN (CHRIS F. (VCLS.)

(AFTER LINEUP #5 THE GOLD CUPS MUTATE INTO THE SATIN TONES, UNDER THE MUSICAL DIRECTION OF KELLIE QUINN. NOW THE GOLD CUPS HAVE REFORMED AND SHOULD PLAY LIVE SOON. THE NEW LINE UP: SPAZZ, GEZA, PAT DELANEY, DENIC FLYBOY/SAX!, WEIRDOS, CLIFF ROMAN & DIX DENNY/SAX & GUITAR, HAL NEGRO, KELLIE QUINN & DOUG STIER (EX-BABY BLUE).

THE SATIN TONES #1
MAY 78 TO OCT. 78

HAL NEGRO (CROONER) | KELLIE QUINN (ELEC. PIANO) | BRENDAN M. (DRUMS)

THE SATIN TONES #2
OCT. 78 TO NOW

HAL N. (CRNR.) | KELLIE Q. (PIANO) | PAT DELANEY (ALTO SAX) | BRENDAN M. (DRUMS)

* THE SIMPLETONES #1
AUG. 78 TO OCT. 78

JAY (VCLS.) | KENDALL (VCLS.) | JERRY (VCLS.) | DANNY (GTR.) | SNICKERS (BASS) | RABIT (DRMS)

THE SIMPLETONES #2
OCT. 78 TO JUNE 79

JERRY KENDALL (VCLS.) | SNICKERS JAY (VCLS.) | DANNY RABIT (VCLS.) (GTR.) | (BASS) (DRMS.)

THE SIMPLETONES #3
JUNE 79 TO NOW

SNICKERS (VCLS.) | JAY (GTR.) | DANNY RABIT (BASS) (DRMS.)

*(BAND MEMBERS COME FROM TWO SAN GABRIEL GARAGE BANDS: CHILD ABUSE & CLEAN WHITE YOUTH)

FEAR #1
FEB. 78 TO JUNE 78

LEE VING (GTR./VCLS.) | DERF SCRATCH (BASS) | J. BACKBEAT (DRUMS)

FEAR #2
JUNE 78 TO NOW

LEE V. (GTR./VCLS.) | DERF S. (BASS) | ALLEN VAN ALLEN (GUITAR) | SPITS (DRMS)

(SINGLE RECORDED WITH LINUP #2)

THE ALLEYCATS #1
1975 TO SUMMER 77

RANDY STODOLA (GUITAR) VOCALS | DIANE CHAI (BASS) VOCALS | RAY JONES (DRUMS)

THE ALLEYCATS #2
SUMMER 77 TO NOW

RANDY (GUITAR) VCCAL | DIANE (BASS) VOCAL | JOHN MCCARTHY (DRUMS)

THE CARS
DEC. 77 TO JAN. 78

MADELINE RILEY (VCCALS) | CRAIG LEE (GUITAR) | L.A. GURLEY (BASS) | DENNIS (DRUMS)

THE INVADERS
JAN. 78

MADELINE RILEY (VCCALS) | JOHNNY NATION (GUITAR) | CRAIG LEE (BASS) | RICKY (DRMS.)

(THE BAND BROKE UP AFTER THREE MEMBERS JOINED THE BAGS)

THE WILD CATS

GERARD (VCCALS) | HOLLY CORDOSA (GUITAR | NASH RIVAS (BASS) | CHARLIE CIGAR (DRUMS)

MODEL CITIZENS
OCT. 77 TO APRIL 78

STANNARD (GTR./VCLS.) | FRANCE RIDGEWAY (CRGAN/GTR.) | JOHNNY LANDI LEACH (BASS/VCLS.) | CHARLIE C.D. BUTLER (DRUMS)

THE BROTHELCREEPERS

GERARD T. (VCLS.) | DIM WANKER (GUITAR) | CTIS * HOLLY (DRMS)

*(AT RELATION TO HOLLY CORDOSA)

TOMATA

THE SCR
TOMATA DU PLE (VOCAL)

THE SCR
TOMATA TO (VOCAL) (S

THE SCR
TOMATA TO (VOCALS) (S

EYENE (VCCALS) JOHN (VCLS.) NCLS.)

EYENE T (VCLS.) (VCLS.)

EYENE JOHN (VCLS.) (VCLS.)

(ALL EXISTIN LINEUP #

THE RAND
(PAT & K.K. START IN CALAMC AT TIME)

PAT GARRETT (GTR./VCLS.) (

THE RAND
PAT G. (GTR./VCLS.) CHARLES (BASS

U.X.A. 2*
NOV. 78 TO NOV.

DEE DEE (VCCALS) | BILLY (GUITAR) | PATRICK (BASS)

*(THE ORIGINAL U.X.A. BOARD SAN FRANCISCO AND REFORM IN L.A.)

BLACK RANDY
BLACK RANDY (VOCALS) | BOBBEAD (GUITAR)

BLACK RANDY A

BLACK R. (VOCALS) | BOB D. (GTR) | PAT G. (GTR.) (

(LINEUP #2 FEATURES T UP. THEN GETS BACK T WHISKY. WHEN IT'S BAC

BLACK RANDY AN

BLACK R. (VOCALS) | BOB D. (GTR.) | PA (G

BLACK RANDY

BLACK R. (VOCALS) | BOB D. (GTR.) | CHRIS F. (VCLS.)

BLACK RANDY

BLACK R. (VOCALS) | BOB D. (GTR.) | PAT G. (GTR.)

(ALSO TO BE MENTIO CONNIE, AND MELANIE

WALL OF VOO
MARC MCRELAND (GUITAR)

WALL OF VOOD

MARC M. (GTR.) | STAN G. R. (KEYBOARDS) ETC.

WALL OF VO

STANNARD (VCCALS) | MARC BRU (GTR.) (KEYB

MIKE GIRA (VCLS.)

MIKE G. (VCLS.)

MIKE GIRA (VCLS. V

TH

ALEX G. (LEAD GTR VOCALS

SCREAMERS #1
MAY 77 TO AUG. 77
A DUPLENTY (SYNTH) TOMMY GEAR (KEYBOARDS) DAVID BRAUN (KEYBOARDS) K.K. (DRS.)

SCREAMERS #2
AUG. 77 TO APRIL 78
TA (AL) TOMMY G. (SYNTH) JEFF McGREGOR (KEYBOARDS) K.K. (DRUMS)

SCREAMERS #3
APRIL 78 TO NOW
TA (ALS) TOMMY G. (SYNTH) PAUL ROESSLER (KEYBOARDS) K.K. (DRUMS)

X #1
AUG. 77 TO OCT. 77
JOHN DOE (VOCLS/BASS) BILLY 'ZOOM (GUITAR) RAND McNALLY (PAT GARRETT) DRUMS

X #2
OCT. 77 TO FEB. 78
(VOCLS/BASS) JOHN D. (VOCLS/BASS) BILLY Z. (GUITAR) MICK BASHER (DRUMS)

X #3
FEB. 78 TO NOW
JOHN D. (VOCLS/BASS) BILLY Z. (GUITAR) DAN BONEBRAKE (DRUMS)

EXISTING RECORDINGS DONE WITH
P #3!

RANDOMS #1
AUG. 77 TO JAN. 78
C. STARTED THE BAND IN
LA MCM & E RECORDED "A.B.C.D."
ME.)
(BASS) JOHN DOE (DRMS/VCLS) K.K.

RANDOMS #2
JAN. 78 TO MARCH 78
CHARLES IVEY (BASS) K.K. (DRUMS)

NOV. 78 TO NOW
TRICK (DRUMS) RICHIE

A. BREAKS UP IN
REFORMS LATER

BLACK RANDY

ANDY AND THE METRO SQUAD #1
AUG. 77 TO DEC. 77
BOB DEAD (GUITAR) PAT GARRETT (GTR./BASS/DRMS) DAVID BROWN (KEYBOARDS) JOHN DOE (BASS) K.K. (DRMS)

DY AND THE METRO SQU... #2
JAN. 78 TO FEB. 78
PAT G. (KEYBOARDS) DAVID B. (GUITAR) HECTOR PENALOSE (GUITAR) TOM HUGHES (BASS) NICKY BEAT (DRMS) K.K. (DRMS)

TURES TWO SIMULTANEOUS DRUMMERS. THE BAND BREAKS
BACK TOGETHER FOR THE APRIL FOOL'S SHOW AT THE
IT'S BACK TO ONE DRUMMER (LINEUP #3)

DY AND THE METRO SQUAD #3
(GTR) PAT G. (KEYBOARDS) DAVID B. (BASS) TOM HUGHES (DRUMS) K.K. (DRUMS)

NDY AND THE METRO SQUAD #4
APRIL 78 TO SEPT 78
CB D. (GTR.) PAT G. (KEYBOARDS) DAVID B. (BASS) TOM H. (DRUMS) JOE NANINI

NDY AND THE METRO SQUAD #5
SEPT 78 TO NOW
PAT G. (KEYBOARDS) DAVID B. (BASS) JOE RAMIREZ (SAX) PAT DELANEY (SAX) JOE N. (DRMS.)

MENTIONED ARE THE BLACKETTES: TRUDY, BELINDA (GUITAR) AND
ELANIE (SLASH), ALSO M.C. DICK BARRIN.

F VOODOO #1
OCT. 77 TO DEC. 78
AND STAN G. (KEYBOARDS/VCLS/ETC.) RIDGEWAY

VOODOO #2
DEC 78 TO MAY 79
AN G. (BOARDS) R. BRUCE (KEYBOARDS) McLEAND (KEYBOARDS) BRANDAU (DRMS) TT.

F VOODOO #3
MAY 79 TO NOW
RC (KEYBRDS) BRUCE M. (KEYBORDS) CHAS GREY BRENDAN (DRUMS)

THE STRICT IDS #1
JAN. 79 TO FEB. 79
(THE LITTLE CRIPPLES & CURTAIN)
MIKE (VCLS/LEAD GTR) ALEY (GUITAR) RICK JAFFE (GUITAR) ROB GIBSEN (BASS) TOM GRAVES (DRUMS) TOM RECHION (DRUMS)

THE STRICT IDS #2
FEB. 79 TO MAR. 79
MIKE G. (VCLS/LEAD GTR) ALEX G. (GTR) RICK T. (BASS) FREDERICK NILSEN (DRMS) TOM R.

THE STRICT IDS #3
MAR. 79 TO APRIL 79
MIKE (VCLS/LEAD GTR) ALEY (GTR) RICK JAFFE (BASS) FREDRICK NILSEN (SAX) PAT DELANEY (DRMS) TOM RECHION (DRMS)

THE B-PEOPLE
APRIL 79 TO NOW
ALEX G. (LEAD GTR) RICK J. (GTR.) FREDRICK N. (BASS) PAT D. (SAX) TOM R. (DRMS.)
VOCALS

THE EYES #1
NOV. 76 TO SEPT. 77
JOE RAMIREZ (GTR./VCLS.) CHARLOTTE CAFFEY (BASS/VCCALS) KENT SMITH (GUITAR) DAN BONEBRAKE (DRUMS)

THE EYES #2
SEPT 77 TO DEC 77
JOE R. (GTR./VCLS) CHARLOTTE C. (BASS/VCLS) D. BONEBRAKE (DRUMS)

THE EYES #3
DEC. 77 TO JAN. 78
JOE R. (GTR./VCLS) CHARLOTTE C. (BASS/VCLS) JIMMY LEACH (GUITAR) D. BONEBRAKE (DRUMS)

THE EYES #4
JAN. 78 TO JUNE 78
JOE R. (GTR./VCLS) JIMMY L. (GUITAR) KYLE C-KYLE (DRUMS)

THE EYES #5
JUNE 78 TO JULY 78
JOE R. (GTR./VCLS) JIMMY L. (BASS) JOE NANINI (DRUMS)

THE EYES #6
JULY 78 TO NOW
JOE R. (GTR./VCLS) JIMMY L. (KEYBOARDS) DAVID BROWN (DRUMS) JOE N.

THE WHORES #1
JUNE 77 TO JULY 77
SCOTT GUERIN (VOCALS) HILLARY HANES (GTR) ART LAMACHINA (BASS) PAT DELANEY (ALTO SAX) SHAUN GUERIN (DRUMS)

THE WHORES #2
JULY 77 TO SEPT. 77
SCOTT G. (VOCALS) HILLARY H. (GTR.) BRAD RABUCHIN (BASS) PAT D. (SAX) SHAUN G. (DRMS.)

(THE WHORES CHANGE THEIR NAME TO THE DEADBEATS)

THE DEADBEATS #1
SEPT 77 TO OCT 77
SCOTT G. (VOCALS) BRAD* (GTR) PAT D. (SAX) PAT AMADEO (BASS) SHAUN G. (DRUMS)

THE DEADBEATS #2
OCT. 77 TO JULY 78
SCOTT G. (VCLS.) GEZAX (GTR) PAT D. (SAX) PAT A. (BASS) SHAUN G. (DRMS)

*(NO RELATION TO BRAD RABUCHIN)

(THE BAND BREAKS UP AFTER THE FIRING OF GEZAX, AND THE SUBSEQUENT DEPARTURE OF PAT D.)

F-WORD #1
JULY 77 TO DEC. 77
RIK L. (VOCALS) RIK DIM (GUITAR) STEVE WANKER (BASS) LOUIE EFFETE (DRUMS)

F-WORD #2
DEC. 77 TO MAR. 78
RIK (VCLS.) DIM W. (GTR.) STEVE E. (BASS) CHRIS CRISIS (DRUMS)

F-WORD #3
MAR. 78 TO APRIL 78
RIK (VCLS.) DIM W. (GTR.) HECTOR PENALOSE (BASS) DUTCH SCHULTZ (DRUMS)

F-WORD #4
APRIL 78 TO JUNE 78
RIK (VCLS) DIM W. (GTR.) STEVE EFFETE (BASS) DUTCH S. (DRUMS)

(THE BAND BREAKS UP, BUT CONTINUES
FOR 3 MORE MONTHS WITH LINEUP #5)

F-WORD #5
JUNE 78 TO SEPT. 78
RIK (VCLS) RCB* (GTR) STEVE (BASS) TERRY* (DRUMS)

*RCB & TERRY ARE STEVE'S BROTHERS

THE EXTREMES #1
JUNE 78 TO SEPT. 78
MALCOLM SINATRA (GTR./VCLS.) SHAWN STERN (GTR/VCLS/SAX) MARK STERN (DRMS) HECTOR PENALOSE (PERC.) JAY LANSFORD (BASS)

THE EXTREMES #2
SEPT 78 TO NOW
MALCOLM S. (GTR/VCLS) SHAWN S. (DRMS) MARK S. (PERC.) RUSSELL JASSON (BASS/VIOLIN/ETC.) SAX

(BOTH HATER/ZEROS & JAY/SIMPLE TONES) SHARED BASS DUTY)

MIDDLE CLASS
JAN 78 TO NOW
JEFF ATTA (VOCALS) MIKE ATTA (GUITAR) MIKE PATTON (BASS) BRUCE ATTA (DRUMS)

NERVOUS GENDER
JAN 79 TO NOW
PHRANC (VCLS, GTR) EDWARD STAPLETON (SYNTH.) MICHAEL GERARDO OCHOA (VCLS/SYNTH) VELASQUEZ (VCLS/SYNTH) (VCLS/SYNTH) RYTHM. BOX

HUMAN HANDS
FEB. 79 TO NOW
DAVID W. (VCLS.) JUAN GOMEZ (GUITAR) BILL NOLAN (KEYBOARDS) RICK POTTS (BASS) DENNIS DICK (DRUMS)

THE WEIRDOS #1
SUMMER 76 TO APRIL 77
JOHN DENNEY (VOCALS) CLIFF ROMAN (GUITAR) DAVE TROUT (BASS) DIX DENNEY (GUITAR)

THE WEIRDOS #2
APRIL 77 TO APRIL 78
JOHN D. (VOCALS) CLIFF R. (GUITAR) DAVE T. (BASS) DIX D. (GUITAR) NICKY BEAT (DRUMS)

THE WEIRDOS #3
APRIL 78 TO JAN. 79
JOHN D. (VOCALS) CLIFF R. (GUITAR) BRUCE BLANK (BRUCE BARF) (BASS) DIX D. (GUITAR) NICKY B. (DRS.)

THE WEIRDOS #4
JAN. 79 TO NOW
JOHN D. (VOCALS) CLIFF R. (GUITAR) DIX D. (VOCALS)

(UPCOMING BOMP LP WITH DANNY BENAR ON DRS. & BILLY PERSONS BASS, BUT STILL LOOKING FOR PERMANENT WEIRDO LINEUP.)

THE FLESHEATERS #1
SEPT 77 TO MAR 78
CHRIS D. (VOCALS) TITO (GUITAR) LARRIVA (BASS) JOHN RICHEY (DRUMS) JOE RAMIREZ

THE FLESHEATERS #2
MAR 78 TO MAY 78
CHRIS D. (VCALS) TITO L. (GUITAR) JOHN R. (BASS) JOE NANINI (DRUMS)

THE FLESHEATERS #3
MAY 78 TO JULY 78
CHRIS D. (VCALS) STAN RIDGEWAY (GUITAR) JOHN R. (BASS) JOE NANINI (DRUMS)

THE FLESHEATERS #4
JULY 78 TO AUG. 78
CHRIS D. (VCALS) JOHN CURRY (GUITAR) SCOTT LASKEN (BASS) DENNIS WALSH (DRUMS)

(LINEUP #4 RECORDS FLESHEATERS EP, AFTER THAT THE BAND STOPS PERFORMING LIVE. LATEST FLESHEATER TUNES ARE ON THE WESTERN COMPILATION LP THAT LINEUP INCLUDES CHRIS D (VOCALS), JOHN DOE (BASS), PAT GARRETT (GUITAR), EXENE/SKRIKING VOCALS & DAN BONEBRAKE (DRUMS). FUTURE FLESHEATER LP WILL FEATURE JOE RAMIREZ & TITO (GUITAR), JOHN RICHEY & BARRY McBRIDE (BASS), AND JOE NANINI, KARLA MAD DOG & CHARLIE QUINTANA (DRUMS))

THE FLYBOYS #1
SEPT 77 TO JULY 78
JOHN BOI (GTR/VCLS) DAVID WAY (BASS/VCLS) DENNIS RACKET (DRUMS)

THE FLYBOYS #2
JULY 78 TO DEC 78
JOHN B. DAVID W. SCOTT TOWEL DENNIS R. (GTR/VCLS/KEYBDS.) (BASS) (DRMS)

(IN DECEMBER DAVID DIES IN A CAR ACCIDENT)

THE FLYBOYS #3
DEC 78 TO MAR. 79
JOHN B. (GTR/VCLS.) SCOTT T. (BASS) DENNIS R. (DRMS.)

THE FLYBOYS #4
MAR. 79 TO NOW
JOHN B. TIMMY SINNER (GTR/VCLS) SCOTT T. (GTR/VCLS) DENNIS R. (BASS) (DRMS) KEYBDS.

RHINO 39
MAY 78 TO NOW
JAVE DAKRON (VOCALS) LARRY PARROTT (GUITAR) MARK SAMARATAN (BASS) TIM SYNIC (DRMS.)

THE GO-GO'S #1
MAY 78 TO JAN 78
BELINDA CARLISLE (VCCALS) JANE DRANC (GUITAR) MARGET TERRY (BASS) BAGDAD (DRUMS)

THE GO-GO'S #2
JULY 78 TO NOW
BELINDA (VCCALS) JANE (GTR.) CHARLIE (GUITAR) CAFFEY MARGOT (BASS) ELISSA BELLO (DRMS)

* ALSO WITH THE BAGS

THE GEARS
JULY 78 TO NOW
AXXEL (VOCALS) G REESE (GTR.) RUBIN (BASS) GABRIEL SHOCK (DRUMS) DAVID D.

THE MAU-MAU'S #1
OCT. 78 TO FEB 79
RICK (VCCALS) GREG (GUITAR) ROD (BASS) RICH (DRUMS)

THE MAU-MAU'S #2
FEB 79 TO NOW
RICK (VCLS.) GREG (GTR.) ROD (BASS) EARL (DRUMS)

JEFF MIDDLE CLASS

SHOCK #1
JAN. 76 TO OCT. 76
PAUL LESPERANCE (VOCALS) KIP BROWN (GUITAR) STEVE REINER (BASS) MIKE (DRMS)

SHOCK #2
OCT. 76 TO JAN. 78
PAUL L. (VCLS) DAVE PERPER (GTR/VCLS) STEVE R. (BASS/VCLS) MARK KIBBERKA (DRUMS)

SHOCK #3
JAN. 78 TO MAY 78
PAUL L. (VOCALS) KIP BROWN (GUITAR) STEVE R. (BASS/VCLS.) GAYLE RO (DRMS)

L.A. SHAKERS #1
AUG. 77 TO NOV. 77
LITTLE JOHN (GTR./VCLS.) RUBIN (BASS/VCLS) DAVID DRIVE (DRMS/VCLS.)

L.A. SHAKERS #2
NOV. 77 TO JAN. 78
EDDIE SAXID (GTR/VCLS.) RUBIN (BASS/VCLS) DAVID D. (DRMS/VCLS)

L.A. SHAKERS #3
JAN 78 TO JULY 78
EDDIE S. (GTR/VCLS) HECTOR PENALESE (BASS) DAVID D. (DRMS)

THE PLUGZ #1
DEC 77 TO MAR. 78
*TITO (GTR/VCLS) BARRY LARRIVA (BASS) FRANK McBRIDE (GTR/VCLS) BLANK (GTR/VCLS) TUCO RODRIGUEZ (DRUMS) VOCALS

THE PLUGZ #2
MAR. 78 TO JUNE 78
TITO L. BARRY M. † JOE NANINI (GTR/VCLS) (BASS/VCLS) (DRUMS) KARLA/VCLS)

THE PLUGZ #3
JUNE 78 TO NOW
TITO L. BARRY M. CHARLIE QUINTANA (GTR/VCLS) (BASS/VCLS) (DRUMS)

(ALL RECORDING ARE WITH LINEUP #3)
* ALSO WITH FLESHEATERS
† ALSO WITH FLESHEATERS

THE DICKIES
LATE 77 TO NOW
LEONARD GRAVES (VCCALS) STAN CHICK (GTR.) CHUCK WAGNER (KEYBOARDS) BILLY CLUB (BASS) KARLES KABALLERO (DRUMS)

THE KIDS
JAN. 78 TO SEPT. 78
BILLY STAR (VCLS.) BARBARA BOO BROWN (GTR.) KATHY CRUED (BASS) BRUCE KING (DRUMS)

WAXX
AUG. 77 TO MAR. 78
WILL L'AMATO (VOCALS) GLEN BROWN (GTR) KIRA ROESSLER (BASS) PAUL ROESSLER (DRUMS)

THE SLUGS
JUNE 78 TO JULY 78
GEZAX (GTR/VCLS) GLEN (GTR.) PAUL (KEYBRDS.) KIRA (BASS) KYLE C. KYLE (DRUMS)

THE VISITORS
JUNE 78 TO DEC 78
SPAZZ (VCLS.) A. GLEN B. (GTR.) KIRA R. (BASS) DAVID D. (DRUMS) (PRIMEV

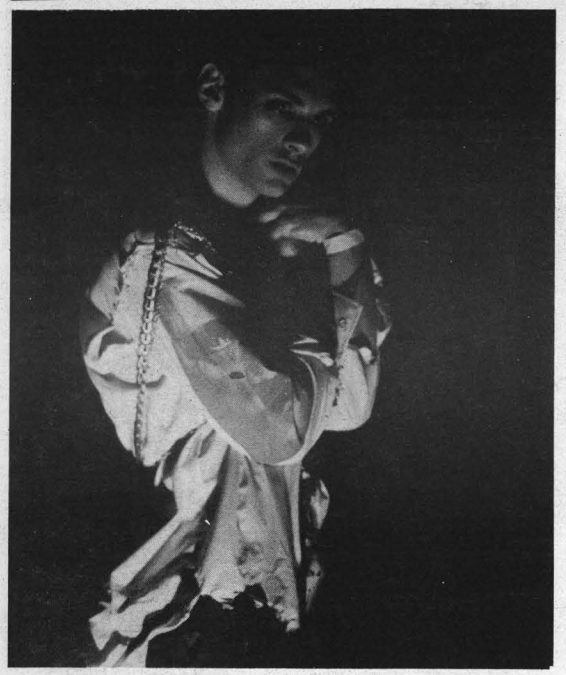
THE BRAINIACS
APRIL 78 TO NOW
JEFF FREEMAN (BASS/GTR) VOCALS SCOT BOYD (GTR/VCLS) BASS JON SHOURT (BASS/VCLS.) GUITAR JON SEAY (DRUMS)

THE RED ARMY
NOV. 78 TO FEB. 79
SPIDER (VCLS.) DAVE SUTHERLAND (GUITAR) RAY CIST (BASS) DAN WASKO (DRUMS)

(THEIR LAST GIG WAS THE MAU-MAU'S PARTY MINUS THE SERVICES OF SPIDER)

BLACK FLAG
JAN. 79 TO NOW
KEITH MORRIS (VCCALS) GREY (GTR.) GARY CHAIN (GUITAR) McDANIEL (BASS) RIBC (DRUMS)

LEONORD



THE SIMPLETONES

"They didn't read a book on how to be an L.A. punk band. They did it on their own. I think they have a very original band with a terrific sound."

Rover

"The Village People of punk"

Nicole

gradually disappered from the public eye. No one has quite managed to make us forget their antics and stage presence and mastery of the ultimate riff. But the future is looking bright again, as an imposing Bomp LP is on its way and live performances are scheduled for the next few weeks. May they reach again the enviable position they once had. (Good early samples on Bomp and Dangerhouse EPs)

THE SKULLS

Dead and buried for ages but still the most sorely missed band in L.A. A shimmering symbol of our Golden Age, when there was only one Masque, no patronising blurbs in the L.A. Weekly (in fact, no L.A. Weekly) no wishy washy L.A. Times aerial vies, no nothing but secret nights of unmentionable fun.

THE SCREAMERS

Still one of the most original outfits areoun, their refusal to do it like everybody else has always kept them the center of attention. Their shows have attracted an incredibly varied crossover audience that considers them THE Los Angeles punk band, and their love of the media is well reciprocated as they are the darlings of every tabliod or daily that routinely decides to take a poke at the punk phenomenon.

And yes, there's also a music side to the Screamers. It is harsh, syncopated, nervous and hypnotic. Their excellent drummer competes with excellent rhythm machines and their arresting singer sometimes competes with robot versions of himself. At the present everyone is praying that their initial rawness doesn not make way to a calculated equivalent of itself. The concept was at its best when no one thought of it as a concept. Now that having no guitars is not so new anymore, they will have to work harder to stay in the forefront. No singles, video disks or laser-powered multimedia holographic recording have yet materialized, so it's still a local (and rare) matter to appreciate this global threat.

U.X.A.

Erratic immigrants from San Francisco, had failed to make much of a dent up until some recent appearances when they grew in stature and presence overnight. Suddenly everything came into focus, and their classic trimmed punk tumult enhanced by nasty little girl Dee Dee on hateful vocals shook some of us right down to our dark bubbling psyches. A friend decided on the spot that they were his all time fave band, and I hope U.X.A. never let him down. The two cuts on the Upsetter album are a good indication of what they may be up to.

X

Everything has been said. Everthing is true. They ARE the greatest, the best, the baddest, the whole L.A. enchilada all by themselves. Every performance is better than the one before, every note, every riff and every wail is a microcosm of everything we've ever believed in, danced to and prayed for. They are the shiny proof that the record industry has its nose stuck so deep in its own ass that it will never manage to pull it out in time to smell the sweet scents of the coming decade. They are the saints of the L.A. scene, and Exene is the madonna. Do not miss any chance to see for yourselves the embodiment of the past two years' collective delirium. If X did not exist, the bleakness of life without them would probably trigger a spontaneous Guyana in the community. (Uneven but still superior cuts on Dangerhouse single and compilation LP).

WALL OF VOODOO

Almost a figment of its creators' imagination, but not quite. They have performed a few times in the past, and threaten to do so again any day. What we saw and heard so far was intriguing and decidely "different". Do not use their electronic hardware as weapons of mental destruction as some other whizz kids have a tendancy to do. Should come out and perform. A few public appearances won't hurt their fringe status too badly.

PHOTOS: MELANIE

THE SATINTONES

THE joke band to end all joke bands. Can come up with more theories to justify their improbable existance than James Brown could do encores. Straight faced kitsch, their ability to stun unsuspecting audiences with their creaky renditions of "Sunny" or "Downtown" makes them the ultimate opening band for that zany party your parents have promised you for your sweet sixteen party.

THE ZEROS

Not with us anymore. Have had their share of internal problems and trouble in maintaining their earlier stature (at least in L.A.). Their last local performance suggested a much harder and much older stance than their initial school-tough image and sound. A trio now, they will most likely emerge as a very real contender in the eighties West Coast school of rock. (Earlier sound well documented by Bomp)

THE WEIRDOS

Real veterans of the scene, they somehow failed to follow up on their astounding popularity of the Whisky days. At one time even more worshipped then the Screamers, they

PHOTO: F. GARGANI

"X" INTERVIEW

"X" INTERVIEW

S: SLASH, JD: John Doe
ES: Exene, BB: Don Bonebrake, BZ: Billy Zoom

S: Say something about NY.
JD: It's like cold congealed soul. After you've been away from NY it doesn't seem so bad. I don't like it. I suppose it's necessary to put different influences into music, but unfortunately, except for the Cramps, nothing gets me at a gut level.
S: Why do you think it's that way?
JD: I think it's self-conscious. I like Teenage Jesus, too. The scene in general, though, is really snobbish. It doesn't break any new barriers. It's probably the same as when Art was really popular and the hip thing to do.
S: When I was at your show the other nite, there were a lot of people standing near the stage who didn't clap or move. They just stood there. Not just for your set, but for the other bands, too. They look like they're watching TV.
EX: Applause is a weird thing. I don't think it's an accurate measure of what people think of you. Some people just feel obligated to applaud, and some people like you and don't feel applause is necessary because it might be corny or something. Maybe they're just lazy.
JD: You'd have to ask them. When you're on the stage you have no idea what's going on in the audience unless somebody's making a big spectacle. I'm complete out of my mind when I get off stage because I don't know what is going on. It's like if you've been under water for half an hour. One thing about touring and reaching other people is you've got to reach them in a complete way. You can't just play music, it has to create an environment. It reaches them on a lot of levels. You don't just hear music and say, 'Oh, that's nice.' It has to be a whole environment of the people that they're with and the club and everything. If you don't do that you're not doing the job right.
S: The only example I can think of is when the Clash came off stage when they played here, how nervous and defensive they were at the press conference ... what nervous wrecks they were. Do you think this would happen to you?
EX: A lot of people like that kind of thing, 'Oh, I've GOT to get away from all these people..' All you have to do is calm down and think you're just a regular person. Already I feel like these questions about what do you feel about your fans chasing you around are real embarrassing. They're not my fans, are they?
S: Do you get harrassed a lot because of your looks?
EX: I haven't noticed it so much lately. It used to bother me a lot. If I'm with John I don't notice anything that's going on. If we're walking down the street or riding the bus or sitting there talking, I don't notice if people are making fun of me or not. But when I'm by myself I feel real vulnerable.
JD: I think other people have higher profiles than we do too.
S: How did you get your R-13 (Mexican gang) following?
EX: We wished it into reality. We wished that they would come see us for so long. I just think they could be real receptive to the music, and they are. More so than others. At the Club 88 the other night, they were the most insane bunch of people; there were about 15 of them there. They were wild. We're trying to put a show together in East L.A. One of them comes all by himself, stands in front of the stage yelling, comes back stage all the time, he's real cool. And then he comes back with 15 people, and they were all up there jumping around. One of them got thrown off stage. If they each bring people next time ...
JD: I think it's great that they're coming. I'm not real manic about it or something like, 'We've got to get to the poeple.' They're exciting to have at a show, and they deserve a break to get away from ...
S: ... disco ...
JD: ... or that silly trumpet music.
S: You're talking about 400 years of traditional drunken music!
EX: They're quicker to catch on. They hear something they like, they've got to get inside, they run right up to the front of the stage and start dancing.
S: That's what we were talking about before. Compared to the people who stand there frozen, the R-13's show their enthusiasm, they're so much more in touch with themselves ...
EX: They get much more sweaty than everyone else!
S: They're aware of the Steppenwolf within ...
JD: They asked me if I wanted to smoke some angel dust ... You know what's really frustrating. You know you've had this great effect on an audience at another time ... and you're thinking how can I duplicate that tonight? Also you may play at the same club over and over and never get to play somewhere else to another audience that you could have that same effect on.
EX: And you know that some people in your audience are maybe thinking the same thing. Here we go again in the same club, same songs ... you're afraid they'll lose interest. I mean I don't sit at home the day before a show and think that ... but ...
JD: The thing that scared the shit out of me was reading a Janis Joplin interview where she talked about playing the same material four nights a week two years straight which is frighteningly close to our situation ... we've been playing "Adult Books", "We're Desperate" and a couple of other songs for a long time. And we haven't had the time to take 6 months off and write an entire new set. Basically everything we write is taken from something that happens to us. I write the best after I've been on drugs. AFTER it's over and I'm in a semi-conscious state. Is that automatic writing!? There's something that most people who write tend to forget, especially successful people and that's if you don't forget who you are and what you are, your public image, every time you sit down to create something, you're going to be stifled.
EX: You start imitating yourself. Some people start saying you're the greatest in the world, so the next time you write you're not in touch with this same thing that made you write the first time. Patti Smith's like that.
JD: The reason why you write in the first place is that you're zero. At least for me, you don't have any ... uh ...
S: Credentials?
JD: Yeah, right, you're not thinking about who you are. There's no self-image; then you come up with something that means something to you. An experience that made an impression on you. But if you step all over yourself, then you're in trouble. Music somehow gets connected up; I'll be working on some music and it'll happen to go real well with a set of lyrics.

EX: I can't believe how many big record companies' music is just so bad. Like Pablo Cruise. Every lyric you can just count the number of cliches ... "That's launched a thousand ships", "Pretty as a picture," these utterly corny things like "I walked into her smile."
S: And got a black eye! Then you've got the cliche subculture that pretends to be burnt out ... like Bruce Springsteen, MOR burnouts. "Darkness on the Edge of Town", "Living on the Edge", "Life in the Fast Lane."
JD: Shitting in the bathroom.
S: Too many songwriters have barriers set up about what is a song, what is rhyme ... all these little prerequisites that it's like being in jail.
JD: There's a difference between a catch-phrase and a cliche and they've never figured it out.
EX: Everything in music, the whole "entertainment field" is so vague. And everyone knows that's the worst thing to do ... generalizing. If you be specific in the things you write more people can get a handle on what you're trying to do.
JD: Stick to your topic! ... what's interesting to me is taking a real experience and mixing it up with visionary permutations of that thing. Realistic but still not surreal. If it's done right it can be great. I think Darby's lyrics are like that. You understand what's happening but it's all confused and it's all mixed-up
EX: Chris' words are like that, too. These factual experiences that suddenly go off into this other world describing emotions. That Negative Trend song, "Black and Red" is like that ... a few tangible things then abstractions.
S: How do YOU write?
EX: Well ... it's hard to say ... we try to pick out the interesting facts in our life. I think it's very balanced between me and John. Where I would write this whole song and John would come along and say well this would be better if you changed this around to here and then vice-versa when he write something. That's one of the advantages of our band; we have all these checks and balances. There's two people in our band that write and we can come up with new material pretty quick.
S: How would you respond to the question Exene if someone told you you would take singing lessons?
EX: I'd say give me the money and I'll go. How does that joke go? That Bazooka gum comic? "My Father gave me $300 for singing lessons." "Oh year? What'd you do with the money?"
S: Your last SLASH interview was over a year ago and you still have virtually the same people in your band. Any secrets to keeping a band together?
JD: Luck ... But we do live together, lend each other money, help each other out without running up tabs on each other.
S: You (John) and Exene write all songs, etc. and Don and Billy seem to stay in the background. Did they just accept those roles from the beginning?
JD: Billy's put forth more effort lately and successfully puts in his influences, but in the beginning it was just sort of us playing my songs, then Exene's and my songs. Billy is a front man, too. Certain newspapers pick him out as the center guy. If anybody was really a megolomaniac in the band it would suffer ... if there was one pretty face instead of four ...
S: Is there any way to beat the music system?
JD: I'd like to think so. The track record isn't terribly good. But I think we're all subject to the American Dream.
S: Did you know David Brown said he'd like to see someone take $100,000 and make "We're Desperate" a top 20 hit?
EX: I'd like to see someone give us $400 in royalties. Everybody from small time booking agents to the big record company moguls say, "You are a commodity, you are a product, you're just like a can of beans on a shelf. If somebody sees it, they like then they buy it." And that's all it is to them. They put out a lot of dollars and they bring in more, hopefully. I'm not eager to find out that it can't be done any other way, I'm not eager to find myself playing places I hate to people I don't like.
S: Listen, Billy, if you're so hot how come you're sleeping on somebody's floor?

BA: I'm not sleeping on the floor, the couch. Because life isn't fair.
S: What do you think your life should be like? What're five things that you'd like to have right now?
BZ:A place to live, a place to fix my car ... I don't want to go into it, the other three are private.
S: What's this about playing with the Rebels?
BZ: That's about it. I'm playing with the Rebels for a night at the Troubadour. Guitar, sax and vocals.
DB: He's a great sax player.
S: Does this mean that all this time playing with X you've been missing your rockabilly roots and this is a chance to play on the side?
BZ: I kind of miss being able to do the other stuff that I do. And I'm going to do it for a bit.
S: How does the rest of X feel about this?
DB: I think it's great because I never get to see him play rockabilly. I rehearse with him sometimes. As long as he doesn't join them.
S: Billy, what about your reputation as far as recording goes, waiting for a contract ... rumours that you're the most difficult to please?
BZ: Rumours?
S: Just that you're the most choosy about who you'd like to be signed with.
DB: Who says? Chris and Judy of Upsetter?
S: No. Actually it wasn't. Just every time people start talking about X should do a record ... if it's more than three or four people talking they always say that it's going to be very hard to get Billy to be happy with any kind of recording contract ... that you're maybe a perfectionist. Do you think you're in less of a hurry to come out with a product than the rest of the band?
BZ: Probably more of a hurry because I'm more desperate.
EX: So far nothing that's been offered us is acceptable to any of us. We haven't been offered that much.
JD: I think that it's because whenever we play a gig Billy knows the most about the sound set-up.
DB: He's seen more studios, been around longer. He's known bands that've gotten signed up by record companies who really didn't give a shit about them and then fucked them around.
S: What would be the ideal offer?
DB: That control of our product, where we tour, who produces us ...
JD: Step Forward would be a good deal if we could get some money to live off of. A little bit of money to live off of and a good product.
S: Do you think poverty is dragging you down? Preventing you from doing things you could be doing otherwise?
EX: I don't mind poverty as much as everyone else. It's just when everybody's poverty-stricken ...
JD: There's a lot of things you could do, sure ...
S: Well, the reason I'm asking is all your songs seem to be so poverty conscious. Down and out conscious. Do you think you could write the same songs with money?
JD: Why do you have to change your life-style because you get money. People do it. But if you've been that way for a long time you're not going to automatically run with a different crowd of people.
DB: We'd be able to record more.
S: Why do you think that you as admittedly ... everyone seems to feel you're the best band in Los Angeles and none of these things have been offered yoj?
JD: It's a mystery to us. Record companies don't know, aren't aware of the surroundings of what we do. Also I don't think we're polished enough for them to immediately realize the saleability of ... us. I think we're too tough for our own good. Our basic stance.
DB: Songs don't sound the same playing live as when we rehearse. Rehearsal's very polished then live we just let everything go. It gets really wild. I don't even think about playing music that will impress people on a technical level.
JD: It's kind of a mistake because you never know when there's someone in the audience who has the power to sign you. For all we know there could be a hundred record company people there one night ... in which case we should have done a real boring set that sounded perfect. It's impossible to do that when you're so caught up

PHOTOS: MELANIE

in the experience. And the record people don't understand that that's what it's about. To create something total.

EX: The thing is OUR tape IS really polished ... our demo that we've been taking around.

S: Billy, do you ever feel that there should be a softer side ... a ballad?

BZ: I can't really imagine what an X ballad would sound like.

JD: I've written a couple of them but we really haven't mastered at putting them across yet. The Rolling Stones said that they never play slow songs at a live gig.

BZ: They never play fast ones either ... some of our songs do have a slower tempo, it's just (general laughter) we play them real loud.

S: From the outside it looks like you're replacing Ray Campi in the Rebels. How do you feel about that?

BZ: I don't want to bad rap people. I'm not replacing Ray Campi ... I've known Ray a long time and I played a few gigs with him about five years ago and told him I didn't want to play any more gigs because I didn't like the way things were going.

JD: How does it feel to be a potential leader of a band you're not a member of? Billy won't say it but I will. When Billy played with the Rebels at UCLA the entire level of energy rose about fifty percent ... at least ... because there was somebody out there going at it the best they could.

S: Billy, what about the secret guitar that mysteriously returned?

BZ: I got it back, I'm happy ... it still had the same strings on it; everything was still in the case ... I didn't ask any questions; that was part of the agreement of getting it back. I've absolutely no idea who had it, where it was ...

S: What was done to it ...

JD: They pissed all over it.

S: You're intent on demystifying the whole thing.

JD: One pet peeve I would like to get out is this new fucked-up attitude clubowners are taking. "Oh, yeah, I guess this New Wave is OK. Let's call up a whole bunch of bands and offer them fifty dollars to play on a great bill." i.e. the Fleetwood, the BlaBla Cafe ... It's this bullshit idea of, "Hey, these bands don't have anywhere to play. They can't play the Whisky, the Starwood; let's get 'em out to our club and pay them $100". And I really fuckin' resent it ... they try to ... to ...

S: Get a deal?

JD: Right! And in the meantime they stir up all these bad feelings between the bands because they put all these headlining groups ... for example the Middle Class, the Alleycats, the Germs, us, the Plugz, the Bags, the Controllers ... everyone's got this place, this position they're trying to jockey for, and what're you going to do? You've got to have some kind of respect for yourself. And it's real bullshit. Where the fuck were they when we all needed a place to play? Now I feel really good because if anybody asks me ... I tell 'em to say "FUCK OFF!" You can play these other worthwhile places like Club 88, and the Hong Kong Cafe and the Vanguard or Ricky's place ... you can put on your own show.

S: Do you, deep down, know what's going to happen?

JD: Yeah ... deep down I know SOMETHING's going to happen (general laughter) ... the thing is I've quit music before. But the only alternatives are hideous.

EX: What're you talking about?

JD: Quitting music and getting a job.

EX: I don't want to even talk about this ... you know people come up to us after a show and go, "Gee, Exene, you're so great ... X is my favorite band ... look at my button, I've got an X button on. And you think, fuck, what am I gonna do? Work the rest of my life, get a job? Because almost everyone reading this is working the rest of thier lives. It makes me feel guilty.

S: That's why all this, the whole scene, started ... if people feel that way about the rest of their life they should get off their ass and do something about it.

EX: Yeah, but the only thing is some people aren't as capable of that as others.

S: Yeah, but there are a whole lot of young people resigned to doing boring uninteresting things and only getting their kicks by proxy, going to a gig every weekend.

JD: The thing that's different now though is you there in the audience can get up onstage if you want to and dance, or even there in front of the stage and have your bit of fame ... and people can go "Wow! Did you see that guy jump off the speaker!"

S: Exactly ... and that's how other bands get started... What other cities would you like to play? Where do you think you'd go over big?

EX: I want to go to Las Vegas and Miami Beach and get a tan ... I think every city would be receptive. Philadelphia is one of the best cities we've found as a band.

JD: I think it depends on how you're presented. If your tour is put together in the right way, and people get a chance to really see you, instead of that in and out kind of shit, then everybody can get hooked on it. John Cale's done a pretty good job of doing things on a small time budget. I don't know whether he's happy with what he's done.

S: He puts so much of his own money into his projects and independent labels.

JD: That's the whole key ... to do things on a small enough scale that it remains personal, but large enough that you can make a living at it. If you get too overwhelmed, then you lose something. Everybody that's big has this sickness of playing bigger and bigger places because they think they're getting somewhere the larger places they can play. If they sell out the Whisky five nights in a row it's not as good as selling out the Santa Monica Civic three nights in a row, and that's not as good as selling out the Forum two nights in a row.

S: Do people still think like that?

JD: Sure, I think a lot of people offer lip service when they don't really mean it, and given the chance they'd just go for it ...

EX: Strike "Go for it" from the record ...

JD: ...hook, line & sinker ...

S: Are you into politics? Do you think we need more riots?

EX: I don't think about that stuff anymore. It's like we take these little steps that lead them in that direction.

JD: I think it's healthy. The riot in San Francisco at least showed the police and the government that it was possible ... that people could do it at the spur of the moment. That's when you're at your best. Sure as hell ... You know what was amazing about that riot in San Francisco? There were these masses of people on the street and about thirteen police cars lined-up in a row with all these cops standing nearby. And people would just go up, open the car doors and toss firebombs inside BOOM! Then to the next one BOOM! and the next BOOM! And the police were just bracing with their nightsticks and that was it. They were scared shitless.

S: You mean the thing when Dan White got acquitted for murder?

JD: Yeah.

S: That's what's so ridiculous. That guy who obviously killed Moscone and Milk gets off and they electrocute Speinkelink for something there weren't even witnesses for.

JD: Ah, talking about justice is ridiculous. There's no justice in America. America is capitalist and that means money buys EVERYTHING.

S: In the whole world.

S: Who do you admire in movies, music, politics, in general?

JD: I admire Celine for his politics, I agree totally. I admire the kids that are in music ... people that don't give up and accept their lot in life. I like John Waters and Paul Schrader ... fuck, you admire people that are like you; somebody who can get a movie released nationwide and not have the nationwide bullshit ... Lenny Bruce ...

S: I suppose that there's really no one on TV right at the moment ...

JD: (laughing) I think Pat of the Germs would give you an argument on that: Cheryl Tiegs, Susan Anton ...

EX: Oh, we saw Blondie on TV today ...

S: What were they on? Mike Douglas?

EX: She had on a housedress and her hair in curlers.

NERVOUS GENDER, EDDIE AND THE SUBTITLES AND THE PLUGZ AT CLUB 88

Nervous Gender don't exactly go easy on everyone's musical prejudices and habits. They take everything we know a rock or punk show should be, shake it around, don't pick up what's fallen off and randomly throw what's left in our faces. It could be called musical if you're desperate for labels, but that's really stretching it a bit. Most of the spectators sipping on their draft beer wondered whether or not to stretch it that far. Meanwhile the band didn't make things any easier for the watchers, they shrieked and howled and spat out ugly sentiments and immature curses, pinched their electornic hardware 'til it hissed and throbbed with machine pain, stuck blades in the circuits and pummeled a token electric guitar that must have been last tuned around World War II and buried in the ocean since. All the band members sang, but the guy with the glasses won the cake for sheer terrorizing lunacy. Everything remained fierce and absolutely un-hummable, the audience went from helpless fascination to unreasonable aversion, depending on their need for newness, mental challenge, easy references or a box of Excedrin.

And, since Nervous Gender even look like they sound, the most hostile amongst the victims never really dared toexpress their doubts out loud. One never knows with mutations: They have a way of strikng when you don't expect it....me, I was amongst the fascinated ones. For reasons not very clear yet. I will keep you informed as to how my investigation is going.

After THAT, it was back to Earth. Eddie & The Subtitles sound okay, they rock in The Ramones vein, with a bit of California beach music thrown in. Dancable as hell and safe for the children, the college kids relaxed and ordered more wine for their date, the punks routinely tapped their toes while talking to each other and the early drunkards pogoed by themselves. The Outer Limits episode was being forgotten by everyone, and the beat went on.

The Plugz terminated the evening with the classic Plugz finale (see other review). They haven't been anything below excellent for a couple of months and they were not about to start that night. They fired everything they had and everyone surrendered. By now this town must have a band for everyone's needs. Take your pick, it's all there.

KICKBOY

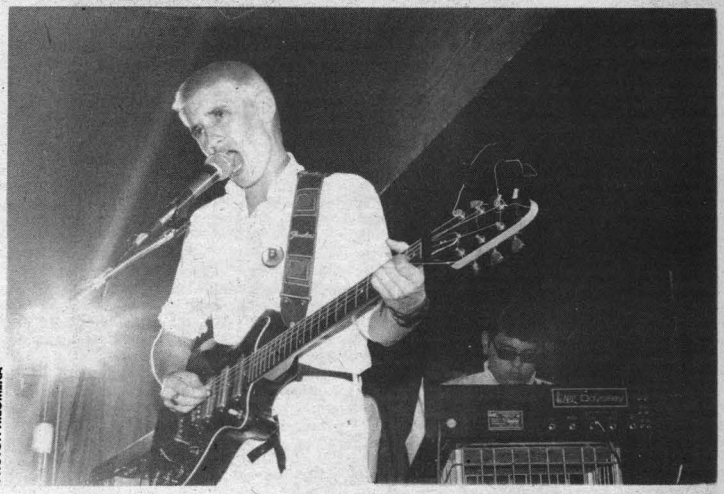


PHOTO: PHILOMENA

NERVOUS GENDER

PROGRESS REPORT
Fleetwood, Redondo Beach

Bands:
Special Guest: No grade. Uninvited guest would be more like it — their reception committee is at the Starwood or Gazzarris, but not at this time at this place.

The Crowd: Intensity: A. Energy: A. Overall Performance: B-. Musicianship: B- (How can you play that fast and be good is something beyond me. Originality: B- ('76 hits the surf but a wave of distortion can't wash over the fact that the band is still very young and needs time to grow. General Comments: Lead singer seems like the bastard offspring of some John Deany/Leonard Dickie mating. General outlook for the band is good.

The Fly Boys: Intensity: A. Energy: A. Overall Performance: A. Musicianship: A. Originality: B- (Songs tend to sound somewhat the same, no matter how well they're played — and this band is one of the tightest, energetic pop-unk groups around.) Press Relations: F (Lead John Boy about to play keyboards remarks "Slash doesn't want me to do this". Audience members replies: "Fuck Slash!" John Boy: "I agree." Well, if they think I'm going to honor them for a bad review for that, they're mistaken. They did nothing to deserve a pan.) General Outlook: Great. New guitar player still needs to loosen up a bit — the other two are jumping around and having a great time. Future seems as bright as their clothes.

The Go-Gos: Intensity: B (Energy went up and down like a roler coaster.) Overall Performance: A- (slightly erratic.) Musicianship: A (one band that *uses* their limitations instead of being hampered by them.) Originality: A (the first in L.A. People in the past have chided the girls for being too sweet and day glo overkill. Tonight they were just being themselves, and if that isn't enough there are plenty of dike bars in L.A. to fulfill your need for tough women you reverse chauvinist.) Material: B+ (They started out the set with a *great* cover of Wanda Jacksons "Let's Have a Party". However I don't really go for some of the more pop songs like "Don't Hang Up" and I can't bear the way Belinda does the bad comedy act for the beginning of "Walking in the Sand". But the new materal was excellent. General comments: A band should either provoke, instigate or provide a great release. Even the Baader-Meinhoff gang needed to have fun once in a while. The Go-Go's are L.A.'s best party band and if you don't like it, sit on a manifesto.

The Plugz: No grade, out of fairness for a problem set, featuring broken guitar strings and a power shortage (electronic not human) in the middle of the set. Under the circumstances the band played quite well and the set was blessedly shorter than some of their recent Club 88 marathons. The new gas line song is quite interesting — however one wonders if the Plugz aren't perhaps, overexposing themselves by playing what virtually seems to be two or three days in the week. Still, a band with a style all its own, maybe not quite to my liking, but certainly satisfying a dancing throng at stage front. They need a whole set of new materal if they're going to keep our interest up.

The Germs: They burned the rest of the forms. They decorated the dressing room in dip, punch and chips so thoughtfully provided by Climax Productions (thats like giving — well what else could they expect?) As for the set: Musicianship varies, Pat Smear guitarist getting an A+, probably the greatest undiscovered guitar player in America and Don the drummer gets and A+ for advanced skin smashing. Lorna gets a B for effort, she's really quite improved but still can't last a set without inevitable boo-boos but her charm more than compensates. As for Darby he effects a style similar to singing while gargling with marbles at the same time. Another band for which you need a guide to decipher lyrics, which is a shame considering their obvious worth. The set ended with an endless version of Germs fave "Shutdown" featuring the band in darkness (Darby already having kicked in the lights) and an amazing feedback atonal guitar noise. As one person turning to me said "They are themost avant-garde band in L.A. today!" Well, I knew it was something....After the Germs carefully destroyed modern music the security guards had had enough, Thus:

The Alleycats: Zero. They were stopped from playing. One bouncer, a former Lt. General in Idi Amin's army, screamed about "getting the hell out". Another, a hippie on loan from the Rock Corp. stormed the floor, bellowing about "no more punk rock bullshit" then after pushing people away took the stage and said "Drive safely". The promoter of the show argued in vain with the bouncers, but the brawn overpower the brains. The fights were over, the constant door searches were over, the bathroom trashing and burning was over, and the prospect for more concerts at the Fleetwood is probably over. Like lemmings drawn to the polluted Redondo sea, spectators took to the freedays in a haze of accidents, broken glass and flying bodies. The cops went home, the hippies went home, the surfers went home, the punks went home, I went home, goodnight from the end of the world.

Zzzzzzzz

RAY CAMPI AND HIS ROCKABILLY REBELS FAREWELL WHISKY BOP

This was to be Campi and his Rockabilly Rebels' final appearance together. The group had fractioned off to Rebels and Rockabilly Rebels. Going back to the past, I recalled a curious stroll to the Palomino Club around September 76. In a thick and tense atmosphere, the premier Rollin' Rock records Showcase was stirring a commotion. Billy Zoom led a powerhouse set alternating between guitar and sax, Johnny Legend was "Rollin' The Rock", and closing the show was this wildcat cowboy climbing all overhis bass fiddle, flanked by two crazed teenagers, Ray Campi and His Ramblin' Rockabillys. Their potential was immediately obvious. And something was happening here: the series of monthly sunday night shows was faithfully attended by the rockabilly fraternity, and it felt as if one had been swept back 25 years to some roadside honky tonk full of upbeat hillbilly rhythms. What also made it amirable and significantly cool was that Campi was an original who was still boppin'. It was however short-lived, and now the band had come full circle. Intent on milking this last shot for all it's worth, the band erupted into their signature intro. Even more than usual their stage demeanor was uninhibited, spontaneous and highly animated. "Rockin' brothers" Rollin' Colin Winski and Jumpin' Jerry Sikorski were bouncing from stage left to right, shoving each other, Steve Clark was all over the place on traps, trashing wildly yet still preserving his steadfast economical beat and guitarist Kevin Fennel was letting loose with his expert piercing licks. When he was not ascending his slap bass Campi was lifting it off the ground, recklessly waving it (breaking two amplifier chords) as his bandaged hands assaulted the strings. Sikorski backflipped, somersaulted, then infiltrated the crowd, dancing and leading them like a pompadoured pied piper. The audience was enthused and cheered on. Ruckus raisin' featured spots for Ray, Colin and Jerry were extended during the first hour and a half set and including a repertoire of old favorites along with material from the recent "Wildcat Shake Out" album. In comparison, the second set was abbreviated, but Ray Campi and His Rockabilly Rebels went out in a blaze of glory, as they should have.

BE BOPPIN' BOB TAYLOR

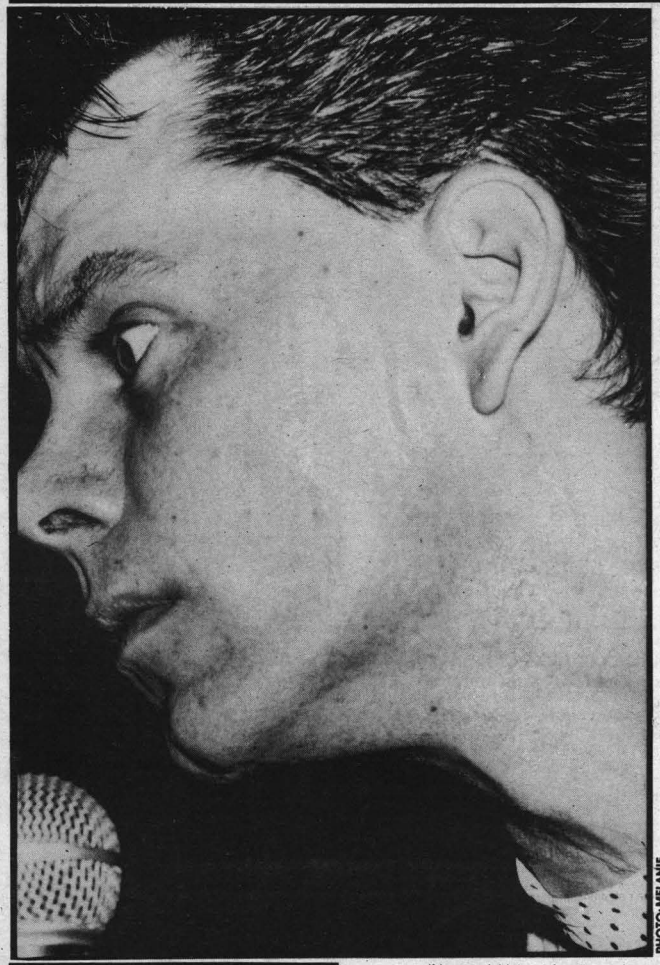


PHOTO: MELANIE

SCREAMERS AT THE WHISKY

The Screamers at the Whisky were terrible.

The Screamers have not always been terrible. I've never been a dyed-in-the-wool, confirmed Screamers fan, but I saw them once in New York, October of last year, where they were anything but terrible, in fact they were great. The scene was another of those ubiquitous art/punk parties, but this N.Y. version was, or appeared to be, much more sophisticated than its L.A. counterpart. This crowd was so nonchalant, so cool that I was sure they would be unaffected by anything short of decapitation. I think the Screamers sensed the apathy, too. They knew it would be no small task to capture the attention of that senseless bunch of narcissists. Suddenly, the band ripped into their set, stinging and scratching for survival like some monster insect. The alternative to success this time would have been the torture a Screamer fears most: they would simply have been ignored. The band responded perfectly to the situation, and the result was that I and a number of other disbelievers and N.Y. nonchalants found ourselves writhing and convulsing under the attack until the band took pity and stopped. When it was all over I felt that I was the one lucky to survive, and wondered if any performance by any band could ever match it.

Six months later at the Whisky. You know the setup, the legit Hollywood night club and everything that goes with it, (lights, stage, groupies, press). The shows (6) were sold out, or rumored to be for weeks. The Sheep, (myself included, based on the band's N.Y. performance) were drooling to see the Screamers after a self-imposed hiatus taken to work on some new material (and I suspect a little media manipulation).

When a performance is really good everyone knows it and simply says, "it was good", usually a lot of times. When a performance is bad and the fans badly want it to be good what you're likely to hear is something similar to the following, mush served up by Screamers fans in an effort to make the Whisky performance palatable: "The instrumentation was ambitious", not good but ambitious, so we should give them extra points for trying hard? Another die-hard fan: "The music was meant for a movie score". So save it for the movies where it at least has an outside chance of giving life to a plot or a film image, rather than a live performance where the audience has every right to expect and demand direct spontaneous communication, not pre-dated contriviance. Another fan: "Well, their intentions were good". Obviously, this person could not digest the reality of Tomata and band doing New Wave show tunes complete with female singer and violin section. I guess this fan thought if the intentions were good then everything that came afterward should be good too. If anyone out there can explain why good deeds are the inevitable result of good, that from good intentions come intentions, please write.

I sat through the performance and about half way through it occured to me that this show belonged on Melrose, Tomata was only playing Tomata, he was acting, and the rest of the band...the same. Everything about the performance in N.Y. and the L.A. one was different (audience, material, stage, lights, attitude, etc.) and it wasn't progress! It was PHONEY, unnecessary, and useless. I hung in there hoping it would reveal itself as some Spike Jones pun, wishful thinking. The Screamers were much too ponderous, much too contrived, and much too serious to achieve even a spike Jones brand of respectable lunacy. They stuck to the script and stayed in step until all hope of honest spontaneity was displaced by their empty theatrics.

My band update would say, "The Screamers are the first L.A. band to become a parody of themselves before anyone really knew who they were."

THE SCREAMERS AT THE WHISKY: ANOTHER LOOK

Unlike someone else I know, I have ALWAYS liked the Screamers. I've liked them ever since that prehistoric first slash concert over two years ago when they played on a concrete floor in Samiof's studio to an astonished audience that had never heard of punk, spiked hair or electrical tape fashion. There was no stage then, and the only thing that kept the audience from engulfing the band was two of us armed with axe and revolver (unloaded). The Screamers had never played live before, but that night they must have converted two hundred people on the spot. IT WAS DIFFERENT.

A lot of polluted water has passed under the bridge since, and we've all heard so much "different" music in the last couple of years I'm surprized we still can talk and smile. The Screamers have gone from concrete floor and borrowed amp to elevated showcase stage and precision lighting, articles in Interview and snotty english papers, shows on television and lines around the block at the Whisky. No records yet, but they probably consider that also an achievement.

I expected a lot from that show. Someone who had seen them the night before thought they were superb. Of course I did not like the high door price, and I did not like the novelty item that made up the 1st part of the show. Ron Davies and his wacky wifey isn't my idea of a perfect opening "band" for a night of new music. Had seen him (minus the missus) years ago opening for Beefheart, and the old timer hasn't exactly improved since. Might make it on the Gong show or in the Guinness Book of Records, but you'd think the Screamers would have more empathy with their music peers than to let a tired put-on hardly good for a giggle or two take the spot instead of rightfully offering it to a deserving local band. If the prices are going to be what they were, let's get our fuckin' money's worth.

But the Screamers came on, and the one-man mess was immediately forgotten. Everyone was anticipating real heavily, like. See, the Screamers rate real high with the non-punk crowd too. Maybe higher. They capture the imagination, they dazzle but they don't especially demand a personal involvement. That's what the non-punks like: a real show, with options. And so Tomata jerkily puppeted (?) his way across the stage, the whirring whining and clanging of the synthesizers and keyboards shot out in every direction and K.K.'s metronome drumming filled in the interstices and coated the discordant explosions. Which is usually heaven to the brain. Choas made to order while you watch and find your rhythmic space to slip into. Except it soon became obvious the old miracle was a bit...rigged. Even from the start the presence of two long haired violonists with berets and classical concert pause seemed a bit stretched. They sounded fine but totally unneeded, simply cluttering the jagged sound attacks with gratuitous diversions. Then the tapes started spinning, adding to the distance between us and them. As if too many strings were being pulled and the puppeteer's hands showed by mistake. Finally, the overall sound did not ATTACK the senses. It PARADED. I don't know if the music was less loud than in the past but it sounded like it was. Tomata sang well but was kind of mechanical in his inspired jerkiness. Guest star Sheila (they kept throwing us surprizes, those cunning showmen) burnt her way thru her portion of the set as if this was her one and only chance to grab her chunk of immortality. She wailed like a banshee in heat, paced like a demon in a monastery cell and during "I wanna hurt" kissed the living stagelight out of Tomata. She brought the energy level up to respectable proportions all by herself but soon vanished. Hopefully we will see and hear more of her. There always will be room for people of her stature. Sheila, do something before the little piggies eat you. The set ended in a respectable triuphant manner, complete with shrieks, requests, possessed pogo and ovations. I clapped with the rest, but I was already wondering where to go afterwards. There was no knot in my stomach, no humming between my ears, no trembling in my knees. I had remained attentive and curious. I am STILL determined to feel my brain sizzle next time the Screamers perform. I expect nothing less from them.

KICK

X at Club 88

Due to a variety of flimsy reasons, I almost didn't go. Bad thoughts about the L.A. scene in general had me in a reclusive mood. At the last possible minute I jumped in my car and raced from Hollywood to the 88. X was in the middle of their first song as I squirmed through the door. From the back of the bar the PA was a transistor radio at low volume with the bass all the way up. After wading through the melee to the front of the stage, I heard a different story. It was an earthquake finally avalanching on thousands in this vale of beers; the desecration of the Holy of Holies by lovers who just couldn't wait for sex until they got home 'cause they got no home; it was the dynamiting of a shrine. X played this instrument called an audience and it shrieked, wailed, moaned and went up in flames (gratefully). Even if you just stood there, the nerd-like zombie that you are, you still ended up drenched from head-to-toe, you still felt like laughing and crying at the same time, you still wanted to live the rest of your life in the next five minutes. When the Mexican gang kids hoisted Exene into the air and rode her on their shoulders everything went over the top. And suddenly it didn't matter if they ever got signed to a major record company, it didn't matter if you have or ever will see them again...because they're the best fucking band in the whole world.

HALF COCKED

BLACK FLAG at the BlaBla June 11

Ventura Blvd. is a bleak and desolate stretch of road just after midnight on a Monday morning. No bull-necked jocks playing chicken with their custom vans; no sedate suburban shoppers browsing in the endless chain of small-time retail businesses. Hardly anyone was inside the BlaBla; not that it wouldhold that many swooning fans to begin with. We'd thankfully missed the Relievers. Still, a long wait was in store before Black Flag got their chance to detonate the microscopic stage. First, a few BlaBla house roadies sluggishly shuffled equipment while Rikki Lee Jones popped her oh-so lame, oh-so bogus be-bop fingers over the sound system. Keith wandered out on stage sheepishly sucking on a beer and acting as if he'd like nothing better than to just settle down with slippers and an evening paper. All at once it was showtime. The rest of the band positioned themselves. Keith made a few shy comments then, without warning, the accelerator got pushed to the floor. For the fifteen song twenty minute set nothing stood in Black Flag's way. They aroused in the audience of 10, one epileptic seizure (a dance), flying salt shakers and several mangled tables and chairs. A truly impressive debut; volatile, angry and not one full moment. They rival only the Germs in their potential for snowballing a room of sedate people into a mangled tumult of chaos. See them before they get banned from too many clubs. (The Hong Kong has already nixed future shows by them because of a recent debacle there.) They're going...to....EXPLODE!

V/D

BRIEF LOOK AT SOME OTHER SHOWS OF THE PAST FEW WEEKS:

Extended reviews of every event have become near-impossible, so here are a few notes on other worthy moments:

EDDIE & The Subtitles plus X at Club 88: The Subtitles were kind of derivative, X was at its sizzling best. The band that can't do no wrong did no wrong.

Controllers, FlyBoys and U.X.A. at Ricky's (No magazine benefit): sparse audience for this sunday afternoon at the beach. FlyBoys sounded tight and bouncy and impressed me a lot. Controllers were excellent as usual, U.X.A. started powerfully but were forced to give up when someone with a peculiar sense of humor fumigated the room with a fire extinguisher. The band tried to ignore the thick and stinging vapors but had to admit defeat.

King Bees, Rebels and Diane Harris at the Troubadour: King Bees were kind of show biz rockabilly/early rock n roll with more technical know how than presence. Good singing, good playing, good night. Well done and boring. The Rebels (ex Rockabilly Rebels) were another matter altogether. Sweaty, corny and more alive than an ant hill. They breathed rockabilly, walked rockabilly and will die rockabilly. Ain't no expert on the format but if this is the real thing I'll never say no thank you again. Jumpin' Jesus, this is fun! Sly ol' Billy Zoom (the roots of X) was guest star of the show. He played saxophone, sang a song and of course lent his unique guitar support to the boys. He was great, always in control but no more exuberant or revealing than I thought he might be, given the emotional connotations of such a reunion. His past made him grin as much as his present. To Billy, it's all the same. If it's good, what else matters. Thank god he is with the best band in any category.

KICK

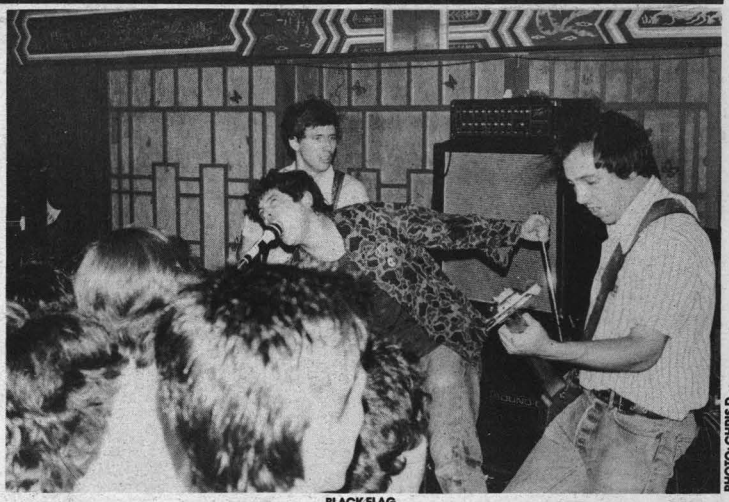


PHOTO: CHRIS D.

BLACK FLAG

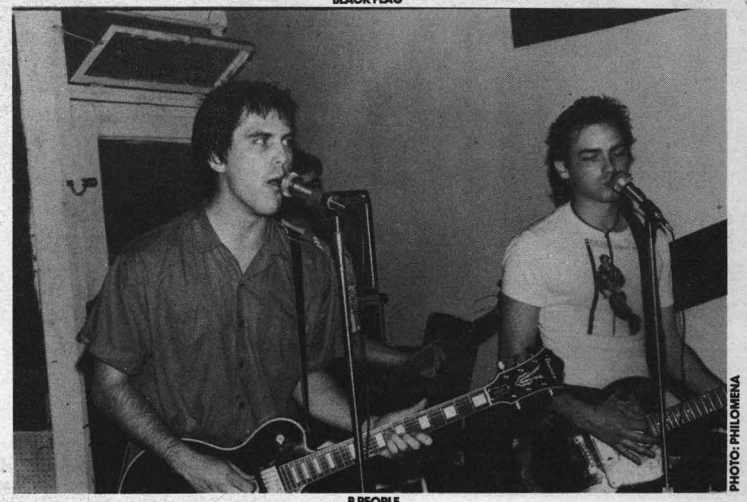


PHOTO: PHILOMENA

B PEOPLE

THE HUMAN HANDS, THE B PEOPLE AND NERVOUS GENDER SOMEWHERE OFF CRENSHAW

3 of the newest, more offbeat and lesser known local bands in one small studio. People wander in and out, exchanging small talk and containers filled with exotic beverages. It is very hot and the Human Hands, already in their 2nd number, look like they've come out of a steam bath. The first thing I notice is the incredible power of the drummer. His name: Dennis Duck. The rest of the band isn't exactly cruising either. Singer David Wiley is about to pop a few vocal chords but pays no mind to such mundane matters. The guy on keyboards takes over the words while Wiley brings a harmless saxophone into submission. Bet that sax did not know it could sound like that. Bet that drum kit wishes it had never been built. It's very demented organized music, it hits you in too many places at once to keep count, scattered spectators keep a safe distance but Wiley brings the maelstrom to them, weaving across groups of people, grabbing a person for a few seconds while singing to the slippery floor, breaking all the rules of stage behaviour. Their set ends before one has really assimilated what was taking place. There remains an impression of unusual force and complexity. Makes most of the No New York creatures sound like dilletante doodlers.

After sporadic beer fights and graceful falling about on the part of the more enterprizing guests the B People start their attack on what's left of our sensibilities. As far removed from the fun band concept as their predecessors, they pound, growl and stretch overlapping layers of fear and pain over our heads. Pretty somber stuff. In a corner, Pat Delaney on sax slyly slips in his very own contributions to the twisted edifice. The drunks in the front rows realize that pogo is out of the question and settle for spectacular falls, throwing one another against the shaking walls, showering in each other's alcohol samples or methodically ripping every piece of clothing within grabbing distance. Rowdy is a polite term for what goes on there. Safely perched on some rafters, someone is filming the ceremony

After the B People I must confess to a very hazy and approximate recollection of the event. Newcomers are frisked for contraband liquor and swiftly relieved of their burden, factions of disagreeing subcultures are formed and decide to step on each other's toes to pass the time, insults are exchanged and killer looks fly in formation. Pandemonium. Chaos. Party time. Somehow Nervous Gender perform their 21st century nursey rhymes for radioactive orphans but the tumult and the social hyperactivity (not forgetting the unavoidable tasting of everyone's brew) take over, this observer surrenders to fate and heads for the whirling void. Let no one say that all these experimental arty bands are dry and boring. The Germs or the Mau Mau's would have been proud to generate such an atmosphere.

KICK FACE.

PHOTO: MELANIE

PENETRATION

THE BALLS AND PENETRATION AT THE WHISKY

I had seen Penetration once before at a gig in the London suburbs and they were great. Even though their recorded stuff (with the exception of two great singles) never exactly drove me wild and goo-goo (too much unnecessary music stuff, also a definite sameness of progression in most songs) the live bit was something else. The principal and obvious reason was singer Pauline, a unique genuine female rocker that put so much energy and soul into her performance that even the more ordinary tunes were transformed and brought to life.

After this Whisky show, I still believe Pauline is a top performer. Anyone who saw her will tell you of her amazing stage presence and her tireless determination to bring the most out of her material. She jumps, runs, constantly trying to pull the audience in and make them feel and share her energy. Her voice soars about the guitar crashes, alternating between soulful wails and rapid punkier shouts, blending style and force with uncanny ease. The band is good and precise but dangerously close to power rock antics. Great riff progressions don't need cliche poses, do they? Still, they give a dimension and solidity to the music that is lacking on vinyl. That night at the Whisky the audience was sparse and slow in warming up, which must have been somehow discouraging and inhibiting for the band, usd as they are to sold-out enthusiastic receptions in their country. No wonder some groups are determined to stay away from the american circuit. Of course, a sure way to increase attendance and excitement would have been to add a popular local band to the bill. At that London gig I mentioned, the opening band for Penetration was Gang Of Four. In Los Angeles, it was The Balls. Talk about a drop in quality level! This ludicrous and harmful error could have been avoided had the promoting record company done a little homework on the true state of the Los Angeles music scene. How many times are we going to have to beg for more relevant and realistic billings whenever the overseas "heavies" get convinced to play our stages? Can't they see that their carelessness or willingness to appear alongside lame combos craving for any industry exposure only results in resentment and eventual indifference on the part of their fans?

KICK BOY

U.X.A. AND THE PLUGZ AT THE HONG KONG CAFE

Hong Kong Cafe is ten times better than old Wong's powe pop palace. It ain't perfect but the people are nice to you, the drinks are not water saturated, the waitresses are not on the rag and the atmosphere is relaxed. U.X.A. came out snarling and kicking and intent on leaving big red welts on some of the laid back ass-in-their-chair crowd (mental welts that is). I believe they did. The crowd in question remained composed but their grins were uneasy and they acted fidgety after two numbers. Dee Dee kept singing 2 inches from their noses, plucking their horn rimmed glasses off their faces and delicately depositing them in the chow mein soup, spinning around red lacquered pillars to ask disturbing questions from the seated spectators hidden behind ("What about the nightmares? the nightmares?...), she looked like a little girl from a strict catholic school who's taken with the wrong crowd but keeps her uniform underneath her leather jacket just to remind herself what's waiting if they catch up with her, she sang and growled things that little girls should have no knowledg of 'cept nowadays they do and it's going to get worse, dear families of the U S of A, it's going to get a lot worse. The rest of U.X.A. had one thing in mind, and that was to lay down a real wall to wall shag rug of piercing burning riffs of red hot metal from which lil' Dee Dee could dangle and swing like an atomic brat with a mind of revenge and destruction. They didn't worry about where Dee Dee was half of the time, their Pistols-like rock n roll was the string that held her captive, she hopped back on stage every few minutes to feel the power, rest on their shoulders and dip in their strength before jumping out for more psychological mischief on the big slow vulnerable public. It was a classic set, every part of it sounded tough, real and menacing.

During that 1st set, U.X.A. proved that the best of punk music is timeless, not a 1976 or 1977 form of expression fondly remembered. Its importance rests in the intensity of the moment. It becomes the only expression, the only reality. It is pure and untouchable. It was a touch act to follow. Of course the Plugz' following is somewhat larger and more organized than U.X.A.'s, but that initial dose of pure music kept reverberating in our skulls. Yet the Plugz burst all over the place like a supercharged racing engine. The interaction between the three is now at its optimum stage, riffs drum rolls and bass lines triggering each other into a continuous chain of explosions, with Tito and Barry trading top vocal outbursts above the bubbling wall of sound. What's more, their new songs are less one-dimensional and evident than the early material. Some are not as fast as the usual Plugz speed run but they have a bottom layer that grips you instantly. The crowd was out of its collective mind, hopelessly twitching and shivering to the music. Even most of the cautious observers of the beginning had gotten up and started to sway and shake, forgetting their awkwardness and feelings of alienation. The wide-eyed oriental help was finally understanding what that mysterious american expression "the joint was jumpin'" truly meant. They did not flinch, which shows a most cool constitution on their part.

The second set was slightly less sweeping, the place was now crowded beyond belief and the stage just about disappeared under the sweaty masses. U.X.A. were hardly visible and kind of rushed, the Plugz more blurry and frantic. No matter, the evening had already qualified as one of the best of the month.

KICK

SLASH PAGE 29

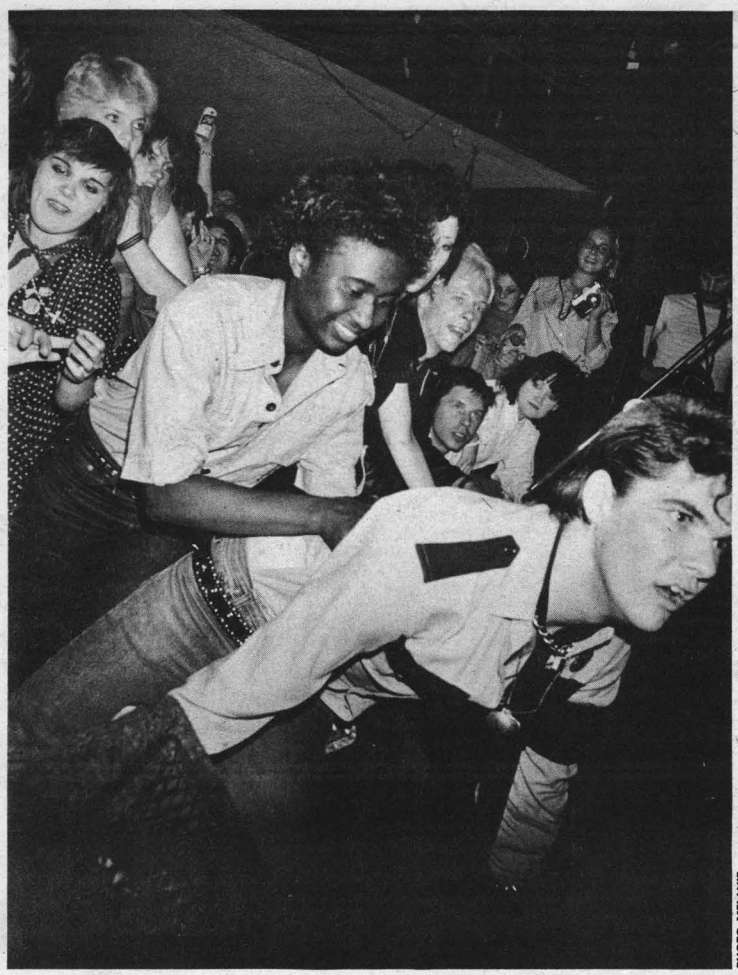


PHOTO: MELANIE

CHERYL TIEGS VERSUS THE ZOMBIE MEN

In addition to talking about myself, I have this tendency to exaggerate. You may have noticed it. I get all excited about some slight detail and its proportion to the whole goes way out of whack. I don't mind admitting this fact. You have every right to know. In this article I vow not to get steamy or loosen my screws. I'll be dispassionate and rational and realistic EVEN IF THE CONCERT WAS THE JERKIEST EXERCISE I'VE EVER BEEN FORCED TO WITNESS! Well, maybe not EVER . . .

Tremor was a real ripple of a group. Spunky lads. Heavy metal cum Power Pop cum Lawrence Welk comes all over your face. They sound just like what's-their-name, some noodle headed girl was fluttering around giving out order blanks for Tremor tee-shirts and bike bags. She did a lousy Steve Martin. She's the Tremors' biggest fan. I wanted to butt-fuck her.

The singer, if I remember correctly, was easy to forget. But the drummer left an impression I'm still trying to shake. Bright striped knee-socks and a flat shabby tam o'shanter. He won our hearts with his kookey sense of humor, but we won it back during his post-concert drum solo. Isn't there a saying about "beating your own drum"? or is it "pulling your own pud"?

Things took a one-inch upswing with The Model. At least they had some illusions to offer. Their name is a disclaimer to vanity, I suppose. Before they even started they had a playful battle of the egos with us as the judge. First the guitarist "Johnny B. Goode". Then, impatient and not to be outdone, the keyboard player did "She's a Rainbow" and "Peter and the Wolf." This guy from the back row kept requesting "In a Gadda-davida." They're a good deal like the Quick, but not so cute. You may want to puke, but it's nicely crafted. Some parts were quite enjoyable if I kept thoughts out of my head. A rollicking, playful kinda band. Your girl might like them if she's pretty and has nerves of rubber.

The singer/guitarist looks like Bert Convey and Harpo Marx. He jammed out like a real trooper, and even did a romantic ballad accompanied by piano alone, all with a constant progression of mime-like expressions and gesticulations. More cleverness for the money. Keep it up guys, and you might become famous.

So long Duke, we're gonna miss you.

SIMON LEGREE.

DRED SCOTT, GERMS, ALLEYCATS AT CLUB 88

My word, it was quite an evening. Two firstgeneration monuments at a Westside Mecca, the human beings converged like iron filings toward a magnet. They engorged the club's innards and came dribbling out like wino vomit. The corner liquor store broke their own record, Club 88's record was smashed. Not just spikey-haired socialites, but punks and surfers and spics and smarties. Lots of people too, all breathing the same air, like people do in the real world.

I neglected to see Dred Scott, preferring instead to do research for this high-tech article. I watched Darby Crash hawking off his Sid Vicious bass pick (only $150, any takers?) and collect numerous alchoholic contributions, both of which gave me keen insight into his deeper nature.

Back in the grotto, the Germs let things ferment for forty-five minutes. The crowd remained glued to their seat by gravity and sweat. The ever-present DC challenged the whole club to a drinking contest, expense was the only factor preventing a victory. By the time he sloshed on stage, his legs were a matter of faith and his eyeballs were glossy blue orbits. Lorna came late to her own party but still blew out the candles.

Germs concerts are more like chemical reactions than musical events. Who would describe a riot in terms of the ideals involved — except as contributing factors? When Don cracks the sticks on the four count, the crowd surges in uncontrolled waves, crashing and thrashing like hyenas — Darwinism working both ways. It's a distilled chaos, a battering ram through cotton padding. Don's marching beat is a decadent glockenspiel, keeping the train on time even while Lorna and Pat place sand in the tank. A white noise version of the black death, a tribute to the grey zone.

Ring Master Darby Crash pulls up energy from his hiding place to bark out incoherent tirades and extort the crowd to frenzy. Indeed, their rational capabilities do seem to run away in fright. The slightest shove sends him sprawling off the speakers, in between songs he wanders around on the verge of tears. Yet with his musical guard dogs he's a man possessed. His eyes burn in appalling beams and red welts of honor decorate his chest. It's not a pleasant spectacle, but it's suicidemagnetic. The crowd kept yelling "jump." Crash made his exit halfway through "Shut Down" and never returned. While Lorna and Don maintained a percussive pulse, Pat sat down to torture his guitar to death, like a sick little monster pouring salt on snails — cracking up at the aural foam pouring out the speakers. Pat laughs at the absurdity of the whole situation. Sometimes there's nothing to do but laugh.

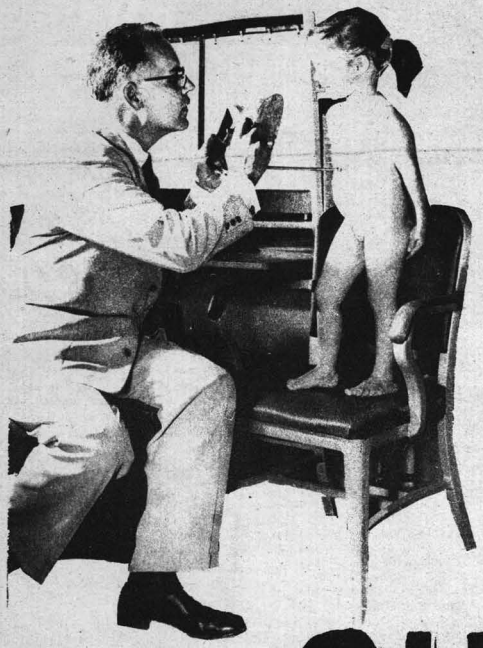
The Alleycats are almost the antithesis of the Germs. Their arrangements are dynamic, their musicianship is disciplined, their message is primarily positive. They could play after anyone and still hold their own.

Their power comes from being not so concerned with image as with music. A small little band, with a huge sound, dense and complex without losing freedom or simplicity. An internal combustion engine without exhaust fumes, each part performing its function without friction, a marvel of propulsion. They sound like they've been playing together all our lives, and they keep getting stronger.

Randy broke the momentum between songs to announce upcoming concerts, (by "the competition.") He prefaced a truly harrowing "Too Much Junk" with a reference to a friend in the hospital. The pain in Dianne's vocals rang with honesty, exposing the inherent fraud in "not caring about anything."

Pulled back on for an encore, the Alleycats ground out "Nothing Means Nothing Anymore." This, of course, can be taken two ways.

MARCEL L'AMATO



YOU be the DOCTOR!

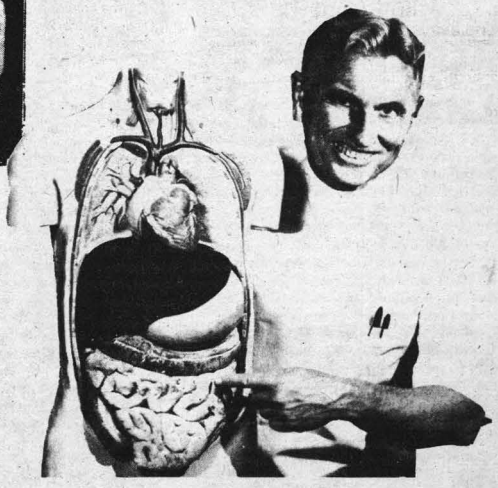
TAKE A QUAALUDE NOW!

WITH THE

EYES

ON

DANGERHOUSE



FORTY FIVES

DRED SCOTT EP
Red Spot Records

Shame the music does not have the strength and conviction of the lyrics. Pretty conventional rock n roll, tight but dry. Yet some of the words are truly inspired, and denote a perception of the emerging new music consciousness that, if blended with a more arresting sound, could almost challenge some of the other wordy new wave popular champs such as Costello the Angry Underdog. One song especially ("Rocker") says as much about the monstrosity of the professional rock n roll life as ten foaming slash editorials: "...Rocker/Be with you in a minute/His head got nothing in it/A maggot tells him what to do/They own his mama too/...And it's a very dirty life/And it's a very dirty life/And it's a very dirty life/And it's a very ugly life". How true, and how sad the song does not sound quite as punchy as it reads.

KICK

LAMOUR
(Sunglass party/Someday)
Zero Degree Records.

This grop is from Virginia. They will never get out of it with lame shit like that.

KICK

face like every Clash song used to. The pretty acoustic intro only accentuates the fantastic density of the song itself. Those Clash songs used to be like that, impregnable as steel fortresses. In their recent creations the steel has been replaced by polished wood, and there are gaps and fissures showing. Is trading your fort for a cottage a sign of mellowing out? Are groovy times really here again?

KICK

ELVIS COSTELLO
(Accidents will happen/Talking in the Dark/Wednesday week)
Radar Import

Because accidents will happen, the sleeve is printed on the inside, blank on the outside. Cute. 1st cut on side two is standard Costello with classical trumpet spicing. Second song is frantic rocker with no highlights. Not a must.

KICK

THE JAM
(Strange town/Butterfly collector)
Polydor Import

This should have been reviewed ages ago. Nobody came forth with their little paragraph. What could be the reason behind such indifference, I wonder.

KICK (thanks partners for leaving me with the shit work!)

"THE COST OF LIVING" EP
THE CLASH
CBS Import

The cost of churning out songs to meet the market's demands? Let's be fair, it must be getting hard to stay up there where inspiration complements anger and urgent rock n roll songs are like fruit on a tree. "I fought the law" is good, a real stomper with a genuine live feeling. "Groovy Times" starts with Dyland like harmonica, goes into second period Clash stuff and ends before anything truly important happens (what did you expect? The parting of the Red Sea? Ed.) "Gates of the West" booms nicely with rapid fire Dylan delivery of the vocals (I can't help it with this Dylan this and Dyland that — I swear it's there. That's not the kind of rumors one goes around spreading just to be funny). "Capital Radio" blows in your

THE DOGS MAXI EP
Melodies Massacre Records
French Import

These canines are from France but they are no precious poodles. No contestation, they know how to rock hard. They don't know how to make it special and original. Perfect riffs, precision drumming, no real edge. Vive le rock, all that jazz. Metal Urbain, where are you?

KICK

THE JAYES
(Truly/Ya To)
Different Records Import

This group confuses me a bit. The "A" side of this is a very juicy pop song called "Truly" and was done much better by its original singer, sexy, Marcia Griffiths. This is a very typical cover version of an island hit. The "B" side is a very rootsy song, with one of the greatest hooks in music history. The singer goes on about "working all day in the burning sun" while the other two guys chant "Ya yo, ya yo" not unlike slaves out in the fields.

Not as primitive as Spear, or the Jomos, but more of a working song than a lament. The Jayes don't try to bring you to tears, but rather want you to see that they are hard working people who pull their weight. The hook goes on into infinity while the band just goes dub crazy. A really realy great record, but more beach oriented than jungle oriented. Or maybe I should say, plantation

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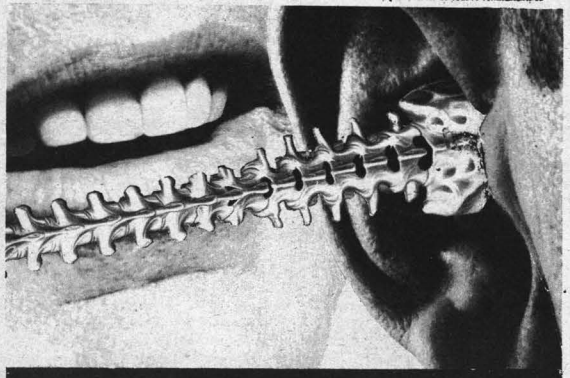

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oriented because they still have them in Jamaica ya know.

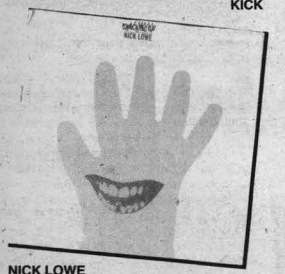
The oddity about the "A" side however. There's a toaster at the end of "Truly" who I think is U-Roy. Its hard to tell since everyone sound like U-Roy these days, but there's no credit anywhere on the record. It must be him. Anyway, get this record and find out for yourself, then write to Slash and tell me, 'cause these days I just don't know...

R. JEFFERY LEA

THE FLYBOYS
(Crayon world/Square City)
FlyBoys Records

The FlyBoys think we don't like them 'cos they're pop punk well they're full of it. This is one of the best pop-punk singles I've heard and if I'm not being nice or tolerant or contradictory, I LIKE IT ALL RIGHT OKAY??!! And why should it matter whether we like something or not I mean we're not exactly in a position where we mold the public taste like we thought Van Halen was a joke well who's laughing now fuckin' hell we're just a pack of off the wall weirdos with fringe leanings everybody knows that so what's the big deal about our monthly bitchy verdicts.....Thing is, I like this record. Bet they still don't believe me.

KICK



NICK LOWE
(Cracking UP/Basing Street)
Radar Import

Nobody wanted to review this. Nobody even listened to it. Okay, so Lowe is not the champion of musical integrity. More like a sponge that regurgitates whatever it picked up weeks earlier. Here, one up tempo sarcastic slick rocker with girl chorus and one intimate poetic delivery with nodded out acoustic guitar and murky subject matter. Competent college coffee-shop material.

KICK

MISTY IN ROOTS
"See them 'ah come" "How long Jah"
(People United Records) Import

This is really a swan-dive into the jungle. A dive I've hoping reggae would take. Since the last Spear album, everybody should have realized that the "roots" sound is the most effective, emotional, and unique sound that is possible by means of reggae. Misty in Roots is a group packaged very slickly by some British company. I don't know if they're from Jamaica or England, but they are certainly aware of how to sound like a safari.

In the Social Living tradition, this record is as dense as the jungle it came from. The production and beat are so fucking thick, it would take a machete to cut through it. Its sort of combination Rasta Man chants with some campfire rhythms and reggae sur rounding it. Truly surreal stuff. One side of this and you'll be more inclined to hunt your dinner rather than buy it. The vocals move through the sound like Bible men in search of Zion. Its amazing how noble these Rasta guys can get. If Misty in Roots are from England, they're definitely a step about Steel Pulse. If they're from Jamaica, I'll bet its somewhere on the north coast where people really do hunt their dinner.

Anyhow, the law of the jungle is something we all can identify with. Its certainly getting to be survival of the fittest around here these days...

RANKING J. LEA

THE MARTYRS
(Pig Pen Victim/Social Sacrifice)
What Records?

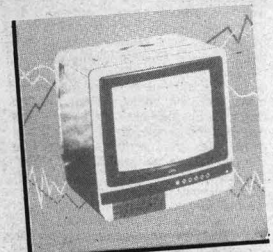
Unexpected surprize from What. Who are the Martyrs anyway? They do some nice distorted wall of noise staff in both fast and slow fashion. The girl on vocals is intriguing as hell. There is something very attractive about these two songs. Come on, tell us the truth, who is behind this?

KICK

KLEENEX
"YOU/U"
Rough Trade Import

Boy do they drive me crazy...that low throaty Dietrich and her back-up Swiss Miss's squeaking those Minnie Mouse post-orgasmic desires make me wanna commit some Zurich obscenity. The sexiest comedy act around, playing intellectual wacky: guitars jangling like bright shiny beads on the turtle-necked throat of these op Heidi bohemians. I especially like the girl drummer, keeping a solid beat, only it's backwards. Don't anyone give her lessons, she plays like a cuckoo clock in the mirror, reversed watch springs on "You", which is actually somewhat of an ordinary song saved by said percussionist and the squeals on the title word. Not up to their incredible debut, but flip side "U" issomething else, a really dark, resonating something else. As one girl self-tape loop squeaks in the background, the cool one of the Alps intones "it's a hard world, it's a bad world, it's hard world, it is so mad" — I think those nasty accents can play tricks on your perception, but that's half the fun of it. The band stays on the same key, playing it down for the ominous, but god, when I hear those squeals I react like a pavlov dog, running in circles faster than that spinning rpm. For a great brain jolt these insects can't be beat.

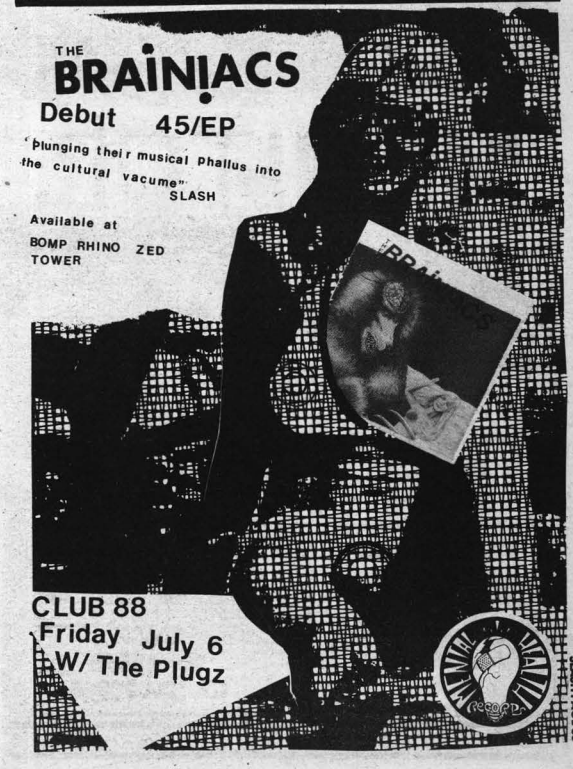
LASCIVIOUS LEE



THE PACK
(Heathen/Brave New Soldiers)
S.S. Label Import

Doesn't move along quite as fast as it should. Nevertheless one of the singles I've heard this month worthy of ever seeing the light of day. Coarse and scratchy with a full volume appraoch to dynamics that breaks cohcrete lovingly over your head while sending the more timid amongst us running for cover, to be re-recorded soon with their new ex-PIL drummer Jim Walker.

CHRIS D.



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JOY RYDER & AVIS DAVIS
(No More Nukes/Nasty Secretary)
Monongo Records

With a song called "No more Nukes" I expected the worst. I still haven't made up my mind about this nuclear business but there ain't nothing ecologically wimpy about that song. First rate rock, scorching vocals by male and female duo, good chorus, fuck, absolutely nothing to bitch about, this is hot. So is side two. That girl's voice is something else. This tacky looking single deserves attention.

KICK

IAN FISHER
(Girls like that/It's a riot)
Monster Wax Records

Not very exciting metal rock. Some neat dirty bass and guitar on b side.

KICK

SPHERICAL OBJECTS
(The Kill/the Knot)
Object Music

"Yesterday's Papers" organ parts punctuate an embarrassing disposable piece of experimental fluff. Here we go again with a lot of unfunny little word games refusing to let us in on the joke.

CHRIS D.

THE SPACE NEGROS
Maximum Contrast
From Moment To Moment
(7 inch 33-1/3 RPM)
Sounds Interesting Records

East coast (white) college students, flippantly alienated. Jazzy chipmunk angst. Shit.

J.C.

THE DAMNED
(Love Song/Noise, Noise, Noise/Suicide)
Chiswick Records Import

Just goes to show you if you hold something back from the public long enough, pretending it doesn't exist anymore, they'll go nuts for it when it finally does resurface. Not that that was the rationale involved here but it seems to be the effect, at least in England. Contrary to critical acclaim none of this stands up to "Neat, Neat, Neat" or even "Don't Cry Wolf". "Love Song" starts out promisingly then slides into a lame chorus that's repeated far too often in the remainder of the song. I like it, though, especially "Noise, Noise, Noise" and "Suicide" with Captain Sensible playing his enthusiastic, sloppy guitar with a real sense of humour and Dave Vanian holding forth with less mannered vocals.

CHRIS D.

VINYLLY..

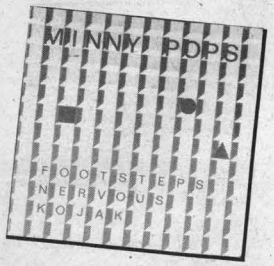
BY SO CLIFFORD:

"SAY BO THEN TONY WITH A B..."
One of the earliest UK independents was Beggars Banquet, named for the chain of record shops, which were probably named for you-know-what. Very much alive with a couple of recent chart successes (DOLL, LURKERS), they have one of the most diverse lineup of groups going; from one-man bands to hard-core punk to electronic weirdness. All of this experimentation does make for an awful record now and then, but their overall track record is really pretty good. JOHNNY G is normally the one man band, but on "The Golden Years" (no relation to Bowie) he uses several other musicians, including horns! Unfortunately he drowns under the weight and all the extras only dilute his simple, straightforward style. A good example is the solo flip "The Permanent Stranger". TUBEWAY ARMY, after starting out as a group, has "evolved" into an almost one man band. Gary Numan is writer, singer, producer, and plays most instruments. Gone is the powe and guitars of their first two singles and we're left with yet another electronic record that makes little impression on the memory. The new LURKERS single, "out In The Dark", is really an EP with four cuts. Two are live, including "Cyanide" which reappears in a very different studio version of the other side. While not as impressive as their last couple singles, still a good value for money release. Their new album should be out soon, too.

UK 5:
LEYTON BUZZARDS have a new one called "I'm Hanging Around" (Chrysalis, gr). This one is a bit more "ordinary" than their last one, but I think that gives it more focus and punch. Nice clean production. Two songs on the B-side and at least one has a great title: "No Dry Ice Or Flying Pigs". UA has signed PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY (henceforth referred to as Punilux) to a big deal contract. Their first release is "Engine of Excess" which has a lot of Devo in it. They manage to get a lot tougher sound than the Spuds, though. The flip is the hilarious "Jellyfish", a seafood story as told by Napoleon XIV. FISCHER-Z have let me down with "The Worker" (UA), a moody tale that sounds like for Abba, but just not meaty enough for these guys. I'm still looking forward to their first lp. STIFF LITTLE FINGERS continue to release politically committed records that sound like beehives on fire!! By far the leading straight punk band in the UK. Chalk up another one for Rough Trade! The year is 1976 and the DAMNED hurtle out of nowhere with "new Rose", an instant brain-bashing classic. Three years later, the reformed (hardly), nearly-all-original-members DAMNED release "Love Song" (Chiswick) with a similar subject and, by god, the same sound! It really sounds great! Very exhilerating! The double B-side doesn't quite measure up, but it's really good to have the boys back.
OBSCURIOSITY:
On the British side, there's AGONY COLUMN and "(I Had It) All Worked Out" (Tyger), a nifty, very persistant record. If T. Heads played direct rather than funky, they might sound liek this. The TOOLS feel they "Gotta Make Some Money Somehow" (Oily), which is truly a fact of life. A bit heavy on the guitar hero bit, but a heartfelt performance anyway. They should rob a

PENETRATION
(Danger Signs/Stone Heroes/Vision)
Virgin Import

Danger Signs is below standards. A forced hook that does not really work. B side is recorded live and much better. And I don't even like live records. A real testimonial to Pauline's stupendous voice, the band gets a bit over-majestic at times, stepping on each other's toes to cram riffs and notes in every available slot, regrettably distracting us from the real worthy element of the stuff, that lady singer



MINNY POPS
(Footsteps/Nervous/Kojak)
Plurex Records

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KICK

SID VICIOUS EP
C'mon Everybody/My Way/
Something Else

Let's hope some of the royalties from this record will be used to spring Sid's mum out of jail. It's hard enough behind bars without memories of a bad luck wander 6 feet under to haunt you. Let's not get drippy over "what could have been". It's all over for the Sex Pistols — there's nothing left to reissue. But for those of you who didn't already know (since these songs are all available on other records), listen up to these skimpy remains for a reminder of what a cool rocker that little rat bastard Sid truly was (w/ or without Johnny L.) "My Way" is one of the world's ultimate slaps in the face, and Sid's versions of "Something Else" (an old Eddie Cochran hit) and C'Mon Everybody" are proof that every waking minute of his life wasn't spent in the realm of the zombies. His vocals are surprisingly traditional, but he really blasts them out and sounds like he's having a good time too. Didn't think he could do it, did you? If you can't find this record (it's a French import) get the singles. SID LIVES, you know. P.S. The cover (a Sid doll in a coffin) is cute, but why was the swazitka on his T-shirt censored?

XTC
Life Begins At The Hop/Homo Safari
Virgin Records

This is good pop music. Abbreviated guitar riffs and melodic vocals. I can see the happy teens dancing to that driving drumbeat. Life Begins At The Hop is a song about those same happy teens having a good time drinking coca cola etc. at a hop. Who's happy? Fuck you.

J.D.

bank...

Maybe my favorite record of the month is one from the leftest of fields. SHOES FOR INDUSTRY has released one of the most confusing 45's I've ever encountered. See if you can follow this: the songs listed on the sleeve wind up with different titles on the label. "Falling In Love Again" becomes "Can't Help It" and it features a Marlene Dietrich impression(?) followed by a crazed, slightly electronic rocker about the inability to stay uninvolved. Nervous and frantic. If that ain't enough the other side is "Laughing Song", err..."Laughbeat" with haywire electro-laughing in a song that takes the first verse and repeats it twice as fast to make up the second verse and then metamorphoses into "Heartbeat" by B. Holly! Jeez, this is weird! It's on Fried Egg records and the back sleeve shows a list of rejected band names (...and they picked SHOES FOR INDUSTRY?!?). Believe me, I'm not making this up.

Yes, there are bands in Wyoming and the ACCELERATORS "It's Cool To Rock" EP (Wide Open) proves it, even though the A's have now moved to LA. Five tunes sharply produced that deal mostly with sex; there's also a clumsy swipe at the masses in "Bloody Disco". "Sorority Girl" and the title tune are fairly normal "horny desires get the best of me' affairs (sorry...) while "Itty Bitty Baby" is filled with lighthearted perversion (13 year olds and duct tape...). Not a bad start and they should be hotter sounding live. The FLYBOYS, from LA, have had their future placed in limbo due to the recent death of their keyboard player. They have released posthumously "Crayon World" and it's a pretty good record. I found the indifferent production inhibiting a-t first, but quality of the songs finally came through. It will be interesting to see if the band will continue. MATT GIMMICK (a band) have released "Detroit Renaissance '79" an EP with very heavy Stooges (not just Iggy) influences. In fact, two of the songs are Stooges tunes that were never recorded by them. Metallic, factory guitar playing by Alan Webber sparks most of the best moments on a rather consistent record. From the wilds of New Jersey descend the SPACE NEGROES and their "Maximum Contrast From Moment to Moment" EP (Sounds Interesting). Using interesting and frequently funny voice cut-ins and strange, ethereal production touchs, the SN's create a subtle Pop Group type sound. Highly listenable and most entertaining. A somewhat similar approach is used by PRODUCT (mostly one guy named Christian Lunch). Their untitled EP on Fish Ranch records also uses voice bits, but the musical sections are shorter and more electronic. Reminds more of the Normal (also a one man group) or Fripp with a dash of Residents.

NOTSO OBSCURO:

Though "Room to Rock" (Kool Kat) is their first record, LEVI AND THE ROCKATS have had more exposure than many "major" bands. They've appeared on Merv Griffin and Midnight Special (the first group to do so without a record label) and have had heavy local press due to canny managing and string pulling. Now about this disc, which is produced very well and brings the bands rockability into sharp focus. It's great fun and all that, but it's a bit static. They run into the same old problem: how do you capture a terrific stage act on vinyl? They're probably very close to major label time, so there should be more evidence in your living room shortly.

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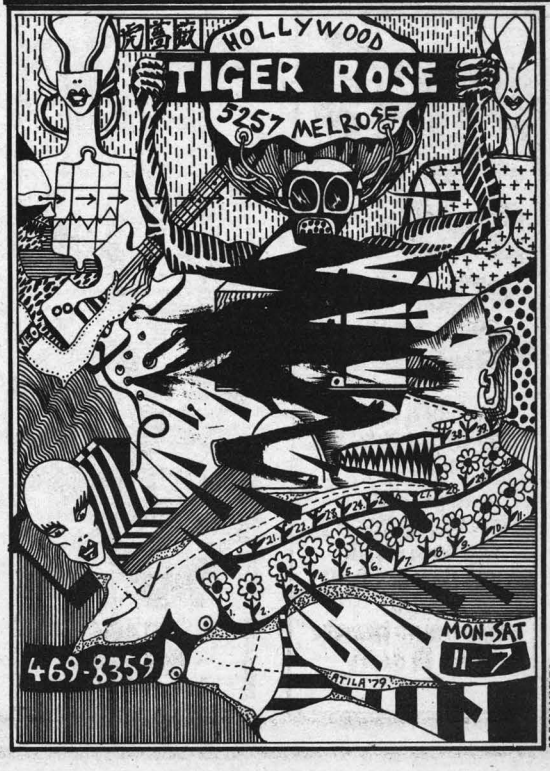

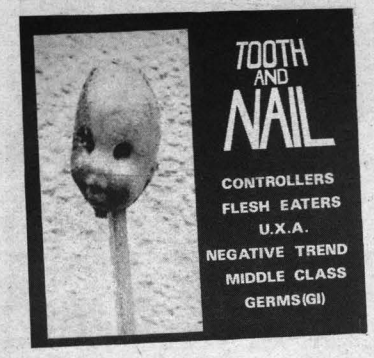

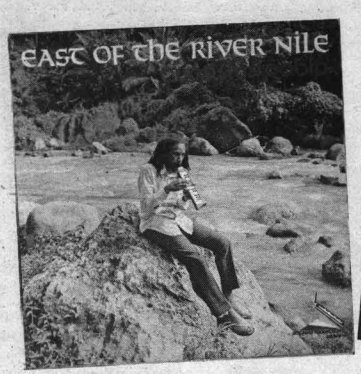

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"TOOTH AND NAILS"
(Controllers, Fleseheaters, U.X.A., Negative Trend, Middle Class, Germs)
UPSETTER Records

The most successful attempt so far at capturing a few of our local combos on vinyl. There is so much wealth and energy in this package that it takes repeated listenings to assimilate its worth. Unlike the New York package, there is an underlying unity of purpose that has nothing to do with shock value and overstretch bluff. Not one of the bands represented here needs to strain and strive for a semblance of reality. This is the stuff they do, unadorned, unpolished and so fuckin' alive and pure it gives you goose bumps. Everything the whole punk/new wave earthquake was supposed to be about, and if this now leaves you cold and uninterested 'cos you're oh so worried about where the next fad is gonna come from you have lost your ticket to salvation and will rot in boredom until you rot in the flesh. And for the rest of you still hungry for real red lean meat here are a few juicy chunks to get your teeth into. The Controllers do 3 songs on top of one another: "Another Day", "Electric Church" and their latest stage hit, "Jezebel". Their infectious rhythm drive moves along at a nice supersonic cruising speed, with guitar and vocals firmly anchored to the beat. No frills, no flash, exactly what's needed to firmly grab you 'til the end. Functional tunes for kids on the ball. Next the Flesheaters, with an impressive reappearance for this occasion. 3 tunes also, "The Word goes flesh", "Pony Dress" and "Version Nation". Singer Chris has not lost the power of his twisted anguished voice (I still say he soon will, at this rate), one song is a remake of their original EP, the other two new ones on which various members from other bands have collaborated. Not what you'd call easy listening punk, it will make your cock shrivel faster than any poison. This sound makes me think of razor blades and severed nerves. Side one ends with U.X.A.'s "Social circle". Side two starts with the other U.X.A. song, "U.X.A.". UXA are my new favorite band but even if they weren't those two cuts would have converted me. Dee Dee's voice makes me dream of unorganized revolutions with no room for leaders. The artillery behind her makes me feel confident as to the outcome. Next on side 2 is another combo close to my heart, the much lamented Negative Trend. "I got power" and "Mercenaries" is their legacy here, and both are required listening material for anyone with vague desires of combining politics, defiance and arrogant individualism all treacherously served under the cover of high energy rock n roll. Middle Class are next with "Love is just a tool" and "Above suspicion". Neither are ballads, but the second one makes you less dizzy than the first. There even is a hook that will not require 40 listenings to be pinned down to your memory walls. Perhaps public pressure forced Middle Class to perform at what must be for them this Geritol pace. An admirable comromise on the part of these young Turks. After all this abundance of ragged goodies, guess who steals the show? The Germs, naturally. (When they don't steal the show they ruin it. Excitement guaranteed in either case). On "Manimal" (?) Darby Crash does the ultimate impersonation of a feline suddenly blessed with the gift of speech. Feline feelings are painfully expressed but soon the natural state of things creeps back and it's back to anguished yowlings. The band tries to tame the beast into a semblance of rhythmic docility but only succeed in exacerbating it. Nature wins. "Dragon Lady" is a psychological study of no use to any kind of shrink 'cept the most research oriented, at times it sounds as if there are two Darby Crashes, one in each speaker, which is one more than the world can handle now. The gang also finds time to perform an autopsy on a piano and Don the drummer has convulsions throughout. "Strange Notes" is the last song, and could be a parable. The guitar riffs collapse like dominos, trying to catch the drums unprepared. The drums are not fooled. The bass sticks to its territory, which is not your idea of heaven for most basses I know. This must be one of the more traditional tunes: it has breaks. That's when the chief yodeller runs on momentum alone, scratching the shit out of your ear drums. The printed lyrics of this entire record will also do things to you. After all, it did things to the people who wrote them. They wouldn't be such a valuable part of this scene otherwise.

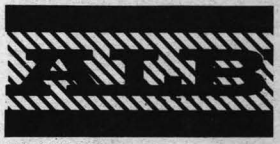
KICK BOY FACE

"HOTTEST HITS"
Virgin's Front Line Import

This recent compilation of early jamaican hits could be the happiest thing that landed on your turntable in a long time. All these singles reflect an earlier era of the music when the beat was more boppy, scratchy and sensual and the subject matter more concerned with problems of the heart than theological meditations upon Jah's overpowering presence. And now that the past-oriented Trojan label is nomore, there seemed to be very little hope of ever getting our hands on this stuff, but Virgin did it and should be profusely thanked for it. Included are cuts by The Sensations, The Melodians, The Techniques, Alton And The Flames, Phillis Dillon, each one a shiny gen that will delight and enlighten you, provided your sensitive fibers haven't already been charred by today's music. Today's favorites of yours humbly are "Cry Tough" (Alton & The Flames) and the irresistible "Right Track" (Dillon). There is no doubt that a volume 2 is in order. May I suggest Keith Poppin's "Samething For Breakfast" as the opening track? Reggae certainly deserves its Oldies But Goodies equivalent. Listen and try telling me I'm wrong.

CHATTY

PS: Now that the british mod revival is bound to bring the "ska" sound back in circulation, this album is invaluable in finding out what this "ska" and bluebeat business was about anyway.



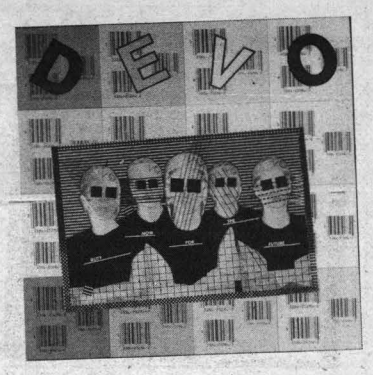
RED CRAYOLA
SOLDIER TALK
Radar Records

Stretch a point, you got a line. Two lines, you got a lane. Drive a car, or a train of though through that lane, on the soundtrack on the most irritating, jangly guitar sound, the treble up to ten square, and the best drummer of the year playing a snare drum as sharp as a bullwhip crack. Poly-poly rhythm fragments. A hard dose of cranium salts, pushing against your frontal lobe with the humour of a psychotic — who else rhymes "Eastern Europe" and "pancakes with syrup". Yeah that voice has the same on-the-edge-of-psychosis as David Talking Head, but this guy has been around twice as long. He must have been, to put this concept together. But what is the concept? Stretch a point, make a line, these lines hold the insrumental and vocal sections together in such a cryptic graph you need a decoder to sort it out. All right, make the people understand, use the adjective: Avant Jazz Psychedelic Folk Rock. What, you don't understand? Albums like this and the Pop Group are creating a music that you can't passively use for background music — you must commit yourself, body and foggy brain. Not ready yet? All right, repeat after me — make a point. Till its pointless. Logic is logic unless it isn't logic — my brother grew potatoes but you grew tomatoes----starting to get it?.....That o.k., buy it now and five years when it assumes neglected masterpiece status you won't have to pay bloated prices for the reissue. Meanwhile if you're not quite ready for this, there's always the new Devo album — compared to this it's a first grade reader. But at least it won't give you a headache. Now give me a beer, albums like this are too much hard work — ahh, that's better. This is a pretty incredible you know — glurg, glurg, glurg.....

Z (extended beyond his capabilities)

THE POP GROUP
"Y"
33-1/3 RPM LP Radarscope records

Don't let the name fool you, though there's probably no danger of that if you get a good look at the cover of this album: frontal close up photo of some mud-covered masked warriors apparently working themselves up for the kill (the poster inside features collaged images of 20th century death, pain, oppression and murder, over which the lyrics are printed in red ink — actually very pop). From the first electronic groan on the opening cut to the last bleak note this is an expert dosage of grating agony and vengeance.



No relief, no redeeming qualities, except that it might work as a purgative (something to make you shit after a long constipation) and might just confirm positively the hate you've been harboring since your first brush with modern numbness. You won't bounce or tap your foot to this, though you may jerk involuntarily here and there. But just as you think you've got hold of a coherent beat or rhythm it'll drop, leaving your stomach where it left off. Don't expect to finish listening to this thinking you've heard something "experimental". You won't be subjected to artfull exercises in noise making. There IS enough repetition of rhythm to keep you in their unpleasant grip, just enough to maintain the nausea. If most punk is quickly beginning to sound like a very empty imitation of itself and you don't like the various musics "of the 80s" either, get this. This music says two things to me about that: (a) There will be no 80s or (b) if there is, hold tight, the worst is yet to come.

J.C.

DEVO
DUTY NOW FOR THE FUTURE
Warner Brothers

A porno cartoon for science babys. Two years ago I saw Devo do most of these songs at the Starwood. It as their second set, very sparsely attended, they were relaxed and seem to have more fun doing these songs, than the first set which was the first album and more commercially geared than this. I mean you can actually enjoy listening. The first was too thinly produced and too calculated. Not to say this isn't — calculation is the essence of Devo's get-rich scheme to win the world by a con game disguising as a concept called "de-evolution". These guys are too silly to be hard nose intellectuals, maybe that's why they win and Pere Ubu is a psychic disorder. But I like these goofy guys with their cheerful nasty cynicism, their gleeful hatred of all the forces that once oppressed them (especially sex which gets the cutting blade in Clockout and Pink Pussycat.) So Wally Cox wins the girl and the recording contract in the end, by playing with a musical erector set while everybody else gets buried in a grave of their own metal design. But how long will it be before this years gimmick is last years fad? Somehow this album seems a lot more personal and human, at the same time it seems fatalistic —
Are we not men? Who gives a fuck, anyway? (In case you can't figure it out — I actually really, really like this album. Only problem is I feel like an idiot at the same time — guess I'm truly DEVO. Bleech, is that depressing.....)
Z going goo-goo

Ooops — didn't do my full duty — all right: Production is much better. Guitars still too under mixed at times. Synthesizer sometimes fits, sometimes is obviously a trick instead of a texture. Vocals much more varied — but the mechanical singing still sounds silly. Darker edges on most songs. Still much too 'clean' as compared to live performances but I can't take those anymore (something about those suits takes the piss out of me.) O.K. Dad, finished my report, can I break the t.v. now?

"EAST OF THE RIVER NILE"
Augustus Pablo
Message Records Import

If you know A. Pablo you either have this already or are looking frantically for it. If you don't, you should start the frantic search right now. If you find it and don't like it, you are a robot and you need a total overhaul.

P.S. Okay, it's instrumental reggae (not dub) of the highest quality.

KICK

"WORLD ON FIRE"
I-ROY
Virgin's Front Line Import

I suspect this to be a few months old but with jamaican stuff we take it when we can get it, it's not as if every release got its oil painting giant reproduction on the outer walls of Tower records. (not true rasta. Lately Romp and Rhino have started to import a fair variety of records, 'specially those twelve inches 45's with the song, the toasting and the dub version. Ed.) On this one veteran toaster I-Roy sounds very nasal. No particular cuts stand out but it still is a nice collection of talk-overs. Some good echo on the instruments tracks, and a couple of excellent horn moments. I-Roy sticks to the tunes, leaving the wild hopping antics now in fashion to the younger fame-grabbing dreads.

CHATTY

"AT THE CHELSEA NIGHTCLUB"
THE MEMBERS
Virgin Import

Starts with an instrumental that could be retitled "The Ventures Go Dub". It won't fool anyone but it's a nifty number. Throughout the rest of the LP the reggae influence makes regular token appearances, most of the time to no discernible effect. It's used to give a catchy bounce to draggy spots and discarded the second they think of a better riff. One exception: On "Don't Push" it's perfect 'cos they use the tchak-ka-tchak jamaican backbone ten times faster than the black musicians ever would. At that speed it simply becomes a particularly effective rock vehicle. Another great song is "The Sound of the Suburbs" (already released as a single), in which the boys momentarily give up the tongue-in-cheek pose and sound as if they mean it. Finally there is "Stand Up and Spit", a funny white reggae ditty. This is an incredibly uneven album, with scattered moments of excitement peaking thru whenever they forget to come on like a clever cheerful good time band.

KICK

"NATURALITY"
The Gladiators
Virgin's Front Line Import

Praise Jah, the Gladiators still sound good. The general impact is still somewhat below that of their initial Virgin masterpiece "Trenchtown Mix Up" but this remains a respectable collection, with two or three first rate masterpieces slipped in. Except for a couple of predictable pedestrian ditties the vocal trio's ability to bounce across lovely uptempo melodies and delicately inject the right dose of soulful feel to every harmony and every chorus is pretty much unchallenged in the field of vocal-oriented reggae. As opposed to Culture or the Abyssinians, The Gladiators (Albert Griffiths, Clinton Fearon, Gallimore Sutherland) lay off the thickly textured mournful wailings. Their voices tickle, not stroke. Perfect cuts, as of today: "Struggle", "Naturality", "Dry your Weeping Eyes". Skip Marley's "Exodus" (a mediocre song to begin with) and "Nyahbingi Marching On" (a silly propaganda jingle strictly for converted brethren). The rest won't hurt you one bit.

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH

THE ONLY ONES
EVEN SERPENTS SHINE
CBS Records Import

Peter Perrett has a great voice — traces of Jonathon Richman, Lou Reed, Marc Bolan, Ray Davies — I mean it, it's a one of a kind. And the lyrics have more angles than a maze. But the over-produced rock and roll soundtrack in the background seems totally out of place. It's promenent enough to make me never want to hear this record again — come on, give this guy the kind of band he really should have, instead of this heavy piece of stale feces.

'ONERY ABE

"SCARED TO DANCE"
THE SKIDS
Virgin Records Import

Except for "Into the Valley", the Skids are scared to rock. I can't imagine why. Unless, for the most part, they're just this great big hollow shell that's been polished up nice and shiny by their producers. All that spit and polish can't bring back the dead or make something live that was never alive in the first place. Derivative power pop goes the way of heavy metal with pedestrian public school lyrics devoted to showing the hyposcrisy of the military establishment. From thin-blooded Sham 69 imitations to the worst of Budgie.

CHRIS D.

SLASH STAFF CHART

"Punk rock: a music by creeps, for creeps." (The New York Times)

BO CLIFFORD
1) Kiss In the Dark - Pink Lady
2) Laughbeat - Shoes For Industry
3) L.A. Explosion - the Last album
4) Itty Bitty Baby - The Accelrators

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH
1) Church is a Rome - Prince Jazzbo
2) Door Peep Shall Not Enter - Burning Spear
3) Can't Blame The Youth - Pete Tosh
4) Samething For Breakfast - Keith Poppin

CHRIS D.
1) Black Flag EP
2) Tooth And Nail LP
3) X demo tape
4) Belsen Was A Gaz - Sex Pistols (Rotten's version)
5) Heathen - The Pack
6) The Undertones LP

KICKBOY
1) Anarchy In the UK - Sex Pistols
2) U.X.A. - U.X.A.
3) The Fall LP
4) Another Day - The Controllers
5) Let's Have A War - Fear

MELANIE
1) I Wanna Hurt - Tomata & Sheila (Screamers)
2) Touch Me In The Morning - Big Youth
3) Damaged Goods - Gang Of Four
4) Lobster Rock - The B-52s

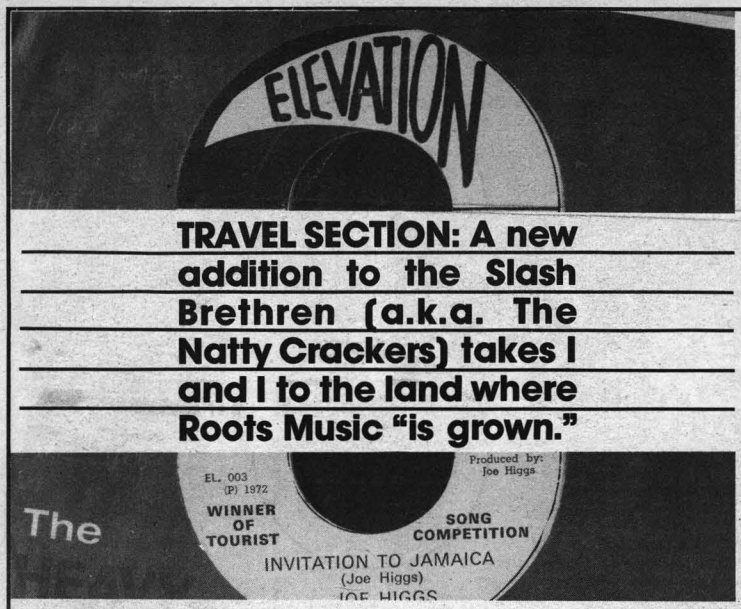
PEA
1) Dragon Lady - The Germs
2) Electric Church - The Controllers
3) Social Circle - U.X.A.
4) Pony Dress - IThe Flesheaters

STEVE
1) Cost Of Living EP - The Clash
2) Stick A Bush - The Gladiators
3) Summertime Blues - Blue Cheer

V.
1) Tooth And Nail LP
2) Our Love Passed Out On The Couch - X
3) Black Flag EP
4) Electrify Me - The Plugz LP
5) Sid Vicious EP

WILL L'AMATO
1) She Electrifies Me - The Plugz
2) Trains Versus Planes - Human Hands
3) Sex Boy - The Germs
4) Codex - Pere Ubu
5) African Night Flight - David Hasbeen
6) offstage patter - Nico's second set

Z
1) U - Kleenex
2) Raincoats EP
3) Super Ape - The Upsetter
4) The Pop group LP
5) Nervous Gender tape



TRAVEL SECTION: A new addition to the Slash Brethren (a.k.a. The Natty Crackers) takes I and I to the land where Roots Music "is grown."

It's so hard to write this. I don't feel well at all. Must be malaria or something. Anyway, not too long ago, while I was escaping New York, I got a crazy idea about going to Jamaica for some time. I was in Miami and found out I could fly there for $85 round-trip. So, I went to the Cuban bar and thought, "Well, I didn't get killed living on Avenue B, I ain't gonna get killed in no stupid country where people think Ethiopia is a promised land," so I went. And I bought hordes of records which is what this number is about.

When I got to Kingston, it was just as crazy as I heard it was. People drive like stock-car drivers. Goats and chickens run around pissing in the street. Everybody sitting on the corner or on the sidewalk. There are NO white people. Since, not many tourists come there anymore, people immediately assume, you've arrived for some business reason. So I told my driver I was scouting reggae bands. He promptly took me over to Randy's records where he said all the best stuff "was grown".

I dove into Randy's and found out they were playing mostly the hits. No. 1 on Jamaicans top thirty was "Soon Forward" by Gregory Issacs. (GG records) This was pretty much a pop-crossover tune for him. Compared to his few British releases. He seems to be after Dennis Browns large success, by using Brown's approach of singing smooth, but soulful, and never being unrighteous. I didn't really like it all that much, but it proves that somebody has Smokey Robinson records in Jamaica . . .

A couple of dub records were high on the charts. Both of these were a whole lot crazier than I've heard in a while. "Barnabas Collins" by Ranking Barnabas (GG records) is a song about the Dark Shadows serial that comes complete with screaming girls and things that scare Rastas at night. Really cute tinkling piano licks by Ansel Collins and the toaster chanting "You shoulda hear she ball, Jesus Christ!" Sometimes the guy even imitates the girl's voice. Pretty silly stuff, but what do you want from Jamaican DJ's. Another big hit, was "Rub a Dub Style" by Ranking Michigan and General Smile (Studio One) and is an old song done up by dual toasters who scream, laugh, make catcalls, question and answers, etc., etc. A lot of fun really. Makes Dillinger seem old.

I was pretty fucked up while I was listening, and so the guy in the store thought I probably wanted to hear something closer to home, so he played "Magnet & Steel" by Walter Egan, which he told me was a big hit in Jamaica. I told him it was alright, I didn't want to hear something I already heard in America, and persuaded him to play some more. He came up with a couple of Bunny Wailer tunes which are climbing the charts rapidly.

"Tribulation" (Solomonic label) is a Wailer song done up by Marcia Griffiths, and is as good as the girl stuff gets. Sexy-lazy vocals with gorgeous I-Threes back-ups. Lots of good hooks. As good as Barbara Lewis doing "Hello Stranger". Except there's this corny synthesizer line at the end. No doubt some of Bunny's doing. (Somebody take that thing away from him!)

The other Wailer tune was sung by himself. It's "Bright Soul" (Solomonic) which does not have corny synthesizer, but does have Bunny singing with a looser conviction than he did on Island. Damn fucking good hooks and choruses full soul and without losing any righteousness at all. He might have a bad production hang-up, but let's face it, the guy hasn't written hardly any bad songs.

A new Dennis Brown and a new Ronnie Davis single were climbing up the charts by the time I left. One, "Stop the Loafing" by Ronnie Davis (JA Man records) is a disco 45 that includes loads of dub plus a version by Clint Eastwood called "Natty Dread don't loaf". The song is pretty much a variation on some old Horace Andy riff, with much grittier soul. The Clint Eastwood version is much better, but still kinda lazy. (I know Chatty loves this guy, but I can't get much out of his record yet. No real style I can pick out). The new Dennis Brown single, however, is fucking brilliant. Perfect cross between sorrow and partytime. It's called "Ain't that Loving You." (Joe Gibbs) with a version included by Nigger Kojack called "Hole in the Bucket". This song is easily up to par with the shit off of "Visions", so I won't waste time. Dennis Brown should be the big star he is, but . . .

Toaster, Nigger Kojack, is like the best thing on the island since Bauxite. He calls, he answers, and just bounces all over the song. Unlike other DJ's, he doesn't wander off into too much rap, but instead rides the beat, until it gets so infectious, your goldfish are dancing in the bank. There's also a girl's voice that taunts calls to him, while he responds with craziness and bouncing and bouncing and bouncing and bouncing. He can't be stopped. This was becoming the most popular dance record by the time I left and why not? It may be the reggae equivalent of "Kookie, Kookie, Lend me your Comb."

Aside from ducking vicious stares and people selling stupid little wooden objects that nobody would buy, I also found a few older records in Kingston. One of these, "Jah Will Cut You Down" by Earth & Stone (Randy's label) was so fucking intense I wonder how I stayed alive listening to it. Very sad "Plight of the People" type stuff. So much a "roots" record that even a middle-class white feels like a tribal warrior. Makes Culture sound like a pop group.

I also picked up a Delroy Wilson record whose cover was made out of a cut-up AJAX box. Songs are good too. Sounds like Clarence Carter doing "Slipaway". Another good score was the single of "Every Tongue Shall Tell" by Horace Andy who used to put out some wicked records a few years back. (Despite what a few idiot Englishmen say).

But the truth is, they really just don't keep much old stuff in print down there. (In fact, they don't here either, just try to go to Tower Records and find "Fever" by Little Willie John. I dare ya. It's no damn wonder people are so stupid they go out and buy disco or Devo or something worse). So don't come to Jamaica with hopes of finding rare old Burning Speak albums. They don't exist.

Kingston stinks. Too much garbage. I decided to go up to Ocho Rios and St. Ann's Bay for a while. Which are real nice beach towns where country Rastas come down from the hills to stare at the tourists, or sell them things. Much friendlier than Kingston. (Don't get me wrong, Kingston is good in some ways. It isn't any worse than Avenue B or East L.A., but I didn't come to an island as beautiful as Jamaica to count roaches).

In Ocho Rios I actually met a few Rastas who didn't try to hustle m, but rather wanted to talk about girls. (They needed advice on wooing white women.) So, we hung out. They got mad every time I stopped to get a beer. They just insisted on smoking this mind fucking pot that prevents you from walking or talking. They also thought I should let a beard grow. True Rastas have beards ya know. Anyway, their attitude toward music was very different than in the city. They helped me get this record by a band called "The Jomos" which comes from St. Ann's Bay and who are disciples of Winston Rodney, the king of roots reggae. The song was called "I Am He" (Spear records) and is a very natural, very righteous group. Lilting flute and African harmony, no doubt part of Rodney's vision. 'Let's face it right now, Winston Rodney is the most important black singer since Robert Johnson. This guy has power. If you haven't got all the Burning Spear records including "Social Living" and "Rocking Time" you are stupid and should just go cry among your David Bowie records. This will be the man that turns reggae into a world of its own, completely departed from any other music in the world.) This record shows the kids are learning well from the master . . .

And so,

I'm happy as a monkey to report that reggae in Jamaica is NOT "turning into disco" as the Clash would have you believe. Rastas and non-Rastas hate disco just as much as you or I. In fact, things in St. Ann's Bay are moving more towards true jungle music. Which is good for everybody.

I guess Jamaica is no place for English rock stars who want to put their arms around a few Ratas and I guess Jamaica is no place for English rock stars who want to put their arms around a few Rastas and play dread. You can't do that. Americans know, because they've spent their whole lives fighting with blacks. Even the few Jamaicans I met always kept their distance. It's a black country full of black music. You can watch, but you can't play. It's a risk not unlike the one the Young Rascals must have took trying to sneak through Harlem to see James Brown at the Apollo. It's pretty dangerous, but it's worth it. So start carrying a knife or something. Real fans will kill for music . . .

RANKING JEFFREY LEA

JIMBO AT THE WILD YOUNG HIP INTELLECTUAL BEATNIK POGO PARTY!!!!!
A WOP BOP A LU BOP A LOP BAM BOOM!!
G.P. 79.
LET'S DIDN'T GO.
MMMMMM...
ROZZTOX
BOY JIMBO, ALL I'VE GOT TO SAY IS YOU SURE ARE MAKING AN ASS-HOLE OUT OF YOURSELF OVER THIS SMOG MONSTER GIRL... AND YOU'RE PRETTY WELL MAKING AN IDIOT OUT OF ME IN FRONT OF KICKBOY... OH WELL, ENJOY IT WHILE IT LASTS YOU CHUMP!!! GARY PANTER
SLASH PAGE 39

ZED RECORDS

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KLEENEX · U
XTC · LIFE BEGINS AT THE HOP (CLEAR VINYL)
STIFF LITTLE FINGERS · GOTTA GET AWAY
ATV · THE FORCE IS BLIND
ANGELIC UPSTARTS · THE
XRAY SPEX · HIGHLY INFLAMMABLE
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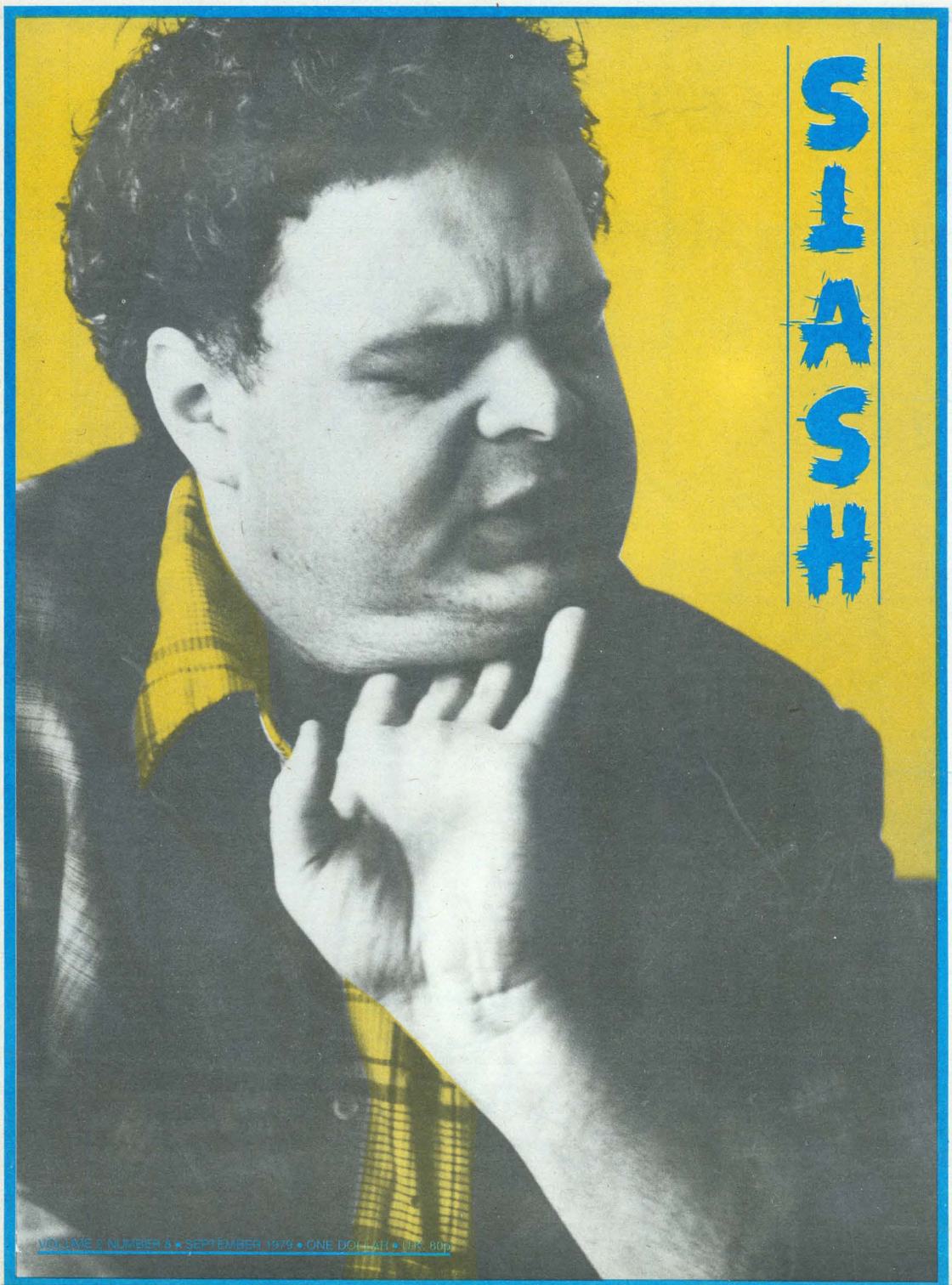

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 6 • SEPTEMBER 1979 • ONE DOLLAR • (UK 80p)

THE I.R.S. AUDIT.

INTERNATIONAL RECORD SYNDICATE, INC.

P.O. Box 118 Hollywood, CA 90028

After an extensive audit of the world's most creative musical forces, the International Record Syndicate, Inc. (I.R.S.) hereby announces the joining together of seven United Kingdom and United States based labels to release the best of a new generation of talent to the American and Canadian markets. All I.R.S. records will be distributed by A & M Records, Los Angeles.

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HENRY BEDOWSKI	KLARK KENT
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TOURING AND RECORD RELEASE INFO:

BUZZCOCKS The first single, "Everybody's Happy Nowadays" will be released August 6th with a major album release to follow shortly. The tour begins on the East coast on August 27th, ending in the West on September 20th. Touring with the Buzzcocks as the supporting act will be The Gang of Four. Based: Manchester, England

Fashion Music Deptford Fun City Records Kryptone Records Spy Records

Illegal Records Rough Trade Records Industrial Records Step Forward Records

THE READERS' CHART

TOP TEN SINGLES (and EPs)

#1 BLACK FLAG EP
#2 PRISONER (D.O.A.)
#3 THE CLASH EP
#4 THE SLEEPERS EP
#5 GOTTA GET AWAY (Stiff Little Fingers)
#6 NAGATIVE TREND EP
#7 ADULT BOOKS (X)
#8 RASTAMAM LIVE UP (Bob Marley)
#9 NEW STAR (Tapper Zukie)
#10 HIGHLY INFLAMMABLE (X Ray Spex)

TOP TEN ALBUMS

#1 INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL (Stiff Little Fingers)
#2 TOOTH & NAIL compilation LP
#3 NATURALITY (The Gladiators)
#4 DEADLOCKS SATISFACTION (Trinity)
#5 ELECTRIFY ME (The Flugz)
#6 THE BELLS (Lou Reed)
#7 GERM FREE ADOLESCENTS (X Ray Spex)
#8 AFRICA STAND ALONE (Culture)
#9 YES L.A. compilation LP
#10 IT'S ALIVE (The Ramones)

(Favorite limey combos still definitely Stiff Little Fingers, X — Ray spex and the Clash. On the Jah front, The Gladiators, Trinity, Culture, Zukie and Marley still rule. Amazine local takeover by Black Flag and the Upsetter compilation album. D.O.A., Sleepers and Negative Trend still strong, the Plugz go down a few notches, X and Yes L.A. reappear.)

WE'VE MOVED! OUR NEW TEMPORARY NUMBER IS (213) 937-4660.

COVER: DAVID THOMAS (not Jackie Gleason) of PERE UBU by MELANIE.

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. . .and our usual array of topical jazz.

PUBLISHED & ART DIRECTION BY Steve Samiof & Melanie Nissen **SENIOR EDITORS** Claude Bessy & Philomena **MANAGING DIRECTOR** Robert Biggs **CONTRIBUTING EDITORS** Judith Bell & Chris D. **CONTRIBUTORS** Will L'Amato, Gary Panter, Z, Kerry Colonna, Bo Clifford, Jeffrey Lea, Mark Williams, Laurie O'Connell, Caitlin **SLASH MAGAZINE is published monthly by SLASH P.O. BOX 48888, L.A., CA 90048.**

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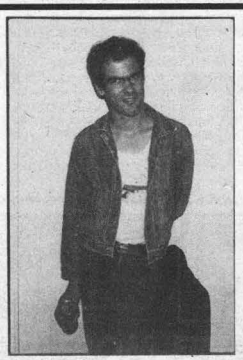
LOCAL SHIT

photos: melanie

WONG VS HONG, OR THE BATTLE OF THE CLUBS IN CHINATOWN

Ever since the Hong Kong Cafe opened its upstairs room and bar to punk/new wave we've heard rumors that the neighboring club across the plaza Madame Wong has been putting the old pressure on the bands that she allows to play on her stage: either you never even try to be booked at the Hong Kong, or my doors will be forever closed to you and your music. Of course most of the bands playing the Hong Kong regularly these days were already banned ages ago from the Wong place, but apparently the old lady never tires of adding new names to her prestigious black list. We talked to Barry, who, along with Kim Turner and Suzy Frank, runs the club part of the Hong Kong. He confirmed the fact that many bands had been intimidated by his competitive neighbors but pointed out that it hadn't hurt his business in the least, as he has little use for what he calls the "barmitzvah bands" that are featured at Wong's. He actually never even met the lady, although she never tires of warning anybody who would listen against his lack of ethics and honesty. The battle for supremacy between the two clubs (note Barry's claim that he has no intention whatsoever of "taking over") include many hilarious episodes such as the time she changed her regular L.A. Weekly ad to "The first and the finest in Chinatown" and he immediately added "You've tried the first and the finest, now try the biggest and the best" to his ad in the same paper, after which she added a border to hers that boasted: "Home of Dwight Twilley, The Motels, 20/20, etc." and the next week the border of the Hong Kong ad read: "Home of Liberace, Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra.." (he claims she seriously accused him of false advertising and was ready to take action!), there is also the time a mysterious tape (supposedly from Dwight Twilley) was brought to Madame Wong's by messenger, played on the P.A. in between sets by Somner and to everyone's delight suddenly switched to a voice exhorting everyone to try that other club just across the street, "Only a pogo hop away"! Barry's partner Suzy happened to be present (he himself claims it is pure coincidence, and that he had nothing to do with what he calls "The Trojan tape") and Madame Wong became so outraged at the sneaky advertising that she physically removed miss Frank from her club! All of which remained pretty funny and of little concern of ours until a few nights later when the Hong Kong was bursting at the seams with action-seeking punks and tourists (Plugz headlining) and a swarm of undercover cops zeroed in on a few drinking minors. Uniforms stepped in, arrests were made (including Charlie, drummer for the Plugz — which very effectively took care of their second set) and the climate for the Hong Kong was suddenly what you'd call overcast. Later, the 3 partners talked to the police, who explained that their presence was the result of many complaints from very close neighbors (all surrounding businesses except one are closed half way thru the evening). Then one officer apparently admitted to Suzy that it was indeed Madame Wong who wsa the initiator of the raid. Still, a potential disaster was avoided when, after a couple of days of only over 21 admission, the Hong Kong people convinced the police department to let them try again with no age limit. All they got was a warning, and the frightening knowledge that somebody was very willing to play dirty in order to shut them down. We have no reasons to doubt the veracity of Barry's statements and we believe everyone should know what kind of business operation they ar supporting with their admission dollars. It's not that we particularly care about the financial future of the Hong Kong people, as a matter of fact we would like to see 3 or 4 music joints in that area, Madame Wong's included, providing she stays in her corner) but we certainly do fuckin' care if somebody's greed or paranoia is going to hinder the future of the live scene in this town. There are enough bands for everyone, and nobody is going to monopolize nobody. In the meantime, it should be remembered that ever since the bust the Hong Kong is not exactly free territory, plainclothesmen (none with dyed hair yet) are most likely there one night out of two and that one lousy sip of Bud from your pal's bottle will get him and you in jail and the Hong Kong back to its former status of dubious culinary hot spot with only the lady at the piano bar to quench your musical thirst.



THE BANDS: BOASTS, BREAK-UPS, BOOSTS AND BITTERNESS

The Whisky may claim that the Bags are not "happening" but they happened to sell out both shows at the Hong Kong, where, assisted by the Human Hands and the already infamous Nervous Gender, they set an attendance record. Alice Bag is also considering an offer to star in a sleazy comedy-horrow movie entitled "I Was a Punk Zombie" while auditioning along with the Go Go's, Nervous Phranc, Trudi and others for a role in a new movie project, "Times Square" (from the folks who brought you "Saturday Night Feber"). On the music front, the Bags material is being "considered" by A & M, Asylum/Electra and Warner Bros. Pop producer Mike Chapman also sent an emissary to check out the Bags set at the Hong Kong but the "consideration" process was cut short when a member of Chapman's new project-Nervus Rex was slammed hard on the pogo derby floor. Guess no one warned those new yorkers about getting too close to the animals!

Who's that familiar face overthere behind the pillar?: dancing jet-setting Nureyev at the Screamers' Roxy show?? Bryan Berry at the Masque for the Germs?? You're impressed? About Linda and Jerry for Black Flag in Polliwog Park? Why not Brendan Mullen at the Village People gig? Speaking of which (the macho commando, not Brendan).

The proprietor of the One Way, the only "rock and roll" gay bar in L.A., told a SLASH reporter he appreciated the mention in our rag for their good taste in record spinning, but did not relish the clientele being compared to the Village People. Seems on the last tour when members of the aforementioned group were in L.A. and tried to hit the One Way for a little cruising, they were left standing on the sidewalk. "Village People? NO WAY!" said the One Way.

Travelogue: While the Plugz spent close to a month in Texas playing and promoting the album the Go Go's and X have been considering an offer to go to Germany and perform at the "World Music Festival" taking place in Berlin at the end of the year.

OTHER CLUB NEWS, SOME GOOD, SOME BAD:

Well, you won't have Brendan to kick around anymore. It's official, the Masque is over, for rehearsals, storage, afternoon showcases, clandestine midnight pow wows... The system has won, we've lost, but we've squeezed the filthy basement for all its worth of secret fun anyway. Last memorable bash took place on July 13th (a Friday, of course) under the auspices of the Mau Mau's and the Youth Party. Turned out to be not that much of a secret as fire marshals followed by many boys in blue (only there to protect the shy marshals) insisted on joining in on the fun and then ruining everything because they did not feel completely accepted. Three innocents were arrested and taken downtown: Rick on one felony charge (assault on a police officer — having supposedly flicked a cigarette at one of the party crashers, which also entitled him to special loving care later necessiting stitches in the leg), Craig (of the Vanguard gallery) on one misdemeanor (obstruction or whatever) for not disappearing fast enough while being choked and hit in the stomach and one Kickboy on a misdemeanor (drunkenness and obstruction) for demanding to know why the party was over. Both misdemeanors have been dropped and the felony has been switched to a misdemeanor. Numerous other arrests and random forms of harassment suggest that this may not be the ideal summer for pogoing and partying in the streets. Meanwhile new studies are published every day on this appalling "permissive society" we're stuck in!

Keep your eyes open for the imminent opening of Blackie's, a new after-hours club (first set starts at 11:30, 2nd at 2:00 AM) on La Brea near Melrose. Perfect hang out for the hard core set who are only starting to get in the spirit of things right before the end of a regular gig.

The middle sized Culver City Arena will open its doors to your type of wholesome entertainment in a few days with U.X.A., Mau Mau's, Fear and the Germs scheduled to share the first bill, a stiff punk cocktail by all standards. The hall sports two bars and is reputed to be quasi indestructible... (steel and concrete!). Exact address is 11445 West Jefferson.

SLASH STAFF CHART

BO CLIFFORD
1) Boy's Don't Cry - Cure
2) Talk, We Dance - Furys
3) Every summer Day - The Last
4) Gotta Get Away - Stiff Little Fingers

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH
1) False Rumor (Hugh Mondell)
2) Oh Mr. D.C. - Sugar Minnot
3) Stepping Out of Babylon - Marcia Griffith
4) Love tickles Like Magic - Junior Delgado
5) Garvey's Ghost - Dub LP

CHRIS D.
1) demo tape
2) To Mom on Mothers Day - Monte Casassa
3) Moritas Moras-Manitas de Plata
4) New Dark Ages - The Mutants
5) Snap/For the Rich - Chinas Comidas
6) Tooth & Nail LP
7) Black Flag EP

GARY PANTER
1) The Creature without a Head - Lenny & Squiggy
2) 2000 Man - Kiss
3) Mechanical Man - Bent Nut and The Bolts
4) Dancing Johnson - Dancing Johnson

KICK
1) A Question of Degree - Wire
2) Rode Rumble - The Fall (tape)
3) We Don't **care about you** - Fear (tape)
4) Swell Maps LP (in part)
5) Read it in Books - Echo & The Bunnymen

MURK WILLIAMS
1) Gidget Goes To Hell - Suburban Lawns
2) Darling, Let's Have Another Baby - Johnny Moped
3) Gay Boys In Bondage - Drug Addix
4) Tatooed Love Boys - The Pretenders
5) Pere Ubu - Dub Housing (LP)

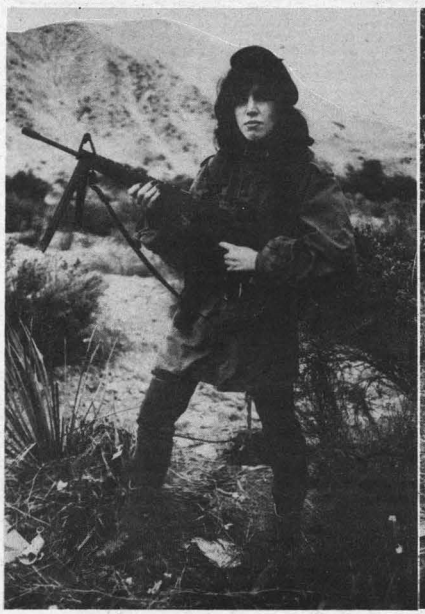
MELANIE
1) Pere Ubu live show at the Whisky
2) The Units live show at the Hong Kong
3) It's Her Factory - Gang of Four
4) Planet Claire - B52's
5) Ring of Fire - Wall of Voodoo (tape)

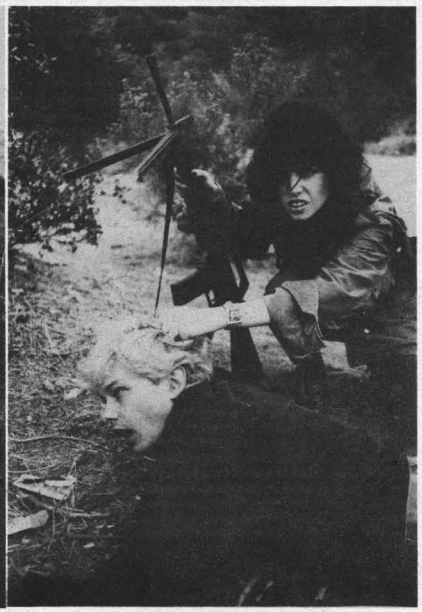
PEA
1) Insect Lounge - The Mutants
2) A Question of Degree - Wire
3) For The Rich - Chinas Comidas
4) Holocaust - Crisis
5) It's Her Factory - Gang of Four
6) Ring of Fire - Wall of Voodoo

RANKING JEFFREY LEA
1) Yes I'm Ready - Barbara Mason
2) I'll be Satisfied - Jackie Wilson
3) Black Hole - The Urinals
4) My Brand of Blues - Marvin Rainwater
5) Stand By Your Man - Tammy Wynette

STEVE
1) Rockin' Time - Burnin' Spear
2) Modern Dance Live - Pere Ubu
3) At Home He's a Tourist - Gang of Four
4) Former Airline - Wire

V
1) Tooth & Nail LP 2.
2) Tramp - Otis Redding & Carla Thomas
3) Black Flag EP
4) To Mom on Mother's Day~ Monte Cazazza
5) Mutants EP





Any correlation between words and pictures is purely coincidental.

More silver screen shit: The Germs lost the part of the punk band they had auditioned for to much more credible contestants: the punk combo will be interpreted by the producer of the movie himself a certain John Peters (we bow to such impeccable credentials) and Paul Javara (Oscar winner for his disco contributions). That's right, only two, but together they probably total more years than all the Germs, so it's about right. We at Slash are very happy to see that, even nowadays, it's still the best men that win.

Sadly enough, justice is nowhere as prevalent in new music circles. Founding member of the Strict Ids/B- People Rick found himself relieved of his guitar duties. Main reasons given for the push: "musical inexperience" and "too much moving around on stage". Ants-in-the-pants Rick plans to start a new band.

And now quickly, before any more sackings, signings, sobbings and splittings come to our attention: Monitor have found a drummer (ex disco band) and will play here and in San Francisco *soon*, the Controllers are on an "extended vacation", Gary Panter is working for the Residents and the Avengers have thrown in the towel.

PS: SLASH has once again moved its headquarters and possible (undecided yet as this is being written) its telephone number. Check a last minute box somewhere in these pages. So long suckers, you're more fun than a barrel of monkeys, and at least you have better things to do than typing out the complete works of Shakespeare!

classified ads. $4.00

instructions

1. Take a piece of white paper and draw a rectangle 2 inches high and 6 inches long.
2. Draw, write, or type anything you want inside the rectangle (use *black* ink for good reproduction).
3. Put your ad in an envelope and mail it to us with the money.

That's it. Ads will reproduce smaller (1 inch by 3 inches). If we receive your ad too late for the next issue, it will appear in the one after. Make sure your ad is the right size (2 × 6) or it won't fit, we won't use it, and we'll cash your fuckin' check anyway.

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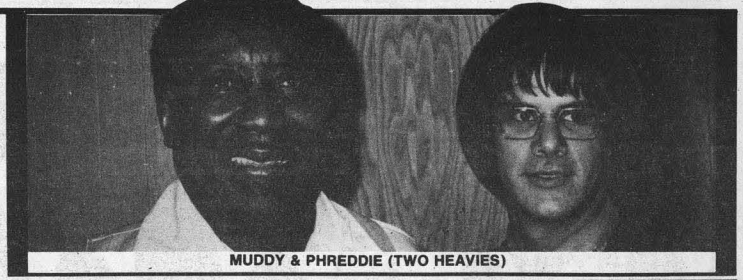

MUDDY & PHREDDIE (TWO HEAVIES)

PHAST PHREDDIE

FASTER THAN YOU

"Please allow me to introduce myself — I'm a man of wealth and taste..." Indeed. Indeed. Yes boppin' cats & pretty kitties this is your very own Rock'n'Roll spiritual advisor, Phast Phreddie, in the ink. The very same Phast Phreddie who founded Los Angeles fanine journalism in 1975 with the influential BACK DOOR MAN and whose writing you all so loved in such beloved magazeenies, as BOMP, NEW YORK ROCKER, WAXPAPER and the L.A. STAR (bet ya didn't know THAT one!) And now fabulous SLASH. After turning down offers from PUNK and TROUSER PRESS to save those fine rags from slipping any deeper into mediocrity. I decided to go with SLASH for two reasons — 1) in TROUSER PRESS I'd have to write about lime-suckin' faggots and in PUNK Sid Vicious death-jokes. Here at SLASH I'm totally free to write about me and all of my friends. What can be more fun? 2) TP and PUNK were both too ignorant to ask me to write for them anyway.

So now SLASH magazine may boast the most beautiful, fastest, the greatest, the King of Rock'n'Roll writing — Phast Phreddie — is now on their side! That's right! I'm back and I'm Loud! I am the Little Richard of the typewriter! Shut up! Shut up! Ooh, my soul!

In the next installment of this column I will attempt to answer any and all questions that you may have considering the secret to LIFE itself; i.e., cool local thrift stores, best record stores that deal Rockabilly items, Little Richard discography, where one may go in Gardena for pizza, manuscripts of Stravinsky's RITES OF SPRING, best burgers in town, where may one find black leather push-up bras — I know it all. Just send your cards and letters to me, Phase Phreddie, in care of this fine magazine in your hands (address elsewhere) accompanied with a fair sum of money (nothing extravagent, tens and twenties will suffice), depending on how bad your want your questions answered (higher sums will, of course, receive higher priority).

I know, I know. The question on everyone's lips is this: What has Phast Phreddie been doing since BACK DOOR MAN's last issue (copies still available, send $2 to me c/o SLASH)? Well, I'll give you the answer to that one absolutely free. Dig:

After that last glorius BDM came out, I was unmercifully thrown in jail for making a huge profit by dealing illicit mind-expanding drugs (also available by mail) and by operating a very successful abortion ring. Of course, the government doesn't know THAT. I was picked up on a trumped up paternity suit (it helped that the girl in question was the judge's daughter — who payed well in for my services, may I add). While in captivity I wrote my autobiography (part one, my childhood) which will be available in hardcover form as soon as the movie rights are sold (so far seven offers). Upon release from prison, I found my vast earnings in a Swiss account still intact. I took out quite a bit with the intention of getting the honorable Kick Boy Face drunk one night and sending him back to France with a one way ticket as a practical joke. He totally surprised me when he started crying about how SLASH needs my writing more than it needs its own existence. He began kissing my feet and exclaiming (and rightfully so) that I am the greatest Rock'n'Roll writer who ever walked this planet and if I don't write for SLASH he will kill himself. You know, the usual stuff I get whenever I go out. Well, being a bit obliterated myself, I humbly conceded. Thus this article that you are now drooling upon.

Another question I just KNOW is on all of your stained teen-aged minds is as follows: Phase Phreddie, we all know how great you write, when are you going to make great records?

Well, kids, it gives me great pleasure to announce (again for Free) that very soon a flimsy sampler album of closet pop singers based in L.A. will make its way to the displays in Tower Records on the strip whose sole justification will be a track entitled "To be Alive (Freeway Dub)" by none other than Phast Phreddie and the fabulous Pinche Ras Clots. In all actuality, this two-record set called L.A. RADIO 1981 could have been easily narrowed down to an EP, as it does have about two or three other terrific cuts. At any rate, if anyone pays less than thirty dollars for said album they are indeed getting a huge bargain for my vinyl debut. Art is dirt cheap these days.

Other news I have to report consists of the following: Tommy's world famous hamburger stand on the corner of Rampart and Beverly in L.A. has just received a new coat of paint. Also, the price of a double chili burger with cheese has gone up to $1.35! Now, that's the most unheard of thing I've ever heard of. If the price of what could quite possibly be the finest tasting burger in the universe gets any higher, well, I'll just have to pay it.

The best thing Clive Davis has ever done in his life (next to signing Patti Smith to Arista) is his purchase of the complete (and then some) Savoy Records catalogue. It's true. Not only are a thousand fine recordings by Charlie Parker back in print, but there is a fabulous series of LPs coming out under the title of "The Roots of Rock'n'Roll". ALL GREAT STUFF! Volume one is a compilation just the bits. #2 consists of 31 songs by the Boss o the Blues, Big Joe Turner. Truly a poet of our times: Dig:

She got great big legs
and she's built up from the ground
She's a tailor made woman
She's none of those hand-me-downs

Now you can take me, pretty mama
And jump me in your Hollywood bed
I want you to boogie in my woogie
Until my face turns cherry red
(from "Hollywood Bed")

That ain't all, either. Volume three is early Doo Wop with the Ravens. Four is a lifesaving packaging of the original Johnny Otis Show, who nearly single-handedly invested Rhythm and Blues right here in Los Angeles. Five is a collection of five blues belting belles and six is honkin' and screamin' round-up of R and B saxophone terrorists such as Big Jay McNealy, Hal "Cornbread" Singer and Paul "Hucklebuck" Williams. Need I say more? Each package is of the double pocket/extensive liner notes variety that keeps vinyl junkies such as myself hollerin' for more.

Local update: A new hangout in town in opening. Mars Rehearsal studios will start having regular shows starting the last weekend of August. This is significant because this is not a Brendan Mullen/SLASH/Art-of-some-kind related affair. This time it is a local band (the fabnew Silencers) who have taken the matter into their own hands by sponsoring these events. It's about time a band gets off its ass and starts working instead of waiting for Mullen/SLASH/etc to pull the strings for it. A moral comes to mind: If ya want something did — do it yerself! I imagine other important related info concerning these gigs will be made known elsewhere in this 'zine. If not, call 660-6334 or 460-4365 for all the pertinent dope. Anyway, a hearty back-slap goes out to the Silencers for their appreciated efforts.

A few final notes: There's a new band in town called the Real Kids from Boston who should be checked out. They've been banned from a certain Chinatown watering hole for knocking down the proprietor's entire family amidst a wild drunken brawl. Go see them, they are cool. Also (ah-hem, let me clear my typewriter for this one) BLACK FLAG IS GREAT THE LAST'S ALBUM IS GREAT PICK UP THE NEW FURYS' SINGLE THE GERMS' LP IS NOTHIN' SHORT OF AMAZIN' LITTLE RICHARD ALBUMS ARE STILL IN PRINT UNCLE JOHN'S ON VINE NEAR YUCCA HAS GREAAAT HAMBURGERS *TRES EQUIS* IS THE BEST BEER IN THE WORLD PERE UBU IS AT LAST COMING TO LOS ANGELES THE FIFTY-FIVE MILE AN HOUR SPEED LIMIT ON THE FREEWAYS IS SLOWING ME DOWN I HATE PEOPLE WHO TAKE BO DIDDLEY RECORDS OFF AT PARTIES AND I GOTTA GO 'CAUSE MY MOMMA'S ON THE PHONE REMINDING ME TO LIVE RIGHT AND GO TO CHURCH ON SUNDAY SO ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT MYSTY IN ROOTS IS BOSS. Be true to your cool.

C.D. PRESENTS

NEW WAVE 1980

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SAN FRANCISCO: SUMMER '79
by Caitlin

To bring you up to date ... the summer of hate is in full swing and there's no place to play except various sporadic and not always successful oneoff gigs and (of course) the Mabuhay, which is doing booming business these days as more and more of the disenfranchised and excommunicated (bands and fans alike) return to the flock, not because it's suddenly cool again or they've stopped fucking over opening bands, but simply because there's no alternative. 330 Grove, everyone's favorite place to be seen, is out of commission indefinitely following a Sleepers (with new singer Rozz)/Middle Class/Tools gig there was shut down by the cops because of some stupid dance permit infraction. The bands played later at an impromptu warehouse party (except for Middleclass, who were too tired or drunk or both by that point), but just as we were leaving yet another carful of our friendly neighborhood boys in blue arrived to censor our fun. Final score: cops two, punk zero.

Meanwhile the Geary Theatre has become all but inaccessible to punk, since the Rastas who were running it lost their lease and the owner is being cautious about renting it — he only wants to do big shows, which means a recycling of all the local heavies and the new bands haven't got a chance. Nevertheless, there's a lot of them (new bands). Several played at the highly successful Rock Against Racism gig, a twelve-hour marathon which drew over 1,000 people and marked the last Rasta-connected show at the Geary. Proceeds benefit a new mag called T-Ital Wave Times, an uneven first issue of which should have made it to LA by now.

There is, however, a bright spot amidst all this gloom, in the unlikely form of the Loma Linda Mexican Restaurant, located two convenient blocks away from the on-again, off-again Deaf Club. It's actually the bottom floor of an almost exclusively punk-inhabited apartment building whose owner decided he could make some money by having gigs there (the restaurant's out of business) and selling beer, so he got his permits and presto — a new club. Since the place is small (it holds 250, tops), they'll be having a lot of new bands playing with just one headliner a night (the first show, for example, featured the Zeros, the Urge, Mertz, and Gangrene and the Amputators). Miracle of miracles, no cop hassles yet, though there's always plenty of "undesirables" loitering on adjacent street corners and disturbing the peace. The club itself is like every club used to be — mattresses against the wall and egg-cartons stapled to the ceiling serve as soundproofing, the PA produces feedback at the drop of a pick, and the clientele consists of drunken bashers. In other words, a needed shot in the arm to those of us who've become a little jaded, and a graphic reminder of the "old days" when every gig was a risk and a full-time club an impossible dream.

PINK SECTION

This month's rising stars are Pink Section, a no wave pop band whose single "Tour of China" is getting heavy airplay, and who are this writer's pick-to-click of the newer bands; the Urge, an allgirl group whose "Bit by Bit," although yet to be recorded, seems to be on everyone's lips these days; and the Fillmore Struts, who got their name from a gang and their rhythm section on loan from the Zeros. In addition to the moonlighting Hector and Baba, the Struts feature former Negative Trend singer Michael and guitarist Fred Williams, who was in the Offs way back when they used to be something more than a good-time party band. Some new names to watch for: the Punts (a totally unique experience — no wave/jazz/rock), the Mondellos, Touchstones, and the Mommers and Poppers, a very poppy and competent Mutants offshoot with no originals.

As for the big fish in this too smal pond ... the exAvengers are all going their separate ways, with Jimmy and Danny undecided as of this writing, Penelope still hiding a movie up her sleeve, the legendary Steve Jones tape collecting dust, and Brad playing with Zippy Pinhead and the remnants of the Lady Larue band (talk about strange bedfellows). Brad and Zippy also joined assorted Pointed Sticks onstage one night for a surprise appearance of the (self-proclaimed) "Vancouver All-Stars." The Sticks and the K-Tels (both from Vancouver) have been playing around, soon to be joined by D.O.A. (we're being invaded). We await the Sub-Humans, who cannot be far behind ... Ron the Ripper of Crime has quietly been replaced by a certain Joey D'Kaye, but fear not, Crime is still Crime. Crime will always be Crime, though they've loosened up their image a lot, having shed the cop look and even gone so far as to have two female back-up singers at a few recent gigs. They have a new single in the can but have gone back in the studio with new member Joey, and may release an EP (if the world is ready for it) ... the Dead Kennedys sold out of their first pressing of their single (1,000 copies) in three weeks ... and the Dils are back from what was by all accounts a highly successful, if not exactly lucrative, cross-country onslaught. They have yet to play a gig in San Francisco, but their Cale-produced EP on Spy Records should be out by late September ... Human interest note: former LA and current SF luminary/troublemaker Peter Urban has quit managing the Dils to become, in his words, a dedicated communist alcoholic. He remains the Zeros' manager. The Zeros, by the way, have an excellent new demo tape ... the short-lived but notorious Deaf Club is slated to reopen, complete with sprinklers to appease City Hall and the Fire Dept., by late August, and Can You Hear Me?—Live at the Deaf Club, though pressed and ready for shipping, won't be out for at least another month ... New Youth are still looking for that elusive club-of-their-dreams, and putting on shows, when and where possible, to pass the time ... Target hopes to open an after-hours video theatre in the near future ... Local Shit North: the Damned played the Old Waldorf and didn't get paid, though they did manage to piss on the audience (shades of D.O.A.) and destroy $800 worth of equipment (not theirs), thereby endearing themselves to almost everyone for at least another six months ... and radio station KSAN is being swallowed up by some conglomerate and will reportedly sound like any AM or FM station very soon (they have in the past been known to play both the Pistols and Siouxsie and the Banshees during regular programming). Another day, another sellout, another dollar.

photo: mick young

The SPECIALS

RANDOM STOATS

by MARK WILLIAMS

Apart from the DICKIES, whose thin patina of street angst all but disguises a lamentable showbiz traditionalism, the So. Cal. new wave has yet to break in Britain. The best try so far wasn't even a California band, but the fact that the CRAMPS were taken into the spiritual bosom of *Slash's* highly discriminating readership during their L.A. sojourn, is reason enough for this writer to eulogise them here.

I saw them supporting the POLICE on the opening night of their first U.K. tour since "Roxanne" charted, and the venue was probably the toughest in Britain, the Glasgow Apollo. Here the bands are insulated from the physical disapproval of the audience by a stage that rises fully fourteen feet above the stalls. The promoters also employ a pack of marginally housetrained gorillas who've been shaved of hair, inserted into ill-fitting tuxedos and given carte blanche to maul anyone who so much as throws a paper cup. Such precautions are necessary because Glaswegians are *mad* at birth, *bitter* because they have the worst unemployment and urban living conditions in the UK and are thus understandably *shit-faced drunk* before they arrive at a place of entertainment. What's more they *hate* the British with a venom only surpassed by that of their bigotted intolerance of Americans.

So when the Cramps came on and Lux started berating them for their indifference, it was start of all-out war. The gorillas restrained warring gangs of besotted Scotsmen trying to throw bottles over the lip of the stage, Lux fuelled their enmity by calling them quaint yank names like "meathead", "bum", and "rat-cunt", and finally *jumped off-stage* into a seething turmoil of mass craziness and *started spitting at them whilst clambering across the seats!* Two gorillas manage to have him out of danger and he ran for his life toward a side exit, where he espied a huge garbage bag full of cigarette ends, cans, cups and dirt. What did he do with this? Why, he ran back down the tunnel and threw it over the audience!

Since then, the Cramps have won a cult following of almost crossover proportions in the UK and a single they've recorded here, "My Daddy Was a UFO Pilot", is likely to make them rich when it's released. They return in the fall for their first tour as headliners.

Mad JIMMY PURSEY has more or less given up on SHAM 69 following the violence that broke out at every gig they played, and plans are advanced for a re-vamped SEX PISTOLS featuring JONES, COOK, PURSEY and DAVE TREGENNA (late of Sham) on bass. The major hassle is that Sham are still contracted to deliver one more album to Polydor, possibly two if the company decide to exercise their option. Pursey is having enough aggravation with them as it is – his JP label (for which he's already recorded several up-and-coming bands at his own expense), hasn't been favorably received by Polydor but it's reported that Pursey has now done a singles-only deal with WEA which should at least see some product in the shops. Still, Polydor have apparently witnessed a Pistols 69 resaersal and were impressed with what they heard. No word has yet been issued from Virgin lawyers.

The hottest new combo currently dragging money out of our pockets are SPECIALS A.K.A. who hail from Coventry, the Detroit of Great Britain, and can be roughly described as punk reggae. They're a seven piece band with two spades, Sir Horace Gentleman (bass) and Lynval Golding (rhythm gtr.) ensuring that the band have sufficient grounding in the fine art of Sky, which is a sort of up-tempo reggae beloved on English mods in the sixties. The band have an excellent front line in Terry Hall (vocals and savege insults) and Neville Staples (guitar and methedrine dancing) and in welding their Jamaican influences with a sharp-edged punk-oid flavor, they've quickly won a vast following of shaved headed malcontents in London as well as the the Midlands. The Specials emerged some 18 months ago and were wooed by Clash manager Bernie Rhodes who put 'em on last summer's UK Clash tour. "The Clash, Bernie'ss number one sons, were in the process of breaking away from him," explained Horace, "and he sent us over to Paris for a club residency. It was dreadful, a disaster, like a Petter Sellers movie."

Since then they've handled their own bizniz, more or less, and now the record companies are lining up with chequebooks in their grubby little mitts. However the Specials aren't up for any old big-buck schmear, they want distribution for their own label, Two Tone. "Once that's established, says Horace, "we want to start recording other bands who compliment us, people like Dexy's Midnight Runners and Madness, the two or three bands in the country who are playing the same sort of music."

Face to small, hot oven which masquerades as the "entertainments room" of the Dublin Castle pub in London's Camden Town and somehow contains about 500 sweaty bodies. Odd that there should be such a diversity of dressage incumbent; modsy, skins, teds, fashionable young Kings Roaders, hippies, tartan punks and transvestites, all for an unsigned band of local teenagers called, you guess it (maybe), MADNESS.

The only direct link between the Specials and Madness is Ska/Bluebeat which permeates the rhythms of both outfits, but there the similarity ends. Madness are almost a comedy band. Their 17-year old singer, Suggs, maintains a constant stream of off-the-wall banter between numbers and inflicts his lyrics with a sort of sudden Dury humour you might expect of someone more than a decade younger. He admits a fondness for seminal 'sixties Bluebeat hero, Prince Buster and even does a song dedicated to him, 'The Prince'. The band feature a cranky tenor sax player, Lee Thompson, and keyboardsman Mikey Barson, who, with his greased coiffeur bootlace tie and grubby d.j. is the only non-skinhead in the ensembles, and the two of them take most of the soloes. The audience went completely ga-ga over them, matching them gesture for gesture in the dementia department; jumping on tables, trading insults, singing their own songs. The band did several non-Jamaican influenced numbers including two crazed encores – 'Hall Of The Mountain King' replete with ludicrous sax solo, and Smokey Robinson & The Miracles' 'Tears Of A Clown' which caused an outbreak of glass trampling amongst the higher spirited (i.e. blind drunk) members of the audience.

The Specials and Madness played a gig the previous week at the Nashville which attracted the attention of one Elvis Costello. However he was refused admission because he was wearing glasses which the doorman feared might get broken. Actually that's not quite true – the place was too full – but it's a nice story which unfortunately underlines the violence that breaks out almost inevitably at so many London gigs nowadays. Some of this has to do with the non-availability of cheap drugs – speed has been in short supply since a number of heavy 'bathtub busts' last year – as more and more kids turn to heavy alcohol consumption to make life a little more bearable, and London has become Europe's numero uno centre for teenage alcoholism. The breweries are of course loving it, but club and pub owners are under increasing pressure from the law to stamp out under-age drinking. Now we have the bizarre spectacle of cops raiding gigs for sub-eighteen year olds where a year ago they were chasing pill-freaks.

The oil (for which read vinyl) crises allied to the abiding stupidity of most record companies, is starting to affect *la nouvelle wave* in a number of insidious ways. EMI, who returned lousy profits last year, are signing up no more bands and refusing to let the GANG OF FOUR, one of their more interesting recent acquisitions, record anything until later this year – they claim they can't afford it. (Q: What's the difference between EMI and the Titanic? A: The Titanic had a good band).

CBS apparently didn't anticipate a big enough demand for the CLASH's "Cost of Living" e.p. which prevented it rising higher than the middle of the top thirty in most charts, despite demand that several retailers declared was definitely there. And the same company upped the price of their 12-inch singles to about $4 because of "increased costs". The rumour is that maxi-singles are hurting album sales, though.

Talking of theClash, Strummer & Co. recently did two "word of mouth" gigs at Notre Dame hall, a sweaty basement in the centre of the West End, where they tested some new songs before a die-hard audience. This writer didn't attend for fear of a repeat performance by one of their roadies, Dave Green, who'd attacked him outside a club earlier in the week for wickedly reporting ex-manager Caroline Coon's deployment of bouncer muscle toward Kickboy at Santa Monica Civic many moons ago. (Had I not been nursing a knee injured in a recent motorcycle accident, I would, of course, mained him for life). However a reliable informant reports that the new songs bear a strong reggae influence and the Clash's stage sound is softer-edged and more integrated than of yore.

There are persistant rumours that following Island dumping both THE RODS and ULTRAVOX more major companies are going to chuck non-moneyspinning new-wave acts off their catalogues. It's certainly true that only a handful of full-tilt punk acts can still shift decent quantities of vinyl or fill big auditoriums – e.g. CLASH, STRANGLERS, BOOMTOWN RATS, the re-vamped DAMNED – and even the JAM are now being talked about as has-beens.

I guess it's inevitable that audience tastes mature beyond the brash simplicity that initially attracted them, and if the bands themselves don't develop accordingly – or at least learn to play their instruments, then they're on the suicide train. Remember Strummer's New York quote: "We had to get our act together because we were being paid all that money"? Ultimately that's what it comes down to; greenbacks. So much for the fucking revolution.

LETTER section

THEY DON'T LOVE OLD JANIE JONES NO?

SLASH,
HOW THE HELL DO YOU PRINT SOME DUMB VIEWS BY A CULTURAL-HALF-WIT-DUMB-DIRT-CHUTE CREATURE CALLED JANIE JONES IN YOUR LAST ISSUE? HOW TRENDY OF HER TO CUTELY REFER TO YES & SIOUXSIE IN THE SAME WHEEZE. LET'S PACE IT JANIE I ENJOY GONAD-CRUSHING STOMP AS MUCH AS THE SPIKY THRONGS BUT MUSIC WILL NEVER CHANGE A FUCKIN THING. AND WHAT THE HELL ARE THE BAGS SAYING THAT'S BRINGING ABOUT THIS UTOPIAN MUSICAL TRANSFORMATION? AND WHAT THE FUCK IS "VITAL" ABOUT THE CATS SINGING "TOO MUCH JUNK"? I KNOW YOU CALIFORNIA PEOPLE STILL BELIEVE SOME STUPID CRAP ABOUT YOUR WAY BEING THE ULTIMATE SPINACH, WELL THE SIXTIES ARE OVER AND IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU PONGOS STOPPED FRENCHING YOUR PROSTATES AND LOOKED AROUND. YOU'VE GOT A GREAT SCENE, DON'T SQUELCH IT WITH BACKSTABBING, AND SLASH, HAVE YOU OUTSOLD THE BIBLE YET?

Bob Vermeulen
Williamston, Mich

PS: GO AHEAD THROW IT AWAY-US FUCK HEADS IN MICHIGAN DON'T KNOW SHIT

HEY FUCK HEADS, THE ONLY REASON WE HAVEN'T OUTSOLD THE BIBLE YET IS THAT THEY STARTED SLIGHTLY BEFORE US, BUT OUR WAY BEING INDEED THE ULTIMATE SPINACH, WE SOON WILL.

THE SLASH ACCOUNTANT

SLASH,
THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO JANIE JONES AND STICKY AND THE BLASE DAYS OF PUNKS. WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU? WILL YOU FADE AWAY IN GRAVES OF DELUXE GREEN? IF I REMEMBER RIGHT THE WHOLE IDEA BEHIND PUNK WAS A NEW YOUTH MUSIC AND A NEW YOUTH CULTURE, AND IT SEEMS WE'RE FINALLY GETTING THERE. YOU'RE AN ASSHOLE IF YOU'RE GONNA CALL BANDS LIKE THE FALL, MAGAZINE, ATV ETC EXPERIMENTAL OLD FART MUSIC. SURE THEY HAVE MORE THAN 3 CHORDS AND SAY MORE THAN FUCK THIS FUCK THAT BUT REALLY, THESE BANDS HAVE A LOT TO OFFER (AS DO STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, PLUGZ, MIDDLE CLASS). THEY'RE NEW ANGRY, AND, IN THE CASE OF THE FALL AT LEAST, FRIGHTENED. JUST LIKE THE REST OF US.
YOU TWO MUST LIVE IN L.A. AFTER MUCH CLOSE STUDY I'VE REALIZED THAT THE REAL OLD FARTS LIVE THERE, AND THE REAL NEW YOUTH LIVES HERE IN O.C. ALL THE KIDS (AND I MEAN LIKE 14 & 15 YR OLDS THAT I HANG OUT WITH DOWN HERE ARE INTO THINGS LIKE THROBBING GRISTLE, LE FORTE FORE, THE FALL, NO NEW YORK, ETC. NOT ONLY THAT, BUT THERE'S LOTSA REAL COOL BANDS LIKE TECHNOCRATS, THE UGLY POTHOLES, DENISE & BIZARRE & THE ASSISTANCE LEAGUE WHO ARE FOLLOWING THE SEX PISTOLS GOAL TO SMASH OLD MUZAK FOREVER, I GUESS THE OLD L.A. VS O.C. STEREOTYPES ARE TUMBLING. SEE YOU IN O.C. (OR A NERVOUS GENDER SHOW)
FLIP (AMYL NITRATE BOY)
PS: THE GERMS ARE STILL THE BEST FUCKING BAND IN THE WORLD.

HELLO SLASH,
THANK YOU LOTZ FOR THAT EDITORIAL, I MEAN REALLY, I DON'T LOOK VERY "PUNK" BUT MY HEART IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE. I SEE YOU'RE PUSHING THE GERMS A LOT, BUT WITH ALBUM OUT SOON THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE. DARBY C. HAD A LOVELY TIME TORMENTING MY MOTHER THE OTHER NIGHT AT MY FRIEND ANDI'S SURPRIZE PARTY. SHE (MOM) THINKS HE'S SICK AND VULGAR. FOR ONCE SHE MIGHT BE RIGHT BUT I THINK HE'S FUNNY ANYWAYS.
WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO REVIEW THE ALBUM WE SENT YOU?

MISS MANAGEMENT
W/ THE SURF PUNKS

US, PUSHING THE GERMS?? SHEEEET!!! SORRY BOUT YOUR MOM, SOME PEOPLE JUST AIN'T MEANT TO MEET. THE LP IS REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE BY MORK.

KICK

DEAR SLASH,
WHO GIVES A SHIT THAT A FEW WEIRDOS AND MAU MAUS EXCHANGED SOME CANDY ASS PUNCHES...LET THEM FIGHT, AS THEY PROBABLY KNOCK THEMSELVES OUT JUST BY WALKING. COVER SOMETHING WORTHY, ANSWER QUESTIONS..LIKE, IS THE GREAT LEE PERRY DEAD OR NOT? WE NEED A DETAILED STORY. IF IT'S ABOVE YOUR HEADS [illegible] A VAN GO ELSEWHERE.

MUCH OBLIGED, MAAN.
G-MAN IN HOGANTOWN
PS: THE SAME QUESTION FOR THAT DEPRAVED WAYNE COUNTY.

WELL, IT WAS IN LOCAL SHIT, WASN'T IT?? OKAY, WE'LL LOOK INTO THE MYSTERIOUS SAGA OF THE UPSETTER. AS FAR AS WE KNOW, HE IS NOT DEAD. GIVE US TIME TO SEND SOMEONE TO KINGSTON, ALL EXPENSES PAID, AND YOU'LL GET THE SCOOP. AS TO WAYNE BABY, YOU MUST BE THE ONLY ONE WHO GIVES A SHIT. ANYWAY, WE DID RECEIVE A PROMO PIC OF THE LOVELY MS COUNTY AFTER THE FINAL OVERHAUL. LOOKS OK TO US. HAPPY ??

KICK

DEAR SLASH,
AFTER READING YOUR JUNE ISSUE, I FELT SICK. LET ME PUT IT STRAIGHT TO YOU. WHY DO YOU FUCKIN YANKS EXPLOIT EVERYTHING? WHAT IT'S ON AB OUT IS THE MUSIC I HAVE LOVED SINCE I WAS A CHILD, ROCKABILLY, MATE.. I THINK IT IS SILLY TO INCLUDE IT IN YOUR PUNKY MAG. ANYWAY, EVEN ON THAT SCENE YOU LOT ARE TWO YEARS BEHIND. WHY CAN'T YOU BE ORIGINAL AN DO SOMETHING AMERICAN. WE HERE HAVE NEVER FORGOTTEN THE SOUNDS OF THE SOUTH AND DON'T PLAN TO. TEDS, BIKERS AND ROCKABILLIES, WE USED TO BASH THOSE SILLY PUNKS TWO YEARS TO GO OUT THE KING'S ROAD. WE TAKE OUR MUSIC VERY SERIOUSLY AND DON'T LIKE TO SEE IT GET POLLUTED BY ASSHOLES LIKE YOU LOT IN L.A. IF YOU ARE GROOVY YOU WOULD SEE THAT MODS ARE NOW BACK, EXCEPT THAT IS TOTALLY BRITISH. ALSO MOST ORIGINAL PUNKS HAVE GOTTEN INTO TRENDO MUSIC LIKE HUMAN LEAGUE AND KRAFTWERK. WE HERE ALSO DON'T CONSIDER LEVI & THE ROCKATS TO BE ANYTHING BUT A LOAD OF POOPS AND POSERS. ASK THEM WHY THEY LIVE IN L.A. AND DON'T PLAY THE ROYALTY. FORGIVE ME IF I SEEM RUDE BUT I HAVE ALWAYS AND WILL ALWAYS BE A TOTAL FANATIC ABOUT ROCKABILLY AND WESTERN HOP. WHY DON'T YOU JUST DO IT RIGHT AND NOT FUCK UP THE ONLY TRUE FORM OF MUSIC AND WAY OF LIFE. LOOK WHAT YOU YANKS HAVE DONE TO THE NEW WAVE, WHAT A JOKE. TAKE MY ADVICE AND DON'T MIX NEW WAVE WITH ROCKABILLY.

PETE, AN EX-AMERICAN
AND CONFEDERATE SUPPORTER

OF COURSE YOU'RE NOT RUDE AT ALL, DARLING. WE LOVE BEING CALLED POLLUTING ASSHOLES! WE NEVER SET OURSELVES UP AS EXPERTS ON YOUR TYPE OF FOLK MUSIC, YOU LITTLE PINCHED BRAIN, WE JUST DID A THING ON A BAND THAT WAS PLAYING THE LA CIRCUIT. DON'T KNOW THOSE TRADITIONALLOVING FANATICS MILLIONS OF MILES AWAY! WOULD BE OFFENDED! YOU MUST HAVE HAD TO TAKE AT LEAST THREE DAYS OFF FROM PUNK-BASHING TO WRITE THIS ESSAY! LISTEN, WE TAKE OUR MUSIC AS SERIOUSLY AS YOU LOT DO, BUT WE DON'T CARE IF IT COMES FROM THE GOOD OLD SOUTH (YE EECH!) OR FROM THE MOON. BUT OF COURSE YOU'VE FOUND THE TRUE WAY OF LIFE, AND WE'RE STILL FUMBLING! LUCKY BOY!

KICK

DEAR SLASH,
SINCE I AM THE WRITER YOU CRITICIZED FOR INCLUDING GRAHAM PARKER, THE NEW BARBARIANS AND THE BEACH BOYS WITH NEW WAVE BANDS IT IS ONLY FAIR TO WARN YOU MY REPLY TO YOUR COMMENTS IN YOUR LAST ISSUE CAN BE FOUND IN THE AUGUST GOSH! FAIR IS FAIR, YOU CUNTS, SO GIMME A BREAK AND READ THIS PIECE WITH AN OPEN MIND.

SID GRIFFIN

DEAR SLASH,
JUST BECAUSE AN ASSHOLE WANTS TO TO DO AN INTERVIEW IN SLASH DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEANS YOU HAVE TO GIVE HIM. THAT GUY PAUL SHRADER SURE DON'T DESERVE IT. WHAT A LOAD OF HORSESHIT. I LIKE SICKOS JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE BUT THAT GUY IS [illegible] BORING, A FUCKED UP MYSTIC WHO GOT BADLY HANDLED IN PRE-PUBERTY BUT SO WHO HASN'T? SHRADER IS IN NO WAY INTERESTING, SHRADER IS IN NO WAY AN OUTLAW, HE'S HOLLYWOOD'S IDEA OF THE BORDERLINE. AN OLD FART LIKE CASSAVETES IS TEN THOUSAND TIMES MORE THREATENING AND STIMULATING THAN THAT GUY.. THE FACT THAT THIS MAN SHRADER [illegible] TWO OR THREE SCRIPTS AND MAKES ONE OR TWO MOVIES IN THE SAME FISCAL YEAR JUST SHOWS HOW DESPERATE THOSE GUYS IN HOLLYWOOD REALLY ARE. FUCK ALL THAT. AND IN THE SAME ISSUE YOU HAVE ONE JOHN DOE UTTERING DENSE THINGS LIKE " I LIKE CELINE FOR HIS POLITICS.." SWELL, NOW COULD JOHN DOE EXPLAINS WHAT HE MEANS BY THAT TO THE RUBES? MAYBE KICK CAN LEND HIM A HAND, HIM BEING A COMPADRE AND ALL (AND HE DID SUCH A GOOD JOB EXPLAINING SITUATIONISM IN FIFTY WORDS). WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU GUYS ALL OF A SUDDEN? NEXT YOU WILL BE DRAGGING POOR CAMUS' SMELLY UNDERWEAR IN YOUR REVIEW OF "KILLIN AN ARAB" (OR IS IT THE FALL?). GET THE CURE, AND FAST.
SLASH IS STILL A GREAT MAG THIS WORLD SURE DON'T DESERVE, BUT YOU GUYS JUST READ TOO MUCH OR NOT ENOUGH. STILL, I WONDER WHAT OLD MAN CELINE WOULDA THOUGHT OF JOHN DOE..

SITTING IN THE KITCHEN SINK
GUY DEBORD'S POODLE

OKAY YOU SMART ASS CANINE, THRU BEING LITERATE AND ALL? JOHN DOE IS TOO DESPERATE RIGHT NOW WATCHING OVER SOMEONE WHO PASSED OUT ON THE COACH AFTER GETTING NAUSEA LEAFING THRU ADULT BOOKS AND WHO JUST MIGHT HAVE TO LEAVE LOS ANGELES TO REPLY TO YOUR INQUIRY - THE MESSAGE HAS BEEN PASSED ON AND WILL BE REPLIED TO NEXT MONTH. AS KICK IS FUCKING AROUND LOOKING FOR BEACHES UNDER COBBLESTONES OR WHATEVER ... WE GOT YOUR NUMBER, DON'T FRET.

SITTING ON THE WINDOWSILL
(WATCHING DRESDEN BURN)
LOUIS FERDINAND'S CAT

DEAR SLASH,
WHEN IS SOMEONE GOING TO SHOOT RODNEY BINGENHEIMER? I'DO IT MYSELF BUT I'M NOT A GOOD SHOT - I MIGHT HIT ONE OF THOSE 13 YEAR OLD GIRLS HE CONSTANTLY SURROUNDS HIMSELF WITH.
... EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT I THINK TO MYSELF " AW GEE BE MORE PATIENT WITH RODNEY'S SHOW, WHO ELSE PLAYS X AND THE PLUGZ AND ALL YOUR OTHER FAVORITES - JUST THINK HOW MUCH HE'S DONE FOR LOCAL BANDS.." SO I TRY FOR A FEW MINUTES - THEN I JUST STUFF MY KNUCKLES IN MY EARS - GOD HE'S SO STUPID!! I'M NOT EVEN TALKING ABOUT HIS MUSICAL TASTES (BLONDIE AND SURF MUSIC), IT'S HIS PERSONALITY. HE'S A DUMB FUCK, THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT. HE HAS A CAPTIVE AUDIENCE SO HE CAN WASTE OUR TIME WITH HIS VERBAL PUMBLINGS AND DROOLING MENTAL PROCESSES.
OKAY. I CONCEDE HE HAS THE RIGHT TO DO WHAT HE WANTS ON THE AIR. NO ONE IS FORCING ME TO LISTEN, AND I'D RATHER HEAR RODNEY MOOT HIS STUPIDITIES THAN LISTEN TO ONE OF THE NORMAL FORMAL DJS. BUT FUCKIN BLOODY HELL, WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO SETTLE FOR IT? WE HAVE STARTED ALTERNATIVE RECORD COMPANIES, NEWSPAPERS AND WAYS OF DRESSING AND MODELLING AND THINKING, SO WHY DON'T WE WORK ON ALTERNATIVE RADIO TOO? KROQ IS NOT ENOUGH FOR ME. IS ANYONE OUT THERE SATISFIED? IF SO, THEY'RE DUMBER THAN ROD NEY. LET'S DO SOMETHING.
THIS IS PROBABLY A STUPID QUESTION, BUT WHO IS BROOK SHIELDS ANYWAY?

(anonymous letter)

ANYONE FOR THE DEFENSE???

KICK

DEAR SIRS,
IN RESPONSE TO YOUR FEATURE ENTITLED "LONDON CALLING", I WOULD SAY THIS ARTICLE WAS WELL-NAMED -- IT SOUNDS AS IF MR. WILLIAMS CALLED COLLECT, AND BURIED ONE MINUTE'S WORTH OF NEWS IN TEN MINUTES OF SELF-INDULGENT VERBOSITY. HE SHOULD CONFINE HIS TREATISE TO SUBJECTS WITH WHICH HE IS MORE FAMILIAR AND REFRAIN FROM SHALLOW ATTACKS ON POLITICS. IT'S AN ADOLESCENT NAIVETE THAT WOULD PROMPT ONE TO AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME ROCK N ROLL AND LEFT-WINGED POLITICS MUST NECESSARILY GO HAND IN HAND.
...WHAT A BLAND ROCK REPORT! I LIVE IN LONDON A PORTION OF EACH YEA R AND SAW 52 BANDS DURING THIS PAST APRIL AND MAY ALONE. WHAT OF THE MENDERS, TUBEWAY ARMY, SILENEX ETC.. AND COVERAGE OF BANDS THAT ARE SLATED TO TOUR L.A. LIKE THE DAMNED AND SQUEEZE? GET A JOURNALIST WHO WRITES WITH SOME RELEVANCE OR AT LEAST PAINT A TRUE PORTRAIT OF LONDON'S MUSICAL SCENE INSTEAD OF A PENCILLED OUTLINE. SEEMS YOUR CORRESPONDENT GIVES MORE THOUGHT TO HIS CUSTOMS FORM. THIS UNINFORMATIVE ARTICLE HAD ABOUT THAT MUCH DEPTH AND INSIGHT.

ROSALIND MERCIER

GOSH, I'VE OBVIOUSLY GOT THINGS WRONG HERE. I MISTAKENLY BELIEVED THAT SLASH WAS GLORIOUSLY, UNASHAMEDLY SUBJECTIVE RAHTER THAN, AS MS MERCIER SUGGESTS, A WIDE ANGLE MIRROR REFLECTING A "RESPONSIBLE" LOOK AT ROCK N ROLL. SINCE I HAVE CARTE BLANCHE TO WRITE ABOUT WHATEVER GETS IN THE WAY OF MY EARS AND EYES, THAT'S WHAT I DO. IT HAPPENS THAT I PREFER AN EXPERIMENTAL BAND LIKE AGAIN AGAIN TO POP CHART CLIMBERS LIKE TUBEWAY ARMY AND SQUEEZE AND VIOLENT, SHIT-KICKING ROCKERS LIKE GIRL'S SCHOOL TO GRAND OLD MEN OF PUNK LIKE THE DAMNED WHO HAVEN'T PROGRESSED SINCE THEY FIRST LEARNT HOW TO GOB IN 1976. MAYBE YOU ARE READING THE WRONG PAPER. TRY ROLLING STONE.

MORK WILLIAMS

SLASH,
A NOTE TO "RED ROCKER" AND HIS ILK:
ANGRY YOUNG PUNKS DID PRINT AND DISTRIBUTE THE "PUNKS FIGHT BACK, REMEMBER ELKS HALL" LEAFLETS. WE DID IT WITH MONEY OUT OF OUR OWN POCKETS, WITHOUT HELP OR DIRECTION FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY. "RED ROCKER" NOTES THAT "I FIRST THOUGHT SOME ANGRY YOUNG PUNKS HAD PRINTED IT, BUT SAW THE SLICK TYPESETTING AND QUALITY OF PAPER AND KNEW DIFFERENTLY." (WONDER IF HE BELIEVES REAL PUNKS CAN'T PLAY THEIR INSTRUMENTS OR WRITE GOOD LYRICS?). HIS LOGIC LEADS ONE TO BELIEVE THE SLICK GRAPHICS AND LAYOUT IN SLASH PROVES SLASH IS CONTROLLED BY C.B.S. HE FURTHER STATES THAT "THESE SHEETS WERE PRINTED...BY THE R.C.P." BULLSHIT! THIS IS AS INACCURATE AS THE REST OF THE LETTER. WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW HOW THIS "TRUTH" BECAME KNOWN, "RED ROCKER" HAS THE MISTAKEN BELIEF THAT BECAUSE THE LEAFLETS WERE NOT SIGNED IT MUST BE THE WORK OF THOSE SNEAKY R.C.P. PEOPLE. WE DIDN'T SIGN THE LEAFLET BECAUSE IT WASN'T NECESSARY! IT WAS FOR AND BY EVERY VICTIM OF THE FASCIST L.A.P.D. ON THE NIGHT OF THE ELKS HALL MASSACRE. RED ROCKER WARNS PUNKS THAT "LEFTIST REVOLUTION IS NOT THE ANSWER". (CAN'T YOU SEE ALL THOSE BILLIONAIRES NODDING APPROVINGLY?). WHAT IS THEN? LINDA RONDSTAT AND HER BOYFRIEND? HE BELIEVES THAT IN REVOLUTIONARY COUNTRIES "MANY HAVE DIED FOR SUPERFICIAL CHANGE AND ONLY MINOR IMPROVEMENTS". IF THE PEOPLE IN A COUNTRY SUCCEED IN OUSTING A CORRUPT GOVERNMENT, DEFEAT ITS ARMY AND POLICE, AND THEN SET OUT TO ELIMINATE FAMINE, ILLITERACY, UNEMPLOYMENT AND DISEASE, I WOULD SAY THIS IS MORE THAN SUPERFICIAL CHANGE AND MINOR IMPROVEMENTS. REVOLUTIONS ARE MASS POPULAR UPRISINGS AGAINST OPPRESSION. IF THE THOUGHT OF ALL THAT HATE AND VIOLENCE MAKES YOU FAINT, HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN PUNK? THERE ISN'T A SOCIALIST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD THAT WE HOLD UP AS A SHINING EXAMPLE, THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ARE NOT UTOPIAS, BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT SOCIALISM CAN'T WORK. OUR TIME COULD BE BETTER SPENT ATTACKING OUR RULERS THAT DISCUSSING THE "FAILURES OF SOCIALISM IN RUSSIA". THE REST OF THE LETTER WAS FILLED WITH HYSTERICAL ANTI-COMMUNIST RANTINGS AND RAVINGS IN WHICH HE PROBABLY THOROUGHLY CONFUSED THE POGO-DAMAGED BRAINS OF SLASH'S READERSHIP. RATHER THAN PICK APART RED ROCKER'S LETTER SENTENCE BY SENTENCE, WE WOULD LIKE TO INVITE EVERYONE WHO IS INTERESTED TO WRITE TO US. SEND US A STAMP AND WE'LL SEND YOU SOME COPIES OF THE "PUNKS FIGHT BACK" LEAFLETS.
INCORRIGIBLES, DESTROY CAPITALISM & CHRISTIAN CULTURE!!

PUNK DEATH SQUAD
P.O. BOX 5937
SHERMAN OAKS
CA 91413

SLASH,
YOU COULD DO A 200% BETTER JOB OF GETTING MORE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN PUNK MUSIC AND SCENE BY SIMPLY PUTTING OUT YOUR MAG TWICE AS OFTEN AT HALF THE PRICE, WITH AN ORGANIZED "WHO'S PLAYING WHERE & WHEN" PAGE. WHY ONLY TELL US WHO PLAYED ALREADY? HOW THE FUCK IS JOEY DUMB FUCK PUNK SUPPOSED TO FIND OUT WHEN A REAL PUNK GROUP IS GONNA PLAY BEFORE THEY DO. YOU COULD HELP A LOT, SO DO IT!

ROGER OVERDRIVE

AND HOW THE FUCK DOES JOEY-DUMB-FUCK-PUNK THINK WE COULD AFFORD TO COME OUT TWICE AS OFTEN FOR TWICE AS CHEAP ? BUT YOU GOT A POINT. HOW ABOUT SOMEONE XEROXING A LIST OF ALL THE GIGS EVERY TWO WEEKS, SELLING IT FOR A DIME, OR SOMETHING? COME ON ROGER, GET BUSY.

KICK

Who?

Weirdos 1979

What? When? Where? Why?

On Bomp

How Do You Spell New York?

The LOUNGE LIZARDS

JAMES WHITE

photos: chris kohchoter

A Knife, A Fork, A Bottle, A Cork.
— Dillinger

by Speedy

BEATNIK CITY — You know what NYC (*chic) opunk (**the proles from the ghettos don't join, so what's left? new wave) crowds (***from Jersey with money for entry and drinks) are like (****there's not any): nobody falls down (except on their designer shade faces, from 'ludes or Quaa-bouncers), nobody throws anything (not even at Black Randy — who was "great" at the Mudd Club even if nobody went and the regulars socialized outside in the gutter). Half the client-cast is employed as atmosphere, full of smart serious narcissist pigs. Thank god for the tunnel people, see above, come from New Jersey (not in torn jeans either) to support this hypocritical industry. The scene is so far from pure it makes still fucked-up New York music, our specialty.

Right now there are two hot acts in town, both with saxes, one honkie hipster art moderne, the other Fulton fish market electronics with Brooklyn, both with acts extremely advanced and tailored to night life in this rotten city. The **Loung Lizzards**, current big rave, are for the upper-class white-boy pub clubs (a perfect slime halo for Hurrah's the rock disco, a big uptown seedy class place with mirrors and Studio 54 dancehall intimations). The Lounge Lizzards are tall and dressy, just the length of those guys gives charisma, like '30s Harvard grey-flannels out sleazing but still with style. There's no way somebody like that would fail to light a lady's cigarette with perfect grace. The lizzards are like that, its all-male, its a concept.

They are so cool. What else could a saxled checkmate punk jazz band be, dressed in black and white, playing real heated-up low-key blues and jazz, sounding like detective story dive nasty music and looking fake English but really elegant Ivy trash in sportshirt and tie. John Lurie plays alto and soprano, histrionic only in his fingers; Art Lindsay (of DNA) plays guitar like he was calmly throttling his mother; Evan Lurie (a brother act, like the Bee Gees) is on keyboard, Steve Piccollo is on bass, and Tony Fier (of Feelies) on drums, in incomprehensible but professional sync. They are totally cool; they better be, who do they think we are, '60s Columbia grads, they're the only ones who listen to jazz in this city. The act works because its nonchalantly opportune; a question of social amnesia, reminding its fans what they look after. And nobody sings, I like that especially.

Its one thing to be the perfect cliche and make good new music, another to do the same once again with feeling. Stage ravings as style is cheap here (that's why cool is going over again), but the only act in town that's got class, music andmore than posing is Alan Suicide and Anne Deon, the hot flash couple, almost a pick-up band, out only twice and already looking and sounding like no other stage players. You know the Suicide trademarks — no guitars, no drums, just that wonderfully inhuman rhythm machine — the "no wave" experimental rock formula at its most logical, the boogie rhythm base steady for your body, the inflected white noise, screaming and lunacy to immobilize the critical faculties. They do it kind of reversed, her on instrument, maniacally, and him as torcher, also maniacally. Neither one is the straight man, rare enough in a two-group and something in itself. This kind of tension, which has led so many two-star male bands to egoistically homophobically self-destruct, makes a boy-girl number even sweeter, a Frankie and Johnny update. They're both dark, both sexy, both wearing red, Annie in tight and plain with some cleavage and Alan in red with black and fuck-style bluejeans. They don't sing to each other or any of that smooth shit, but they are heated with a sexual charge, moving in and out of the light, who's singing, who's dancing, twice they clinch, a hostile and a hot grapple. It takes nerve, being a couple and performing and throwing the audience's sexual pretenses back in its stupid face.

Other no-wave acts around town of note: DNA, with Arto Lindsay on guitar and vocals, Ikue Mori on drums, Tim Wright on bass, the only remaining unit from the No New York album (developments from remaining members of Mars, Contortions, and Teenage Jesus, who have not quit the business, you will know when they go public), plays the cleanest and toughest experimental rock in town. As said before, Arto plays tortured, grimacing wild guitar that is unique. DNA played last at Tier 3, a downtown dive that books good new bands (like Buzz and the Fliers) and is not too crowded, since only the bands' friends come and they don't seem to have many. This however won't last.

Robin Crutchfield, who did keyboards and helped write for early DNA, came out with his new moody Dark Star at the Mudd Club (the epitome NY social hang-out tight-entry scene). Other art bands, making occasional appearances: Theoretical Girls, Static, A Band.

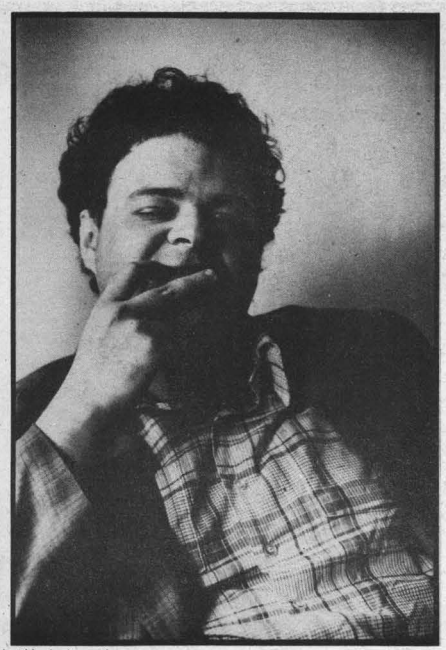
One Thursday at the Mudd, which has dress-up nights (you saw it in People) and other kinds of nights, was a history lesson, not meaning Fripp, Nico, Sylvain Sylvain, or other NY old hands who are around quite a lot, but Eddie Kirkland, a wild roots Chicago conked bluesman who taught Jimi Hendrix to play guitar behind his back. Love those war of the sexes blues lyrics. The personality night was organized by Neke Carson and Ronnie Cutrone, who've also brought Jackie Curtis and Pat and Martin Cleveland there, though not the celebrated return of Sam & Dave.

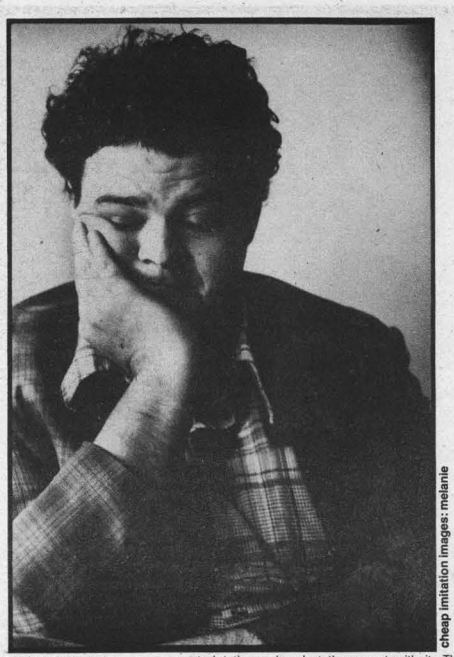
PERE UBU: DAVID THOMAS

"Pride in Work"

DAVID: Hey, you guys are highly recommended by the Residents.
SLASH: The Residents? Who's recommended?
DAVID: Slash. They said you guys are all real nice... When you get into the business you establish certain things...We've always tried to be as accessible to people as possible...Like, interviews don't bother me cause it's like anybody else talking...Our policy, any question that's asked, will be answered. It's just that we don't offer, don't volunteer information...
SLASH: Especially when you've probably said everything fifty times.
DAIVD: That's ok, you gotta say something.
SLASH: How do you feel about your fans in the audience that're so fanatical they scream at you to play certain songs?
DAVID: That's ok... Just as long as they don't, y'know, I don't care for obscenity... And I don't like hearing 'Life Stinks', I know it's a song, but I'm not sure...That song always bothered me. The way I look at it, any song that has every rhyme in 'ink' can't be serious... We used to do 'Sentimental Journey' then when it died and one person clapped, we'd go into 'Life Stinks'... It used to be a killer...
SLASH: Were you breaking glasses when you did it?
DAVID: That's too dangerous. I'm totally opposed to inciting violent feelings...that sort of violence is not good. Too many people do it, and too many people are not willing to take the consequences for their actions... Since I feel performers are definitely responsible for the audience, y'know, we try to keep everything under control. This is why we get upset when there is obscenity and foolish behavior...In Cleveland it got to the point where our audiences were self policing. When people would get unsavory, they'd take care of them, not violently...
SLASH: Peer pressure.
DAVID: Massive peer pressure! Y'know I'm almost proud of our audiences cause they take care of themselves...
SLASH: Do you get pretty much from the audience what you put out?
DAVID: Depends on the city, depends on the audience. first night we didn't get anything back, but last night was really fun. Y'know, you have to feel an audience out, and sometimes aproach them in different ways... A perfect example is Amsterdam, the Paradise, and I don't know if you know, but they have drugs and everything for sale there. Everybody's just plowed under! The first time we played there we figured, boy! we must be bombing out here! So we get done with the thing, and we walk offstage, and down the ladder, it's in this little church, and we were halfway down and the audience just went crazy, just (exploding sound) like that. But that sort of reaction after you're done is to us, pointless. The audience has to return the energy while the set is going on, or it's pointless. It doesn't do you any good when you're done... So yeah, it's great, you liked us, so why'd you want so long... Y'know, it's not even really applause, you can feel it, its an energy thing. If you put out energy and its reflected back, it just cycles higher and higher, and we're willing to take more chances, get looser and that sort of stuff...
SLASH: Don't you think because of the kind of music you're playing that people don't really know what to do with it at first?
DAVID: I'm sure of that, I'm well aware of that. I know, we've never played out here, nobody knows what to expect. People don't expect us to look the way we look, any other way but...
SLASH: You don't look pretentious.
DAVID: We try not to be. Its ike a symphony orchestra y'know, they come out and don't do anything other than what they are. They dress up nice, but they don't come out and stick their ass up and you know all that stuff. The only person that really dresses up is me. Y'know, when you go to see people at a formal occasion — and you know a show is basically a formal occasion, you want to look nice, so I just dress nicely. As nice as I'm capable. It's not big deal, we try not to separate the stage from the audience...
SLASH: A friend of mine commented that yourmusic is 'thinking music'. Do you approach it more on that level than...?
DAVID: Well, we try and combine the two. There's no reason you have to be dumb to play...Y'know I don't like the term 'body music' cause that implies loose behavior (laughs)... But there's no reason why body music has to be dumb... Too many bands do it on a simplistic baby baby level, even supposedly avant sorts of things... There's no reason why you shouldn't have y'know, pride in workmanship. Nobody has pride in work anymore...

We try and do our job the best we can do it. It's all cliche stuff, but it's a matter of doing it rather than just talking about it. We're not stupid. We're not eggheads or anything, but we're not stupid... I'd be real unhappy if it was just intellectual type music, that wouldn't be fun for me to play at all, I like the beat y'know, I like the beat. It's a combining of the two...
SLASH: A lot of bands have tried that before, the sort of thing where you want to play music that moves you, but in a way that doesn't debase you or bring you down to a lower level then you really need to be to appreciate it, but they haven't been too successful, until recently anyway. I kind of think you guys might be breaking that idea. Do you feel like you're pioneers in that respect?
DAVID: No, well we're aware that we're doing stuff that nobody else is doing, but that's the whole point. The only reason to have a band is to do something that comes from you, that comes from the unit of the band. I mean, every band should be totally unique... The thing about us being unique doesn't mean that much to me.
SLASH: Well, one real plus for your band — ok, John Cage was playing tapes in his music forty years ago — but you're introducing it to a rock and roll audience which really in that sense are behind the times, as far as free elements in the music and stuff like that.
DAVID: Really, people think we use more tapes, we use them in the two bridges of Modern Dance, in the introduction to Real World, and Dance Party.
SLASH: How did you come about elements like tape and totally random synthesizer?
DAVID: I think Alan might argue about it being totally random. There is a certain element of that, but he is aware of what he's doing. The tape thing, that's something that comes from Alan. When he was starting out with things, he used to tape a lot of stuff, y'know just for atmospherics and scene setting. He's moving away from tapes, in the new album he doesn't use any. Alan has never been musically trained, he avoids music. Up until just recently, he had a push button action y'know, trigger for the synthesizer and then he got this other unit that had a little keyboard and he was real bummed out, cause he thought it was too musical. Then he opened it up and saw how it could be non musical, he uses the triggers instead. He hates the idea of music coming out of the synthesizer y'know, the synthesizer is not a musical insrument...Everybody uses it as one with obvious exceptions here and there, but everybody uses it as a souped-up organ or something, which is a total prostitu-





cheap imitation images: melanie

tion of what it's designed for.

SLASH: Who plays the organ and piano tracks on the album?

DAVID: Tony does most of the piano, I did the organ track on On The Surface.

SLASH: When you're putting a song together, how do you do it?

DAVID: (Laughs) Oh, it varies, different kinds of ways... The classic example of one kind of way is Real World, literally the first time we ever did it was exactly how it was recorded...Sometimes it takes a long time, and everybody does their own part...

SLASH: Nobody comes in with an idea and says this is how the bass should sound this is how...?

DAVID: No, that's a totally alien idea...Everone would look at him and say like walk out the door... Humor Me took about a year to write and at the beginning I hated it, I couldn't figure out how we were gonna eve be able to use it...

SLASH: That song (Humor Me), is that about anything or anyone?

DAVID: Well, it's about something but I don't want to go into that...I'm not really sure what that song means actually...It's actually written about a person, but I uh, I'm really not sure what it means...That's why I'm happy with the new album, cause I don't understand a lot of it y'know, a lot of the things I wrote...

SLASH: What are some of the song titles on the new album?

DAVID: Uh, Fabulous Sequel, Forty-Nine Guitars and One Girl, Small Dark Cloud, Small Was Fast, All The Dogs Are Barking, One Less Worry, Make Hay, Goodbye, and Jehovahs Kingdom Comes...

SLASH: Are you really into Alfred Jarry and his...

DAVID: No, no, no uh I don't know what you mean by into y'know, I'm aware of the stuff he wrote, but I don't go around spouting green camels...I haven't read him in years, I hadn't even read him for three years, when the name was chosed...The reason the name was chosen, I'll run this down, there's a whole lotta factors. Number one, you have to understand the way we work is intuition and discipline. Those two have to be combined to have anything work out. If you have intuition without discipline you're gonna be self indulgent, and if you have discipline with intuition then it's just gonna be real mechanical... and cold. And I would consider dull. Cause I like to not understand parts of the things that I do, cause that keeps me interested. Ok, it was chosen for: A, cause the fanatics, Pere Ubu, just the way it sounds, the way it looked...Because we never figured we'd ever play anywhere anybody's know what it was, it didn't have to mean a thing...And I liked a certain number of Jarrys' production techniques, they sort of affected the way I was thinking about music...Also, and this was a later rationalization, the character can be summarized as someone who has allowed the animal things, to dominate the personality...Ubu for me has always been the documentation of the struggle to eliminate the animal thing...Negative emotions, obsessiveness y'know, uh y'know...

SLASH: What's happening with the Cleveland scene?

DAVID: Nothing, nothing, nothing...A lot of people are moving out of town, and the only band that's around that's really worth anything is a band called Fifteen Sixty Seventy-Five from Kent... There's a band in Akron called Chai Pig...

SLASH: Are you still based in Cleveland?

DAVID: Yeah, it's where we live.

SLASH: How is the record company (Chrysallis) taking care of you?

DAVID: (Chuckle) In Europe they're real nice to us, we're like a real band...Over here, it's not really worth talking about...They're not knocking down doors for us...They gave us the money and they put out the record. They pay for a cople long distance phone calls, they gave us a hundred dollar bar tab at the Whisky each night..

SLASH: How did you like the Whisky?

DAVID: Seems to be a nice club, it seems pretty intimate...

SLASH: Do you think California is still taking things too seriously?

DAVID: Yeah, yeah, yeah... I don't want to talk about my California prejudices, it's not worth it, it's too boring, I just don't feel like I fit in out here, I get real paranoid...

SLASH: Not to change the subject, but I'm intrigued by Chinese Radiation. Does that song mean anything?

DAVID: It's not about anything political, it's just about a certain feeling...It's basically a love song type of thing... The original inspiration for the title, which probably has nothing to do with the song, whenever they blow up the bombs in China the radiation comes up over the pole and down through Ohio...It's basically a love song...

SLASH: Is it true you used the Grand Funk Live album...

DAVID: Yeah! How'd you find out about that?...Yeah, yeah, it's from Shea stadium isn't it?...Grand Funk applause tapes (laughs), I thought that was really funny. I'm glad that's finally come out (laughs).

SLASH: What's your plans for Heathen Records?

DAVID: It's basically just a hobby...Y'know, just do everything limited edition so it doesn't become a lot of work... We got the Girls out, and there's a new group coming out called Pressler Morgan (?) which is a very good release...(rambling on about the creating of Shriller)

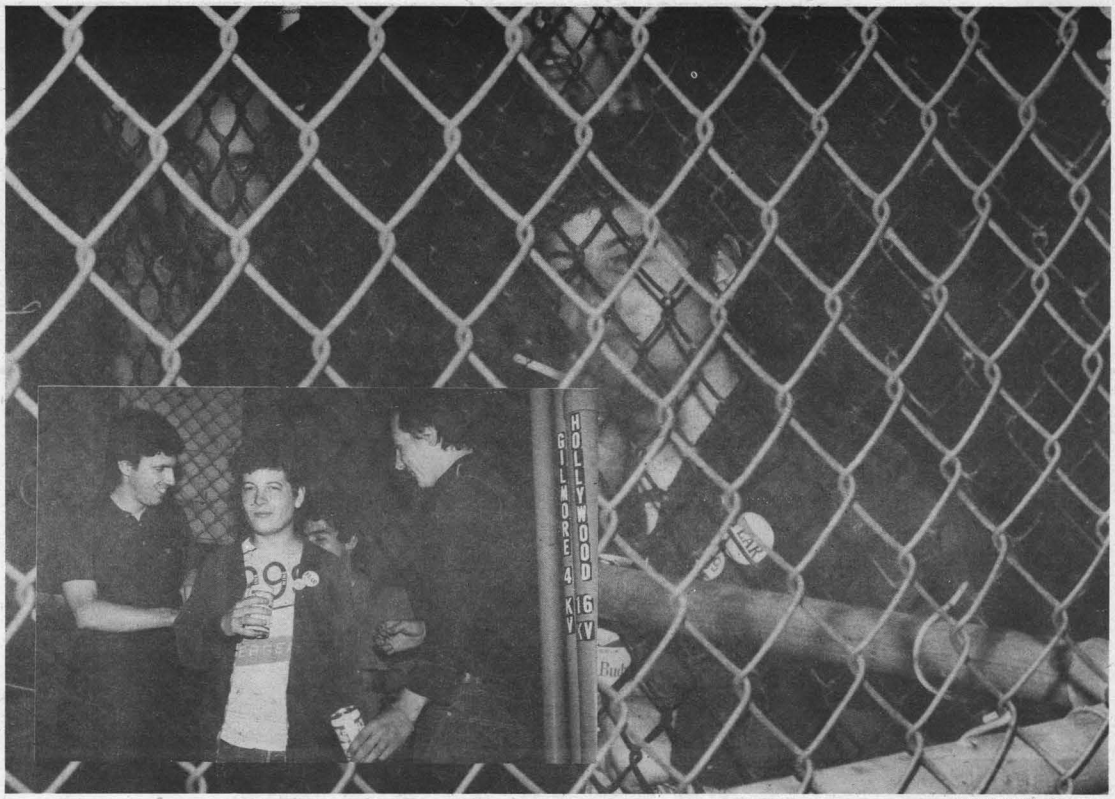
DAVID: You know, I don't really listen to it that much, it's hardly something you'd throw on at a party...It's the right music for the right mood...

SLASH: It's pretty spooky.

DAVID: Yeah well, there's times when you feel spooky...It's not something you'd want to listen to all the time, in fact I can't imagine any healthy individual who'd want to listen to that all the time (laughs)... (on radio stations, record companies, etc.) It's their radio station they can do what they want with it if it's their record company, they can do what they want, it's their government...let them do what they want with it...That's all there is to it...When you sell somebody a bag of carrots, you don't worry whether they make beef stew out of them or carrot salad, which is the same attitude you approach record companies with...You've sold them the record, they've given you the money, and it's out of your hands. You've done the best that you can do, you've done the music, you've done the artwork, and you've sold it to them...There's no point in worrying about it...It's nice if the company likes you, and likes to put money into you, but you don't get anything for free. Whatever they put into you, they're gonna expect out of you, it's sheer business, very logical...We're fortunate that he record company doesn't put any money into trying to create an image for us (laughs), we've no problem with that...Let's say the record company says ok we're gonna put a hundred thousand into your image, ok they're gonna want something for their money... It doesn't have to do with music, a lot of people think they're gonna put pressure on you to make hit singles or something, but it works in a lot more insidious ways...They're gonna want hype, they're gonna want photos and they'll say you guys take such lousy stinking photos, c'mon lets get some good photos, and on and on, Y'know Industrial Wasteland, yeah, that'll look real cool (laughs)...You pay for it in a lot of ways that aren't worth it..We're happy, the second album sold better than the first, and the new one will sell better than the second, we're all much better off than we were before, we're making money doing this, instead of checking parts on an assembly line...We're pretty happy, we're making a living and nobody is bothering us as far as music and art goes...We have no pressure from anybody..It's a position we wanted and that we worked for...

SLASH: Have you ever thought about doing other work outside the band, film, things like that?

DAVID: I'm real wary of the whole film-camera-video thing. Film is just a two dimensional thing..I don't know what the dimensions of music are, but it certainly can't be communicated in two dimensions...The camera is certainly no replacement for the human eye, and I realize I don't understand the dynamics of film or photography, but it's not real, it's a cheap imitation...
(on the new album): It will be out in September...Basically we were going for a live sound...Most of the songs I didn't write down ahead of time, I'm trying to get to the point where I don't have to write anything down and it still comes out meaning something...Some of the songs were made up at the spur of the moment, I just went in and sang the stuff...some of the stuff is written out ahead of time, and then we throw them together. The job is to combine the pieces so that they mean something...The band went into the album with a conscious attempt to approach it in a different manner...It would be nice to approach each album differently. It doesn't matter if you fail, as long as you try...



PHOTOS: KERRY COLONNA

BLACK FLAG

The following extracts appeared in local papers around Polliwog Park:

"The recreation department was as angered and embarrassed as the audience," said Ric Morton, special events supervisor who organized the concert. "We plan to screen and audition every act from now on that wants to perform at Polliwog Par, so nothing like this will ever happen again."

"The Concerts in the Park which have been conducted at Polliwog Park by the Manhattan Beach Recreation Department have been very popular and enjoyed by hundreds of Manhattan Beach residents each Sunday afternoon throughout the summer. However, last Sunday, July 22, one of the groups scheduled to play gave a performance far below the quality required by the department and the quality desired by the audience."

The situation was complicated by the fact that a certain percentage of the audience, the so-called "Hollywood punk crowd," was enjoying the performance and didn't want Black Flag to be removed from the stage.

Black Flag: Keith vocals, Robo (absent) drums, Greg bass, Gary guitar

SLASH: Tell me about that beach concert. (see live review)

KEITH: My old man, he goes — What kind of music are you playing to have people throw things at you like that?. Can't you tell that these people hate you?... We got the gig, we got all the bands to play the gig.

SLASH: So are you going to get run out of town now?

GARY: They're policitians.

SLASH: How come you can't seem to play at a place more than once?

KEITH: We got a chance to play at the Hong Kong Cafe again. We played on a Monday night and the next Friday night X played and a seat got ripped off.

GARY: We just didn't look like a good risk.

SLASH: Just a matter of circumstances?

GREG: 'Cept it was too loud.

SLASH: Where d'you guys come from? Were you in bands before?

KEITH: Gary was in a band called Warner..real long hair and, sorta psychedelic...

GARY: Pre-punk

SLASH: Where's Robo?

KEITH: Robo didn't want to come 'cos he thought he'd get embarrassed because of his bald head.

SLASH: (laughs) As far as Hollywood is concerned you guys have only been playing for about 3 months.

KEITH: Listen we've been around for a long time, we just couldn't get like all the personnel in the band together. In a period of about 2 weeks, we went through about 5 or 6 bass players and our first drummer was just totally into dealing drugs and self-glorification.

GREG: That was over a year ago...we still have problems getting gigs.

SLASH: Why d'you think that is?

GREG: It's the politics...it really is...Since our record came out we find it easier and just a few bands have helped us that have liked our record.

KEITH: The record was sort of a break for us.

GREG: We still will play any place we can get for free, we've just only had about 2 offers in the last 2 years.

ROBO STAND IN: How about that surf party?...

SLASH: How d'you get along with the Surfers?

KEITH: I grew up at the beach and I grew up with a lot of those people, now they won't even give me a second look or anything. I can take 'em or leave 'em, I couldn't care less.

SLASH: Have you guys been out of town yet?

KEITH: Riverside.

SLASH: (to Keith) I'd seen you by yourself aside from the band and you always seemed to be on the go, pissed off at something...

KEITH: There's a lot of bullshit that goes on...Like a lot of the big bands could really help the small bands...Like that gig with X at the Hong Kong Cafe. The night before we were supposed to play...we started handing out flyers on Thursday, we were out there passing them out and I'm taling to Kid Spike, I'm going yeah we're really gonna have a good gig tomorrow night and he goes: "I don't think you guys are goin' to be playing tomorrow night, that's what I heard!

GREG: They cancelled us without letting us know about it and we went ahead and printed up flyers and they watched us pass out the flyers to 2 guys that booked the bands...We rented this place in Hollywood the same night and the next night and put on a gig there.

SLASH: That was a good one...There was a couple of good fights with the guys in charge.

KEITH: Those guys man, those fuckin' burn outs.

GARY: They couldn't really find anything wrong afterwards.

GREG: They said it was a big brain fry so they couldn't let it happen again. Nothing really wrong happened.

KEITH: The music was too loud and they couldn't listen to TV.

SLASH: D'you find the big bands standing by you?

KEITH: A lot of those bands like us.

SLASH: Are they willing to take chances to make sure you get on the bill?

GREG: No, not so far. It's been mostly the people that aren't known that much. It's really political getting gigs in this city.

SLASH: So you think there's some kind of conspiracy amongst the bands who are already playing the circuit?

GREG: No, they're not helpful at all. You know it's the same old thing, once you're up there, you wanna keep things the way they are.

SLASH: D'you think it's because they've had such a hard time getting to where they are themselves?

GREG: Everybody has a hard time. We've had a hard time but we're willing to work with other bands I think.

SLASH: Once you make it as a band you're going to make sure the smaller bands get their chance?

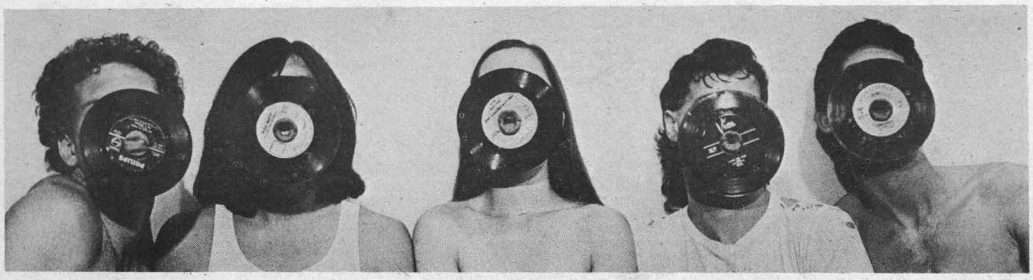
GREG: Yeah.

SLASH: D'you rehearse a lot?

GREG: Up until a coupla a weeks ago we rehearsed about 5 days a week.

SLASH: That's a lot...(to Keith) What was your first job?
KEITH: My first job was fucking working for my old man, selling fishing tackle. A good jewish business: Come on down, we got a good deal for ya.
SLASH: (to the others) Do you work?
KEITH: Shit we all work.
GARY: I work at a pool table place in Long Beach.
SLASH: What d'you do there?
KEITH: Wanna buy a pool table, we can set it up right in here.
GARY: (Says something in Spanish)...aqui, rapido....
SLASH: (to Greg) What d'you do?
GREG: Build electronics equipment.
SLASH: What does Robo do?
KEITH: Robo's walking this fine white line down Hollywood Blvd.
GARY: He worked a regular job up until a couple of weeks ago.
KEITH: In a kidney machine factory or something like that.
SLASH: How did you guys finance the single, what is SST?
KEITH: That's Greg's business. All the money for the single came out of Greg's pocket.
SLASH: How much did it cost you?
GREG: It cost over a thousand dollars.
SLASH: How many did you press?
GREG: 2,000 It was recorded about a year and a half ago, it took us a long time. Bomp was going to put it out, they delayed us about a year, but we couldn't get anybody else to put it out.
SLASH: So you decided to put it out yourselves?
GREG: Yeah.
SLASH: How are you distributing it?
GREG: By foot.
SLASH: Is it going OK?
Greg: Yeah we noticed it's been selling down in the South Bay area, like where we live, it's selling up here too, but it's not really available right now outside of the LA area.
SLASH: Are you going to do another one soon?
KEITH: We got a chance to make an album. If Chris (Upsetter Records)'ll come though. They guy that does Test Tube Records, was going to put out the Extremes single, wanted to put out a bootleg of that gig at Polliwog Park. I was totally for it I talked to him the other night and he said: 'I could always put it away and release it in about 3 or 4 years,' and I said we might not be together in 3 or 4 years. (mutters something about Disco) Fuck I worked or the Commodores for 3 months, roadying. I saw places I'd never seen you know, 'cos I'm so fucking locked in down here, saw Alabama and Missippi...the swamps were great, got to Detroit and Baltimore and New York. I didn't mind working for them because they treated me like a fucking king man, I was the only white guy. I don't like their music now, I like them as people, I got to know these big superstars as people.
SLASH: (To Keith) Tell us about your arrest the other night at the Hong Kong.
KEITH: That was fucked...What did *you* have to go to court for?
SLASH: Drunkenness and Obstruction.
GARY: He comes walking out the Hong Kong and he goes 'Fuck you you fucking gooks', turns around and sees these police everywhere, turns around and runs back inside...
GREG: Too late.
KEITH: I got busted by the ones that were inside though. One guy grabbed me underneath the arm and started waltzing me slowly towards the police car and I go 'Here I go!'. 'cos I'd got busted for slashing a police tire out in the Masque parking lot. I hope it's not as bad as before, I don't have to deal with all those fucking niggers on angel dust. They put me in the drunk tank. The worst part is that they let you out at like 8 in the morning and I didn't have any money and I'm just standing outside...
SLASH: What d'you think's lacking in this LA scene right now?
GARY: That *exactly* what it is, an LA scene!
SLASH: (laughs)
GREG: I think it's really good, I think there's a lot of real good bands.
KEITH: There's just not any good places to play. We need huge padded warehouses with nothing but a low stage and PA....Hang from the ceiling were nobody can get to you, all they can do is just throw stuff at you.
SLASH: The Alleycats are going to play Magic Mountain soon, when is your turn?
GARY: O Boy!
KEITH: We'd go under a different name.
GREG: We may be appearing at different places under different names.
SLASH: Let me see that review (of Polliwog Park).
KEITH: That's the best one because these are fucking liberals.
SLASH: Were there really 2,000 people?...I don't know of any LA band that's played to 2,000 people.
KEITH: We're not an LA band. We're just casual beach loving guys...I got a lecture from a couple of these surfer guys they go 'You guys you're like a protest band or something, what're you talking about? You want these people to fight with you, everybody's supposed to be getting together. I say yeah but how could I get together with people like that that don't like me in the first place?
SLASH: Tell us about the punk rock scene down where you live. Are there a lot of punk rockers?
GREG: Yeah.
KEITH: A lot of them are young kids, they don't wanna listen to that fucking Foreigner bullshit.
SLASH: You seem to think the real enemy is not the conservatives but the liberals.
KEITH: The liberals are supposed to be so open minded but they're fucking conservatives.
GARY: They're the new conservatives.
SLASH: So where d'you stand politically?
KEITH: I fucking hate politics. Voting's like a joke, the last time I voted I was living with my parents and my mum showed me which holes to punch.
SLASH: Give us some titles of your songs.
KEITH: Oh, Nervous Breakdown, Having a Divorce...
GARY: Revenge.
SLASH: A lot of people say you sound like the early Pistols.
GREG: I think the reason we sound similar is like we used to be really into Iggy Pop...
KEITH: If we could get anoth guitar player we could start sounding like we're influenced by the MC5, which is probably the 2nd greatest Detroit band of all time next to the the Stooges.
SLASH: What about Iggy Pop today?
GREG: Forget it.
KEITH: I love some of the songs on his new album...I'm Bored, that's such a fucking great song man.
GARY: On any weekend there's better bands than Iggy Pop, that are from LA.
KEITH: So what about the Buzzcocks — yo oughtta catch some of these bands at $8.50 price, that's steep!
SLASH: If there's 3 *good* bands I guess $8.50's not so bad.
KEITH: My goal in life is to play at the Forum and open all the doors and let everybody get in there for free.
GARY: Good luck.

SUBURBAN LAWNS



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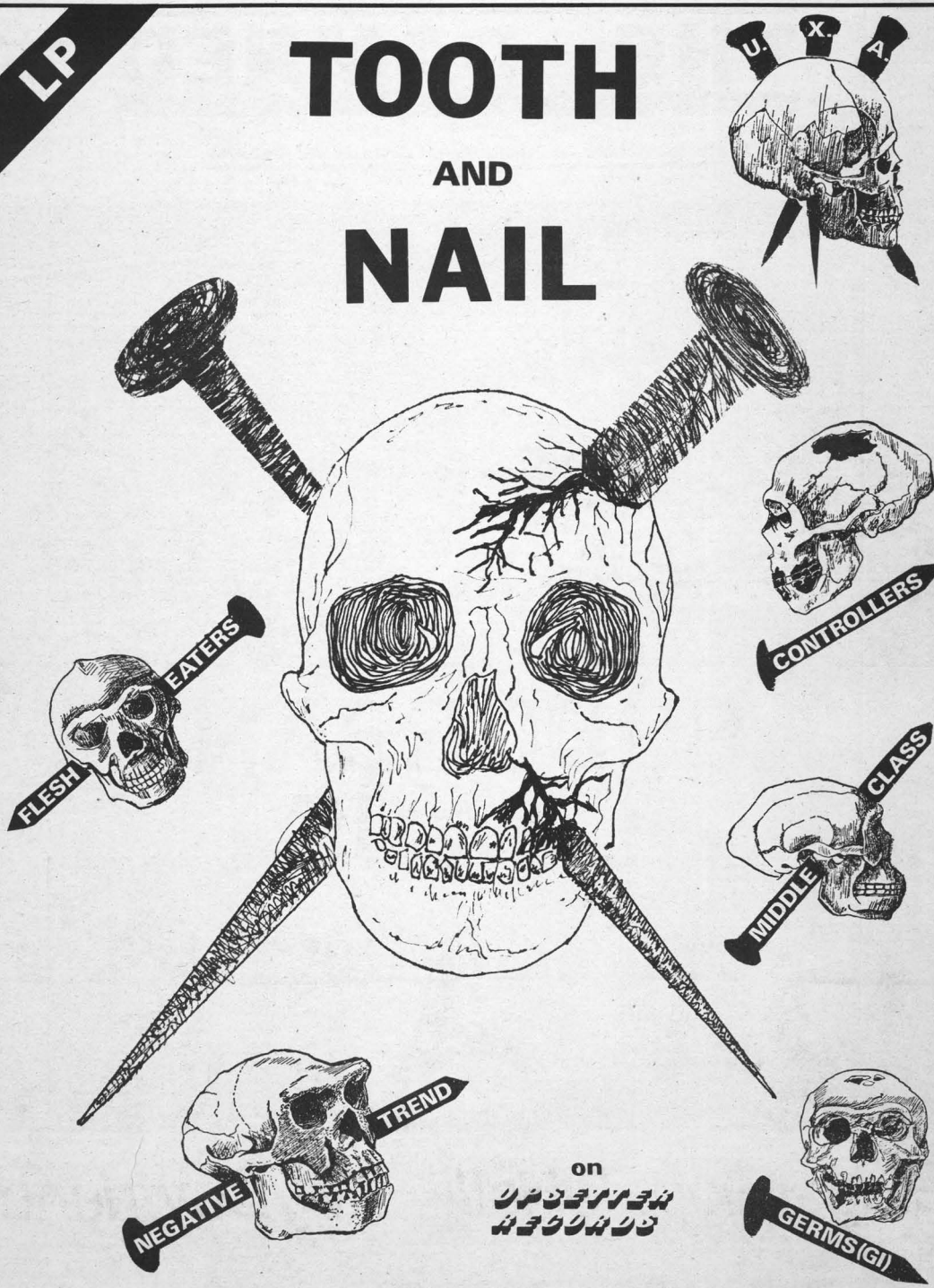

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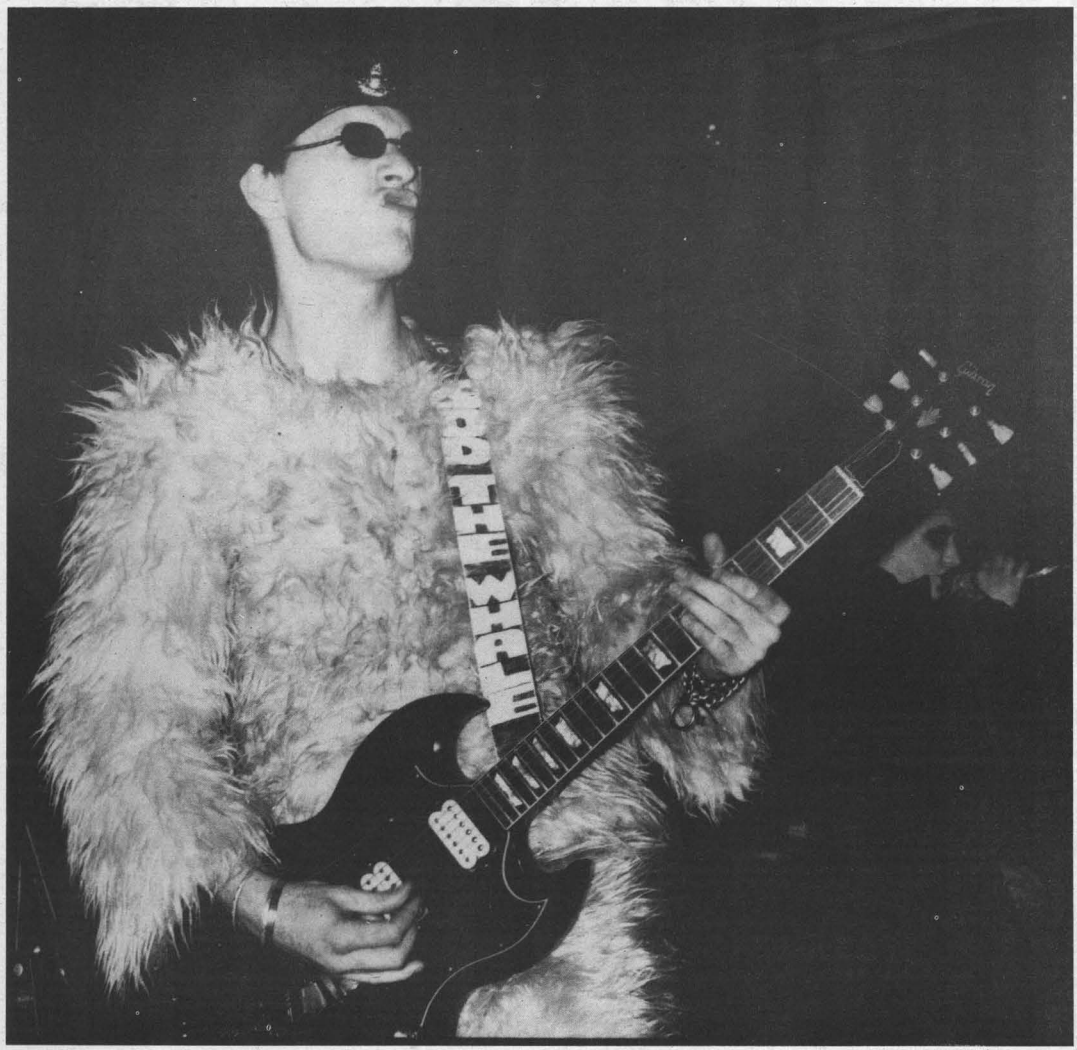
THE DAMNED

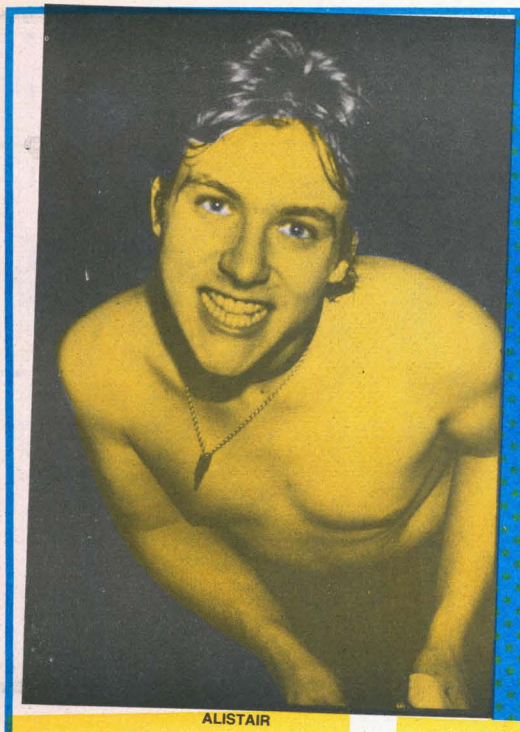
STILL RUDE AND ROCKING AFTER ALL THESE YEARS



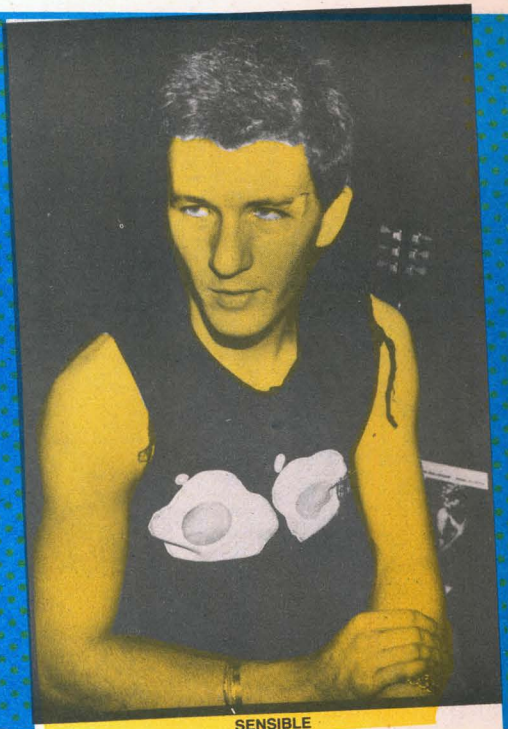
photos: melanie

Ha, the Damned. Here at Slash we've always kept a soft spot for this bunch. The very first project the paper ever got mixed in was a Damned interview in April 1977. Sort of the corner stone upon which this media empire was built (oh oh, it's going to be one of THOSE, eh? Ed.). And the Damned album was probably the first encounter most of us ever had with this punk thing. An encounter nobody is about to forget. The first few notes of "Neat Neat Neat" or "New Rose" were enough to separate us once and for all from the rest of the crowd (with both sides agreeing that a final parting of the ways was better for all concerned). Their first concert in L.A. at the Starwood was another turning point for local rock n roll.

All in all, an impressive number of positive points for a bunch that, almost immediately after they started, drew more scorn, sarcasm and vicious attacks from the british (and american) press, than just about any other band. When the Clash were bigger-than-life revolutionary heroes and everybody's last white hope the Damned were already branded as sinister clowns, dumb slobs and traitors to the cause. Which they probably were now and again but that was their style, and fuck everyone else. Two years later, it is still their style, and fuck everyone else, again. Which may be considered as an admirable consistency in their philosophy or as a pathetic inability to grow. Yet enough has happened to the group in the past two years that you would think they have had no choice but to pick up tidbits of wisdom along the way: countless changes in the line-up department they add a member, Brian James leaves, Scabies leaves, they add a member, change insruments, add another member, etc. etc.), the name switches back and forth from Damned to Doomed to something else back to Damned, they change labels, managers, they flop then rise again (latest single big on UK charts), they give up, fuck around, waste time but somewhat survive. If you think this means they are now a more thoughtful, realistic and calculating bunch of individuals, forget it. Unless Van-

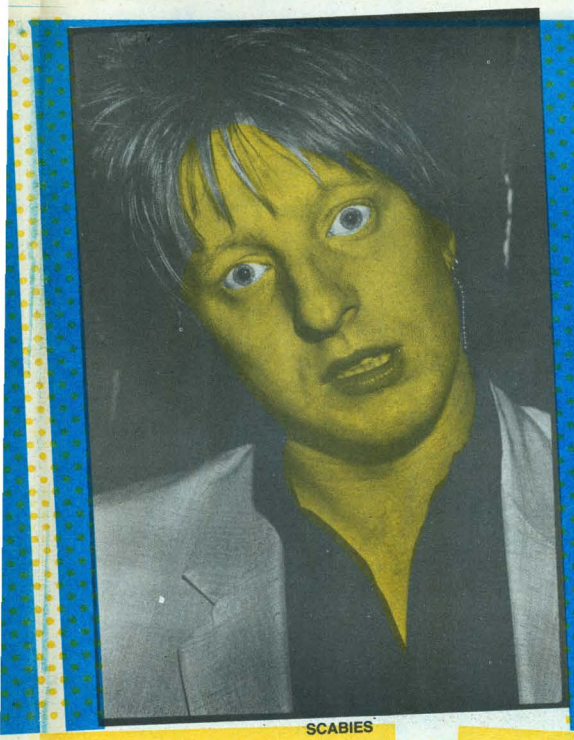


ALISTAIR



SENSIBLE

ian (the only one we didn't speak to — last time around the little ghoul hadn't said a word either) is a hundred per cent the very opposite of his partners, it looks like the Damned are still naive, misinformed, resentful, paranoid and hostile. Even the newest member, Alistair (ex-Saints), a man with a different history and background, now displays the same Damned characteristics. If all this sounds condescending and negative I must add that they are also brutally honest (even when wrong), unpretentious, rabidly anti rock n roll elite shit and fun-loving. But before we go any deeper into what makes them tick, let's take a look at their sets on the Whisky stage. The night we went there the place was surprizingly below capacity, a strange fact considering the impeccable reputation the Damned music seems to hold amongst L.A. punkeroos. Only possible explanation has to do with the price of the door tickets and the less than sympathetic attitude the club has had in the past few months. The Flyboys worked their asses off to a distracted crowd but showed no signs of discouragement. They sounded fine but the spectators appeared to have other things on their mind. There were, as they say, definite ripples of excitement when the Damned came on. Expectations, myth meets reality, the need to be blown away as once before, all that. Captain Sensible was resplendent, sporting an unbelievable fluorescent shag-rug outfit that made him look like an overgrown shooting-gallery prize. Vanian had the legendary Transylvania gear, the pallid face, the oily haircut, the burning eyes. Rat looked like a slob and Alistair like a tourist. They performed a lot of the old stuff, some of the new, and some unexpected covers. Although Sensible is not one of the world's great guitar players it was loud and tight, an undeniably potent slab of music slung in our faces.' Scabies is a hell of a pounder, the new bass player is as solid as they come and Dave Vanian is even more of a magnetic performer than he used to be. Not only is his voice strong and cutting but his utilization of the stage space makes it completely impossible to keep ones' eyes off him. Cape flying, arms swinging, he stomps from far left to far right, incessantly baiting every section of the floor audience only to storm off for some supercharged pacing around the other musicians, dodging the chords, the monitors, the mike stands, and I wondered if so much hyperactivity was a normal survival trick for vampires intent on avoiding the old spike in the heart business! Yes, it was good, but, BUT,....it wasn't as it should be. The most exciting moments were still the renditions of the old classics, and there were hardly any new songs that had as much impact. There is no doubt that when they lost Brian James they lost a hell of a songwriter. There is something indistinct and blurry to the new material. Not blurry as far as the speed at which it is performed (that never mattered anyway) but meaning that it all lacks that great whirling chaos quality that used to make us pogo 'til we dropped. Wham bam music is great, but when it loses the bam it loses much of its beauty. The second set was better, and even though Alistair sulked thru most of it, sitting cross-legged on the floor and only paying attention to his guitar (most likely a gesture of protest or contempt somewhat explained in the demerited conversation quoted below) Vanian, perhaps desirous to make up for some of the band's less than dedicated attitude literally tore the place apart. His presence was awesome. Halfway thru he jumped amongst the pogoing proles, and it had nothing to do with the super-brief calculated token "mingling" other performers have bored us with in their attempts to pull that instant credibility blanket over our eyes. It was genuine, risky, and lengthy. Unfortunately the show took an ugly turn shortly after when Scabies, momentarily on guitar, decided to swing it into the audience. It whacked a kid right in the face, and ruined any chance of a really triumphant ending. Many other kids swiftly went from a dancing to a fighting mood, flipping the finger to Scabies, daring him to step off stage. He vaguely tried to apologize, but it was too late. Captain Sensible started yet another incoherent rap against america, its cars, its finances, its audiencs, its lack of reality. It made about as much sense as his bozo suit, and its timing was pathetic and really daft. It literally added insult to injury and made everybody with more than half a pea for a brain cringe in embarassment or shake with anger. Listen, Sensible, and all the other limeys that are about to try their luck around here: we don't need that half-baked cliched shit about all of us owning Cadillacs, swimming pools, bank accounts and no feelings for "real" punk, no capacities for dancing, no nothing that's really important. The kids into the music here are as alive as you are, they don't have more money that you and they don't get paid by a record company to grab a mike and sputter smugly ignorant inanities about people they don't know and living conditions they don't understand. That means stop getting your generalities and conclusions from the tv and the misinformed british rags or shut up. With astute minds like that, it's no wonder you ended up with Maggie Thatcher on your back. Suckers! The messy awkward end to the evening went on, with Vanian physically removing Scabies from stage, Sensible babbling more home-spun philosophy, Alistair storming off after threatening everyone, Scabies coming back to methodically flatten his drum kit, piece by piece, having at last found a positive and creative outlet for his frustrations. Crash, zing, bang, boom, hate, hate, hate. What a waste. But back to the core of this article, the long awaiting Damned interview. First day, no way, the boys are prancing around Disneyland. Second day, okay says the manager, a brief one between sets. Eccch! Not exactly ideal, but what can a poor sleazy tabloid do? Anyway, before the show, there is a party at the Tropicana for the Motels, cheese and wine courtesy of Capitol, so we go there before and of course who is there jumping in and out of the pool, splashing guests and guzzling whisky by the bottle but Rat Scabies (overweight and pasty), Alistair (chubby and pasty), and Captain Sensible (pasty with a band 'aid on his eyebrow). They have not been invited to the Capitol bash but they're staying here and there is no law against using the pool two feet away from all the dressed-up junior executives, the bell-bottomed heavies in charge of screening the guests keep a wary eye on their activities, the Damned (minus Dave hiding from the daylight), a couple of ex-Red Army and one Simpletone take turns throwing each other in the water, I speak for a few minutes with Alistair about the sad fate of the Saints, and of course a bit later end up in the pool, leather jacket and all. I come out weighing twenty extra pounds and devoid of smokeable cigarettes. The security heavies are now out to get Scabies although I tell a very concerned Capitol representative that it is all in a day's work, and that this is the most fun thing that has happened to their party so far. The mischievous trio split to their side of the motel where we corner them a bit later and ask them to add a dozen names to the Whisky questlist, a fair retribution for the water treatment. They bitch and curse but good-heartedly get on the phone. See, very decent chaps, hearts of gold. They even give two of us a ride to the Whisky, and on the way we are given glimpses of, hold your breath, CAPTAIN SENSIBLE'S ROAD DIARY, guaranteed not to be published soon by Harper & Row. Then the show, then time to march upstairs for the "interview". Ha! Backstage is packed with fans and Jenny Lenses and the band is in no mood for chit-chat. A rumble they wouldn't mind, but conversation by the fireplace is out. They are fuming, they are mad. They didn't like the way their set went down one bit and they're going to take it out on somebody. And here we are, with a tape recorder! Within a minute it was a shouting match between us and them while people milled around, cheering, booing, arguing, taking sides. Sensible was the most distressed, at times



SCABIES

looking uncomfortably close to tears. THEY JUST DIDN'T UNDERSTAND, why in England they go down a storm, etc, etc., it's all America's fault, your scene sucks..... We HAD to slightly disagree. It was an exciting "interview" all right, quick and not boring at all. And no punches were exchanged. Always knew these guys had a deep-rooted respect for the press.

(between songs onstage)

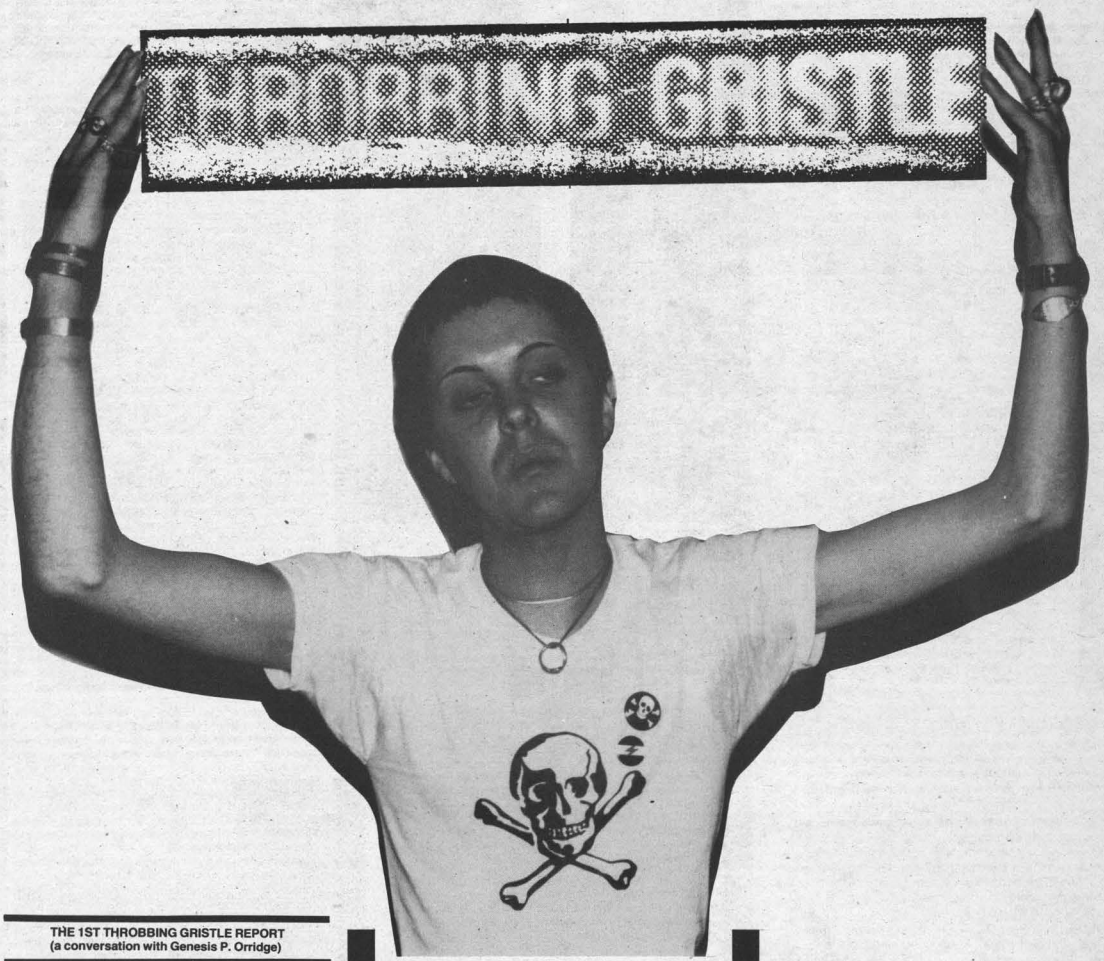
Alistair:...I'm really gonna enjoy goin home, this place is a shithole you don't have any idea...
Captain Sensible: Ya don't have no suss, no nuthin, you don't know what's going on...
Alistair: There's a lotta fuckin shitheads here. Ya like Kiss an' things like that? (the band starts into a Kiss riff...)

(backstage)
Slash: Can we do a short interview now?
Alistair: Shit now an fuck off...
Slash: C'mon...
Alistair: O.K., I'll throw ya out the window.
Slash: Shit!
Alistair: I threw ya in the pool. (laughs)
Slash: You want to kill me tonight? You want to weigh my fucking jacket? (referring to a waterlogged leather jacket-Ed.)
Alistair: Stuff the jacket up yer asshole.
Slash: Fuck You! Give me a break, I mean really...
Captain & Alistair: (mimicking) nah, naah, nah, give me a break...
Alistair: I can't take this fucking shit... I'll go out an kick their fucking butts assholes. We shoulda never even played the fuckin... They can all kiss my ass.
Slash: What're you talking about?
Alistair: Those fuckin idiots that paid to come an see us. They're fuckin idiots they're all shit!
Slash: Maybe they're idiots to come and see you...So you want to play to an empty room?
Alistair: It's *like* playin' to an empty room!
Slash: What's so different about England?! What's so...
Sensible: There's thousands of people in England. Have you seen them?
Slash: Yea, I've seen them...They pogo all over the fucking place, that's about the only difference...
Sensible: They're terrible! They'll give you a hard time! They'll give you a good time! They enjoy themselves! They'll tell you! (referring to the Whisky audience) Did they like us?!
Slash: Yeah, every fucking one like you. But they...
Alistair: Shit, this place just bores me to death...
Sensible: Everywhere was fucking good, apart from L.A. I don't give a shit, I don't wanna be a fuckin pop star in fuckin Los Angeles...
Slash: Well then you shouldn't have fucking come here!
Alistair: If I have my way we'll prob'ly never ever come back!
Slash: But you don't have your way obviously...
Alistair: There's nowhere else to play. I'd rather play in any fuckin other place in England...From the fuckin poshest to the toilets we'll play...
Slash: Don't give me that shit.
Alistair: Ya know, what I think what we should've done is find a small club somewhere, where they charge $2.00 or something, and get the fuckin real people in instead of those fuckin...
Slash: Right, exactly! Why didn't you?
Alistair: 'Cause I don't book the gigs!!
Slash: Well maybe it's time you start putting on the gigs yourself.
Ssensible: That is the problem innit? Six dollars fifty, right? That's the problem...
Slash: You're fucking right. All the punks are somewhere else. You gotta whole lot of fans out there and they're not willing to pay six fucking fifty!
Alistair: We've spent three weeks here right? An we ain't played a fucking right club yet.
Slash: Maybe you got something wrong with your management.
Alistair: No...it's fucking America, America's fucked up.
Slash: Bullshit! That's a load of shit!
Alistair: Up your ass!
Slash: Up yours too. Right now you could pack a ***fucking*** club if you played the right gig. Y'know, a club that charges just a bit less money...
Alistair: In New York the clubs we played at charged five dollars to get in...
Slash: That's still too much.
Sensible: I'll tell you what the problem is, right? We played here tonight to an audience that were alien to us, the people that can afford six dollars fifty, right?
Alistair: They've bought fifty quid bondage trousers from England!
Sensible: Exactly...
Slash: I know but you're the fucking one who's...!!
Alistair: I never bought any fucking bondage trousers!!
Slash: But you agreed to play for this gig, didn't you?!
Alistair: It's fucking money innit? We've lost fucking thousands, six fucking fifty or no six fucking fifty!!

VANIAN

Slash: Ohhh... Then you might as well'de lost another few thousand & played to the right peop...
Alistair: We might as well never of fucking come in the first place!!!
Alistair: We thought there were a lot of people in fucking America who wanted us to come an play for them.
Slash: We wanted you to come, a lot of people wanted you to come, they think you're one of the greatest ***fucking*** bands in the world.
Alistair: Ahh...
Slash: Well?
Alistair: I'm fuckin annoyed!! All these fuckin people...Get into a car, right? Come up to this gig, drive halfway down the street, you change into your fucking punk clothes, an you walk up here, scared shitless of being beat in before you get here!!! That ain't no fucking punk rock!
Sensible: There ain't no fucking punk in America. There ain't no fucking punk whatsoever. I'll tell you what, you get more on ***fucking*** welfare than I get in this group! I been two years in this group an I never got paid a penny for it! Is that a good job?
Slash: It's the same with the groups here.
Sensible: I need a fucking set of strings, now!!! NOW!!!
(we bump into Rat Scabies as we're leaving)
Rat: Hullo...
Slash: What happened to your voice?
Rat: I fucked it, givin too much head.
Slash: Are you as pissed off as them (Captain Sensible & Alistair)?
Rat: No, I love America, and L.A. It's just the fucking audiences re so fucking lazy, with their fucking cadillacs an their fucking half pound cheeseburgers
Slash: At least you're not opinionated.
Rat: Nah, I love America, America the beautiful. I'm gonna come and live here one day...
Slash: Maybe the Screamers still have a room available.
Rat: (laughing) In a year from now I'll live here, when we're bigger than Kiss...
Slash: You were great tonight.
Rat: Too bad you won't be here for the second set. The second set is going to be much better. I'm gonna splinter those drums to pieces with an iron bar. I've been the whole tour with those drums, and they stink. Tonight they're gonna go... Listen to our new album, it's musical. You're gonna like it. Live, this band is not musical, live this band is fun. That's what makes this band the best in the world... Even Jimmy Page makes mistakes onstage... Thanks very much...

THROBBING GRISTLE



THE 1ST THROBBING GRISTLE REPORT
(a conversation with Genesis P. Orridge)

SLASH: What was your part on the "Vibing Up The Senile Man" album?

GENESIS: Well, there are two stories. The official story is that I thought the tracks I was asked to be on were very good and that it was a good change of direction for me (which was true) as they were up to then, but then it got very boring, the most crucial thing was that I had seen these leather thousers that were 60 pounds and that's what I got paid (laughing) Sorry, it's a ? story, really. It's not an LP I would have bought, but I enjoyed doing it. It's me laughing at the beginning of the LP. I laughed so much all the way thru, it was hilarious. They were very very serious about it, and I kept dropping things, especially on the "Serpenting Gallery", it had all these little bells, cowbells, gong I had left over from years ago, and we had to go "ding"..."Bonggg", and say each of the words in a certain way... they kept getting the words wrong, and I just got the gigles, and it took us longer than any other track to do, and it's the shortest. They got a bit fed up with me actually. I didn't go back after that. He (Mark p)has always been trying to get us involved in records. Like in "The Image has Cracked", we actually got that stopped. That was after he'd sacked Alex. They'd already done about 25 test pressings, and Alex came around to see us, we were talking about it coming out soon, and he asked what did I think of my bit, and I said what bit? and he says don't yo know what's on there? So he told me Mark had rung up our answering machine and tape recorded me saying the phone number and that it was Trobbing Gristle's and Industrial Records', leave a message blah blah and had put it on the beginning of one of the tracks, and not telling us anything about it. I immediately rung him up and said I don't fancy having all your fans ringing up night and day to see if it's true and leaving messages on the tape, and he said "Oh, I thought you'd be very flattered that we mentioned you". I said well I'm not. So we made them edit the master tape and recut it.

SLASH: Must have meant it as a surprize gift . . .

GENESIS: He probably did, but it was a very naive thing to do. Can you imagine 10 or 15 thousands ATV fans . . . "Hey, let's ring up and see if it's really them . . .". I mean we already have enough death threats and things.

SLASH: yea, what was that other story with the answering machine . . .

GENESIS: We got 18 hours of messages, and there are a lot of peculiar ones, but on that particular death threat one . . . . the guy's real name is Robin Crocker, but he calls himself Robin Banks, and he used to be a roadie with the Clash but they sacked him because he was too violent. I found this out afterwards, I had it on the machine and played it to Jon Savage and other people and we also knew what provoked it, which was when I had a big fight with girls at a benefit we did in London for distributors of alternative films . . .so we were playing for free to about 300 hundred people and halfway thru a couple of the Slits and a couple of the Raincoats and a girl called Annette Weatherman (who it turned out is Robin Bank's girlfriend) all came in completely drunk and pilled out of their heads and the first thing they did was go to Robert Rental's 4 year old son and hit him in the face and pick him up and swing him, about then they went up to this 15 year old TG fan and started slapping him and he didn't know what to do — them being girls and all — then they picked up chairs, threw whisky bottles at Sleazy's head . . . . And this was immediately, not as a response to what they'd seen or heard, and they also stood right in the front in the light so that everyone could see . . . we just carried on, so then they pushed over some speakers on my foot and I was getting angry by then. They were obviously going to see how far they could go, so I just stood on a monitor on the front, undid the strap of my bass and held it by the neck like an axe, making it clear that anything else that happened was going to be dealth with but they came back and tried to pull all the wires out of the amps, which could have blown the whole lot, so I just took a swing at the nearest one, and flattened her. It was Annette Weatherman, and it was the first and only time Chris ever hit anyone in his life. He was so annoyed that as she got up he jumped down and punched her right back down. And it worked. They stopped. And we switched everything off.

SLASH: What were their reasons?

GENESIS: I asked them afterwards. They said they were "true primitives". Well, they got a primitive response! They said: "you must be a real shit". I said maybe, so I'm a shit. That's the way I am.

SLASH: But if they had liked what you were doing . . . .

GENESIS: Oh they said they had all the records, and why didn't we carry on playing, and they were having a good time and they liked it...

SLASH: Their own twisted way of showing what a good time they were having?

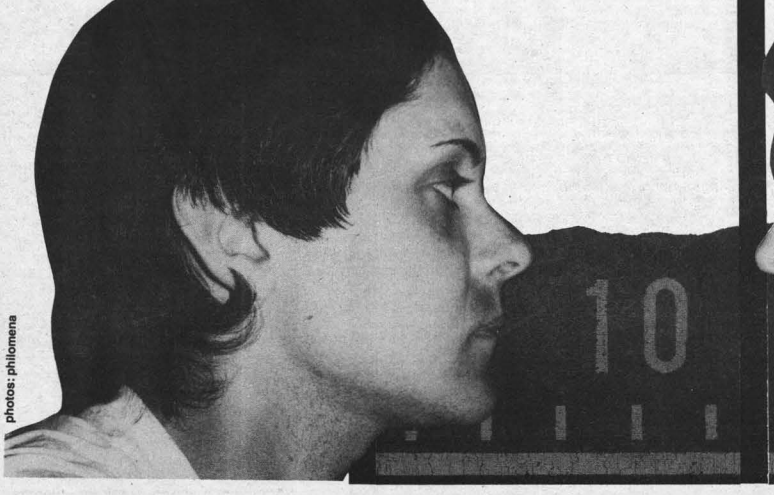
GENESIS: No it wasn't. It was their way of showing off and getting attention. I've seen them go to other gigs with completely different typs of groups and they do exactly the same thing everywhere they go, 'cos they want to be the female Sex Pistols. They're still into this thing of the more you damage something, the more it makes you cool. I said to them it was just a new form of censorship. They hadn't paid to get in, so if they didn't like it they could have gone out. They could have yelled it was boring, but to actually try to destroy all the equipment; it's quite a different matter. I would never do that to any group, no matter how bad I thought they were. And there was also 300 people there who were enjoying it, and it ruined the evening for them, just because of 2 or 3 people, which is a National Front tactic. A very tiny but extreme minority that creates a lot of trouble. They had no clear idea at all except they thought it was clever. And they were really shocked when they were hit back. They've never done it since, you know. And then they did the old thing of "you shouldn't have hit us 'cos we're girls."!

SLASH: Boooo!
GENESIS: I said "I looked at you and as far as I was concerned you were idiots, and I wasn't interested in what sex you were. You were idiots and I dealt with you as idiots." That's when they started saying "You're a real shit . . ." and also "Why don't we have a political discussion"
SLASH: So following this there were death threats?
GENESIS: She did the old thing of "I'm going to get my boyfriend on to you". It was so pathetic, these archetypes, and they were supposed to be so radical. I asked Jon Savage about it, and he said her boyfriend has actually been in prison for GBH (Grievous Bodily Harm...Ed), and that's when I found out who this guy really was, and that he had been sacked for being too violent, and that he may just turn up with a shotgun or something. I thought the only way to handle it was to ring up Jaws of Sounds and to trivialize it and also make it ridiculous, but still let everyone know in case I did end up murdered in an alley. So I had him print that I received death threats from an anonymous friend of the Clash who liked to rob banks, and that we were going to bring it out as a record on Industrial Records, and we did, which I also never thought we'd do.

The other voice is Chris' wife who is a complete lunatic. She used to ring up and completely fill up an hour's tape on the answering machine, day after day after day, for weeks. When he met us and started doing things with us with his synthesizers and things, she decided he was having an affair with Cosey, and that Cosey was taking him away from her. Before we even met him, he'd wake up at 3 o'clock in the morning with her kicking her in the head and stabbing him with a great big piece of glass in the stomach and never telling him why. One night he woke up with his head hurting, and she was hitting him over the head with a piece of three-by-one wood. She's been in a mental home. She's insane from being spoiled. Her mother was insane. She used to go to casinos every night gambling. One day she ran from her mother's house, and I could hear this woman in the background screaming away, and it was her mother, and I thought: no wonder she's so insane herself. Bizarre. In the end she said to him, either you get rid of your synthesizers, or you lose me. And he packed up all his synthesizers and moved out. So then she said she'd hired all these East End gangsters to come and throw acid in Cosey's face, she was going to have me shot through the legs . . . She did know these kinds of people, too and Cosey in particular was worried about it, because it was aimed mostly at her. The only way she could justify his not being there was that it must be another woman. The fact is, she scared him so much from women, that he hasn't had a girlfriend since. He still can't cope with the idea. She was really the craziest woman I've ever met. She said one day, "I married Chris, and now he belongs to me, he's my property. He shouldn't go out of the flat without my permission. And at the same time she was going out all the time groupieing around all the punk groups and all the rock groups. She used to give blow jobs to old middle-aged taxi drivers to get a free lift home. She was taking drugs, sleeping with all kinds of weird syphilitic Lesbians — she was totally decadent. Yet he wasn't allowed out the house to go shopping without her permission. I've just heard his divorce is going through — he was deserting her in the end, but she's not contesting it, because she's met this Teddy Boy she wants to marry. She had aneurexia when she met him.
SLASH: Do you think there's something in your music that attracts such characters?
GENESIS: Something, yes. It's like strobes can create epileptic fits in certain people. That's what my theory was with the girls, it's that they were confronted with an alien ritual, totally alien. And instead of looking at it and figuring out what it was, or just letting it wash over them... they blocked it out, and in that sense I don't think they were totally responsible for what they did. They were totally confused, and their only response was a totally primitive response. Also, I think they decided to come and show off, but on a subliminal level, I think they were confused. Occasionally you get people and you can tell it's just flipped them out. It's only when they try to fight against it,

The Compleat Combo

when they try to impose their structures on it, their preconceptions . . . I found out that the same night I found out that a girl had spontaneous orgasms. I thought it was wonderful, I wanted to try to find her and play the tape of the gig for her, and say "Where was it that it happened?" A friends of hers said she acted like she was totally high on drugs all the way home and she was leaping about in the tube station and accosting people and being really flirtatious. She's normally very quiet.
SLASH: What kind of decibel level were you on?
GENESIS: Everyone says that's the loudest that we've ever played, due to the acoustics of the room, it was very, very physical. We always play with very high frequencies and subliminal tapes. We're never quite sure what we're going to do.
SLASH: You should really try to find that girl . . .
GENESIS: Apparently she was some kind of junkie, she and her friend were really big coke dealers, and their place had been raided about 8 times. That girl turned Queen's evidence, apparently she couldn't stand being in jail any longer, and she crassed on everyone else and she vanished not long after that, and she's hiding somewhere.
SLASH: And science was set back five years . . . If it can happen to someone, it could happen to others.
GENESIS: We test everything on ourselves. Chris and I have done experiments at the studio with the old P.A. we had. It was very loud. It was a very small room. We had it on full volume, over 1,000 watts with really high frequencies for about 15 minutes. All our clothes were moving, vibrating back and forth. I could see crisscross patterns in the air. And as I moved, I could hear them going CLICK, CLICK . . . the joints in the crisscross pattern. Chris got tunnel vision, then he went blind, and then we both started to lose our sense of balance and fall over. Everything in the room was moving all over the place . . . I was climbing on the great bass speakers trying to keep them from falling over . . . we thought it wouldn't be fair to people who came to see us if we didn't play the instruments this loud ourselves, experiment on ourselves first. We do that with everything we do, we always test it on ourselves first.
SLASH: How did you feel after all this?
GENESIS: We felt hungry...really, really hungry. A lot of people describe the sensations as more drug sensations, or vertigo sensations; they very rarely describe music. They talk about the physical/mental experience. We originally called it metabolic music. We worked on the premise that all sound goes in all over the body...whether you're aware of it or not.
SLASH: What made you drop that label and call it Industrial Music?
GENESIS: Actually we didn't want people to know too much. At that point we wanted it to be more subliminal so we could see the real effect. We didn't want people to decide in advance that they were to be affected. You know when you give a person a phony joint? And they think it's real, so they get stoned? Plus it sounded a little contrived.
SLASH: What do you do with your lights when you're on stage? Monte talked about it some.
GENESIS: Oh, it's varied a lot. We're trying to think of a new triok...because we got bored with all those. We've got these housing lights that they use for the accidents on the motorway. And we've got all these lights around us so no one can see what's happening. It appeals to us that there were these very clear lights. Plus they use them in the big railway yards when they're working at night. We didn't want to get into stage lighting. The idea of a few of those lying around just like at a crash accentuated the idea of the music and the accident. As if we were actually saying: we're an accident, we shouldn't be here. And at any minute it could disintegrate.
SLASH: Did they hurt your eyes?
GENESIS: Yeah. When we first started using them, we weren't into being seen, the whole rock group ritual in its normal form. We toyed with the original PA we built with these great big black speakers...it nearly covered the whole front of the stage anyway. There was only a very narrow gap of about four feet where you could see through to see us at all, so we just stuck these great Halotin lamps in the gap shining straight out into the audience. It looked like daylight where they were...which also confused them because they're not used to being the ones that can be seen. So all they could see was this big black wall, this sound, this noise coming out, this light. And if you looked straight at the gap where we were, your eyes...it would burn into your retinas. If you tried to look for five minutes, you'd be semi-blind for the rest of the day. We like the idea of these people walking home with big dots in front of their eyes, feeling hungry. Of course the whole thing was a reverse of the normal ritual. That's why in another town we just got these 7 foot mirrors and the whole of the wall behind us was 7 foot mirrors...we were a lot more aggressive then. I used to leap down and charge through the audience and interview people and ask them why they'd come. They'd lost track that I was in the group. Because they'd never seen me on the stage because they *couldn't* see. Some of them threatened me because they liked us. You (to Kick) said you hardly saw us when you were there. Even now we're not that visible.
SLASH: There was this bluish haze behind the speakers; it looked like some entrance to hell...gothic architecture. All the people were standing there like lost souls waiting to get in...
GENESIS: I think Cosey has only ever stood up twice. Until a few months ago she always sat down in a chair behind the speakers because her guitar was so heavy. Then Chris made her a new guitar. He shaved off a lot of the wood so basically it's just the neck... It's so light she calls it her "Stick" Maybe for five minutes the last two gigs we did she stood up a bit. A historic thing; after two years she stood up. People could see her and they didn't realize what a switch that was. We've also dumped all those big speakers. We're into "cabaret" now-...we're getting more visible. We've gotten those little combo



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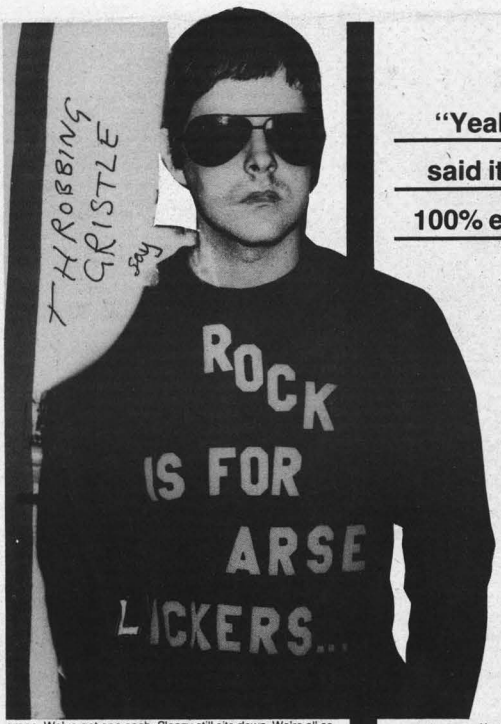

"Yeah . . . we never said it's meant to be 100% entertainment".

amps. We've got one each. Sleazy still sits down. We're all as far away from each other as possible. I can go for a walk if I get bored and have a chat with Cosey. She sometimes takes sandwiches (general laughter).

SLASH: Do you get bored often?

GENESIS: Yeah . . .we never said it's meant to be 100% entertainment. Some of it's exciting, some of it's boring, some of it's obvious, some of it's not. See the only way we can get those inspiring moments is to gamble by improvising. Nearly all our songs are made up on the spot.

SLASH: Do you mind telling us what happened after that gig I saw?

GENESIS: Oh, that one. No, not at all. I don't have any secrets. That way I can't get blackmailed. We'd done the album by then, THE 3RD AND FINAL REPORT...I'd gotten quite paranoid for various reasons. I was quite convinced that that was probably going to be the last gig that we'd ever play. And I decided to make it the last gig. I took 250 Valium and 50 Mogadon tablets I'd saved up and a 100 Stellaril...

SLASH: What type of pills are those?

GENESIS: They're steroids. There are different ones for different things. They all tend to work on the glands...which is what musclemen or sex-change patients use...Then we went and played at the Crypt. We insisted playing first just to be awkward because we knew that there would be a lot of people who would come late so they could see us at the end. I only remember about fifteen seconds...one thing I remember, (I don't remember it in a physical way), but I know I climbed up to the roof then jumped right down. Normally if I do that off of a chair...I've really weak ankles and I remember being surprised when I hit the stage and my ankles were all right. I can remember someone yelling "It's not loud enough." And that's when I started playing the guitar with me foot, then screaming "Is that loud enough!" That's when I got the light and started shining it in their eyes in the hope it would blind the bastards whoever they were.

SLASH: The rest of the band didn't seem overly concerned about your state. Did they know?

GENESIS: They didn't know I'd taken all those pills. I actually wasn't that much different than I often get. The only difference was that I had amnesia. They just thought "Here he goes again." They keep their eye on me to make sure I don't...they try to make sure I'm not going to kill myself. They must've sussed there was something really wrong 'cos they took me round the back and sat me in a little chair. 'You just stay there'... I woke up in intensive care. First thing I did was looked at me side and there was a bottle o'pills and I swallowed the lot.

SLASH: What were they?

GENESIS: More Steroids.

SLASH: Oh gosh!

GENESIS: And the nuse got a real bollocking for that...and then I started swearing 'You bastards, you fucking cunts, I want to die'... I mean this is what I've been told later. Apparently they kicked me out of the hospital, I was so obnoxious, threatening all the old men and throwing things at everybody and me parents came down and they were outside the ward and they said all they could hear was a stream of obsceneties coming out of this ward and things going clang... Monte, he wrote to me and he basically said I was a really stupid bastard, he sent me all this information about how awful valium are and all the side effects. However he said basically just to be awkward, out of spite, continue, and that appealed to me. Even if I don't do anything useful again, if I just use up their welfare money...

SLASH: Do you really see your main reason to do what you do as making a nuisance of yourself?

GENESIS: Not the main reason, as a kind of agent provocateur.

SLASH: Cultural guerilla?

GENESIS: Yeah I suppose so, that's the kind of direction it's been going on a long time and even with Philly's brother we used to do a magazine at school called Conscience which caused a lot o'trouble, in fact I left just before but the issue after that which I helped with...one of the people got expelled.

SLASH: How were you raised? Liberal background? Strict background? . . .

GENESIS: Oh...Sensible, amazingly sensible.

SLASH: Do your parents buy your records?

GENESIS: No I give them to them, but they play them. My father's favorite track is Zylon B Zombie, he said he thinks United's a bit boring, nothing much happens in it he said and he thinks that After Cease to Exist is boring but he quite likes Love Bait. I was shocked when he told me the ones he liked, I was pleased but...

SLASH: What did your parents want you to be? D'you know?

GENESIS: They never said; except they said because I talked so much I ought to be a politician, that was a kind of family joke.

SLASH: So your desire to...disturb...doesn't especially come from a repressive background at all, does it?

GENESIS: Oh no, I mean me father was a drummer in a Glen Miller-type dance band when he was about 18, 19. He was the first person in Manchester (where I was born) when he was 17 to do over 100 miles an hour on this new road and he used to go around in cavalry boots and big leather jacket with a big stick in his boot...when the war broke out he volunteered to be a dispatch rider to get a new motorbike and ride — 'cos he was underage, and went to France right away, riding all these brand new motorbikes, and then he came back up to Dunkerque and then he did repertory threatre —...me mother did that as well and she was also one of those chorus-line dancers. I've never met anyone else so far that's told me about their parents who seemed to have been so lucky.

SLASH: You've mentioned Cosey. Will you tell us about this episode that could be titled 'Throbbing Gristle versus the queen'.

GENESIS: Oh my god. That was a big chapter, it's still having repercussions now. We're still banned by the British Foreign Office from Canada and Australia. This year we were invited to go to Sydney — we weren't really that keen so in a way it turned out better this way, but it was all settled, we'd got grants to take us and we even had first class hotel accommodation 100 pounds an hour if we'd've performed, free travel to any city in Australia for 6 kids, just unbelievable, and then suddenly they said 'We've been under pressure and you cannot come, and we knew exactly what it was. We got a 'phone call from the foreign office and they said 'We've had a 'phone conference with Washington and Ottowa and we've decided that Canada can't cope with you guys so if you agree not to go to Canada you'll be allowed into America.

SLASH: Waaah!

GENESIS: Big foreign offices deciding what to let you do and that's why we suddenly went very low-keyed before we came to America because we didn't want to lose the chance to be able to travel you know. I'm sure the reason was the Americans knew it was all bullshit but in England, I mean they had a discussion in parliament which The Times reported...The cabinet talked about it! No joke...just like the Pistols. This was like 4 weeks before the Pistols story broke...We vanished to America so then it moved on. I better go to the beginning now! What happened was we got asked to do this exhibition at the ICA Gallery which is in The Mall in London...at the end of The Mall is Buckingham Palace and it's owned by the Queen. The guy who was running the gallery for a while had started an arts lab in the 60's and had been involved in the whole arts lab movement and they got him in there to kind of liven the place up because it's known as a very boring gallery — At one point that was the only place that The Clash could play and the Savoy Set and The Damned, Patti Smith jammed with the Clash there once. The Slits first performed there and Generation played the first time there and this guy said to us he wanted us to do an exhibition, he didn't care...We said well we've decided to sort of dump art and do music, that's what we've always really wanted to do — we'd proved our point which is that none of us had any art training and we ended up getting these big exhibitions, in catalogues and everything and we'd proved a point so we thought well we'll try the rock business next and it was instinct or coincidence or just a feeling in England at the time, it was the same time a lot of other people were thinking that way you know..start chiselling away at these rock business stereotypes and rich ones and the first time Cosey ever did a porno magazine, it was a picture that we did on the invite leaflet, the article was called Prostitution and it was a kind of psuedosociological tit magazine article you know, we'd always saved all the magazines we could find with her in to eventually use for some kind of a show and we thought as this is our last real art event we'll make it into a crossover and we'll also make it kind of a retrospect so we got very nice sort of conceptual silver frames, we took all the porno mags pics that she was in, all the pages she was on, we mounted them all in these lovely frames and she signed them all with pencil. They were all along one wall originally and then on the opposite wall was all photos that we'd been given by people who'd taken pictures, people we'd never asked, but had just given us photos of art performances and then on the end wall was every press cutting we'd ever had so it was 3 different ways other people'd seen us, but none of them really what we were like. The Cosey part was so funny..This is Tessa from Sunderland, she's an air hostess and then the next one was 'This is Barbara from Hawaii'. We didn't have to say anything...We didn't have to say it was feminist or anything, it ridiculed the whole thing in its own way and they printed all these pictures and added this stupid text, we could never have done a parody of it as good as the real one, that's why she actually deliberately decided to go through the whole thing. And the queen got certain rumours through people working at the ICA that there was going to be pornography in this gallery, so they sent — I don't know what you call them — 3 lords anyway came down and said if this exhibition goes ahead like this, we're gonna padlock this building and it'll never open again...The queen said she doesn't want this show to go on. So there was big debates night after night, this was about a week before it was supposed to open and we just sort of said well do we do something else that's kind of a response or do we just go ahead anyway? In the end, because the newspapers had picked up on it — I mean had to be literally smuggled in. They chased us down the corridors, they kicked a door down to try and get to Cosey! and punched people who were trying to stop them. The only compromise we had to make — we thought it's better they were there in some form than not there at all, so we built these great big boxes which they slid in and out of, so they were all in there and you could just pull them out and look at them and put them back in and there was a guy that sat there in a security uniform and you had to say to him "I want to look at the dirty pictures" The thing was then that we knew the police were gonna come so we had a thing over the door saying 'No-one under the age of 18', just like a sex shop. And we had a thing that everyone had to read that said 'warning: certain of the items in this exhibition could be disturbing to people, etc. etc. and then they had to sign into a book saying that they'd read the thing. So there was no way the police could get us, it was a private club. Scotland Yard sent down the vice-squad and everything. Oh yeah it was in the papers you know. We lost track of about 600 cuttings. But the thing was that we had all the press cuttings from when I was at school and as this went on every day we got all the papers and we added all the new ones — and they never mentioned the press cuttings once in any newspaper. And we had about 3 tables we found in the basement on which they usually have archaelogical things, and we had a few of the little objects we'd used in performances in which is where the used tampax was, a walking stick with all used tampax attached to it, and bits of chain, a rubber boiler suit, vaseline, syringes and stuff like that. Siouxsie of the Banshees was there before she was Siouxsie, she's in one of the press cuttings and opposite there's this M NIcholas Fairbanks pointing and there's this headling — "These people are the wreckers of civilization". It was marvelous and it was the first big event where they saw all the punks and all the drag queens in outrageous drag and Throbbing Gristle played live and there was a bar with only beer and whisky (no sherry)...there was fights... Generation X played for the first time when they still had Gene October only we called them LSD, it was the most unhip name we could think of for a punk group.

SLASH: What was the exact date of that memorable opening?

GENESIS: October 26, 1976.

CONTINUED NEXT MONTH . . .

The nearest American film to Bunuels
Andalusian Dog
– New York Magazine
Pink Flamingos
AN EXERCISE IN
POOR TASTE
SATURDAYS AT MIDNIGHT
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FRIDAYS AT MIDNIGHT
ERASERHEAD
A drama of dark
and troubling things.

JOE REESE: TARGET VIDEO

Interviewed by J. Bell

S: How long have you been making videotapes?
JR: I started in video in about 1973. I was just doing it for myself at the time, taping street performances in parking lots around restaurants like Kentucky Fried Chicken.
S: Are your videotapes mostly of punk bands, or do you film things like news events?
JR: I do mostly punk, but I tape other performances. I tape things off TV from news broadcasts if it's relevant to something I'm doing. The stuff you see on NBC and CBS is public property. I like to re-edit the news pieces, which is what they do too. In turn, I let them use some of my stuff to broadcast. We can't shoot live news footage yet. It requires a $30,000 minicam which we don't have yet ... but we will.
S: Did you get your equipment by stealing, buying or with grants?
JR: A little bit of all that. A lot of trading, too. I would work for someone who would give me things. I've been given a lot. Now I've formed a small organization and people have loaned me money. This studio was originally a gallery. We had everything from poetry readings, painting and sculpture shows, dance performances, and new wave and punk shows. I got more and more interested in going in the direction of punk because it seemed more relevant to the ideas I was involved in, and a lot of the people that I was working with were into it, like the Mutants.
S: Tell us about the fire.
JR: I had a 2,000 sq. ft. studio with a soundproof recording room. We had shows there, but the electricity in the building was pretty crumby, things were blowing out, sockets were making funny noises. This was in January 1978. We went to the Sex Pistols concert, but I only took my super-8 camera. I left all my other equipment back at the studio. When we came back from the concert, there were the fire trucks rolling up the hoses and there was nothing left but charred embers and pieces of wood. Everything I had was consumed. It wiped out about 12 years work. After the first 6 months of shock — I stayed drunk most of that time — things started changing. I met my partner in this new building, people started giving me junk parts and lenses to cameras, and I started again.
S: What was your cable TV show?
JR: The most recent one I started in 1977. I showed mostly bands playing, collage pieces, performances, and the latest gossip, what's happening in the community to keep it informed. The idea was that it would give me an opportunity to learn more about producing by showing mostly local groups, and I could expand it when I went down to La or NY or Europe. I shot mostly art performances in Amsterdam, Italy, Germany — there weren't too many bands there three years ago. But they were really into the blood and guts thing. I taped a Hermann Nitzche performance in an abandoned church. I had the cable show for one year and three months. Now I'm on UHF.
S: What type of equipment do you use?
JR: I have broadcast quality equipment so it can be shown on regular TV and is up to their standards. I have a portapak with a color camera and a digital editing system, so we're capable of doing just about anything in video.
S: Where else have your tapes been shown?
JR: A month ago I had something at the New Cinema on St. Mark's Place in NYC. I showed a 2-hour piece of 30 California bands, edited together with inserts like a regular film, like a movie, but keeping a raw quality. The New Cinema is a theatre rented by six artists who installed a great sound system and an Advent screen. It's a strictly video theatre — I think it's the first one of its kind. It's been going 6 months now and is very successful. There are sometimes 3 or 4 shows a night, real late too so everyone has a chance to catch them. It gives filmmakers a chance to show their work because they can transfer the film to videotape, which I also do.
S: You work in film as well as video?
JR: I have a super-8 camera with a 200-ft. cartridge so I can shoot 15 minutes straight with sound. I shot the Clash with that and it came out really well. We also have access to 16mm equipment. We are trying to cover all the possibilities so we can have the highest quality package at the lowest possible price.
S: If a band wanted to hire you to make a tape of them, how much would a half hour, color videotape cost?
JR: The raw stock is $20. There's a $50-70 set-up fee. So it's roughly $70. I've put out a price sheet and what the cost is to produce a tape. We are trying to keep it at a level that will give the artists involved as well as me a chance to use our creativity and exchange things, but not have the costs get out of hand.
S: Do you sell copies of tapes?
JR: Not without the permission of the band. Besides, that's not really what we are trying to do. Originally, I wanted to put together a library that would be used in our own theatre, at clubs, and as promotional tapes for the bands. If a band wants to get a copy of the tape, they can get one. In the future it will be slightly different. We will still have the library, but we are now doing things specifically in the studio and with live performances to mix together into half hour and hour shows for distribution on a videodisc.
S: What exactly is a videodisc?
JR: A videodisc looks exactly like a record album. It's the same thickness, the same diameter and comes in a sleeve and jacket. It's got stereo sound. You put it into a playback machine that's hooked into your TV and your stereo. It's a really good system. The quality is so much better than videocassette. The discs have more resolution lines on the screen and the image is incredible. I can't believe they've done such a good job so fast. Prices vary, but in NY they will be about $400, which I think is a good deal for what you're getting. Bootleggers have already got the playback machines and are selling them for $1100. The discs that you play on the machines are from $12—20. The prices will probably go down like they did with Betamax. You can get those for $200 used, probably cheaper if you're in a card game.
S: Do you think the "record" button on Betamax and other home recorders will be outlawed to prevent pirating and bootlegging of TV shows?
JR: They won't be outlawed, they'll be phased out because videodiscs will take over. Discs are for playback only, so the problem will be solved ... In a way I'm against bootlegging. My concern when I'm working with a band is with quality. Bootleggers aren't concerned with that — some bootleg records are pretty good, but most aren't. The same with video, if you mass produce it at high speed, which is what they do (the mafia is already doing it in NY) you're really cheating people. With the type of information I'm dealing with — well, this noise has to be at the best level possible!
S: What other new electronic devices have you worked with?
JR: I've done a thing called slow scan which is an electronic device that works with a telephone. There are different spots that are set up in the US and Canada that have these machines. They are hooked up into an Advent screen. You put your telephone into an electronic machine called the robot, then play a tape or broadcast a live show to these different places. The machine picks up the electronic information like any other video scanner, breaks it down into a sound code and runs it through the telephone. The telephone at the other end of the line, like in a long distance call, picks up the sound information and develops it back into an image. It's very simple. It started out as a government process and was used for

communications during the war. Now it's available to the public. It started out being used for fine art performances, but a lot of them are so dull and dry that people really got bored. I broadcast the Mutants from Napa State Hospital (a mental institution), and the response was overwhelming. People really got excited, they loved it, they thought it was crazier than shit. In our new studio in San Francisco we are going to have one of these machines ... Also, the first art satellite broadcast was done between California and NY. You can either rent time or get a free open channel through the National Endowment for the Arts. We want to do satellite punk shows. It's basically all set up. There's the geosynchronius satellite system. There are three satellites set up in a triangular pattern at three points around the planet — so there are no barriers between the satellites and you can broadcast around the world by bouncing from one satellite to another. So we could set up a show with Osaka, Japan or Rome or wherever. We just have to keep pushing it.

S: What about Crime's performance at San Quentin?

JR: When we got there we had a meeting with the guards in the courtyard in front of the prison, and we were told that once we passed the gates if we were taken hostage the policy of the prison was that we would be shot if necessary. We were literally putting our lives in our hands. The guy was very convincing. It was tense. But it added to our desire to do it. Crime dresses up in police uniforms when the perform, so it was kind of a surreal experience for these guys. The prisoners don't have any love for police badges, so they made a lot of remarks. They were throwing pebbles at me while I was running the camera and heckling me.

S: Have you had other problems during shows?

JR: When I first started doing this, people gave me a rough time. They didn't like having the camera around, they didn't like that media system. But it's changed overnight. You can't reject electronics. And now that they know what Target is up to, that we are not outside media people trying to exploit the scene, a lot of people are working with us. Also, the police have been getting on my back, because the last show we had with 5 bands was totally packed. the cops just closed it down and told me I'd go to jail if I ever did anything like it again. They're pretty convincing in Oakland. I am moving to San Francisco, though, and then I want to open an after hours video theatre.

S: What is the ultimate goal for Target Video?

JR: I'm interested in establishing an information center and representing groups of artists from all over the world, and world exchange between Japan, England, NY — everywhere. We already have someone in Germany, and I may be going to Japan in October. People are really interested in this information over there. With video, a really small group of people like New Wave and punk artists can communicate to thousands of people overnite. You have to be able to see the bands that are playing the new music, it's so strong it demands some kind of visual reinforcement. I edit inserts into tapes of the performances (bombs going off, riots, LBJ in a swimming pool with his puppy) and you can expand concepts. There are no limitations to what you can do, and very quickly. When I was in NY I showed my tapes to all the clubowners so they were able to make decisions if they wanted certain bands to play there. It was all done for free, it was just the idea that I wanted to set up a communication. Places like Hurrah's and the Mudd Club call me to find out about new groups, so we're giving new bands opportunity to get exposure.

S: What do you do with your profits?

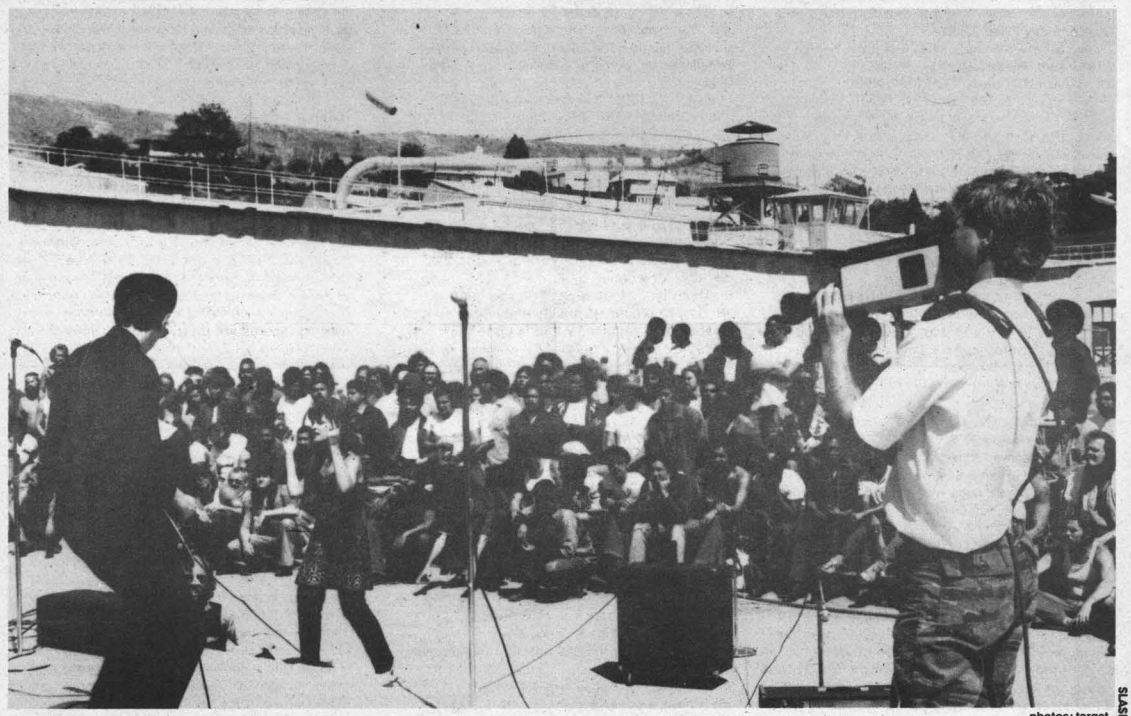
JR: The money we do get, we put right back into Target. I borrow money for all the equipment. I don't even own it. I don't want to. I just want to have th best stuff there is and use it. Let's face it, no matter if you're the most radical group in existence, you've got to have some kind of money to pull off what you want. Look at the Black Panthers, look at the money they generated. I'd much rather do this than do a cigarette commercial. That's how you make money. All the other video companies around here would never deal with the New Wave stuff. They don't want to put their equipment in jeopardy, and they can make more money selling girdles and bras or cars ... or doing porno. That's where the big money is at.

S: What about the future?

JR: Information is what the 80's is all about. We're headed for an information war. Recorded information and how it is manipulated is what the battle is all about. Some make lots of money with it, some use it for political reasons, which is what we're after. A lot of record companies don't like what we're saying. I kept my cable show because UHF wanted me to edit out all the "fucks" and "shits".

S: Anything you'd like to broadcast via print and ink?

JR: I would like to hear more from the bands, people who are performing new music, I'd like to have them contact us. I want to expand our library. So when any bands are up here, they should give us a call and come over and look at what we've got, and think about if they want to be distributed on a videodisc, because we're preparing all that stuff right now. It's important for us to communicate.



photos: target

Taping CRIME at San Quentin

staged events

As opposed to the last one, this summer has so far seen an amazing proliferation (look that one up!) of live gigs way beyond our most optimistic expectations. It has even got to the point where some of us have been known to spend a fortune on gaz zooming in one night from Hollywood to Chinatown back to West L.A. in order to catch the highlights of the night. Imagine, more than one gig an evening to go to! Might be the normal state of things in London town or the Big Apple, but here in Mellow Meadows?... Add to this the inevitable before-gigs, in-between-gigs and after-gigs parties and it's no wonder some of the weaker ones in the crowd are showing signs of terminal exhaustion. And we're only halfway thru!!

So, instead of dissecting gig after gig in our usual manner, we've decided to kill fifty birds with one stone by roaming thru our quickly fading memories of most of these shows, trying to pick out the outstanding sets we saw and distributiong gold medals and honorable mentions whenever deserved. A bit like the "we highly recommend..." number all them lame liberal rags about town have been pulling 'cept we're not concerned here with MOR sporific outfits like 20/20 or Diane Harris and the Tufftones. This is the real world, goddamit! And here are some of its more outstanding citizens: One of the most pleasant surprizes of the past few weeks hasbeen the latest show of the *Go-Go's* at the *Hong Kong Cafe* (with *Human Hands* and *Plugz*). Snicker all you want all you sceptics but that band is undoubtedly on the verge of entering the ranks of the Big League (you know, the Big League: X, Plugz, Screamers, the ones even your brother who goes to U.C.L.A. has heard of and maybe seen once). It's hard to pinpoint what exactly changed them from just another sweet bunch with potential to what they are now but anyone who was at that show KNOWS they were, and are, HOT. It's true their new dummer Gina has taken to their brand of hard-as-painted-nails-modern-pop-with-spikey-overtones (beat that one, L.A. Weakly!) like a piranha to a Beverly Hills jacusi but Elissa was no wimp either. Maybe the girls finally got the confidence they needed to forcefully slam their tunes into the audience's face, maybe all the countless hours spent rehearsing (not many bands work as hard as the Go-Go's on their music) have finally paid off — the battle with their instruments is over and the battle with the public consciousness is just starting, whatever it is, this bunch is here to stay. So, here go the first five gold medals out of the batch to (note those names, historians) Belinda, Jane, Margot, Charlotte and Gina. Moral: yesterday's joke band is often today's serious contender. Of course, we should oint out that just because the Go-Go's are now a bona fide first rate band don't mean they're going to cruise effortlessly into that big contract everybody in town is yakking about. Just look at the other first rate bands you and I know that are still living on dubious tacos and plain wrap beer. Just because they're all girls may be the gimmick some unimaginative talent scout might jump on, and it also may be the fuckin' kiss of death. So, watch out Go-Go's, your music is the only thing you have to sell. Believe me, it's good enough.

Another band that has come out of the shadows this summer is the Long Beach-based *Suburban Lawns*, who have obviously decided to strike hard and once and for all impose themselves upon the "scene". Well, as far as this rockin' idiot is concerned, they have. Saw them two or three times recently (once at *Club 88* with *Brainiacs*, twice at the *Hong Kong* with *The Eyes* (more on them later) the Rotters and Spy (nothing on them later) and every time I was blown. They begin competently with fast hard numbers that no one would be ashamed of, the three guitar players alternating on vocals, it rocks in a strident and occasionally dissonant manner, but in no way does it prepare you for what comes soon after. You see, the Suburban Lawns have this Sue Tissue character that soon joins them on keyboards, a very subdued-looking girl with long black hair and a predilection for vinyl raincoats and boots. On keyboards she's almost invisible but then she borrows one of the guy's bass and steps up front and that's when you start realizing that this chickie ain't no wallpaper and that maybe there's more to the band than first meets the eye. Not only does she play that borrowed bass with more nerve and mean rhythm than a funk pro but she spits out her backing vocals in a most unsubdued, unbacking manner. Something like tense abandon, except more so. But it's only a bit later, when she finally decides to do her singing full time, giving back the bass and grabbing the mike stand as a drowning cat claws at a stick you offer it that your lame little heart KNOWS that this here is one of the fuckin' toughest, most unique, most outstanding performing creatures you're ever likely to see and hear, here or anywhere. If this sounds like jive to you, buster, check it out and then tell me to my face that girl ain't amazing. She may not be on your list of "in people" yet but you see her once and if you're halfway alive she'll make number 1 and you'll just be another shivering fan before you can spell out Lene Lovich. That's a promise. When Sue Tissue sings, nothing else matters. I don't even know if she's got a great voice (their really good single doesn't quite convey what's it's about) or if she's sexy or anything, all I know is that you can't keep your fuckin' eyes off her, so strange is her presence, so surprizing is her way AROUND the songs. It's either the most sarcastic "rock attitude" any performer has ever pulled or a genuine breakthru beyond the countless cliche barriers even the so-called "new" bands are all stumbling on. Check them out, there's more style here than you could use at one go, and, as Ranking Jeffrey always says, style is how you separate the doodlers from the real people these days. And by style we don't mean posing. One of those Suburban Lawns gigs also featured *the Eyes*. Well, that band too seems to have come out of their semi-retirement situation and we finally had the chance to see them in action. Their super-edgy brand of pop may not be everyone's cup of tea but there's no denying the razor-sharp precision of their sound. It has a deceitful "light" quality to it that upon repeated listenings (not easy with this elusive pack) turns into something entirely different. After a while you begin to separate the ingredients in the shrill super-dense package, and you're hooked. Almost a case of a band being individually too good for their own collective good.

photo: kerry colonna

SUE TISSUE/SUBURBAN LAWNS

Okay, who else got nominated this month for the Academy Awards? Well, for one, the most imposing out-of-towners had to be the lengendary-but-never-caught-in-the-flesh-yet *PERE UBU*, who played recently at the *Whisky*. I mean, I hardly ever played those guys' records (somehow too impatient with the decidedly offbeat approach), wary of the cult business the band has been generating around neo-hippie circles, mainly just too fuckin' fast in my dismissal of serious alternative stuff with no obvious connections — god do I feel like a dumb shit now!) but minutes after this decidedly unhip looking band came on I was spellbound, and remained that way until the last second of brilliant modern music had been squeezed out of them. I tell you, if I had known I would love it so much before coming in, I would have been a nervous wreck! The band is so good, so inventive, so inspired and so un-fuckin' pretentious about it all they make you feel like a trendy nerd who's missed the last boat. They may not sport the latest hair styles or the latest threads but in the music department they can be more gripping and challenging than the newest hype from any in-circle around the underground world. And as to that BIG David Thomas fellow on tortured yodelling and vocals, he is THE master, the boss, the real bad spokesman of our collective unconscious and all you Rotten clones can go back to kindergarten and smash your toys. He may look like Orson Wells or Jackie Gleason but that overweight fucker can rock like James Brown and growl like Beefheart at the same time. In between songs or when the instruments take over he mumbles, scowls, gestures and spaces out like a genuine street crazy in a dark doorway, he gets hold of your attention with one flick of his finger and wins your undying respect with a raise of his eyebrows. The idiot on the dance floor that kept barking for "more boogie" and "get down music" and whom the fat gentleman dismissed as a "despicable fly" should have shriveled up and died, had he been in possession of half a conscious mind. And so, for frightening us and touching our sensibilities at the same time, a shower of gold medals on those Cleveland guys.

Another out of town band that shook this boy silly was *The Units*, from neighboring village San Francisco. They played the *Hong Kong* a while back with *Pink Section* and destroyed just about every concept I had about "electronic" combos. As every other cro-magnon I know I always have had this underlying feeling that synthesizers and other sterile looking gadgets were generally intruders on the rock in roll field and that nothing genuinely "alive" could be extracted from their circuits, no matter how flash and brilliant some of their rock n roll impersonations could be. That night, watching the Units pound their machines into submission, I knew that another cliched concept of mine was biting the dust once and for all. I also knew that there probably was a future to rock n roll after all, and that future did not necessarily include anything resembling guitars. The Units' sound was so tight, their individual presence so devoid of bullshit and posing that I even overlooked the half-assed "multi-media" business with the home movies flickering in the background. Less easy to overlook were the overwhelmingly "zany" antics of a certain section of *Pink Section* who, in spite of an occasionally attractive sound, manage to rub my fur the wrong way for most of their set. I must add that this opinion is not shared by most of the other loonies on this boat and that I'm still quite willing to check them out again, especially following the release of their irresistive debut single.

The *Mau-Mau's* may not have a single yet, but everytime they are vaguely "scheduled" (a word to use in the loosest possible manner when speaking of the Mau Mau's) to play somewhere one can count on excitement and adventure. So far, the Mau Mau's have managed to be prevented from playing more than they have actually set foot on stage but it's the intention that counts. Recently, they have even managed to somehow organize a flexible network of similar-minded bands (U.X.A. Black Flag) who are intent to promote, as their "Youth Party Magazine" mouthpiece proudly proclaims, "public music at public prices". Idealistic as it may sound (listen, all you Screamers), they even pulled it off once, at a vaguely discoid sleazoid bar on Hollywood Blvd called *King's Palace*. The other attempt at grassroots entertainment took place a while back at the Masque,

where for a one dollar cover charge you were going to be treated to the rock bottom sounds of the Smart Pills (competent new trio in town), Black Heart (featuring one ex Avenger on drums and one ex Controllers' drummer on vocals), U.X.A. Black Flag and of course les masterminds Mau Mau's. The Festivities didn't go exactly as well as could be expected, in fact the potentially great gig turned out to be a very factually great bust, 30 or so Hollywood cops showed up and neither Mau-Mau's, Black Flag or U.X.A. got a chance to say 1, 2, 3, 4.... (see local shit for more lurid details). Black Heart did get to play, which was a shame. A permanent temper tantrum might be Carla Mad Dog's idea of stage presence, but I don't think it is anyone else's. And just because senior Darby Crash gets away with the anti-everything stance don't mean every amateur with a chip on its shoulder can get up there and bitch gracefully in public view. Like, if you gonna be real nihilistic and shit, you better firmly believe in yourself. This is only an apparent contradiction. Over.

But back to Hollywood Boulevard, and the wonderfully uncool environment of King's Palace. That night, for two bucks fifty, we got to jump along to the tunes of the Smart Pills, U.X.A., the Mau Mau's and Black Flag. Although U.X.A. were fantastic The Mau Mau's definitely won the popularity contest that night. It was the sweatiest, rowdiest, most physically dangerous dance floor I have observed in a long time. And, in spite of the lame excuse for a sound system which just about obliterated Rick Wilder's snarling vocals there was enough music left in the static for the pogomaniacs piled on top of each other to writhe until exhaustion. The sound was white hot, like gusts of metal wind, and there was no doubt that although they don't have much live action the Mau Mau's have been secretly lightening the bolts on their war machine. Now if only one could hear them under optimum sound conditions, like on the Troubadour stage....But don't hold your breath for that one, it's probably against the Mau Mau's principles!

At the other end of the musical spectrum, *the Screamers* played again recently, at the posh stuffy Roxy of all places, It was pretty much the same show as the Whisky's controversial sets (see last ish.) 'cept since the Roxy does not have the slightest trace of a dance floor one had no choice but to be real well behaved and attentive and listen to the music. Everybody but Tomata was also kind of tucked away behind their hardware, real efficient servants to the SOUND, occasionally commuting from one type of keyboards to another, hardly pausing to loosen their ties. There were some lovely musical moments courtesy of Paul, who is more and more assuming the persona of a romantic pianist, and K.K. the once flamboyant drummer played standing up for a little while, which made me nostalgic for the good old days. Tomata was funny and discarded his evening attire piece by piece, pacing from one end of the runway to the other and pulling mock-anguished faces while little girls in the front tables mouthed every word and tried to grab his dangling suspenders. Sheila rose from the dead and the two of them played out a minute caricatural drama like in a silent movie cept the soundtrack was full of gothic crescendos and pregnant pauses (poses?). There were lots of mummies and daddies and other assorted healthy folks in the audience and everybody had as good a time as at the Rocky Horrow Show a few years ago. I still love Vertigo and a few other tunes but I think now I would stick to the recorded versions, if only there were any. The Screamers are a very talented and very smart bunch who happen to have directly opposite views to mine as to where music should go. Whether or not it is true that this happened to be their last live performance, their future is a bigger question mark than it ever was.

And now, before I go back to bed until night time (which still is the right time, all of them summer afternoon barbecues and cocktails by the chlorine tank notwithstanding) et me proudly (ta ta) announce our Live Summer Extravaganza, part II (or whatever it will be called by then) coming up in next issue, which perhaps will cover obscure unknowns such as Magazine, Buzzcocks, Gang of Four, the Cramps, along with local giants and out of town challengers like the Dead Kennedys, the Offs, the Urge, the Senders, the Zeros, you name it, they'll be here, we'll be there, and when the bloody summer is over we can all meet in a sleep cure clinic.

Next in this live section, a series of perceptive looks at the still twitching Devo phenomena, the twitching more than ever Human Hands Nervous Gender crowd, the unvoluntary twitching caused by Fear in a certain state institution, and the twitches of outraged shock that followed a certain Black Flag's outdoor display. This was Kick, now twitching off.

DAVID/HUMAN HANDS

Nervous Gender, Human Hands, Bags Hong Kong Cafe July 28

Nervous Gender, Human Hands, and the Bags were choice ingredients for a tossed esoteric rock and roll salad served at the Hong Kong Cafe July 28.

Nervous Gender played clever experimental rock with an untuned guitar and brainy experimental electronic boxes. Human Hands look brainy and lay experimental rock with a detuned sax and tuned guitars. Everything about the Bags is tuned and a look of braininess isn't needed for the Bags to dish out an ear meal of very physical, agitated music to a very physical, agitated audience.

Some people waitng outside get annoyed at KNBC-TV cameramen who were filming a Chinatown new wave news segment and made derogatory remakrs and shoved the cameras. There's a chance that unruly behavior towards the media will prevent television from showing punks as people who wear polyester pants and enjoy a game of golf if the weather's nice. Punk's bad public image could keep Human Hands off the Merv Griffin show and deny Nervous Gender the right to drive around in limousines and eat shrimp and other exotic French dishes.

Nervous Gender delighted the crowd with depressing songs about dejection and rejection played on strange looking electronic boxes by disturbed people. They looked nervous on stage, seeming almost self-conscious as they played upbeat tunes, cover songs like "Georgy Girl", and psycho-sexual love/hate songs about fast food, Mommy, and being put down because you're a geek. For example, their song *"Scandinavian Dilemna"* is about someone who gets raped in a plush Wilshire alleyway as she rushes to MacDonalds. Since she's Swedish, the rape reminds her of a documentary. In the hospital they force her to watch a Jacques Cousteau television special and she goes crazy.

Phranc has the stage mannerisms of a Las Vegas comedian. Phranc looks remarkably like a 12 year old boy. She tells one-liners, grins like Johnny Carson, and makes one expect a ba-dump-bump retort after song introductions.

Nervous Gender's instruments are three synthesizers, a rhythm box, and one untuned guitar. Most of their songs aren't funny. Gender's songs can be so serious and make such pointed statements that it can get painful.

Girardo, Nervous Gender's lyricist, singer, and synthesizer player, said, "We usually sing about sexual perversion and violence, but I don't see that as particularly depressing."

Human Hands seem conventional after Nervous Gender. Most of them look wholesome enough to live in the 1950s. Guitarist Juan Gomez looks like an A student. Singer David Wiley is a powerful vocalist and he makes horrible noises on the saxophone. Maybe they'll be stars someday.

The Bags had more sheer power than Nervous Gender and Human Hands and the Bags probably have more sheer power than just about anybody not in the CIA. Bob Graves' searing guitar work, Pat's bass playing and Alice's rock and roll shouting shoot through the symbolism and artistic statement world of "experimental rock" and replace it with blood and guys.

The Bags' version of the Airplane's "Go Ask Alice" is pure energy. Pat looks lovely in high-heeled shoes with pointy toes to match her pointy haircut and day-glo lipstick that accentuates the while pallor of her complexion. The Bags' set was less cerebral and more meaty than Gender or Hands. With Marshall amps, the Bags can make the dead walk.

John Liebrand

FEAR AT CAMARILLO

They sound like tabloid headlines: "CRIME AT SAN QUENTIN", "MUTANTS AT NAPA STATE HOSPITAL". Now "FEAR AT CAMARILLO STATE HOSPITAL". The scenic ride is half-baked freeway until you enter the grounds of the hospital. With the rolling lawns and eucalyptus trees it seems like any other sleepy California farming village ... then you drive through the gates past Unit 20 where desperate inmates poke their heads between the window bars. When we got to Haggerty's Gym curious patients started friendly conversations, mostly incoherent due to the Thorazine/Stellazine lobotomies they are forcefed in daily doses. The more lucid among them complained that the excessive drugs impaired their ability to enjoy the music. Some were so nervous they marched back and forth in small armies from the dance floor to the patio outside. Those who stayed inside to dance each had their own style: stationary prayer, jumping jacks, voodoo boogaloo, slow robot. Rows of people sitting huddled in the back swayed in the shadows.

Fear was great, but they made a mistake when they unthinkingly pulled out their six-pack. The orderlies frantically herded out those in the crowd who were attempting alcoholic rehabilitation, in other words, 2/3 of the audience. Oh well, beer and chloral hydrate (their nightly sleeping pill) don't mix anyway. Fear continued their treatment on the thirty remaining patients that were allowed to stay, and it seemed a success. Exene befriended a forty-four year-old woman named Marjorie who wanted to know when Elvis was going to perform. While she waited, she bummed cigarettes from Kickboy and tried our Exene's lipstick.

After Fear, the security guards wanted to clear the place. The Angry Samoans conned them out of another fifteen minutes so they could play a couple of numbers, but most of the inmates were already back at their units. They go to bed early out there.

V/D

BLACK FLAG
AT POLLIWOG PARK
(IN MANHATTEN BEACH)

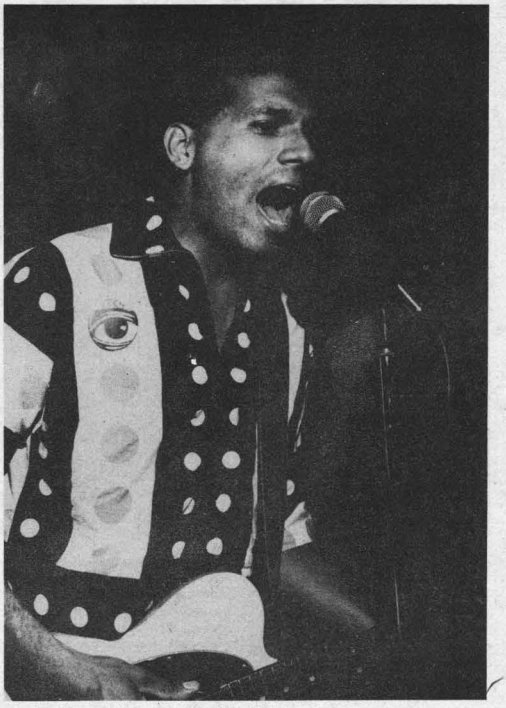
(Imagine real nice orchestra music)
"It was such a lovely Sunday afternoon. Mom & dads brought along the kiddies, there was plenty of potato chips and baseball and lemonade. There was a playground and ducks and love and niceness and kisses all over until,
(horrible music creeps in)
"Somebody let Black Flag into the park . . . . . ."

At about 7 o'clock, Pollowig Park's entertainment program burst into chaos like an alien jumping out of somebody's chest. The Park's first ever rock & roll show, exploded into a messy collage of punk noise, foul language, beer drinking, beer throwing, and monsoons of flying garbage. Vicious little Keith dug in, claimed his ground and wouldn't leave until he'd insulted, angered, and threatened everyone in the park.

A bunch of idiot surfers showered him with trash, (probably thinking they were gonna see Cheap Trick or something) parents screamed complaints about Keith's foul words, (In fact, enough to stop the show twice) but Black Flag's onslaught ran its course. And amazingly, nobody left. Maybe they were fascinated or horrified, but they stayed for it all.

One thing is for sure, Black Flag are soon to accompany the Germs, Damned, and Iggy in the Party-Wrecking Hall of Fame ... So "Tear It Up" as Johnny Burnette would say ...

Ranking Senor Lea



JOE/EYES

photos: scott lindgren

DIANE/ALLEYCATS

HUMAN HANDS/EYES/ALLEYCATS, Hong Kong Cafe, 7/11/79

Human Hands exploded on stage to a generally responsive but static audience. Lead singer/saxophonist/synarist David Lively would look more appropriate as a junior manager at McDonald's than as the front man of this frenzied quintet. This corn-fed fresh-scrubbed quality lends a disconcerting air t his often manic performance. The last time I saw them play, at a party, Lively was less restrained: plunging into the audience and thrashing about with a sometimes unwilling victim. Perhaps subdued by the audience, a bunch of norms waiting for the straight-ahead rock 'n roll of the Alleycats, tonight the band turned in a less manic, occasionally sloppy, but always powerful performance. The incredible rhythm section might very well set a new fashion for geeks with glasses: besides looking great, Dennis Duck on drums and Rick Potts on bass offer some of the most charged and unpredictable rhythms around. Each song has much substance to unravel: rhythms merging, stopping, and starting again, pop hooks subtly altered, as in the excellent "Dilemma," which repeats and mutates a catchy phrase into total, controlled delirium. On "Lurk" Lively's saxophone provides rhythm-shattering squeals, trusting in the capable hands of Potts and Duck for reconstruction. "Crazy" features a mechanistic Morse Code guitar part by Juan Gomez that probably gave ear (if not brain) damage to a large percentage of the audience. In "New Look," the first song, Lively's narcissistic posturings were unsure, but his delivery of the other songs was convincing: smug, wide-eyed coyness that somehow never got too cute. Though several songs are too long, and segments could use some editing to maintain the high energy level they instantly produce, Human Hands offer some of the most intriguing music I've heard in a long time.

The Eyes came on next, an abrupt change from the first band in both their professionalism and traditionalism. "Disneyland" was great, with Joe Ramirez's infantile babble and sleight-of-hand guitar playing sounding better than ever. "TAQN" was performed at the speed of light without losing a fragment of its sarcastic edge, guitar and organ trading frantic insults.

Joe Nanini on drums, who looks unsettlingly like an oriental Abe Lincoln, somehow kept up the frantic pace. It's refreshing to see a band with a sense of humor that can take itself seriously enough to deliver tight, bouncy songs like these. Though their set would benefit with more variety, the Eyes prove that humor and power aren't mutually exclusive.

I enjoyed the Alleycats better tonight than the last time I had seen them, at Club 88 when they played with the Germs, an unenviable spot for ANY band. This time they seemed to have more vigor. Though their homespun lyrics are wearing a bit thin, they still can be counted on to provide a professionalsounding, dynamic set. Diane Chai is an amazing technician on the bass, but the same patterns and intervals grew monotonous song after song, and I found my attention wandering to the creepylooking audience, comprised of fat business majors gone "punk" for a night, grizzled hippies, and a smattering of "Wet"-type fashion robots, all pogoing in wild abandon. Though they can't be considered innovative, the Alleycats have a lot going for them if they can evoke this response from that kind of audience.

by Sanyo

DEVO AT THE SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM, JULY 1, 1979

I must admit I didn't come to the concert with an open mind. I have watched Devo's progress for two years, from the excellent, groundbreaking first single, to their rough, stagey, energetic early performances in 1977, to the disappointing first album, to the newest album, which I can't even stand to listen to. So I entered the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium embittered as only an ex-fan can be: because I knew that, at one time, Devo had a lot more going for them than silly suits and catchy slogans. When I left the Civic that night I wasn't so sure.

The first movie has worn well with age, and their newest films have some great images — notably a flying baby. But there was no excuse for the boring, predictable pap that they delivered as "the sound of things falling apart." Their set was technically superb — no one can accuse them of sloppiness now, all rough edges neatly polished to eliminate the sharp, dangerous splinteres of sound that used to be so exciting. They played fast, too, with mechanical whirlwind Alan Myer on drums never ceasing to amaze and impress me. But the top-heavy synthesizer sounded like everybody else's conception of "kooky" music — the unique, 3-d lunacy of the original synthesizer parts tamed and dissipated to utter harmlessness. The new songs, with the notable exception of "Swelling Itching Brain", and "Strange Pursuit" are at best forgettable, at their worst, like "Pink Pussycat" and "Triumph of the Will" embarrassingly bad. On the early songs, like "Jocko Homo" and "Mongoloid", Devo looked and sounded like tired old robots whose master had forgotten to reprogram them.

The audience loved them: after all, aren't they "wild and crazy guys?" They ate it up, all of it: the flashy lighting, the endless costume changes, the synthesized-string section backups that sounded reassuringly like disco. It's not every night you get to see spacy guys with silver masks ans yellow suits playing the kind of music you can understand, and they responded, rocking the floor and damaging eardrums in their excitement. When the inevitable question was put to them, the auditorium reverberated with their common reply: "We are Devo!"

Devo has always laughed at their audience; at their willingness to be made fools of. At the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium that night, I was laughing at Devo, because they have de-evolved into the very spuds they revile. A fitting end, I suppose. But I don't want to talk about spuds — either audience or performers — any more.

by Sanyo

45's

WIRE (A Question of Degree/ Former Airline)
Harvest import

The Wire commando strikes again! No survivors! Wire have never slipped up so far, and on "Question of Degree" they take bigger chances than ever before: just as it gets nice and oppressive they stop the methodical pounding to skip thru a much hazier interlude, something Pink Floyd would wallow in for one side of an album, but just as you start worrying wham it's back to the steel colored landscape, they literally spin out of the neo psychedelic break they've created with renewed energy and contained violence. Very strong stuff. B side is totally over the edge.

Kick

THE FLESHTONES
American Beat/Critical List
Red Star Records

Awesome recreation of a period in time (mid-sixties) when Rock and Roll was YOUTH music, not a Industry Business. This record captures it all—fuzzy reverb guitars, tambourines, harmoicas, gruff voices, oohhing backup—god, it's perfect, and yet still real and immediate enough to keep from being a museum piece. Like the Cramps, the Fleshtones have reshaped the past for the future, and I can't fault their faithfulness. The sincerity is overwhelming, you wanna blast this out of your car radio, even though they don't play this kind of music on the radio anymore o.k., the tape deck then, it's a soundtrack for going a thousand down the freeway with no tomorrow, blast it in your den, do all the Shindig dances on the living room rug. This is the boat the B-52's missed. This is the rock and roll we all nearly missed the first time out. Let's get it right this time. Hey, play that again!

Z

THROBBING GRISTLE
(We hate you little girls/ Five Knuckle Shuffle)
Sordide Sentimental
French import

"Throbbing Gristle, a secretly positive modern myth, constructed from negative contemporary myths, spectacularly valorizes everyday fantasies and social irrationality..." that's an extract from an essay attached to this single. The essay is translated from the french. It's long, complicated, very french and printed inside the sleeve, which is shaped like a magazine and opens like one. Also much artwork inside and outside. The weirdest most elaborate package for a single I have ever seen. When the french like something, they bury it under philosophical treatises and sophistico art work. They have done it with comic books, western movies, and now industrial music. It's a bit annoying, but if they have to..... Anyway the text is pretty challenging stuff if you can get thru it and the record is the best Throbbing Gristle I have heard. First rate agony sounds. "We hate you" drools, shrieks and chokes (we hate your little tits, we hate your little clits...") while evil machinery grinds and squeals, it sounds as if recorded at the bottom of a giant supertanker and is not recommended hearing material for your parents.

B side is a throbbing (ha!) terminal amphetamine delirium about the last dark sparks of a dying fried mind. It cooks. A delight for those of you heavily into borderline kicks.

Boy Face

ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN (Read it in Books/The Pictures on my Wall)
Zoo import

One more band like this and Liverpool will be forgiven for having laid the Beatles on the world. Come to think of it, this trio is enough, all is forgiven. This has so much charm it's unfair to everyone else on the music circuit. Nothing fancy or tricky either..... oh fuck it, PERFECTION. AND ATMOSPHERE. AND BEAT. Both sides haunt me. They take turns. Mamma, I feel a cult growing.....

Kick

PEARL HARBOR AND THE EXPLOSIONS
Drivin'/Release It
405 records

One thing I can't stand is obvious subliminals, and they must repeat that word "Drivin' " at least fifty times on this record. When you learn song-writing that's called a 'hook'. I call it obnoxious. Nice of the band to cop a riff from James White and the Blacks, do you think they'll acknowledge it when Arista signs them? Who the fuck cares, the machine is already in motion, the publicists have already been bought off, that lousy Leila Snake revue that these opportunists came from is dragging the bar circuit in S.F. while the liberated Miss Harbor opens her port for a big green bill. More MOR to foul up the airwaves, Miss Lovely Voice doesn't care I'm gritting my teeth, she fingers the green while I grind my spleen.

Z

GG & THE JABBERS (One Man Army/ Bored to Death/Beat Beat Beat)

Sat thru this. When it was over, my cigarette had gone out. I relit it.

Kick

JANE AIRE & THE BELVEDERES
(Lazy Boy/Call Me Every Night)
Virgin import

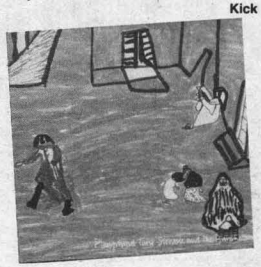
A long way from the 1st single. A long way in the wrong direction. That certain edginess has made way to slickness and commecial shine. The result hides itself behind a picture disk, and hide it should. Nail it to your wall and don't worry about having to take it down now and again to place it on your turntable. After one spin, the need will be gone.

Kick

THE POINTED STICKS
(The Real Thing/Out of Luck)
Quintessence records

If even a reluctant pop consumer such as myself can actually enjoy this record its GOT to be good. It is. Bouncy, pleasant, catchy, throw me all the adjectives and I'll use them. It's amazing no one has thrown these canadian kids in a big studio yet. They sure know how to swim.

Kick



SIOUXSIE & THE BANSHEES
(Playground Twist/Pull to Bits)
Polydor import

More ominous banging and clanging and visionary wailings from those funloving Banshees. A side is relatively devoid of grandiloquence and sticks to the point, B side is overstretched and frankly boring. Both sides are laced with children's whines and chatter, which must mean something in Banshee symbology. I hope the 2nd album s not collapse under its own weight.

Kick

The ACCELARATORS
It's Cool to Rock EP
Wide Open Records

Don't get me wrong, I'm no feminist. I can't stand self righteous separatists spouting off 'sexist' faster than their vaginas can make contractions. But I still get peeved when I hear some idiot band blatantly coming out with women-hate in the name of 'funny' lyrics. I mean why single out women for abuse, just because they wouldn't lay the hick faces in the band? You see "Itty Bitty Baby" uses rape as the hook of the song. Some loser ties up his girlfriends in duct tape (that's supposed to be humorous) and dorks them, until he meets some girl with tape of her own. Violent s&m woman-hate sung disguised by a mousey little voice and mediocre rock and roll. At one point the singer mentions "if you can't use it, masturbate it." Why not "castrate it", should solve a lot of their problems. "Cool to Rock" is some sort of anthem but I don't pledge allegiance. They complain about "Bloody Disco" but if all they have to offer to replace it is misogyny and lead guitar solos, well I'll take "Ring My Bell" anytime. Finally another male chauv bitch on "Sorority Girl". They hate some woman cuz she fucks a lot and got old—wow, how dare she be loose and rich and have bad makeup. Fucking horrible crime, isn't it? They should know—just like jocks, just like fraternity clones, these guys have that same smug, self-righteous look on their oxen faces. At one point a singer says "this town is like any other town". The same goes for some bands ...

Z

THE REVERSIBLE CORDS EP
Company Texas records

Offbeat quartet from Texas tackles usual punk themes (Guyana/Legalize Crime, etc) with a less usual line up: guitar, accordeon, steel drum and girl singer. Sounds almost as strange as it reads. I think I'll call it folk-punk. Has potential, but the way it was recorded makes it sound like an anthropology document.

Kick

The Urinals
(some label, who cares)

This is whole lot better than I thought it would be, "I'm a Bug" and "Ack, Ack," are hard-crude punk bashing with smart hooks that hold up extremely well for their simplicity. Some super crude drumming. Only rivaled by Bradley Field himself.

Also, "Black Hole" is a better Syd Barrett soundalike than anything the Bowie-Eno-Roxy attempts. We would like to make records like "Arnold Layne" wouldn't we?

Jeffrey

SHAG NASTY (No bullshit just rock n roll/Looking for Love)
Shag Nasty records

They may rock pretty convincingly and the singer got a good voice but as far as originality of themes they don't even make the gauging needle quiver. How about "No bullshit rock n roll" as an encore?? Now that would mean something.

Kick

INTERIOR
. . . disco/Jaws 1&2

I can't figure out the name of the Disco song thanks to the arty jumble typography. Real cute. As cute as the little burpy organ and rhythm box, sound familiar? Sound NORMAL? Why don't they filter these guys brains instead of their voices so they can come up with something TRULY different. Tell those arty dutch whizs to keep their fingers in dikes. Hey, all you college joes out there trying to impress your dorm buddies with the newest specialty single, don't hesitate. This might be gone before your intelligence is.

Z

JUNIOR DELGADO (Love tickles like magic)
Greensleeves 12" import

Delgado is a man to watch (and listen to) these days. This bouncy tune eases its way into your head in a very insidious manner. It does not slam into you ala Burning Spear, it charms you. As with most of these 12 inch numbers side one terminates with hints of the full blown dub version (Prince Jammy and the Aggrovators) that occupies side 2. The dub offers no earth-shaking pyrotechnics, just tasteful sinuous hide and seek games around the melody line, and the frail staccato guitar theme pops up every time you almost lose track of it.You don't have to do a thing. This record plays itself.

Chatty

THE DADAISTICS
(Modern Girl, Paranoia Perception)

From the arty color cover collage, the song titles, the band name, I expected a big slice of experimental. I did not expect an above average rock band with girl singer, kind of Penetration style. But that's what I got—appearances do deceive—why do they present themselves as this year's Devo? They stand on their own merits quite nicely, thank you. Get lost.

Z

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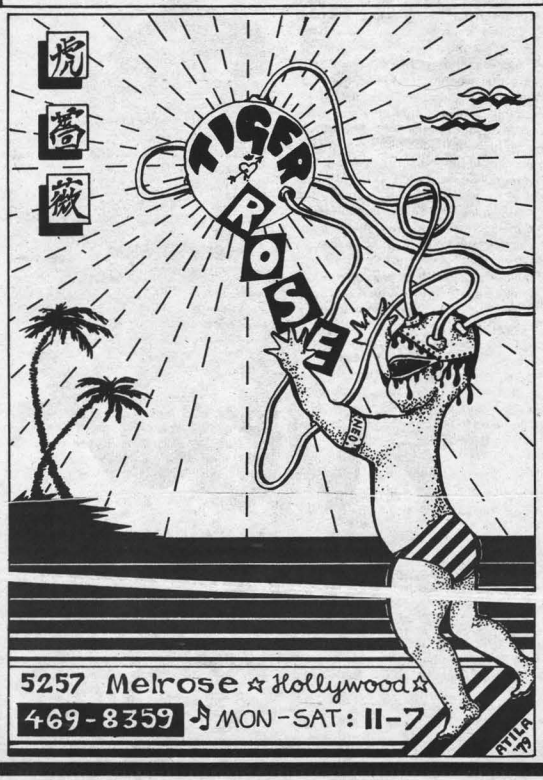

THE FRED BANANA COMBO
(No destination blues/Jerk off All Nite Long)
Warm records import

Sheeet, look at what the mailman brought in! A sub-standard Chuck Berry fixation exercise with naughty lyrics. Recorded in 1977, it came all the way from overseas (Germany?). Not too fresh when it started the trip, this record is now positively stale. Do not trust the europunk chic cover. This is recycled garbage.

Kick

CABARET VOLTAIRE
(Nag Nag Nag/It That Me (Finding Someone At The Door Again?)
Rough Trade import

This is a record of immense charm. The Ramones meet The Human League. Whoever said that the post new wave avant-garde are humorless and have no warmth must have been too drained from listening to their dreary post-Lydon Pistols records. "Nag Nag Nag" is electronic punk which has a becoming background whistle which, to quote Eno, is "as ignorable as it is interesting", and features vocals not to mess with: all distortion and sincerity — music to fall in love to. The other side is an extended romantic piece which is a trifle experimental but doesn't fool around. Listen to this but beware of fakes.

Simon Bodger

MASSMEDIA (Jag Vill Ingenting/ Das Jazz)
Mass Produktion records import

"One of the best punk bands of the North East of Sweden", or so they tell us. And in the North East of Sweden, they're fuckin' purists when it comes to punk. Either the grooves have been carved with a rusty switchblade or the master tape been dipped in sulfuric acid to give it that authentic punk quality. So, if you're into surface noise, hoarse meaningless vocals and wham bam background racket on what could be guitars and loose parts of a drum kit, be my guest. I like it better than many shiny disks I've had to put up with this month, but I've always been a sucker for good intentions. Music may be reborn in England, but in many parts of the world they're still trying to kill it.

Das Kick

WILLIE BRACKENRIDGE
(Blood Money/Money Dub)
Harvest records import

The best 45 of the year no less? An aural adhesive with all the best motives. Reggae as fine as this doesn't come around too often but when it does it's heaven. Note the sticky bass line and the way it shuffles around with the unashemedly catchy hook and the omnipresent reggae rhythm guitar. The dub is almost better where what's not present does as much work as what is. Here, the guitar leaves, letting the bass line trundle along only to return with an echo as its calling card. This works. Everything is in the right place which is what it should be in reggae.

Simon Bodger

SILVER CHALICE (Hot Tears/Wasted)
Final Gear records

Geza X (him again?) had a hand or two in this although I can't truly see why (I know, to keep himself off the streets and out of trouble!). Don't know who are the people hiding behind the noble name and I'm not holding my breath to find out. Not badly done but sounding like just about everything else in the rock world — come on all you boys and girls out there, get up and do the predictable. Last few seconds of "wasted" offer a very decent scream but it's a bit late in the game to salvage anything. Black Flag also have a song titled "Wasted", and it's Jack Daniels compared to this brew 102.

Kick

THE CRAP DETECTORS (Police State/ Set Program)
Real records

Hard core techno punks from..... Nebraska??? Well, how long do you think all the fun can remain the exclusivity of two or three big megacities? Musico-political anarchistic kids gotta let go wherever they are. "Police State" is a bit reminiscent of early Metal Urbain, although it could use a bit of zing in the riffing department, "Set Program" is futuristic babble with mucho atmosphere courtesy of the whiz kid on dials. At least they're obviously listening to the right kind of music.

Kick

ALTERNATIVE TV (The force is blind/Lost in Room)
Deptford Fun City records import

This "memorial single" is apparently the end of another phase in the adventures of Mark Perry (and company) in the world of instant communications. One last crumb to the ATV fans before getting on with the business of being good missionaries. Nobody can accuse these guys of taking the easy road to success! The more accessible cut (on which Perry rocks hader than on anything since The Image Has Cracked days) gets relegated to the B side while A side is given over to a nebulous morality tale in which innocence and creativity appear to be brutally repressed by an invasion of outer space fascist villains. The protagonists are not exactly sharply defined and the musical thread may not be as taut as all that, but this is not what you'd call an easy story to put on vinyl. Still, Mark, I'm afraid this is NOT the way to seduce the mod contingent.

Kick

THE IMPOSTERS (Nightime TV/Off With His Head/Burglar)
415 records

Off with THEIR heads! Night time TV is better.

Kick

METAL BOYS
(Sweet Marilyn - Fugue For a Darkening Island)
Rough Trade Import

Halfway through hating this record I began to like it. I should have never gone to art school, it made me schizophrenic doctor. Why did I hate it at first? Well loud fuzz guitar, undermixed whispery voice, rhythm box and occasional splurt of electrodes was not my idea of the emotional and mental catharsis at 45rpm I expect these days. I expected more from the Metal Urbain folks, they've produced some masterful, slashing, emotionally debilitating, crippling sound structures in their time, get me meaning? And I thought this was stupid, the sexy lyrics inane, a very slight home experiment. But somehow it started to make sense—it started to connect. I saw the underground subtle, sneakier damn those frogs anyway, I go nuts contradicting myself, give me the thorazine shot and lock me away. Why should I have to go through all this over a lousy fucking single?

Z

LEE PERRY (Free the Prisoners/Chase Them)
Conquering Lion of Judah records

Another disco giant 45 from Jamaica (no, not *that* disco, honkey!) with The Upsetter controls. Actually, it's 33 rpm but just one song on each side, the package is as unclassifiable as the music it contains, it slowly sways on and on until you're in a trance or asleep. Soothing to the point of nausea, spaced out hypnotic african dance with rastafarian herb rituals for good measure, who needs the National Geographic when you've got a Lee Perry running a studio.

Chatty Chatty Mouth

BRAIN JAMES (Ain't That A Shame/ Living in Sin/I can Make you Cry) - can't figure out the label but it's a Faulty Products affiliate

Parts of "Ain't that a shame" obsess me something spectacular. The most unforgettable almost mellow progression my brain has salivated on in a long long time. The rest does not match it, but 40 seconds that really move me and I get all grateful and silly.

Kick

THE MUTANTS
(New Dark Ages/Insect Lounge/ New Drug
415 Records

New Dark Ages? Have you been down to Venice Boardwalk or Hollywood Boulevard lately? Let's go back a little bit further, like the Pleistocene Period. The lead singer warbles like an extrovert Davie Byrne, treating not-so-esoteric subject matter. "Insect Lounge" comes off wacky without the dumbness of a Dev. You see pix of the Mutants, and you might think their music would be full of gimmicks and cute effects. It's not true. All three of these are straight ahead, instantly memorable in a hummable way. This stands alongside the Sleepers EP as being one of the best records to come out of San Francisco.

CHRIS D.

THE SENDERS
(No More Foolin'/The Livng End)
Senders

Original white blues without any of the Foghat brand of extraneous pretty boy's vocal anguish or unnecessary guitar frills. Like the Cramps, the Senders take an established style of rock music and revamp it back to its basic form and purity. Unlike the Cramps, they don't offer anything new in lyrics or image; which makes their future uncertain. Not great, but enjoyable. Word-of-mouth indicates that this isn't the most sterling piece of evidence as to what the Senders can do live towards tearing down the walls of your local club.

CHRIS D.

EXIT (Windpower/Welcome to the 80's)
Yeast recors

This group sounds like one of them "Christ is reborn/rejoice brothers" singing monstrosities that never took off a few years back and decided to recycle their wares. So lame as to be hilarious. "Windpower" is about clean energy and as exciting as this subject can be, "Welcome to the 80's" has all the modernity of a Godspell outtake. This has to be a comedy record.

Kick

NON — Mode of Infection/Knife Ladder

This San Diego duet (Boyd Rice and Robert Turman) uses tapes, rhythm generator, noise manipulation units, and mechanical devices (shoe polisher, blender, etc.) with a refreshing absence of the pretentious wimpiness that so often characterizes "experimental" music. The disc is one-sided, has an extra hole for optional further distortion, and can be played at any speed. Three continuous groove tape loops create uncomfortable rhythms, with the added annoyance factor of having to lift the needle each time to move to the next selection.

"Mode of Infection" is a catchy, almost commercial-sounding (for Non) number with rhythm generator and striking, barely audible vocals. The infectious break offers variation in timing and tension just when it is needed. An accessible introduction to noise music, that proves repetition need not be boring.

The last track, "Knife Ladder," is taken from Non's first live performance. Though the noise patterns are similar to "Mode of Infection," "Knife Ladder" is still an interesting work in its own right: more experimental in nature, it has no beat, and employs sporadic and repetitive noises with the familiar sub-audible vocals. A female member of the audience offers impromptu vocal contributions. Her syncopated screams become a bit tiresome after a while, but there is an undeniable hypnotic quality to this and all the tracks. This single is a must for anyone who is tired of the same old thing. Non explores its unique territory with impressive finesse and power.

by Sanyo

FASHION
(Citinite - Wastelife)

Making the proxy dye hair stick up in certain places. Straightening the cuffs, the pencil thin necktie. A very slight mascara around the eyes, pulling the pants just so, the hand slightly grazing the flat buttock, prick involuntarily stiffening. Fake germo-franco accent, name dropping appropriate allies—Eno, Roxy, Ultravox. Such a modern little bitch, the pills and champagne. Buggery on a blue lit floor. For all these times he prefer the song "Citinite"—it fit as tight as a wang in his porkhole. The other song, Wastelife, no he didn't care for it too much. A bit crude. One day a 'punk' from the rock disco said he liked it, so he was stuffing the modern effete's roundeye. It was a bit cruder, that song, and so was this hunk, suddenly grabbing the spacial one's necktie and strangling him with it. Social suicide—but then I'll observe that a dead pose is better than live artifice. I'm like that punk that kills pretentious queens. We are not fashionable people.

Z

JAMES CHANCE ("That's when your heartache begin") — From the original soundtrack "Gruitzi Elvis"
Ze records

O my! Where to start? There are 4 tracks here, but only one could really be called significant. On the others (two of them by Pill Factory, which means the Chance/ Bradley Field/Arto Lindsay/George Scott cultural association) these gentlemen fart around with retard percussion rhythm or retard percussion plus moronic sax bowel movements. They'd most likely think you're an idiot if you like it but not many will give them that pleasure. Unfortunately, "That's when your heartache begin" is ugly and

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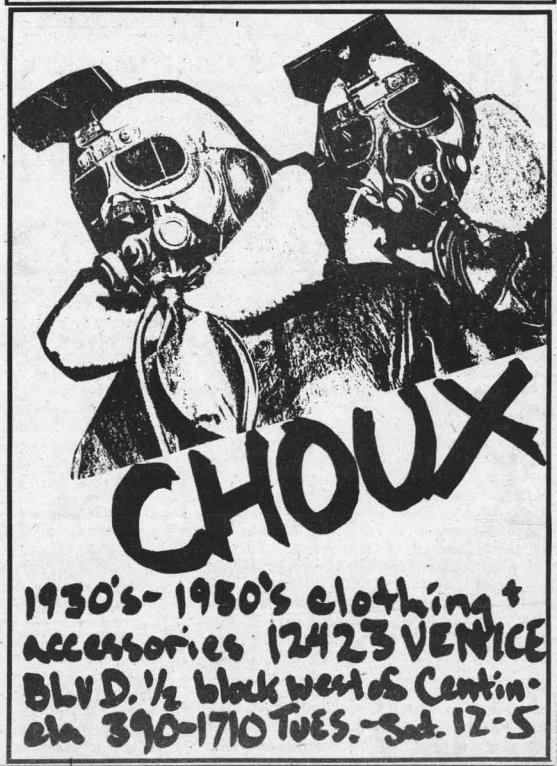

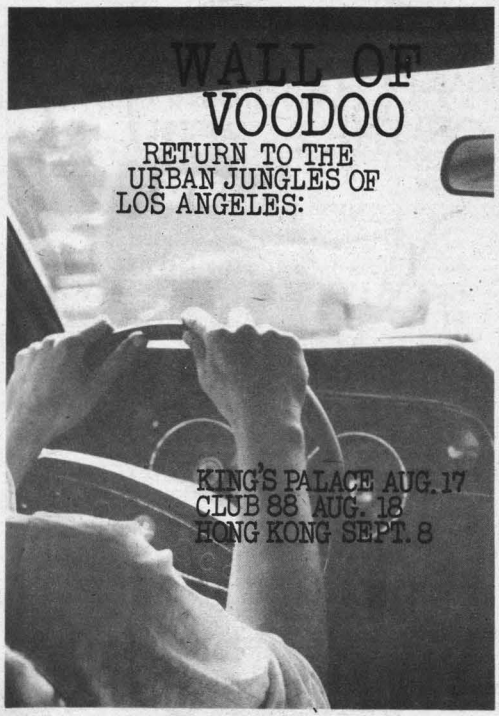

brilliant. A real nasty piece of work that should cut your appetite down to zero, it starts rather normally with James Chance sounding like an idiot on vocals. A minute later it's not funny anymore, it's frightening. He's either mad, mean or most likely both. Will be a hit with the warped set.

Kick

THE YACHTS (Love you Love you/ Hazy people)
Radar import

"Love you love you" is the kind of title that makes me run away but halfwaydown the street I turned around and came back to listen: the old "driving pop" was still there on the surface but there was this guy going on how cynical he is ("yes I'm cynical, cynical, cynical, cynical" done in neo wop-doo-wop fashion) and how he wouldn't climbing no mountain for her ha ha not me and ends in a glorious explosion of jubilant sudden contradiction: "and I think I love you you you you you you . .

Schizophrenic love for every youngster. That's what I call modern sensibilities.

Kick

THE RIPCHORDS (Ringing in the Streets/Music is/Peace Artist/Television)
Cells records import

Good militant stuff. Manages to say something without splashing about in tepid cliches. "Ringing in the streets" is a great paranoid anthem. On the other side they have a go at the music establishment, the hippies and the tube. It's brief, sharp and to the point. Won't make you dance.

Kick

PINK SECTION
(Tour of China/Shopping)

An accurate and excellent example of this band's fruitcake style. Most bands with electronics tend to hold their hardware in dutiful respect, but these guys and girls play with them like tinker toys (which in many cases they are). The most remarkable thing about this record is that it was recorded in the band's living room on a four-track machine, yet manages to convey what they are about better than some recent local studio recordings I've heard. They've managed to keep that sometimes overtly obnoxious Judy creature in check, giving the lead vocals to the kewpie boy with the detective fingers searching up and down the guitar neck for clues. "Tour of China" accurately observes modern Asian social situations influenced by the not so honorable Western disease. Punctuated by toy xylophone and occasional blurts of Berlitz Cantonese it's quite mad. I do like it very much, thank you, drop dead. "Shopping" gets a bit carried away in the vocal overdub dept., but I woke up one morning with the bass-guitar riff repeating amongst the ions and ozone so it's obviously affected one cheesehead out here. So bear in mind friends, it doesn't take much to make a record and make it right. Get the picture? Yes, we see ...

Z

PUBLIC IMAGE LTD.
(Death Disco/No Bird Do Song)
Virgin Records Import

You have to listen to this at least twenty times before you can make out anything Johnny's moaning, and even then seventy-five percent of it is still indecipherable. That doesn't matter much; criticism of "can't understand the words" is pretty futile when you're dealing with anything outside of Captain and Tennille. This isn't only disco death, it's career death, too. But PI doesn't seem to have regard for such things. Which is alright with me. I don't know how long Virgin will stand for it, though. Each new release by PI is a more contemptuous slap in the face against everything that is accepted and practiced in not just pop music but "punk rock". Public Image brings modular disco rhythms to dissonant guitar scratchings and Johnny's wailing wall technique of voice execution (half the time he sounds like some Moslem holy man constrictedly yodeling out his Koran prayers from atop the sacred tower). I can't listen to it too often, but I like it very much.

CHRIS D.

Black Randy and the Metro Squad
(I SLEPT IN AN ARCADE/GET IT UP AND TURN IT LOOSE)

Dangerhouse records

The Godfather was found with his nappy head under the Venice Pier, a tarball under his arm and a crumpled wad of greenbacks in his hand. It was discovered that BR had just finished recording this ultimate masterpiece and had taken his advance royalties and went walkin' the dog down the boardwalk. I'd like to go down to that arcade — it seems everyone was there — pimps, popes and Mau-maus. BR left no stone unturned on this superbad new production, and before all you baby record moguls have to grovel down liquidation lane, take a stroll to Dangerhouse and take this brother to brunch

V/D

PRAG VEC (follower/Expert)
Spec records import

Not quite as commanding and forceful as the first EP but no dismissable pastry either. On that first record the tunes immediately exploded in your face and were over before you really knew what hit you, here it's more of a insidious build up approach, with Sue doing less flash acrobatics in the vocal department and the boys sticking more to some carefully selected riffs. Good, but less passionate. Let's try again.

Kick

THE TYROS (Parasites/Cold Shot)
Widget records

Melodic power pop with new wave undertones, or is it melodic new wave with power pop undertones, or possibly new wave power pop with melodic undertones,

VINYLLY:
by Bo Clifford

This time fewer longer rather than more shorter...
A UK V:

Several new things at once from Virgin, that former bastion of all things hippie, as they step up their activities in this country. Taking them numerically: INTERVIEW is one of the groups that will get a big US push. Their "You Didn't Have To Lie To Me" has that Asylum harmony sound mixed with just the right amount (corporately speaking) of Costelloisms to appeal to the masses. Not just bad, but dull too (kiss of death ...). The flip is a step up, but this band is just not convincing. Maybe an album will show them off better. Now, if you're in the mood for some electronic Europop, you just gotta try COWBOYS INTERNATIONAL. Besides having a great name, they make good, ephemeral pop that, fortunately rates low on the obnoxometer. "Nothing Doing" is one of those tunes that slowly makes its way into your memory, but once there it takes root. Changes from a throwaway to a keeper. However, this band should never make an album. The new DEVO single "The Day My Baby Gave Me A Surprize" is from their recent lp and shows off their mechanical sound quite well (it must be tough to pick out a single on these guys). "Penetration In The Centerfold" is a non-lp cut produced by Eno that is one of their most extreme tracks (on vinyl anyway). Shouting, jumping (I'm sure), bouncing, these guys are sure frustrated! I guess stardom can't relieve that uncontrollable urge. When BARRY ANDREWS left XTC, I was afraid for the results, but his new EP proves that he can do it on his own. Four very strong songs written with perception and produced appropriately. "Me and My Mate Can Sing" is a backstage story with a novel approach. The girls tell him they can sing and they have made up names and want to be on stage and if you'd only listen to us, sir ... you get the picture. "Bring On The Alligators" is a daily horror story of all those people that irk and provoke, just when everything is cool. "Mousetrap" is also a view of everyday existence. That of the guy trapped by comformity and normalcy, a real cubicle lifestyle. The stress wreaks havoc on the nerves, you know. Winding up in the "Sargasso Bar" with a drink in hand and eyeing the birds, Barry observes the singles set. Perhaps too easy a target, the somewhat sad round-robin lifestyle (that's twice) has been over exposed. One of the most direct bands in Britain, the RUTS have a hit on their hands with "Babylon's Burning". Great propulsion and the guitarist has flaming fingers; the B-side is even hotter. For a local reference: they sound somewhat like the Plugz. "Death Disco" is the latest from PUBLIC IMAGE LTD. and it does little to clear the confused image (sorry ...) these guys present. As usual this takes some time to sink in, but it's worth the effort. I still can't tell what John is singing about; I really can't get past the incredible bass hook or Keith Levine's jagged, slashing guitar. I can't help being reminded of the Pop Group single, too. Very similar feel and the same sense of being different. The other tune, "And No Birds Do Sing", seems a bit unfocused and just doesn't sound as good as the A.

A US B:

Well, it's about time that I covered an American label's current releases, so let's start with Bomp Records. From its humble beginnings five years ago, the pop oriented independent has become one of the most prolific companies of its type. A trio of new singles are now out and the biggest surprise is probably the one by STIV BATORS. Dead Boys' fans and those who only listen with one ear will be shocked by this record, but Stiv's likeable bad boy image is intact. It's just that he's more interested in hooks than crawling around on stage these days. "The Last Year" is a litany of his disappointments and is dedicated "to a lazy Sid in heaven". "It's Cold Outside" is a very good remakr

or melodic wave with new power undertones, or . . . . . anyway, get away from me. I got my problems.

Kick

COWBOYS INTERNATIONAL
(Aftermath/Future Noice)
Virgin import

Is a budding Abba what the world needs now? Is it? Is it? (caution: it IS catchy)

Kick

CRISIS
(No Town Hall/
Holocaust/PC 1984)
Action Group Records Imports

I had a preconceived notion that Crisis would be one of the most violent, no-bull-shit bands to come out of the British Isles. But I was wrong. The music's okay but the performance is lazy and not the oh-so-urgent flammable stuff one would expect. Except for PC 1984", the words are protest cliches. Disapointing.

HALF-COCKED

CHINAS COMIDAS
(Snap/For the Rich)
Exquisite Corpse Records

It's great to see someone progressing for once, becoming less pretentious rather than vice versa. I liked Chinas' first record, too, but this is even better. Chinas' band pared to the bone and taking off like a rocket through ten-inch steel plating. They tear through, still haven't lost velocity and are ready for the next round.

CHRIS D.

Gang Of Four (At Home He's a Tourist/
It's Her Factory)
EMI import

Forget the lyrics and vocals (stuff you've heard before). It's the guitar, bass and drums that work here. The beat drives and rolls, while the guitar slashes, chops, pulls its way through the song. It's the most exciting element of the song. It's erratic guitar banging not unlike "Little Johnny Jewel" by early Television (you know, it was wrong to dismiss Television. Though they were boring live, their guitar playing has influenced every new wave/punk guitarist in the last year or so). Also, it's about time somebody started using the guitar a little differently.

Ranking Mr. Lea

Ho, ho, something in me tends to disagree here, Mr. Lea. I wouldn't dismiss the lyrics of this great single, they're sharp and realistic and thought provoking and carry as much weight as the music, and that's a lot of weight for a 45. I like to hear about middle class frustrations and ulcers and dissatisfied housewives, it's a nice change from the usual decadent rock n roll chatter. And when it's enhanced by the neurasthenic nervous sounds these guys can pull out of their insruments, it gets pretty chilling.

Kick

THE MONOCHROME SET
Eine Symphonie Des Grauens/
Lester Leaps In
Rough Trade Import

Well, these gentlemen certainly do the continental, without being overtly pretentious about it. But I could have done without the German title, kinds of runs my nose in ignorance, know what I mean? I like the spanish tango beat, one thing about the Monochrome Set stuff I've heard, the music is really faultless, they are that kind of special group, but this song doesn't seem to meaure up to the high standards of their first single. A band that manages to combine intellect and emotion with some very COOL rock and roll, but a decent song and instrumental seems too slight an offering. Try a bit harder, folks, we're not all members of your coven yet, cut the effete trickery and maybe you can wind up millionaires, god forbid.

Z

THE SUBURBAN LAWNS (Gidget Goes to Hell/My Boyfriend)
Suburban Industrial records

As stated somewhere else Sue Tissue has to be the latest mini superstar (star as in talent, not attitude) to come out of this cultural swamp we have no choice but to call home (home is where the smog is). A strange star to be sure, as live there seems to be a definite reluctance to capitalize on her evident stature. It's probably as much her decision as the rest of the band's, and it's admirable although somewhat frustrating. On vinyl she does sing both songs, and the results are might impressive. Her very off-beat half-choking half hiccuping flat delivery merges wonderfully with the hard syncopated rhythm provided by the band, it's overmuch too soon so you play it again, the same thing happened so you finally see the light and put the turntable on automatic. This band is going somewhere, I will bet my astronomical Slash wages on it, and I'm going there with them. When they get there I will officially change my middle name to "I told yo so". I will be very obnoxious about it.

Kick

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of a classic song of '60's Ohio teenlovelost. Stiv sounds right on top of it and definitely in his element.

If the thought of nubile popgirls blowing in your ear (men only) appeals to you, direct your lobes to the sounds of NIKKI AND THE CORVETTES. Recorded at Rollin' Rock with Ray Campi and best of their session men, these girls and a guy bounce into the old Wanda Jackson number "Honey Bop". Nikki sounds a bit uncomfortable, but the band is hot and it's good fun all the way. The flip is "Shake It Up", a Peter James original and features his terrific and accurate guitar. A much more successful side. Finally (how fitting ...) the LAST have a new single, a new, considerably improved version of "Every Summer Day". It's a true California record and the end of the season feel also signals an end to youth and a surprisingly poignant realization that time, indeed, moves on and "getting old will only bring me misery". With a full, complex production and Joe Nolte's spot-on guitar playing, it's not just a great song, but a great record. "Slave Driver" is a more straight forward tune. A hard, punchy protest that has the boys spitting in the eye of the boss mentality. Angry men rule ok!

"WHAT DO I CALL THIS STUFF":

The CURE are known for making intriguing, sorta unusual records (their album doesn't have song titles, just pictures), so what are they doing with "Boys Don't Cry" (Fiction) which is a perfect example of the new pop of England. I mean there's hooks, melody, and very emotional vocals; all kinds of stuff. The guitars strum away as the singer pleads for his baby. Positively an update on the Four Seasons "Walk Like A Man"! The other side, "Plastic Passion", is a bit more like their (un)usual style. A report on certain of mans' artificial relaxation aids, it has that herky-jerky art pop that we know and are all growing slightly tired of. Better produced than most. A second single from the GANG OF FOUR has been eagerly anticipated, "At Home He's A Tourist" (EMI) is not as instantly exciting as their first one. It soon reveals itself to be a strongly felt song about the urban living dilemma. Dabbling in dub with echoed guitars and chant-like vocals, it has several good lines in it which make it stay on your turntable. "It's Her Factory" extends their approach to include harmonica and (I think) a saxophone. Also quite good.

Long Beach's resident Mods The FURYS have their third single out. It's called "Moving Target" (Beat) and it's a bright popper about being a misfit. Danny Holloway's whiz kid production saves this one. But the flip is the real keeper here. "We Talk, We Dance" is about getting on with it and just living. Simple idea made more difficult by the frustration and confusion surrounding all of us. How many people do you know that live on that kind of straight line? It's not an easy thing to do. Finally, from Seattle the return of CHINAS COMIDAS, whose debut EP got lots of good press. "Snaps" (Exquisite Corpse) is a much improved sound that shows the band to be more in tune with what they want to do. Chinas herself sounds like more her own woman than just another P. Smith influenced singer. And the band is hot!! "For The Rich" is a bitter black comedy about the privileged classes' view of lesser persons ("I mean they'd like everybody to have blond hair."). Again, the band is hot!! Late flash: their EP has been shrunk to a single and remixed to sound very good, a nice move on their parts.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?:

Only thirteen records this time, as opposed to the more usual 20 or so. Would you rather see more stuff covered? Less stuff covered more? Why don't you let me know:

Bo Clifford
5734 Laurel Cyn. Bl.
Box 11
No. Hollywood, CA 91607

LP's

The B-52's
(Warner Bros. records)

I know a lot of people are going to hate this record. And they have every reason to be dissappointed. With all the screaming and yelling New Yorkers have been doing over this, you might have expected an east coast version of the Screamers, but you're wrong.

What we get here, is a real enjoyable, cute, and funny record. A dance record. No more, no less. This is not arty or punky or whatever is hip nowadays, its just fun. You can take it or leave it. (Depending on how much guilt you have) Most negative people (including me, myself, and I) will hate this with a passion. It doesn't mean anything. It doesn't stimulate. Its not arresting. Its just nonsense. But I find I do have a capacity for silliness and this record is silly. I laugh with it and sometimes at it.

Their publicity will eventually cut their throats. People like Bowie-Eno-Fripp etc. etc. showing up at B-52's gigs and screaming "genius" are full of shit and care a lot less about music than you or I. Like Devo, its some big joke to them, so they spread it to their water-brained followers who will lap up any bullshit these guys give them. The simple truth is: New York bands get signed the minute these jive assholes say they're "In Crowd", and record executives eat it too. Meanwhile, meaningful and important music like the Dils, X, or Contortions just rots alone in its prime.

Anyway, excuse that. That was more a review of the New York scene, than of the B-52's. About the group themselves,

If I sit and try to imagine that the 52's came straight from Georgia, without ever going to the Big Cheese, I find I do enjoy them a bit. They got a great backbeat and totally unique style. Unlike Devo, they don't use lots of idiot gimmicks, (like that DNA or Jocko Homo bullshit) but rather emphasize dances, T.V., B-movies, beaches etc. etc. They are not important, but they are no more irrelevant than Dee Dee Sharp or Shirley Ellis or Chubby Checker were. And I think "the Nitty Gritty" is a great song.

Actually, the 52's are the way pop music should be played. With humor and simplicity. These two ideas are what made the first Blondie album so much better than all this 20/20, Nick Lowe, Knack garbage. These guys think they're sensitive poppoets, when they should be writing fucking dance songs. And because they don't, the 52's and Blondie are a million times more fun than any Beatle/Dylan mixture will ever be.

So, anyway, despite all the hype and lies coming out of Noo Yerk, this record turns out to be really neat. You see, there's girls in the band, (the standout being adorable little Kate Pierson) and they can get away with being cute even better than Buddy Holly. So, if you need a record for an oddball party, look for the yellow cover, and twist it up.....

the Ranking Mr. J

SURF PUNKS
Surf Punks

Much to the consternative of certain people connected with this newspaper, I consider "Fun, Fun, Fun" by the Tital Waves one of the more thoughtful expressions Southern California's New Music and a fascinating synthesis of dispirate creative modes. So imagine my delight at being given a whol album of similarly contrived nonsense to review. Well considering the hair-length of half the people who turn up at the Hong Kong Cafe these days, I suppose it was inevitable that the Beach Party Went Punk sooner or later and stripping aside the essential cultural predjudices, Surf Punks is not a bad album. The songsexplore the social mores of surf-niks with a slightly less facile approach than the Beach Boys or Jan & Dean in their hey-day (e.g. they are quite candid about smacking intruders on the head with heavy, blunt objects and sex, drugs and alcohol feature heavily). The playing is pretty convincing without resorting to the excesses commonplace on highly over-dubbed old-wave records of the 'sixties. Musically the axe falls fairly evenly between the two genres, but the compromise is acceptable to anyone old enough to remember when compromise *was* acceptable. Which is me, I'm afraid.

Murk Williams

"OFF WHITE"
JAMES WHITE AND THE BLACKS
Ze records

Yep, that guy again. With an entire album worth of original, offbeat offensive offerings. "Contort yourself" and "Heat wave" were on that 12" reviewed last issue but the rest of the noise is new. Cept for those 2 and the "Stained sheets" number it's all instrumental, with a shitload of guest "stars" adding their dissonant or funky touches to Mr Chance's ultra personal handling of his alto sax. It's not as self indulgent as I expected, even gets genuinely exciting and inventive at times and when it's not and runs around in circles like a plucked cat chasing its tail it still is the best audio background to lay on the floor and watch the smoke of your cigarette wrap itself around the bare ceiling light bulb. Instant cool guaranteed. Someone tells me that Lydia Lunch (credited as guitar on "White Devil") is also the mysterious Stella Rioco on x rated moans and purrs in "Stained Sheets". Since only Miss Rico's (bondaged) legs are shown in the picture and I am not familiar with Miss Lunch's lower section I have to take their word for it. The "tune" is a very funny telephone "dialogue" between a super cool dude with the heart of a dyena and an oversexed mute with masochistic problems. Intriguing, eh? And then there is the cover: the most carefully stylish piece of musical camp designed in a long time. From no wave to no-stalgia, and probably back again when it's time for the Contortions to add their bit to this confusing saga.

Kick

Israel Vibration
(Top Ranking records)

This jazz comes from one of the new British reggae labels, that are trying to put out more sincerely produced stuff, rather than diluting it as Virgin & Island have lately. Top Ranking comes up with a suitable stereo production without sounding like Steel Pulse or Santana or something...

The group itself treads the DMZ between roots & soul. On "Why Worry", there's chant backing that is as African as Jomo Kenyatta himself. On "the Same Song" the emphasis is more on soul harmonies, not unlike the Gladiators or Diamonds. One great thing they have in their favor, however, is that they have a gift for creating "longing harmonies". These are vocal melodies that are romantic as well as arresting. "Streets of Glory" and "Jah, Time has Come" possess that qualify of emotion that makes you feel as if you've come to the end of a long struggle. The Gladiators do this. Spear does this. Its much like the ending soundtrack to a long South Seas adventure film. You can almost see that sunset. You can almost feel that girl that you won at the end.

Anyway, there's a hell of lot going here. Its some debut. Oh, and by the way, the members of Israel Vibration are named "Wiss", "Skeleton", and "Apple". And my name is,

Ranking Jeffrey Lea
(soon come forward, mon)

THE CONTORTIONS
"live" at Max's last spring

JAMES BROWN
"live" in my brain

I was really going under last spring. I was nearly gone. I was walking down Union Square at night with this Puerto Rican girl named Rosie, who somehow had become my girlfriend the night before. I was cold, wet, and I missed my car. I didn't feel like going to Max's, but it was better than home. Anyhow, this beat group called the Contortions played and Rosie didn't like them too much, but I did.

The singer of this combo is Mr. Dynamite, James chance, who enters like a sad destitute boy and picks up his pet saxophone. The beat creeps in quickly and then it's all over the place. It sounds like some kind of contorted soul music. Guitar licks counter each other and the sax coughs up notes from beyond the scale. When Mr. C. gets around to singing, (after a wild jazz rave-up) the people back away 5 ft. from the front. He shouts with a ferocity like somebody ripping up your girl's dress. He does a few James Brown steps, then he's back at the mike, wretching out the most uncomfortable lines in the east. It hurts to watch him. It hurts to listen. By the end of the set, he's on the floor, twisted and wet. Then, he gets up, dusts off his coat and leaves quietly. No encore.

Other times, he's caused fights, or wrecked-up a place, but that's beside the point. Any punk can do that, but this boy is out for more. He causes emotional chaos, so that when you leave, you feel as bad as the stage looks after the show.

Like James Brown, Mr. C is not out to cause a riot. He simply wants to share himself, but when he shows too much, all hell breaks loose. Not unlike riots at the Apollo in J. Brown days.

The most important thing is that Chance is experimenting with a background. He cops James Brown. He cops Albert Ayler and John Coltrane. It all is fused into the Contortions sound. James Chance knows his roots. This simple one fact, makes him infinity amount times better than these idiots who jump into the abstract without knowing anything about rock & roll. He's learned from the best and that's why he's more together than any art-rocker on the scene.

Experimental rock is just an extention of simple beat music. If you don't know the basic elements of R&B and hillbilly, (the combination that created this world) you are simply making noise. Mr. C. recognizes them. (Especially R&B) This is why he's more effective than everybody else. And none of those French records are an adequate example of what he can do. The new James White and the Blacks hustle is simply Mr. C and friends goofing off on some Frenchman's money. The No New York stuf is badly produced from a very young period for the band. There's so much he's holding back on, but it all comes out onstage.

A really strange occurance back east, is the fact that James Brown has become a sort of culture hero. Mostly, because of Mr. C's idolization of him. It was real interesting to see young spandex-legged honeys and leather coated bad boys searching the bins for old J.B. classics. And it's about time too. James Brown was the black Iggy and should be recognized as a profound influence on punks as well. Idiots who think somebody's rockabilly boppings, have more to do with punk-rock, than the desperate scream and wail of James Brown are terminal assholes. They don't realize that Iggy was once a blues drummer. Or that the Stones, Dolls, and Jim Morrison all copped their basis from the complete animalism that J.B. layed down every night.

It ain't no wonder that he changed the face of soul. Turned it from an entertainment form of blues into a complete jungle extravaganza that reeked of chaos. And like punks, he spent his whole life, turning an intelligent art-form back into the intense headbanging scream & rhythm that it started out as. The way it should be. And tho' it's cool to experiment, it should never lose this basic element. It's the soul of new music; old music too.

As if no surprise, when I left the Big Pizza, I happened across a new French or English import in a local joint. It was called "20 Greatest Hits of James Brown" (Polydor) and had just about everything a youngster needs to learn about the King of Scream. "There was a Time", "Prisoner of Love", "Its a Man's World" etc. All the best stuff, complete with photos of Mr. B down on his knees, cutting out his heart, in the name music. Of course, there's gonna be some asshole, who's gonna say "who cares about some stupid old nigger." Without ever knowing it was niggers who invented everything we listen to. Even old crazy jazz guys made music like the Screamers about 15 years ago. I don't give a shit for mongoloids and fashionable bullshitters who are plain stupid and call it arty. They might hate music, but I don't. I'm 21 now, and I don't see color anymore. It's all transparent to me now...

MR. JEFFREY LEA

"NEW VALUES"
IGGY POP
Arista Records Import

"Dance to the beat of the living dead". Here we are once again except that Ray Power line about the "dead" is for real and there ain't nothing living about it. To make matters worse, we're not dancing, we're not even twitching; we're standing stock still out of shock and disappointment at this abject piece of shit. Iggy's comedy album. That's the only possible way to describe the few fun moments here. Very few. "New Values" is the only decent tune and has absolutely nothing to do with the surrounding grooves. The slightly entertaining thing about all this is Iggy's voice brought down low and talky like Lou Reed doing a Neil Diamond impersonation (who just happens to be wasting his time relating dirty jokes and bad puns). Take a look at the inner sleeve. No, that's not Carlos Santana in that leisure suit, it's fellow ex-deity, now producer James Williamson. This is one of the scariest most potent indictments against drug addiction I've ever seen. Oh, well, at least they didn't go Hare Krishna.

CHRIS D.

"SLY, WICKED AND SLICK"
SLY DUNBAR
Virgin Import

Only use I can possibly see for this is if you have a small exclusive caribbean import shop full of overpriced island items made of bamboo and straw and you need a vaguely reggaeish musak soundtrack to orchestrate the gentle motions of credit cards being pulled out of wallets. Old Sly may be (is) one of the most in demand ja drummers but this solo effort (with the inevitable sprinkling of top session men) is so devoid of any kind of life or excitement that I sincerely wonder why anyone went ahead with the project.

CHATTY

LIVE AT MAX'S KANSAS CITY
HEARTBREAKERS
Max Kansas City Records

Or a "Junkie's Sojourn at the Chelsea Hotel" or "So Fucking High I Can't See The Frets on my Guitar". I wanted to like this album, I really did. The liner notes on the back give a concise history of the band's involvement in the '77 English scene while hyping them beyond belief.

Yes, you naive suckers, the only album to actually capture the energy and excitement of the Heartbreakers. LAMF was far superior without being that good either. It's gotten to the point where you could call this Walter Lure's band rather than Johnny Thunder's. Most of the songs are Lure's and nearly everything slightly interesting is sung by him. If only David Hojansen would've stopped fucking around by himself and written some lyrics for these guys ... maybe they would have had something to get excited about. Either way, if you want to hear something great and more now-sounding than the Heartbreakers, stick to the Dolls' two albums. It seems that the only possible path for the Heartbreakers was dissolution.

HALF-COCKED

LODGER
David Bowie
RCA Records

Not the shambles it at first seems. Bowie has his misguided, directionless moments, but there are more signs of life here than on anything since "Station to Station" and volumes more lyrical meat. The perfectionist finally comes out of his hard, cold shell (almost), lays it out; the dissolution, loneliness, breakdown and despair. Bowie has never, ever sounded quite like this before. Various tunes on "Man Who Sold the World" and "Diamond Dogs" come close; calm, at peace and the next minute on the brink, packing it all in, doing away with himself. "DJ" is so multi-layered and sarcastic it sears. Bowie descends into madness, ranting hysterically in the most subtly nasty anti-disco/disc jockey song ever. The music may lay back too much, but Bowie spits venom.

CHRIS D.

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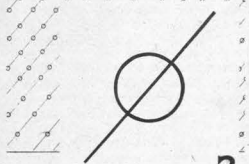

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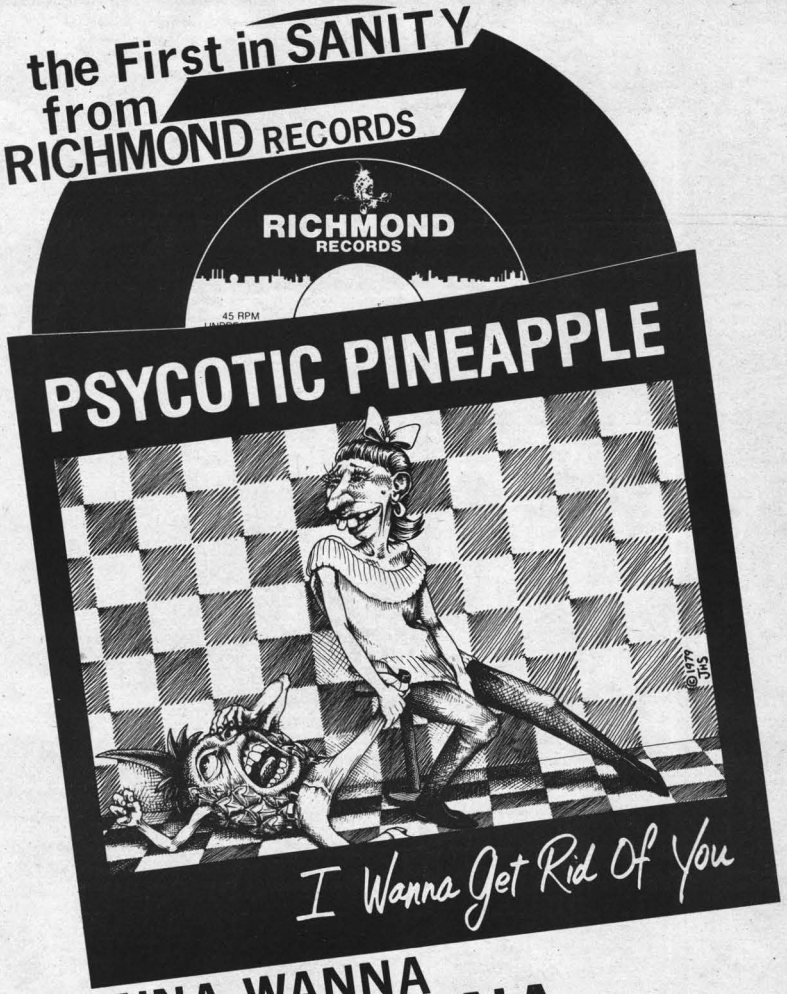

I WANNA WANNA
WANNA WANNA
WANNA WANNA WANNA
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B/W AHEAD OF MY TIME

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I'M BO
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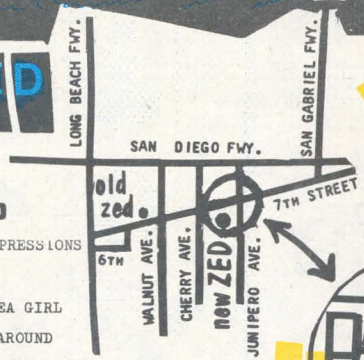
JUDY, WOULD YOU GO WITH ME TO THE RESTROOM?
SUB MOD
ROZZ TOX
It's KickBoy!
Why DO GIRLS ALWAYS GO to the toilet together ZZZ what the hell do they do in there so LONG?... AND What is this CRAZY FUCKER UP TO?!!! Oh God I hope he doesn't WANT to live IN MY CAR!!! Why ARE they taking so Long?
HEE! HEE! HEE!
I'M O.K. YOU'RE O.K.!!!
Rest A
WOME
© 1991 GARS "I'M O.K. NOW." PANTER

ZED RECORDS

HAS MOVED



JUST ARRIVED

FISCHER Z-FIRST IMPRESSIONS
RUDI-I SPY EP
SIMPLE MINDS-CHELSEA GIRL
48 CHAIRS-SNAP IT AROUND
WASTELAND-WANT NOT EP
IAN HUNTER-SHIPS
MADNESS-THE PRINCE
BLAH BLAH BLAH-IN THE ARMY
PATTI SMITH-DANCING BAREFOOT/5=4-3-2-1
LONDON ZOO-RECEIVING END
IAN DURY-REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL
DISTURBED-I DON'T BELIEVE
STRANGLERS-DUCHESS
THE FALL-ROWCHE RUMBLE
FINGERPRINTZ-TOUGH LUCK
THE STEPPES-THE BEAT DRILL
CLIVE PIG-HAPPY BIRTHDAY SWEET 16
MATCHBOX-BLACK SLACKS
GERRY & THE HOLOGRAMS-GERRY & THE HOLOGRAMS
THE LAST WORDS-ANIMAL WORLD
MODS MAYDAY '79 (SAMPLER LP)
SHAM 69-HERSHAM BOYS 12"
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IAN DURY-REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL 12" (LONG VERSION)
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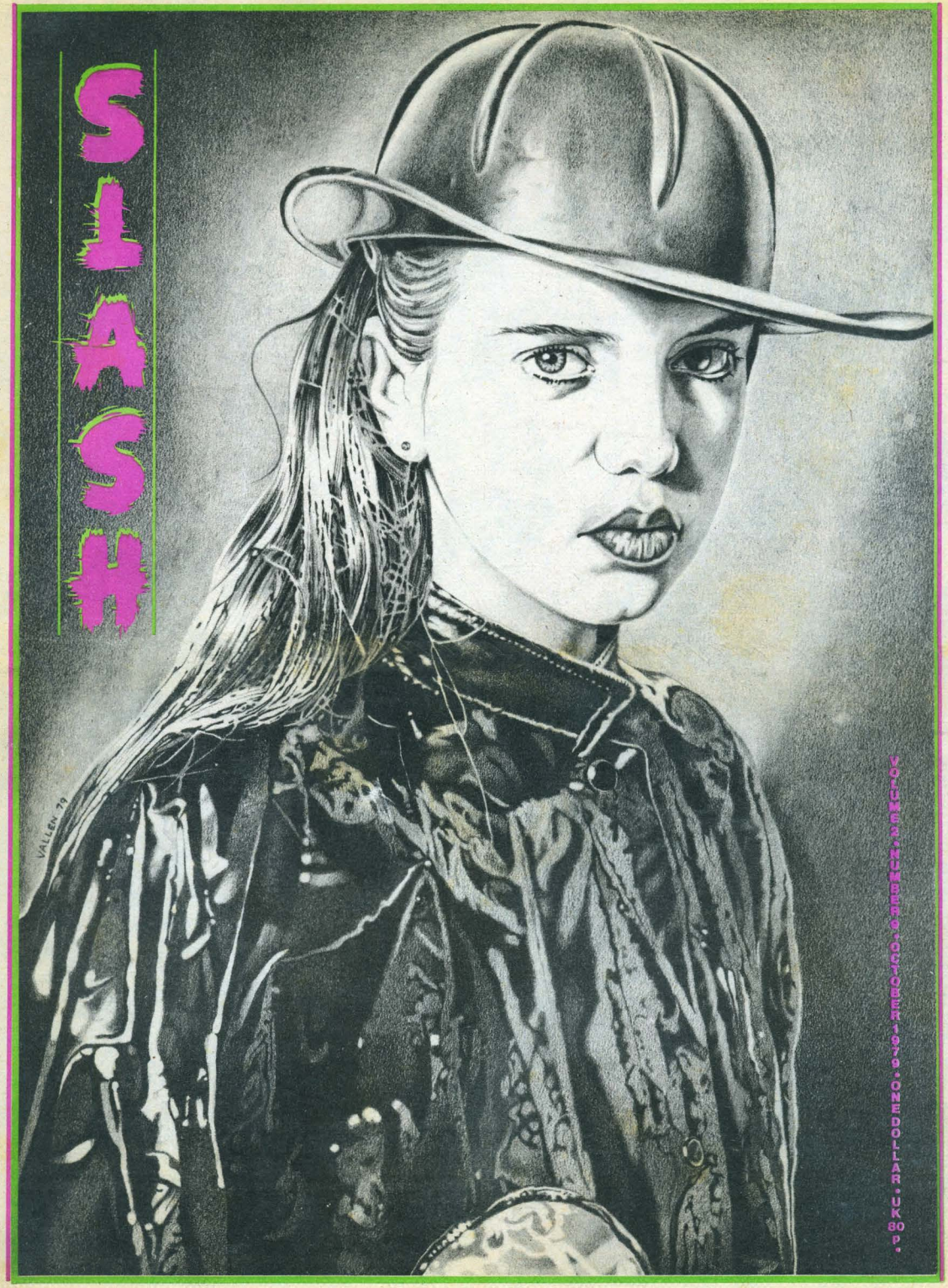

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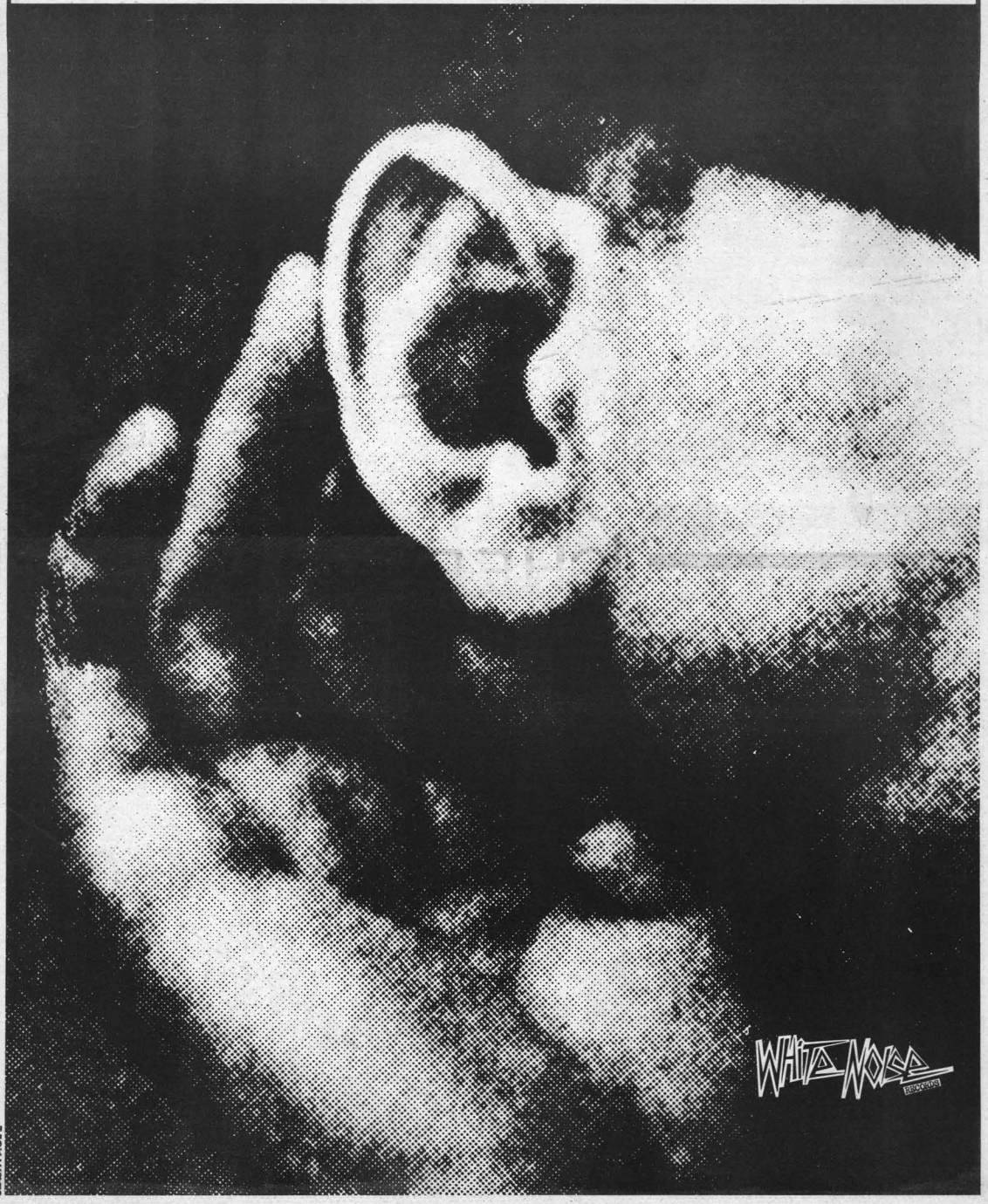

THE READERS' CHART

THERE IS NO READERS CHART THIS MONTH. (Well actually, there was one, everyone concerned with compiling it swears there was one, the typesetter swears she set it, the bonded accountant swears he audited it, but somewhere between him and this page it disappeared. We had a nice apology to fit in this box, explaining the above, but we lost it too...)

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...AND A GENEROUS ASSORTMENT OF TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS

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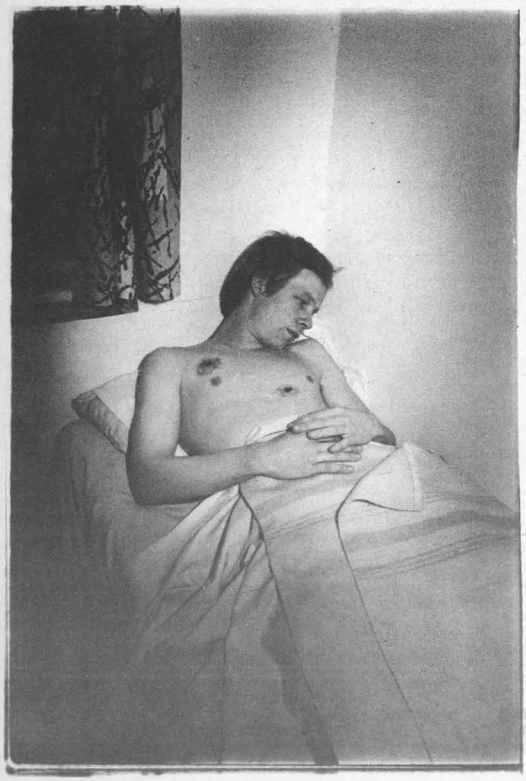
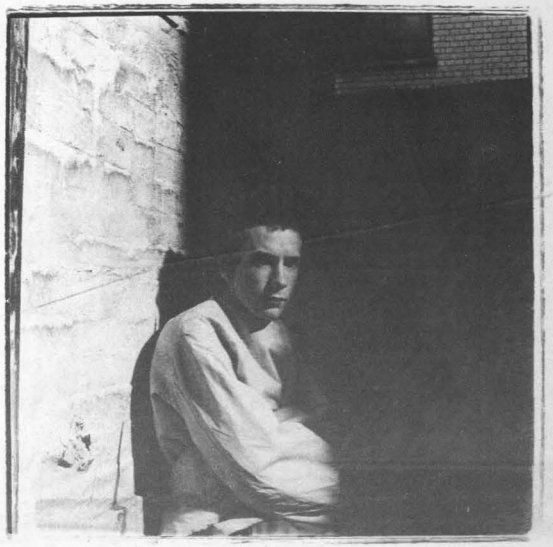




THE FIRST PUBLICITY PIX OF THE PISTOLS BY SLEAZY OF T. GRISTLE

SICKEST STORY OF THE MONTH AWARD goes to the Buzzcocks/Cramps disaster at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium in which four people were savagely beaten by big men with small pee-pees.

BACKGROUND:

After going on too early for anybody to see them, GANG OF FOUR split to be followed by the CRAMPS. Then THE BUZZCOCKS took the stage only to continue the pre-set pattern of restless boredom, disappointment and the all-round low energy level.

But the Buzzcocks, with Pete Shelley looking like a nice little poncy mathematics teacher, with no stage presence and rick y tick little rhythm guitar gams was not enough for the Huntington Beach/Costa Mesa surfing contingent reared on the Ramones, Pistols, Damned, Weirdoes, Clash, Dead Boys ets.

These guys took over the stage, resplendent in bleached blond spikey pinhead haircuts begging to be absorbed in Buzzcock energy which was totally absent from this otherwise excellent studio band.

The gorilla sized security guards took the game of throw-a-punk-off-the-stage as a personal affront to "manhood". As many kids as they could chuck off from one side of the stage were replaced by hordes on the other side.

Then everything started to get ulgy after Pete Shelley invites the Civic audience to sit on the stage on top of the risen orchestra pit. The guards swore blind vengeance after the show.

Outside the Civic at the end of the show, three guards from a company called WEST were seen by at least ten eye witnesses to come running out of the hall in a blind fury . . .

They ran berserk into a crowd of kids swinging, kicking and punching skulls.

The casualty list was Margo from the Go Go's, an eye sticking out six inches, Gerardo Velasquez from Nervous Gender a smashed in mouth, Tom the Skinhead multiple thumps and kicks on the head, plus ditto Geza X who tried to prevent the beating . . .

At the time of going to press, Slash magazine was unable to determine from Santa Monica Police whether any arrests had been made after statements were made by at least five witnesses . . .

The company refused to comment on the situation and a Whisky spokesman (Whisky Presentations promoted the event) said the whole thing was a complete embarrassment since the guard company had been hired to keep peace . . . (more info next issue)

Amid yet another furor, BRENDAN MULLEN walked out on the King's Palace, where he had been conducting "experimental" booking during the past few weeks, leaving the bewildered owners with their hands in the air.

But why, dear boy, why, we asked. It seemed a good location with great potential etc . . .

"I just decided it was impossible to do business with these people. The deeper I got involved with the place, the more skeletons I found in the closets . . . it wouldn't have been able to last anyway, even if I had set it up.

"Basically, the owners wanted a full blown club handed to them on a plate, but without putting anything out for it . . .

"It was hilarious, like a monkey cage with about ten negros (no racist slur intended) running around bumping into each other, all claiming to be Da Boss, nothing was getting done, except bands and customers were getting treated atrociously.

"It was very amusing for a couple of weeks, an interesting experiece . . . YET ANOTHER MASQUE ABORTION!!! but the Palace was not for me, the music, the bands or the audience.

"It's a shame, really, because I quit being a social worker a while ago, or else I might have sweated it out and slogged away to try and break down and transcend 200 years of ethnic, cultural and genetic malfunctions . . .

"If I only had the time . . ."

According to the "Father of Folk Rock" the latest in the mad dash for the title of "Father of the New Wave Fish Market" the inimitable DOUG WESTON now estimates that in the city of L.A. there exists more than "three thousand fans and followers of the New Wave Market, including the Hardcore Punk Rock Contingent . . ."

Presumably the old Queen Mother has assessed her figures according to thse schmoes thick enough to think of those stupid so-called discount give away tickets as some kind of break . . .

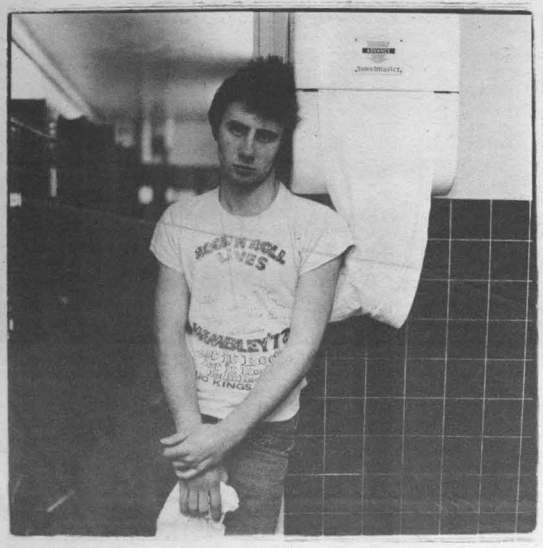
"A buck off' she says, when even the dumbest fucked up street punk knows you just walk by the decomposing hippie at the door, and who cares, anyway, 'cos Doug don't care if the band has overheads, it don't really matter if they get paid. 'cos the all the creepy New Wave "discoverers" are guzzling away the bar anyway . . . 'cos the club has overheads and the goddamned band should be hqappy to go broke to pay to play the Troubadour . . . it was good enough for Elton John . . . why ain't it good for you?

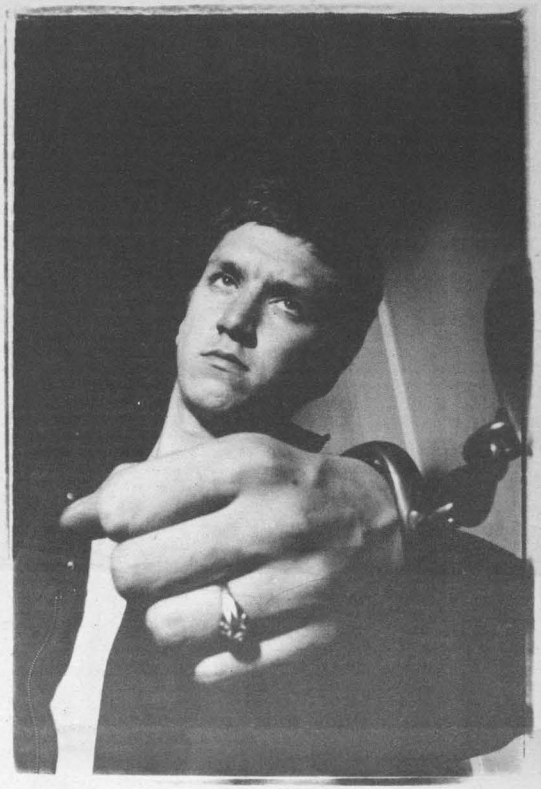
The Queen has the audcaity to take 50 per cent from those stupid tickets, plus she scams another 40 percent off the top of the full price admissions ON TOP OF 100 PER CENTY OF THE BAR AT TOTALLY INFLATED PRICES . . .

Doug's a beauty, believe us.

Direct from the New York Big Time, SUICIDE finally made their L.A. debut this month which turned into somewhat of an act of kamizake. First, the boys played a three-nighter opening for the CARS at the Universa Amphitheatre to be greeted with tumultuous response, the unamimous shrieks, cat calls and boos of 15,000

SHIT





••• MCLAREN THOUGHT THEY WERE TOO "HEAVY" (SEE INTERVIEW).

people, not a bad accomplishment, we thought, but why SUICIDE on this bill?

Answer: Cars' founder Ricky Ocasek is producer of their upcoming 12 inch single.

The duo followed up this debacle/triumph with a scheduled two-nighter at the King's Palace, yet another temporary incarnation of the Masque. The boys insisted on playing on a six inch high stage rather than using the various available risers.

In the name of what we presume to be "confrontative art" this gave Alan Vega the advantage of trying to perform eye-to-eye, nose-to-nose with the "Go back to New York" right into the artist's face.

After breaking a microphone and demanding nearly all the door receipts our favorite Masque boy Brendan cancelled them from the second night amid a clamor with Marty Thau, Suicide moguloid manager (the former Dolls' mentor . . .)

"The whole thing was a bloody mess . . ." said Brendan . . . "Marty demanded all this money upfront to play the second night . . . so I had to tell them to piss off because there were two oither baqnds on the bill to contend with who need to be paid as much as Suicide. Marty would not agree to play for a straight percentage and demanded a huge guarantee, but I felt their drawing power wasn't sufficient to gyp the other bands.

"So Marty left town cursing and swearing to bloody my name all over the Eaqstern world . . ."

Dennis Duck, drummer of the fast rising modern pop combo Human Hands, seriously smashed up his leg a few days ago in a nasty car crash. Dennis had to be pried free from the wreckage and is now in a Pasadena hospital in traction, waiting for the surgeons to install a metal rod in what's left of his leg. We haven't talked to Dennis yet, but other members of the band seem confident that eventually Dennis will drum again, even in a cast . . .

Members are Seattle band Chinas Comidas were in town recently arranging bookings for a series of upcoming concerts in October . . . Jimmy Pursey of ex-Sham 69 also in town recently, hanging out with, of all street people, Kim Fowley! Pursey was also heard on Rodney's show preaching and answering questions from kids in search of a guru. Speaking of Rodney's show, there were some angry words from Dangerhouse's top man David Brown following an appearance by X on the said show. Some X members apparently complained on the air over the treatment they and their record received at Dangerhouse. Nonsense (not the exact words!) says David. X had told him they themselves were "ashamed of their record" and agreed not to be paid any royalties. After many angry phone calls over the next few days between the House of Danger and the House of X a relative state of turce was reached when John and Exene met the freshly-returned-from-San Francisco Black Randy at the Troubadour and talked things over . . . One thing is certain: the X single on Dangerhouse is not available anymore . . . The fast growing beach punk scene around Long Beach, Huntington Beach and other sand and surf communities is attracting so much attention recently that Slash will probably dispatch a couple of its more fearless beer drinking writers to the sea side to find out what all the commotion is about. Check next issue for possible developments . . .

Ricki Kline (ex Rickie's on the Venice beach, ex Blackie's on La Brea) does not give up easily. He had decided to open a new club in downtown L.A. It will be located in Chance Wayne's building, on the second floor, at 15th St. and Main. Opening date is scheduled as October 6th . . .

Also on the club circuit, there is a growing rumor that the not very beloved Dave Forrest (booking manager for the Whisky) has been fired and replaced by a certain Gaylord. The new man has apparently assured some people that from now on bands like X, The Weirdos and others were once again welcome to play the so-called "world famous" Whisky a Go Go.

The Stardust Ballroom show featuring the Dils, Plugz, SVT and Rubber City Rebels has been cancelled. According to CD Productions (who put on the New Wave 1980 show at the Stardust earlier this month) the Stardust has signed an exclusive booking agreement with big business Avalon Attractions. No one else will be able to use the room, although Avalon plans to do only 2 shows a month. CD aren't giving up though, and plan to do their shows elsewhere. Talking Heads are due to play the Stardust at the end of October along with a more prestigious (and infinitely more boring sounding) show at the Greek Theatre.

JOHNNY CASH, recently in L.A. for the marriage of his daughter Carlene to Nick Lowe, was so impressed by the WALL OF VOODOO version of his classic "Ring of Fire" that he has aked the band to appear on a Christmas special to be seen on a major network. Taping will take place at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, with transportation and accomodation provided by the Man in Black himself.

Menwhile, look out for a Voodoo date at the Palomino where the combo plans to expand a little more into the quite bizarre area of electronically-treated country music.

"This country thing is just a temporary fixation with the band," explained Stan Ridgeway, "after the current series of gigs are over, our music will develop more in the direction of Louisiana with a dash of gris-gris. The next phase will take the music to Haiti, then we'll be ready for the African jungles by next Fall . . .

LETTER section

SLASH,

I WAS WONDERING IF YOU COULD HELP ME TO REALIZE A LIFELONG AMBITION THAT I HAVE HAD FOR SOME TIME NOW. I WOULD LIKE TO VOMIT OVER DARREL WAYNE DURING ONE OF HIS RADIO PROGRAMMES. BEING OF A SHY AND RETIRING NATURE, I WOULDN'T DARE ASK DARREL MYSELF, BUT I THOUGHT THAT NICE RODNEY MIGHT SLIP IT CASUALLY INTO CONVERSATION WITH MR. WAYNE AT ONE OF HIS TUPPERWARE PARTIES.
P.S.: PLEASE PRINT THIS LETTER OR I'LL DECLARE WAR ON RUSSIA.

JUANITA MYERS

SOUNDS LIKE A WORTHY ENDEAVOR TO US. WHO IS DARREL WAYNE ANYWAY??

kick

DEAR SLASH,
PLEASE DON'T CONDONE BANDS THAT TRY TO INITATE OLD WAVE BANDS. FOR INSTANCE, THE WORLD HAS SEEN TOO MANY MICK JAGGER IMPERSONATORS ALREADY.. BUT WHEN THESE IMPERSONATORS GET YOUR APPROVAL LIKE WITH RICK WILDER AND HIS NAU NAUS, IT SIGNALS THE DEATH OF WHAT WE ALL HOPE FOR. IF OLD WAVE IS TO BE OVERTHROWN IT HAS TO BE DONE BY SOMETHING NEWER THAN IMITATIONS OF THE STUFF THAT SLASH READERS HOPE TO OVERTHROW. SO GET WITH IT SLASH AND LISTEN BETTER.

VIC GODARD

YOU'RE NOT VIC GODARD YOU LITTLE IMPERSONATOR! THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN JAGGER AND WILDER ARE NOT EXACTLY OBVIOUS TO ME. BRYAN FERRY MAYBE, BUT JAGGER? AS TO THIS OVER THROW BUSINESS, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? WE ALREADY HAVE OVERTHROWN (UP).

kick

SLASH,
I KNOW YOU WONT PRINT THIS, BECAUSE FIRST OF ALL I HATE THE FUCKING GERMS! AND THE ONLY REALLY GOOD BAND IN L.A. BESIDES THE MOTELS ARE THE SIMPLETONES, WHY DONT YOU TALK ABOUT THEM?
I THINK DARBY CRASH OR BOBBY PYN HEAD OR WHATEVER THE FUCK HIS NAME IS THIS WEEK OUGHT TO BE KICKED IN THE YARBLES AND SENT OFF, YOU SHOULD HAVE REVIEWED THE HONG KONG SHOW WITH THE SIMPLETONES AND THE CROWD AND (YUCK, BARF) THE STEPMOTHERS. SPEAKING OF WHICH THERE IS ANOTHER BAND YOU PROBABLY LIKE. WHAT A BUNCH OF DEGENARATE, FAGGOT, PERVERT, FUCKHEADS. NOT ONLY DID THEY GROPE EACH OTHER AND KISS EACH OTHER ON STAGE, BUT THEY SANG A SONG CALLED "FUCK YOU" (JUST YOUR SPEED) AND DEDICATED IT TO MADAME WONG, AND SO MY BUDDY JUST HAD TO GO OVER AND LIGHT A FIRE IN FRONT OF MA WONGS, AND WHO GOT HASSLED, ME ! SO IF I EVER SEE ANY OF THOSE FUCKING STEPMOTHERS ON THE STREET I'LL PROBABLY JUST SHOOT THEM IN THE FACE AND PART.. A LOT OF YOUR SO CALLED PUNKS FANS DESERVE THE SAME AND IF I HEAR ONE MORE PERSON SAY THE STEPMOTHERS OUTPLAYED THE CROWD OR ANYONE I'LL SHOOT THEM TOO.
START REVIEWING AND PUSHING GOOD BANDS YOU SHITHEADS
LOVE,
ALEX/SNICKER/ROCCOF

WHILE I WAS READING THIS CHARMING MISSIVE THE WONDERFUL GERMS LP WAS SIZZLING ON THE TURNTABLE, MAKING ANY KIND OF THINKING ABOUT THE MOTELS OR THE SIMPLETONES SIMPLY IRRELEVANT. LIKE TRYING TO RECALL WHO GORE VIDAL IS WHILE READING MALCOLM LOWRY. US SHITHEADS ARE PUSHING GOOD BANDS, YOU SHITHEADS ARE TOO BUSY BICKERING TO NOTICE ANYTHING.

KICK

DEAR SLASH,
BLACK FLAG IS GREAT AND I SAW THEM IN MANHATTAN BEACH. THE CROWD WAS MOSTLY FAMILIES AND SURFERS WHEN BLACK FLAG CAME ON AND CHALLENGED THE AUDIENCE TO GET UP AND MOVE. I EVEN HEARD THE LEAD SINGER SAY "WHY DON'T THEY GO HOME AND WATCH WALT DISNEY". ANYWAY, I HAPPENED TO BE WEARING A LED ZEPPELIN TEE SHIRT AND I WAS DANCING IN FRONT OF THE STAGE WITH THIS GIRL. SHE NOTICED WHAT I WAS WEARING AND SAID "OOH, ZEPPELIN, I DON'T WANNA DANCE WITH YOU, CREEP!"
AFTER THE CONCERT I RIPPED UP THE SHIRT, SPIT ON IT, AND THREW IT IN THE GUTTER. SO NOW AFTER SEEING BLACK FLAG I HATE LED ZEPPELIN, BLACK SABBATH, AND THE REST. FUCK 'EM.

A CONVERT TO PUNK
DAVID BLEVINS

DEAR SITTING IN THE.....

YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY COV BOY TO ASK ME ABOUT "CHINZE'S POLITICS". IF YOU WANT THE WHOLE STORY, READ CHINZE'S BIOGRAPHY AND DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS. I MEAN WHAT I SAY. AND PLEASE NO SILLY UNDERWEAR IN THIS LAGAZINE. HAVEN'T WE SUFFERED ENOUGH?

YOURS IN LOVE WITH MANY PEOPLE

JOE BIOW
PS: EVER HEAR OF SHOCK VALUE

SLASH,

I WAS GOINT TO USE MY RED PEN ON THIS CORRESPONDENCE BUT, WELL, I SWALLOWED IT ACCIDENTALLY. HELL, WHAT'S SURGERY ANYWAY. BUT I MUST SAY THAT "FORCES OF VICTORY" BY LINTON KWESI JOHNSON IS A POWERFUL STATEMENT AGAINST THE FORCES OF REPRESSION. I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY NO L.A. STATION HAS A TIME SLOT DESIGNATED FOR THE PLAYING OF REGGAE WHEREAS ESTABLISHMENT MUZAK FOLLOWS THE DOW CHEMICAL ROBOT SCHOOL OF LEARNING, MUCH OF THE WEST INDIAN MUSIC BRINGS A SELF-UNDERSTANDING TYPE OF RELEASE, FOR ME ANYWAY. UNFORTUNATELY, I FIND IT HARD TO FIND PEOPLE WHO ARE EVEN NON-RACIST ENOUGH TO LISTEN TO IT. BUT THE TIME SHALL COME WHEN ALL PEOPLE CAN LIVE PEACEFULLY WITH ONE ANOTHER. YEA, I DOUBT IT BUT IT'S A DREAM.
OH, BY THE WAY, PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN THE ORGANIC (SO CALLED) LIFESTYLE ARE NOT NECESSARILY WEAK PUSHOVERS. ESTABLISHMENT MEDICINE AND CORPORATE FOOD STORES ARE THE ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE - THEY ARE THE ONES DESTROYING OUR HEALTH WITH SYNTHETIC FOODS AND SYNTHETIC DRUGS TURNING PEOPLE INTO MACHINE-LIKE ADDICTS. AND AFTER OUR BODIES AND BRAINS ARE WEAKENED, WE ARE SUBJECTED TO SENSELESS TRASH ON TELEVISION. THE COMPANIES MAKING EXTREME PROFITS SELLING WORTHLESS PRODUCTS TO THE POPULOUS ARE GETTING STRONGER. THAT'S WHY SLASH MUST REMAIN TRUE TO THE IDEAL OF PROMOTING MUSIC AND IDEAS THAT ARE MORE TRUTHFUL THAN NOT. WELL, I SHOULDN'T SAY YOUR IDEAS ARE MORE TRUTHFUL, BUT THEY ARE LESS REFINED. AND THE MORE YOU REFINE SOMETHING, THE LESS OF THE WHOLE IS LEFT INTACT. BUT WHAT DO I KNOW ANYWAY?

MIKE MOVIKOFF

LET'S HEAR IT FOR OUR "LESS REFINED" IDEAS! I ALWAYS KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING NOBLE ABOUT US. I JUST NEVER COULD PUT MY FINGER ON IT. THANX.

kick

SLASH,
I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE WRITER OF "STAGED EVENTS" FOR HIS OR HER KIND WORDS BUT I MUST MAKE ONE IMPORTANT CORRECTION. I DID NOT, NOR WOULD I EVER, CALL SOMEONE " A DESTICABLE FILTH". I'M SURE IT'S EASY TO MISUNDERSTAND ME, MASTER OF ELOCUTION (?) THAT I AM. I DO NOT BELIEVE IN INSULTING ANYONE. THIS MAY SEEM A TRIVIAL POINT BUT TO ME IT IS AN IMPORTANT ONE. I WOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD NOTE THIS CORRECTION NEXT ISSUE. THIS MAY SEEM AN ABSURD REQUEST. IF SO, PLEASE HUMOR ME.

YOURS,
DAVID THOMAS

FASTER THAN YOU

Hello boys and girls, and welcome to another installment of this fabulous column where the truth is detected as lies, lies are the pinacle of truth and your mother is a hooker. Once again, I — the most beautiful Rock 'n' Roll writer in existence — will make the drab black & white of this poorly typset magazine appear as glorious paisley in your fragile eggshell minds. And what dirt does the All-Fast One have for us today? Read on, consumers, read on.

Well, I asked for it. In my last column you may remember that I requestyed letter from ya'all out there in Readerland. Even before SLASH hit the street the letters have litteraly poured in. Here at the newly carpetted and puked upon SLASH headquarters ww were forced to rent another office space just to hold it all in. Thank you so much, kids, you've been wonderful. Also, thanks for the enclosed money with each letter (with the exception of those scums who somehow forgot to include the cash. We know who you three are.).

It seems that many of the letters deal in the same subject: Where do we go when Chinatown closes for the night? There are a total on one and half place to go after hours in Los Angeles: Danny's Dogs and Blackie's.

Danny's Dogs (also known affectionately as the Okie Dog) is a well lit hamburger stand on the corner of Gardner and Santa Monica Blvd. Not only is the food (my faves are the triple chili cheeseburgers, Okie Dogs, teriaki burgers, teriaki burritos and especially the tacos) incredible but the counter help put on a fabulous show nightly for NO EXTRA CHARGE! The two main characters are of oriental origin and they play the parts of a pair of surviving Kamakazi pilots who came to America after the war and found jobs slinging ground round in a popular Hollywood fast food stand after becoming addicted to a real fine quality Japanese amphetamine. Danny's is quickly becoming THE place to tie on the feed bag while in Hollywood. Regular customers include the Screamers, Levi & the Rockats, the Cramps, Silencers, Mr. Rod, Don Snowden, the Motels, Rory Johnston, Cherri Penguin, Miss Trudie, the Zeros, Gennybody, the Plimsouls, the Crawdaddys, X, Brenden Mullen, Orchids, the Pop, Ranking Mr. J., Miss Pleasant (her mother and sisters), Miss Zane, Miss Sandy, Harvey the K, Miss Andrella, the Gogos, F. Eddie Digne, the Testones, the Germs, the Zippers, Art Fein, Kari Krome, Miss Priscilla, Miss Leslie M., Miss Judy & Kevin, the Last, the Dictators, the Mumps, the Know, the Furys, the Faye Twins, Little Anna Pizza, Rik L. Rik, Chris/Clair & David, the Senders, the Sarge, Dr. Don Waller, Little Tommy Wilt, the Blonde Miss Dory, the Bags, the hipper SLASH writers (both of them), and of course I am there almost nightly.

Blackie's is a different story althogether. It is a small, dimly lit nite club on La Brea near Melrose that is open until four in the morning on Friday & Saturday only. Originally opened by Paul Greenstein (I've never seen him at Okie Dog) who compromised with the owner and now books the bands there. The night I was there I saw two fab new teen combos: the Unclaimed (dress like the Music Machine and perform songs by the Chocolate Watchband, P.R. & the Raiders and the Sonics) and the Crawdaddys of San Diego (they do all the Bo Diddley, Chuck Berry and Muddy Waters songs that were covered by British invasion R&B bands). So that's cool. But not quite up to the high after hours standards set by the Okie Dog. By the way the Ballard/Greenstein story is an exact repeat of what happened at Madame Wong's (no relation to the Wongs in the flick THE WANDERERS — great Rock 'n' Roll movie). Everyone in Hollywood is awaiting Mr. Greenstein's next move. So's the lovely Miss Jan, I'll wager.

In my travels I've found only one other place on earth that has an after hours place quite like the Okie Dog — New York City. The club: The Kiwi on East Ninth of which the Fast Man is a card-carring member. They feature cheap warm beer and a couple broken pinball machines. A truly wonderful joint.
MORE DIRT: It doesn't matter where I go, someone always asks me where I get my incredibly cool looking pointed-toed shoes. For years I've been venturing into the darkest depths of downtown Tiajuana side streets for my supplies. But all of that is over. A brand new clothing store in Los Angeles now carries these fashionable items for less money and bother than the trip to T.J. The place: the STRAIT JACKET, 8046 Third Street, near Crescent Heights. They also deal custom clothes and all sorts of the garbage that you clowns will really dig.

On the local scene, it may now be announced that the popular Rock 'n' Roll unit the Zippers — the band that amazed everyone in town by remaining unsigned to a major label for so long — may soon be going into a recording studio with none other than Ray Manzerek (of Rick & the Ravens fame) as producer and financed by Electra Records. Stay tuned to this column for the results.

The hippest and grooviest new Pop/Noise ensemble is Catholic Discipline. Led by SLASH magazine's guiding light, Kickboy Face, they proved to be quite an excitable addition to the L.A. Pogo scene. Although more than one observer expressed a desire for Mr. Face to sing in French, his vocal chords proved to be quite good and anybody with a countenance such as his is sure to go far in this business. I expect an inking with SLASH records will be in order.

Noted local lad Geza X has recently unleashed on an apathetic world a solo single. Geza, who was once in one of my fave bands, the Dead Beats, performed all the instruments, produced and engineered it all by his lonesome — a New Wave Todd Rungren/Roy Wood. I really like the way the label look on the record. Also, the inner sleeve boasts that the whole mess was recordced in three channel stereo — not a new concept. Three Channel stereo was pioneered by the folks at E.S.P. records in the late Sixties. E.S.P. was responsible for recordings by Charlse Manson, the Fugs, Albert Ayler, Sun Ra and the Holly Modal Rounders. Those were the days. Oh, year, the songs on the Geza X record are "Rx Rock 'n' Roll"/"Pony Ride" on Final Gear records, whatever THAT means.

On Friday the 14, well, actually, Saturday morning at 1:00 a.m., Los angeles was treated to a rare viewing of RIOT ON SUNSET STRIP. The movie is based on actual riots of teenaged delinquents and connected incidents on Hollywood's famed street in 1966. The flick opens with the title track as performed by the Standells (the Bags do this song live) and is highlighted with a great fight scene in a club while the Cocolate Watch Band plays. A great movie about mixed-up juveniles and parental shortcomings. A must to see. Pick up the Soundtrack on Tower Records.

Everyone's fave clothing & nifty things store, the Poseur on Sunset Blvd., promises to manufacture and sell "Free Chuck Berry" buttons soon. We all must stick them to their promise. Chuck Berry should be celebrated as a national hero, instead he is thrown in jail. We all must join in and protest against Chuck's imprisonment.

Well, that about raps it up for this issue. Tune in again next month when I reveal the glories of Uncle John's Hamburgers on Vine St.; fave new bands to watch; fave old bands who's records you should own; how to enjoy a complete meal for two at about $1.25 a head; the ususal dirt on my exciting life; and of course I will again tackle your letters (don't forget to enclose money). Thanks for the visual contact.

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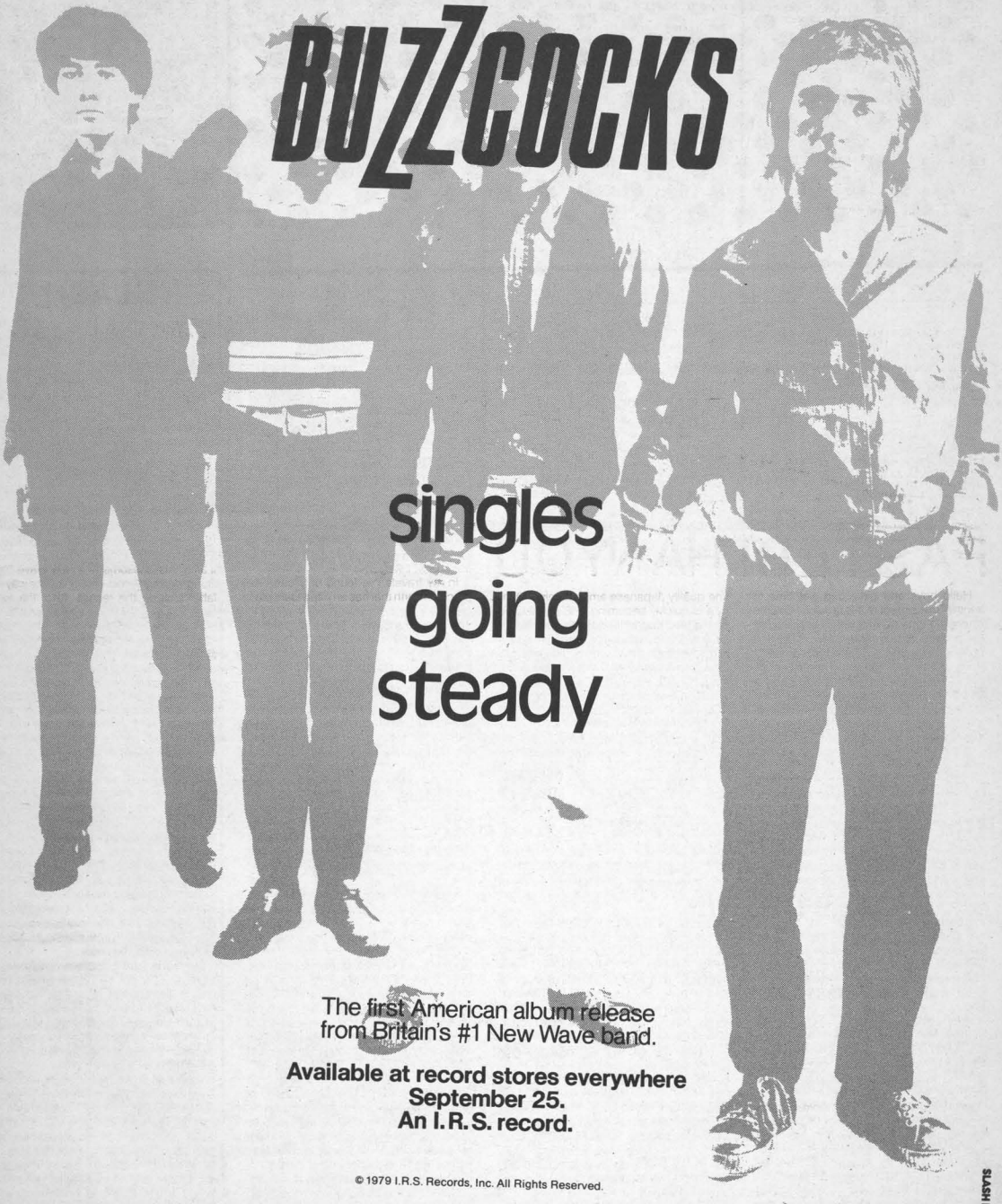

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AND NOW A WORD TO OUR SPONSORS FROM OUR MANAGING DIRECTOR:
(the managing director is the one who keeps it all together while the rest of us are busy trying to pull it apart. Ed.)

ALTHOUGH IT'S TRUE SLASH HAS NEVER BEEN KNOWN FOR ITS EXCESS OF EDITORIAL HUMILITY, I DID SIT DOWN A COUPIE OF DAYS AGO TO THANK THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE SUPPORTING US, NOT NECESSARILY FOR OUR PARTICULAR POINT OF VIEW BUT FOR OUR ATTITUDE OF COMPLETE SUBJECTIVE EDITORIAL FREEDOM. IMPOSSIBIE AS IT FIRST SEEMED, SLASH HAS MANAGED TO SURVIVE (HENCE THE CUTE "STILL IN **BUSINESS**" BADGES), AND I THOUGHT IT WAS ABOUT TIME TO **ACKNOWLEDGE** OUR ENLIGHTENED SUPPORTERS. THEY HAVE, AFTER AII, GIVEN US THE MONTHLY OPPORTUNITY TO WORK OURSELVES INTO AN ACUTE STATE OF EXHAUSTION, MAKE IIFELONG ENEMIES, IOSE OUR HARD-EARNED MONEY, BREAK UP OUR HAPPY HOMES AND IN GENERAI AIIOW US TO EXPERIENCE THE THRIIIS AND RISKS OF LIVING IN A FREEWAY IANE YET UNDISCOVERED! SO THERE I WAS EXPRESSING MY GRATITUDE IN THE TYPICALLY SARCASTIC SIASH STYLE THAT MAKES STRAIGHT SENTIMENTALITY A JOKE, WHEN THE PHONE RANG. AT THE OTHER END WAS AN OUTRAGED RECORD COMPANY PERSON WHO, JUST HOURS PRIOR TO OUR DEADIINE, ANNOUNCED HIS DECISION TO PUII OUT A CONFIRMED FUII PAGE AD BECAUSE HIS VINYI PRODUCT HAPPENED TO HAVE RECEIVED A IESS THAN RAVE REVIEW IN OUR PREVIOUS ISSUE. AS ALWAYS WITH A CONFIRMED AD WE HAD RESERVED THE SPACE AND COUNTED ON THE INCOME. THIS IATEST INCIDENT WITH THE INDIAN GIVER RECORD COMPANY IIIUSTRATES ONE OF THE PROBIEMS WITH PUBIISHING A MAGAZINE IIKE SIASH. EVER SINCE THE BEGINNING WE HAVE GONE TO GREAT IENGTHS TO RESIST JUST THIS TYPE OF PRESSURE (THE YOU-GIVE-ME-AN-AD-I-GIVE-YOU-A-GOOD-REVIEW ETHICS) THAT HAS TURNED MOST EVERY OTHER MUSIC PUBIICATION INTO AN INSINCERE QUAGMIRE OF "OBJECTIVE" DRIVEI ABOUT RIFFS, PROGRESSIONS, VAPID MUSICIANSHIP, WHIIE IMPORTANT ISSUES ARE TOTAIIY AVOIDED IN TIPPY TOE EDITORIAIS.
ALTHOUGH JUST AS A SIMPIE EXERCISE IN MENTAI FITNESS WE DO OCCASIONNAIIY CONDESCEND TO DABBIE WITH ANAIYTICAI WEIGHTS AND MEASURES, OUR PRIDE IIES IN SIASH'S EMOTIONAI HONESTY. OUR OPINIONS CANNOT BE BOUGHT (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF OUR OWN VINYI PRODUCTS. IF JUSTIFICATION IS REQUIRED SEE THE IETTERS SECTION IN PAST ISSUES, IF STIII NOT SATISFIED WRITE AND WE'II WAIK YOU DOWN THE YEIIOW BRICK ROAD OF MORAI CORRUPTION). WHETHER RIGHT OR WRONG, SIASH IS NECESSARY.
SO THAT BRIEF AND DISTASTEFUI ENCOUNTER WITH ONE NARROW-MINDED SAIESMAN MADE IT POSSIBIE FOR ME TO FURTHER APPRECIATE, AND GENUINEIY THANK, THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE SUPPORTED US IN THE PAST AND WHO CONTINUE TO DO SO : THE ADVERTISERS WHO ADVERTISE WITHOUT TRYING TO MANIPUIATE, AND THE READERS WHO CONTINUE TO READ US WHETHER THEY AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH OUR PARTICUIAR SIANT. YOUR ENIIGHTENED SUPPORT IS MUCH APPRECIATED.
NOW I'II BUZZ OFF BEFORE I MAKE MYSEIF III AND IET KICKBOY AND THE REST INSUIT YOU FOR HAVING INTEIIECTUAI ATHIETE'S FOOT, ZITS IN THE WRONG PIACES OR WHATEVER THEIR IATEST ANNIHIIATION CAMPAIGN FOCUSES ON THESE DAYS.

R.B.

SLASH STAFF CHART

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH

1) Forces of Victory LP - Linton Kwesi Johnson
2) Mashall Dread Locks - Clint Eastwood/ Vivian Jackson
3) The Way it is - I Kong
4) "Presenting the Gladiators" LP

CHRIS D.

1) Germs LP
2) Sex and Dying in High Society - X (tape)
3) To Mom on Mother's Day - Monte Cazazza
4) Corpus Christi/White Nigger - The Avengers
5) Gidget Goes to Hell/My Boyfriend - The Suburban Lawns
6) Tooth and Nail LP

KICK

1) Gangster - The Specials
2) California Uber Alles/Man with the Dogs -The Dead Kennedys
3) Rowche Rumble - The Fall
4) We must bleed - The Germs
5) It's Her Factory - Gang of Four
6) Kill the Great Raven - Snakefinger

MORK WILLIAMS

1) Memphis Tennessee - Silicon Teens
2) Time Goes By - The Distractions
3) My Boyfriend - Suburban Lawns
4) I like Motorcycles - Vermillion & The Aces
5) Dirty Pictures - Radio Stars

Z.

1) Babylon Underground - Catholic Discipline (live)
2) Nag Nag Nag - Cabaret Voltaire
3) We hate you little girls - Throbbing Gristle
4) Amphibians - Monitor (live)
5) Dance Franny Dance - The Floyd Dakil Combo

RANKING JEFFREY LEA

1) Ascension - John Coltrane
2) I Thirst (Pt. II) - Dillinger
3) Sugarlight - X (live)
4) I'm Shakin' - Little Willie John
5) Soul Serenade - King Curtis

STEVE

1) Magazine (live at the Whisky)
2) Weirdos LP
3) Forces of Victory LP - Linton Kwesi Johnson

PEA

1) Gang of Four (live at the Whisky)
2) Germs LP
3) California Uber Alles - The Dead Kennedys
4) Gangster - The Specials
5) My Boyfriend - The Suburban Lawns

MELANIE

1) Fear of Music LP - Talking Heads
2) Second Hand Daylight DP - Magazine
3) Weirdos LP
4) A question of Degree - Wire
5) Germs LP

V.

1) Germs LP
2) Gidget Goes to Hell - The Suburban Lawns
3) Our Love Passed Out On The Couch - X
4) Prisoner - D.O.A.
5) Tooth and Nail LP
6) Black Flag EP

Pink Flamingos

SAT

"The sickest movie ever made"
—*Interview*

A FILM BY DAVID LYNCH

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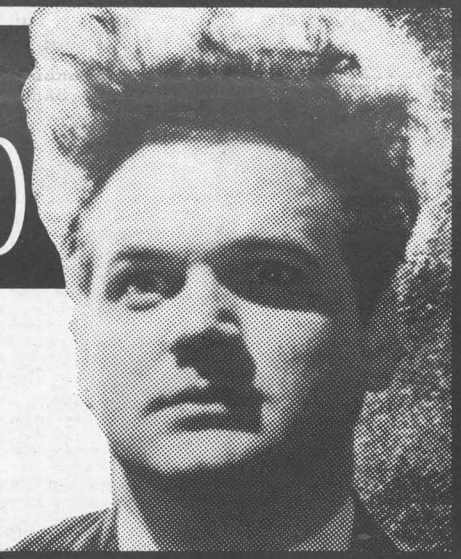

NUART

MIDNIGHT

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MADNESS pic: A. Hansen

LAURA LOGIC pic: J. Beckman

THE NEW & DEFUNCT PISTOLS pic: T. Sheehan

LONDON: RANDOM STOATS

MUNK GOES POD

It's hard not to be cynical about JIMMY PURSEY, not because he's a loud mouthed braggart (as indeed are some of my best friends), but because his "man-of-the-people" posturing contradicts his recklessly selfish opportunism. He was candid enough to admit that the SHAM 69 split was the inevitable consequence of the violence the band invoked wherever they plonked down their speaker cabinets, but threw down the gauntlet with a farewell gig at the Rainbow which gave the Sham Army a final opportunity to indulge in a war of attrition with each other and a hefty faction of Britain's neo-Nazi National Front, using the seating facilities as the armaments. Are you surprised that the concert was recorded for a "final album".

Having made it clear that *he* was going to lead a warmed-over SEX PISTOLS reunion, Pursey promptly shat on his own doorstep by muscling his ego all over the rehearsal sessions with JONES & COOK to the point where they told him to piss off and put the official lid on the whole foolish enterprise. Finally, with Sham's rabble-rousing single, "Hersham Boys" enjoying its fifth week in the top thirty, Jim is asking the shell-shocked survivors of the band if they'll have him back again.

Jones and Cook appear to be going in another and rather odd direction, however. The jovial two-some were last seen in the company of ageing-mod, PETE TOWNSEND at a LOCAL OPERATOR gig at Dingwalls. All three had arrived in Townsend's limo which was kept waiting outside until they'd had enough, and all three paid to get in. This unlikely trio have been skulking around the metropolis and it would seem that Uncle Pete might be trying to narrow the generation gap he's always moaning about in the light of the Mod Revival. Are you ready for TOWNSEND's TOSSERS?

This latter phenomenum is one of the more curious, or even laughable aspects of a music scene that desperately lacks a rudder. Mods, in case you can't remember, we're short-haired, sharp-suited fashion freaks who rode round on scooters plastered in spotlamps and mirrors, took large quantities of amphetemines which enabled them to survive all-night R n' B/Tamla Motown/Ska sessions, and frequently indulged in running battles with teds and/or greasers at British sea-side resorts. The original Mods favoured groups like THE WHO, THE YARDBIRDS, SMALL FACES and just about anyone black who could sing and had a saxophone in their band. But the Mod Revival appears to be an excuse for last year's punks to smarten up their act and dance instead of pogo.

The whole thing has happened with incredible speed; in the six weeks I was in America, THE SPECIALS, and MADNESS both of whom I covered in my last scree, have become major stars and the focal point for all sorts of sartorial silliness, reflecting the new modness. The Specials have a top ten hit with "Gangsters" and Madness have a likely one with "The Prince", both of them reggae/blue-beat toons, and Madness have just done a lucrative deal with Stiff Records (Stiff/Epic in the States). From pub-rock to national notoriety in less than two months.

Then there was The March Of The Mods, a tour comprising THE PURPLE HEARTS, THE CHORDS and SECRET AFFAIR, which specialized in damaging hotel bars and playing thin pastiches of, or in the case of The Chords, slightly punkified renditions of mid-sixties Tamla/Stax classics. Bands with names like the KILLERMETERS and the MERTON PARKAS are just as fast as they can buy a shiny mohair suit and the national press are having a field day killing off punk in the wake of this new fad.

Even JOE STRUMMER is muttering that he's "Very concerned" about the deserting troops, although the new album, just finished at Wessex Studios, is reportedly a killer. Included on it as is the first song written and sung by PAUL SIMMON.

Whilst the violence may be on the wane now that Sham have packed up, the ANGELIC UPSTARTS (a Pursey protegee that also encourage aggro wherever they go) are off the road and the Clash off to America, it doesn't stop people dying at gigs. On Sunday September 2nd. CBS's latest new wave signing PSYCHEDELIC FURS were supporting middle aged Velvet Underground surrogates THE ONLY ONES at the Lyceum when 15 year-old Tobias Sladek dropped dead near the front of the stage, evidently from natural causes. I'd fortunately left the concert before this happened, otherwise I might've been bored to death too. The Furs are this week's hot combo, although I find singer Richard Butler Rep sub-JOHNNY ROTTEN poses and weak ULTRAVOX/PISTOLS rip-offs tiresome after about three numbers. The only redeeming actor is the existence of a saxophonist, Duncan Kilburn, who although he can't play very well, at least adds a litle tonal colour to an otherwise minor league operation.

Talking of saxes, elsewhere in this issue you should find a review of RED CRAYOLA who benefit hugely from Lora Logic's crazed reed-work, and SWELL MAPS who don't need to. This charming little package was announced as Rough Trade Night at the Nashville at the end of a week which saw Rough Trade's Geoff Travis in court for masterminding the nation's largest bootleg operation (and you think we didn't know, Geoff?) and in the pages of N.M.E. as the diligent, virtuous father of British independent labels.

Once again N.M.E. got their noses browned, but not as badly as with Deanne Pearson's idiotic piece on L.A. New Wave. Since I imagine Kickboy will be dishing his eloquent appraisal of Ms. Pearson elsewhere in these pages, I will withhold my own critique. However as I was in Los Angeles myself for much of the time she was researching her piece and saw a lot of great music and heartening developments, I can only assume from her reproachful and dismissive observations that she had her head firmly up her arse during the larger part of her stay.

There are all manner of new albums out here, XTC's "Wires & Sticks" being by far the most interesting of them and a lot better than their last limpid effort. The SLITS album has finally arrived and the cover and promotional campaign features ARRI UP and *les girls* virtually naked save for a lumpen patina of mud in a fairly calculated attempt to avert one's attention from the amateurish histrionics of the record itself; playtime in the recording studio. At the other end of the ballpark we have SIOUXSIE & THE BANSHEES' "Join Hands" which is so professional and cold as to deter even the staunchest Banshees accolyte. I've just heard that with typically masterful timing, Siouxsie and manager Nils Stevenson have given the elbow to Kenny Morris and John McKay of the Banshees immediately prior to the album's promotional tour. "We decided to get rid of the tossers," explained Nils with remarkable candour.

Much worthier is a compilation of Liverpool's new wave, "Street To Street" on the Open Eye label. Herein you will find camaradie, vague but determined ideas and the sort of furious esotericism that I find so engaging in So. Cal's new music. Bands featured include BIG IN JAPAN, ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN, TEARDROP EXPLODES (both of the latter starting to make an impact nationally) and ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK. It costs less and is worth far more than the Siouxsie album, so if you can get the choice, buy Merseybeat.

Mork Williams

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SAN FRAN CISCO: SUMMER '79

by Caitlin

Last month fell nicely into place, with the Deaf Club open 2-4 nights a week and no cop hassles as yet, Loma Linda putting on a few more shows, the Frisco Disco opening and closing its doors to punk (ditto for Berkeley's Bear Lair), Superb Productions (a UC Berkeley lower-echelon Bill Graham Presents) suddenly doing all the upcoming large punk shows (Buzzcocks, Talking Heads, B-52's, etc.), and Temple Beautiful a money-making, though not always fun, venue.

Weekend of the month award goes to the Deaf Club for the 17th & 18th. On the 17th the Zeros headlined a benefit for Dessie Woods (a woman who shot her rapist — an excellent idea, more women should try it — with his own gun, and is doing TWENTY-TWO YEARS for it). At the last minute one of the opening bands cancelled, and the conscientious Zeros played two back-to-back sets, the second featuring such classic Zeros tunes as "Cosmetic Couple" (never before heard in SF), "Wimp," "Don't Push Me Around," etc., not to mention the international debut of drummer Baba Bogus on lead vocals, on Bo Diddley's "Roadrunner." On the 18th the Dils made a surprise guest appearance (their first with new drummer Zippy Pinhead, ex-Lady Larue, ex-KGB, ex-D.O.A., etc., and new manager Nico Ordway, a/k/a Stephen Schwartz, ex-Search and Destroy "Politics of Punk" writer) at a show headlined by this month's Belfast Cowboys: Rozz (ex-Sleepers, ex-Negative Trend), Jimmy and Danny (ex-Avengers), and Denny (of the Offs and Jorma Kaukonen). The new Dils sounded rough but promising, opening their abbreviated set with "Red Rockers Rule," their version of the Masque $4 door fiasco, and closing with "National Guard," which the Clash wanted to cover. The Belfast Cowboys, in true Cowboys style, insured themselves SRO crowds at all future gigs by providing free plastic cups and generous servings of gin to all and sundry, while at the same time performing truly warped/inspired versions of such songs as the Shaun Cassidy smash "That's Rock and Roll," T. Rex's immortal "Bang A Gong," Slade's "Gudby 2 Jane," and their own "I Can Laugh About It Now." On the same night, down the street two blocks at Loma Linda, a/k/a Testing Grounds, the Mutants, No Alternative (Johnny Genocide's new band), Flipper (Will and Steve, ex-Negative Trend, and Ricky, ex-Sleepers), and C.I.A. packed the place, with numerous indecisive dayglow kids haplessly wandering back and forth between the two gigs. A weekend to restore one's faith in this teenage wasteland we quaintly refer to as the scene.

The Avengers, or should I say formerly the Avengers, will soon be releasing an EP on White Noise records, featuring "The American In Me," "White Nigger," "Uh-Oh," and "Corpus Christi." Penelope is currently doing a low-budget film in Portland, with possible videodiscs in the works ... the Units, one of the better electronic combos to come out of punk, have an EP out featuring "High Pressure Days," "Cannibals," "Work," and "Cowboys," while Tim is no longer with the band, having moved onto such interesting projects as a recent impromptu gig with Steven Brown and Michael Belfer of Tuxedomoon, as well as a tentative new band, the Bombo Masters, starring Steve from Pink Section and Andrea ... meanwhile the Units are planning some N.Y. dates with new member Nick Buck (of SVT and Hot Tuna fame) ... Carla Maddog vacationing in San Francisco ... and Dead Kennedys lead singer/lyricist Jello Biafra is running for mayor, presumably on a platform of "why not the most ludicrous?"

FUTURE MAYOR OF SAN FRANCISCO JELLO BIAFRA PHOTO CREDIT: SUE BRISK

MICHAEL AND HECTOR OF THE FILLMORE STRUTS PHOTO CREDIT: SUE BRISK

The Geary Theatre/Temple Beautiful shows have been doing well, drawing 5-7 hundred a gig (boycotting no longer being in vogue, apparently). The tickets are $4, the Budweiser's a buck — and it's a can — and there are no ins and outs, but it's the only SF venue, Mab included, with a capacity of over 350, so it's take it or do without, and, at least so far, people are taking it, albeit grudgingly. Superb is using Temple Beautiful for the Buzzcocks/Gang of Four show, which the Dils are opening. Tickets are $5.50, which ain't bad, compared with the Old Waldorf or Fox Warfield. Speaking of ticket prices, the Clash play the Tribal Stomp for a mere $12.50, with no other Calif. dates confirmed at presstime.

Record news: Steve Tupper and Mike Fox (the latter being one of the Tools) are starting a new record company, with a not-too-distant first release sampler EP of four previously unrecorded local bands already in the works. If this one does well it'll be the first in a series ... S&D rumored to be resurfacing, with a new twist (which I am not at liberty to reveal) ... best of the newest bands in town: the Contractions, girls who actually ROCK, and Mertz ... the Mutants sail for New York in Sept., with their wonderful debut EP, "Insect Lounge," "New Dark Ages," and "New Drug" climbing the charts ... Tuxedomoon is among the bands scheduled to play at the Walker Arts Center-sponsored national New Wave/Experimental Music Festival in Sept. in Minneapolis (don't laufh, I used to live there). Proceeds after expenses benefit Amnesty International. Also upcoming are possible dates in both France and Germany, plus a second East Coast tour. Their classic first single "Joeboy"/"Pinheads on the Move" has just been re-issued, their "No Tears" EP is in its third pressing, and they have two new releases upcoming: the first is a single featuring sometime-front man and all-around famous artist Winston Tong, which should be out as you read this, and the second is another EP of all-new material. All of the above feature the suicidal guitar work of Michael Belfer (an example of what I mean can be heard on the Sleepers EP, most notably on 'Linda") ... CAN YOU HEAR ME?—LIVE AT THE DEAF CLUB is postponed indefinitely due to lack of money (this is beginning to remind of me APOCALYPSE NOW), but there's a 50-minute Super-8 film in the works, which might be out by X-mas... Coming in october: The Western Front, a week-long marathon of West Coast punk bands, art, films, video, etc., to be presented at the Deaf Club, Temple Beautiful, the Roxie Cinema, in the parks, at Target, and probably several other places as well, all of which will be videotaped by Target with the possibility of it being turned into videodiscs (all is not quiet...) ...lotsa punk bands doing benefits for the May 21st Riot Defense Fund (you remember our riot, don't you?): first Tuxedomoon, now the Blowdriers, the Contractions, and No Alternative ... New Youth Productions is starting an international communications network, the point being that every time a band plays a new city they are informed by the locals that they could have done better playing at Cub B or with band Q — a situation NYP hopes to at least alleviate. With the aid of this handy information leaflet, you will now have at your hands names, addresses, capacities, booking agents, and hours of every club in any city you care to name, plus a listing of bands and their phone numbers (should you happen to need to borrow a snare drum at the last minute), whether they have records out, etc., plus radio stations in the area that you could send your record to ahead of time (advance promo you know), fanzines, etc. This is also helpful for record stores trying to keep abreast of the latest releases, fanzines trying for wider distribution, etc. For full details please send New Youth an SASE plus details on your band or mag or club, plus a dollar if you want to receive a copy. Their address is P.O. Box 6029, SF, CA. 94901.

Pearl Harbor & the Exposions, the band you love to hate, signed with Warner Bros. ... the Readymades broke up (it had to happen), though they may get back together without frontman and founder Jonathan Postal. When even the Readymades begin to wise up and call it quits, one wonders how long the rest of us can continue beating our heads against the walls of apathy...

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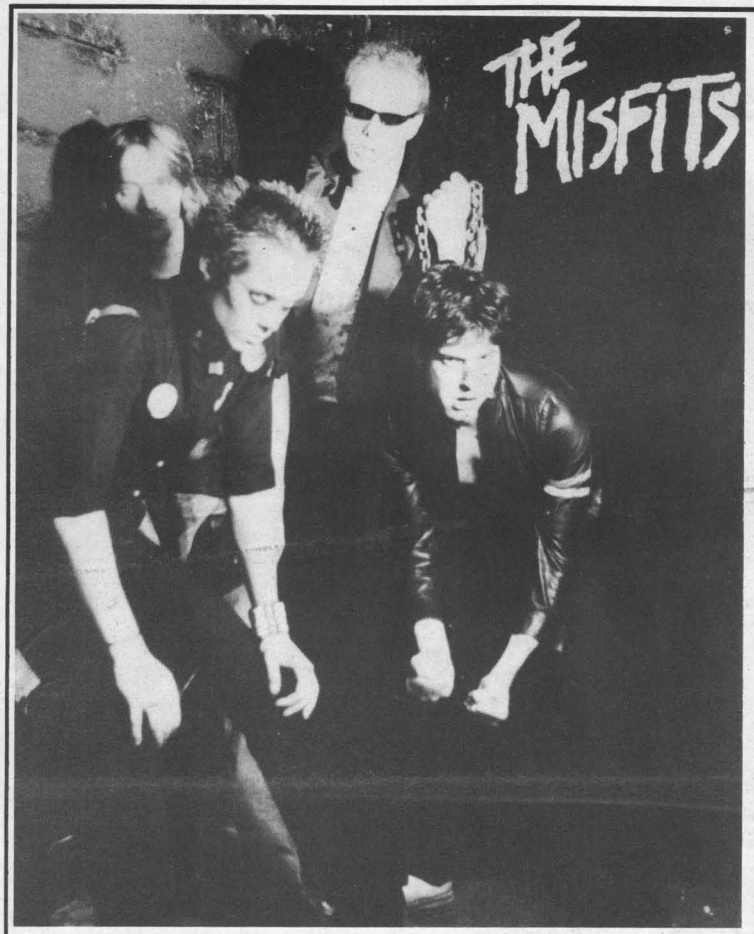

A TEA PARTY WITH THE MISFITS: CAKE, BEEF TRIPE SANDWICHES, SPILLED BEER

ONE SUNDAY AFTERNOON I GAVE A FRIENDSHIP TEA PARTY. THE MISFITS WERE INVITED. THE MISFITS CAME. NO ONE ELSE DID. IT BECAME OBVIOUS I WAS GOING TO INTERVIEW THEM. AFTER WE GOT PAST THE BLUE & GREEN CAKE AND BEEF TRIPE SANDWICHES, I TRIED TO ASK QUESTIONS. IT WAS VERY HARD. FOR MORE THAN ONE HUNGOVER REASON. LET ME EXPLAIN ABOUT THE MISFITS: - THEY ARE A NEW YORK BAND. - THEY ARE POPULAR. - THEY OPENED FOR THE DAMNED ON THE RECENT TOUR. THE MISFITS ARE GLENN DANZIG ON VOCALS, BOBBY STEELE ON GUITAR, JERRY ONLY ON BASS AND JOEY PILLS ON DRUMS, WHO WAS NOT AT THE TEA PARTY. AFTER THE INTERVIEW WE THREW FOOD OUT OF THE WINDOWS AND THE DOORMAN WAS ANGRY WITH ME. I'M NEVER INVITING THE MISFITS OVER TO MY HOUSE AGAIN. HERE IT GOES . . .

. . .Mission Impossible is on all the time/O.K. Claire let's do this seriously, ask real questions./What records are you going to do next?/Night of the Living Dead maybe a 10 inch of our old stuff/Oh so Horror Business isn't . . ./ It's out now/O.K., how does it feel to be big stars?/It's cool you get free drinks/Are the misfits alcoholics?/ Yep/Are the misfits drug addicts/Sure/Are any of you homosexuals?/Klaus is...ha, ha ha/What's your dream bill?/Us and us/The Temptations?/Yeah/Leslie Gore/ Claire still sitting in the chair thinking of a question/Who in New York do you hate?/Who in New York do we hate?/Who in New York do you like?/We like the Misfits, they're a very good band/JERRY THROWS A BARBIE DOLL ON THE FLOOR/Oh Barbie. Our new single is "Barbie bites the dust"/I want to be party time girl/I'm party time boy/What's your favorite movie?/Wild in the Streets/No Night of the Living Dead/Are you making a movie?/Well, it's not just us making it, there's a whole mess of people, but we're gonna be in the movie, it's about 4 different things. It's all monster movies, 4 different monster movies. Howie's gonna be in one, Jerry's gonna be in another, I'm gonna be in another, Klaus is gonna be in the other one/ . . .exciting big tours you're gonna do/Might go to England with the Damned/Did they ask you to tour with them?/Yeah . . .didn't they?/We hate Max's, Max's sucks, we haven't played Heat yet, a lot of people haven't played there yet/Club 57 is gonna die for sure. C's is gonna go under really soon. Club 57 is just too big to handle/For a minute they were getting the bands into the big halls and all at once they blow it?/Because of that power pop bullshit/CLAIRE SPILLS BEER ALL OVER THE FLOOR/Don't spill any beer/ We're changing this interview to go-go girl gets in trouble/Heat might have a chance 'cos they can pay the rent in one date, they can hold a large crowd./Do you think your music has evolved?/Sure it's just a lot tighter than it was, the idea is a lot more intense/Bobby plays too many leads/No I don't/You do too/Do the Misfits really hate each other/Passionately/We have to or it doesn't come off right. We don't have enough violence/ We fight a lot but we work everything out/I'd say it's science fiction, that's what we are/We're not r&r, we're not r&r/We're not new wave. David if you say it one more time I'm going to . . ./Phil Spector is god you know/Nick Lowe would be a good producer even tho' he's a jerk/ Do you want to talk about a certain person's mother distributing you in England?/No/Do the Misfits date girls of other religions?/We don't have a religion/Favorite ice-cream?/Chocolate/Racist, racist overtones/Bobby, why do you keep throwing up on people at the Mudd club? Is it true you threw up on John Lennon?/Let me demonstrate/Do you like to drink Bobby?/Yeah/Do you drink a lot?/Yeah/I'm going to grow another head and be party time boy and party time girl/Like that movie with Rosy Grier with the white head and the black head/ The two-headed transplant/Doesn't anybody want to watch tv/I've been watching it, it's not doing anything/ Barbie I love you/Chitlins, pizza/Little girls/We're not musicians/Rape, pillage and steal/How can you be in a band that absolutely sucks to hell?/One dead interviewer/Is it true you are necrophiliacs?/No/Glenn doesn't know what it means, you know what it is Bobby/I know/Yeah, you know, people who dress up like girls/ . . .talk about our single now/"Horror Business" was recorded in a haunted house/Bobby what are your main influences/Jimi Hendrix, Johnny Thunders and Condemned Souls. And Glenny/GLENNY STARTS TO IMPERSONATE A KAMIKAZE PLANE AND BOBBY LEAVES TO DRIVE DAVE TO THE SUBWAY/When are you going to L.A.?/We're calling up this week for dates, we should be there in September/BOBBY COMES BACK AND WE THROW FOOD AT HIM FROM THE LIVING ROOM WINDOW/(Bobby) I was walking up and I see all this cake and stuff and I go ha ha that must be them . . . . . .

(ON FEBRUARY 28 1979 THE MISFITS AND A MOBILE RECORDING UNIT ENTERED AN ABANDONED HAUNTED HOUSE IN NORTHERN NEW JERSEY. THEY RECORDED AND LEFT. WHILE MIXING THE TAPES BACK AT A N.Y.C. STUDIO, STRANGE VOICES AND NOISES WERE HEARD IN THE BACKGROUND. (esp. on Teenagers from Mars.) NO EXPLANATION OF THESE SOUNDS COULD BE GIVEN BY THE BAND OR RECORDING CREW. — Dave Street)

* to alienate all the slimy little intellectuals who think we're growing up.

ZEROS

Photo: Richard peterson

ZEROS INTERVIEW

By Caitlin

This interview was conducted during what would have been a rehearsal had not the Zeros' trusty roadie neglected to bring their equipment back from the Deaf Club. The Zeros were somewhat late, thus prompting the first question ...

SLASH: So what's this famous Zeros time I hear so much about?
BABA: The concept of Zero is like, Zero is a time, which means, we make the time.
JAVIER: We're never on time.
BABA: Well, we don't want to give ourselves a bad rep or anything, but ...
HECTOR: We're always punctual!
BABA: See, if you tell us to be there at 10:30 we'll be there at 10:30 ... or ten hours later.
JAVIER: You see, when you cross Market St., the time changes. That's the meridian.
SLASH: Do you guys all work now?
ZEROS: Yeah.
SLASH: Where did you get the money to do this demo tape?
BABA: Begged, borrowed, and stealed it.
JAVIER: From gigs, from playing.
SLASH: But don't you take the money from gigs for yourself?
HECTOR: No ... not any more. Maybe we will now, though, to fix up equipment.
SLASH: Speaking of equipment, Hector, I noticed you don't have a bass bottom anymore ...
BABA: We don't talk about that! You could say, though, that he's very grateful ...
HECTOR: Yeah, very thankful ...
BABA: To Lorna for the use of her cabinet, and he did a nice job to it, it sounds better now, and it looks better, more punk ...
HECTOR: It's been dragged around a lot.
BABA: And Hector really appreciates that. Maybe sometime again ...
SLASH: How'd you guys feel opening for the Clash? Were you scared?
JAVIER: No ... well to me, see, we had played there (Temple Beautiful) before, when it was Dils/Avengers/Zeros/Plugz ... so I wasn't thinking, "God, this place is big" ... but I did think it showed in the playing that we were a little nervous. But those are the only gigs that matter anyway, when you're playing to a new audience.
BABA: I wasn't nervous, I was uncomfortable — I felt my drums could have been louder, that the overall sound wasn't loud enough — you know, they did turn us down.

JAVIER: We didn't get a soundcheck, because the Clash were onstage for two hours playing stupid reggae riffs.
BABA: Playing soccer. They couldn't SKANK if they went to Jamaica and got lessons. (Baba here breaks into a hilarious version of "Safe European Home".)
SLASH: So I hear Greg Shaw's one of your favorite people ...
BABA: Well, I heard that, like when we find him we're gonna punch him in the stomach.
SLASH: What's the story behind that? You never got any royalties (from the two Bomp singles)?
JAVIER: None. The most professional record company in California.
HECTOR: The most reliable, trustworthy, promising ...
SLASH: Are you planning on releasing another single soon?
JAVIER: I'd rather do an album.
BABA: But if we can't do that we'll probably put out another single.
SLASH: Do you think your music's changed a lot in the two years since the Zeros started?
HECTOR: Yeah...
BABA: You get better, you try new things.
SLASH: Baba, is that the first time you ever sang a song onstage? (At the Dessie Woods benefit at the Deaf Club Baba sang Bo Diddley's "Roadrunner.")?
BABA: Yeah. I had to make up my own lyrics because I forgot the right ones.
SLASH: The Zeros have been playing a lot of benefits lately — the Rock Against Racism show, the Moody Park Three, Dessie Woods — do you like playing benefits?
JAVIER: Yeah. I really liked the Dessie Woods show.
BABA: Yeah ... it was one of the better causes. More power to her.

SLASH: Where do you like to play in San Francisco?
HECTOR: Oh, the Boarding House ...
JAVIER: Oakland Coliseum, Day On the Green ...
BABA: Winterland.
JAVIER: Yeah, but Day On the Green, you can really get loose.
BABA: My favorite place we've ever played was, ah, Barney's Beanery in Hollywood. (Much laughter.) Hey, ask us what our favorite gig was.

JAVIER: The last time we played (LDessie Woods show), it was really fun.
HECTOR: And I liked playing Texas. We really did a lot of stuff in Texas that we never did before and we've never done since (more laughter). The audience was so weird, you just had to give your best. It wasn't a choice, you had to.
SLASH: What'd you think of the last trip down to LA?
JAVIER: Waste of time.
BABA: It was too hot there.
JAVIER: Yeah, it's fucking hot in LA. (A very small audience showed up for their gig at the Hong Kong.)
SLASH: Why did you quit playing the Mabuhay?
HECTOR: Sooner or later, if you go there, you'll find out.
SLASH: Would you ever consider playing there again?

HECTOR: They always fucked us over.
JAVIER: They treated us like shit, why should we do that?
BABA: See, Dirk, he does things like he'll put you on stage, and he'll pressure you, tell you to go on in five minutes, fuck you around, tear up your guest list ... he'll put you on stage and then tell you the schedule's been changed, throw on another band and so you get a lower percentage ... it's hard to deal with.
SLASH: Do you guys get along with each other?
BABA: We're all brothers — in God's way.
SLASH: What other bands do you like to play with?
BABA: Oh, the Clash. We like to play with the Clash, the Crime...
HECTOR: Oh, yeah, Crime, hey, beautiful people. No, I like to play with the Middleclass. They're a bunch of nice guys — a bunch of Johnstons. (Much laughter.)
BABA: What's that guy's name, the singer? Jeff. Jeff Johnston, Bruce Johnston, and Mike Johnston. The Johnston Brothers.
HECTOR: And Mike Patton.
BABA: Mike and Mike. Beef Johnston.
SLASH: Did you like going to Texas with the Middleclass?
HECTOR: Yeah, it was great, never boring. Anyone else, it would have been boring.
BABA: There were these cool people in Texas, the Next, their band was called the Next, they were like, "Wanna smoke another one?" "Yeah, light up another one" "You like pot?" "Yeah, I like pot." "So how's your band?" "Yeah, right on ... smo,e another one" — those people, I liked them a lot.
JAVIER: A lot of people were prejudiced because we were from California. They had this realnegative attitude towards California.
SLASH: That's because California is to Texas as New York is to California — you know how everyone here thinks New York bands are going to suck.
JAVIER: I remember one time at the Whisky this band the Fast came from New York, and the lead singer didn't like the response and so he said, "You can't do this to us, we're from Brooklyn." And so Pat Smear grabbed his hair and dragged him off the stage, and then later the Whisky bouncers beat the shit out of him.
SLASH: Did you guys survive the Elks Lodge incident OK?
HECTOR: It was real weird ... me and Baba weren't there when it happened but —
JAVIER: I was there.
BABA: I went right across the street to have a little dinner and I come back and there's all these guys with white helmets on and their tight little pants and these moustaches and their arms crossed, and they said "You can't go back in" ... pigs.
HECTOR: I was at this Japanese bar and I decided to go back and all of a sudden there's all these cops and helicopters ...
BABA: I thought they were searching for some criminal in the park, in MacArthur Park, there's always muggers and stuff there ...
JAVIER: They came out like it was World War III. They had the helicopters, these guys on motorcycles all lined up ... it was a fucking attack on people, it wasn't a riot ... it was just the cops.
BABA: It was one of the more peaceful gigs.
JAVIER: Police can do fucking everything. They do it every fucking day.
SLASH: Do you think you've moved away from teenage themes in your lyrics? Because it seems all your new songs are about getting lied to, getting fucked over, coming home from work and — what's that line in "Getting Nowhere Fast" about I got the money, but something's missing?
JAVIER: "Got the money in my hand/but it don't feel right" — cause it's NOT worth it.
BABA: Yeah, well they usually write about what's happened to them, what they see going on...
JAVIER: We don't really think about it at all, we just write the songs as they come out.
SLASH: Are you planning to stay in San Francisco for awhile?
BABA: We're leaving tomorrow — skanking.
HECTOR: We're gonna move to San Antonio. No, we'll probably be here for quite a while.
SLASH: Are you conscious of trying to present a "Zeros image" on stage?
HECTOR: Well, before when we used to play, we were like kids from school, but then we changed —
JAVIER: Yeah, we weren't kids from school anymore.
HECTOR: No, I mean, before we'd have these ironed suits, on a hanger in a plastic bag, and then you don't want to wrinkle it so it's hangin' in the car, and when you got to the gig you put it on right before you play ... now a lot of times you just wear what you had on all day.
JAVIER: I can't really think about things like how I move around on stage, you can't do that. I just try to play my best.
SLASH: Are you more confident now about singing, Hector?
HECTOR: Well, the first time I was nervous, but after that ... when we were a four-piece I didn't do anything, I just played bass, and then I quit the band —
BABA: We don't talk about that!
SLASH: Why did you join F-Word, Hector?
BABA: Go ahead, tell.
HECTOR: Cause their manager (Posh Boy) had this station wagon and he said, if you join the band, I'll move your stuff up to LA from San Diego, so I said ok, I'll join, move it. And then about a week or two later I said I quit.
BABA: And then he joined an even better band.
HECTOR: Yeah, then I used to play in bands like Black Randy, Arthur J, not because I liked their music but because I made really good money when I played with them.
SLASH: Why did you two (Hector & Baba) join the Fillmore Struts?
HECTOR: Well first Baba joined, just to help them out, and then I was coming around to rehearsals and stuff and they said "We need a bass player," and finally they said "Why don't you play?" So I said ok, just until you find somebody new, cause I have this other band —
SLASH: So you're Zeros first?
JAVIER: Por vida.
HECTOR: Yeah, but now they don't want us to quit. I can't be in two full-time bands.
BABA: Ask us what we think of Peter as a manager.
SLASH: "Why do you have a Communist manager anyway?" — wasn't it Howie who asked you that?
BABA: Yeah, Howie asked me "So you guys, uh, have this, uh, Communist manager, so, uh, like whaddya think of Feinstein anyway?" And I said "Uh ... uh ... yeah Howie ... uh, alright." But you know what he said to me before the interview? He said "Now, you're not going to make fun of me, are you? You won't embarrass me on the air, willya?"
SLASH: Did you guys have any musical influences besides the Dolls?
BABA: Yeah, Elvis Costello the Ramones ...
JAVIER: Blondie.
HECTOR: Yeah, now that they've turned disco I go down to the Stud ALL night. (Baba here breaks into a falsetto version of "Heart of Glass.")
BABA: My main influence? Nicky Beat.
JAVIER: My first influence was the Velvet Underground, THEN the Dolls.
HECTOR: At first it was the Beatles, then Baba Lopus here played both Dolls records for me over the telephone. And then I started liking 60's bands like Count Five, the Seeds ...
SLASH: What were you doing before you were Zeros?
JAVIER: I had this band, the Mainstreet Brats ...
BABA: Me and Hector were playing in the park.
HECTOR: We played softball, and frisbies, and merry go rounds, and guitars, and with ourselves, and in the bushes — and "Chatterbox." Okay, next question.
BABA: Do you or your spouse make more than ... (General laughter)
SLASH: What do you do in your spare time?
HECTOR: Listen to records, try and figure out songs, take apart my guitar.
JAVIER: Oh, I like to have some friends over, do the DJ roundup, do some toastin'...
BABA: What spare time?
SLASH: Did you guys ever try to share a place to live?
HECTOR: For awhile.
SLASH: Did you get on each other's nerves?
BABA: We got on each other's beds.
HECTOR: You see, there was a shortage of beds. Just one, and it was king-size. But we got kicked out of that house five times.
JAVIER: We were not wanted at all.
BABA: They hated us.
HECTOR: Nobody likes us!

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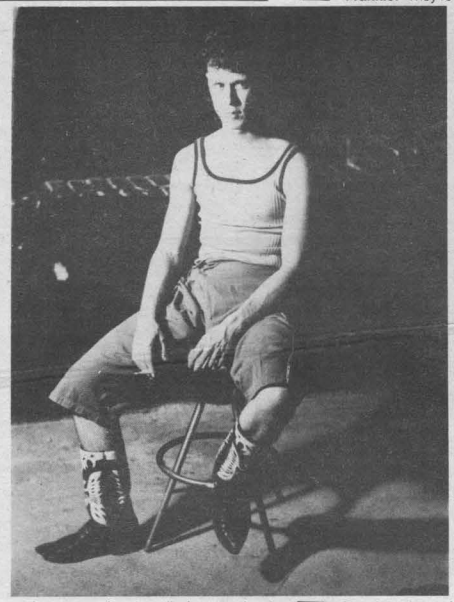
SUBURBAN LAWNS

Sue Tissue - vocal occasional keyboards and bass. Vex Billingsgate - vocals, bass. Chuck Roast - drums, John McBurney - guitars, vocals, Franie Ennui - guitar, vocals.



Slash: Why the fuck are you so late?
Billy: Just putting in overtime in our day jobs.
Slash: What d'you guys work at?
Billy: I'm a power tools salesman.
Su: At the Heavenly Grinder Burger
Slash: Where!...Is it painful?
Su: Yes, 'cos people are really mean, they always ask me go go get somebody else to wait on them.
Slash: Why?
Su: I don't know.
Chuck: House painter.
Frankie: I'm a data processor for a computer company in the heart of Orange County.
John: I'm a whore. No, I'm a factory worker.
Slash: It's all very suburban isn't it? Tell us about Long-beach, you insist on staying down there.
Suburban Lawns: (mutter) Cheap rent. Good studio space... We used to throw out own gigs but it started getting out of hand.
Slash: Part of your band used to be called something else didn't it?
Vex: It used to be called the Fabulons.
Slash: What is a Fabulon?
Vex: Well we found out that it was a part of the back up band for Fabian, Fabian and the Fabulons, that's why we changed it.
John: We thought it was like synthetic turf.
Vex: Fabulawn. We have this girl, we had this blonde...
Slash: What happened to that first line up then?
Vex: I met Su while I was going to Cal Arts and she was going to go back to Minneapolis or to Boston, she wasn't really sure and I said give California another chance, just come to a few of our rehearsals...
Slash: Su were you in the Technocats before?
Su: Mm. I was playing bass with some of the Suburbs (There's another Suburbs in California I guess.) and The Braniacs and a Magician too.
Slash: You don't totally come on as a full time member of the band as you only come on stage a third of the way through the set. Is there a reason for that?
Vex: Those are our best songs and we feel that that is the best arrangements, it kind of builds to something and then is cut out rather abruptly.
Frankie: We had a lot of material before Su started with the band, we don't do very much of it any more...slowly we're developing more and more songs.
Slash: Who writes the songs?
Frankie: Su wrote some by herself, I wrote some by myself...we're all written some by ourselves, we've done some that were written by all of us too. Lately we've been working as a group...it comes along very slowly that way.
Slash: How d'you feel about your recent reception? I mean up until a couple of months ago you guys were hardly heard of.
Frankie: We jsut wish we could get a little more reaction...I don't know what it is. Sometimes you play like shit and people love you and other nights you feel like you're kicking ass and people are just sitting there staring at you.
Vex: Personally I've noticed we've been cagging a lot of fans from other bands it seems like strangers who came to see the other bands come up and say you know, 'I realy like what you guys did' and that's good...that's what we're doing it for.

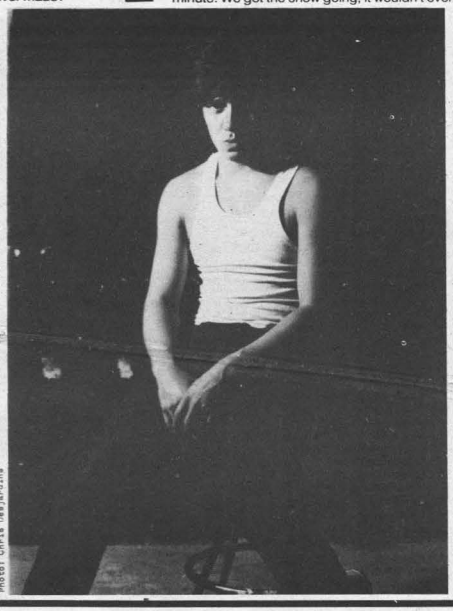
Slash: (to Vex) When did you lose your sideburns?
Vex: I did it a long time ago - I can't grow sideburns so I figures...it's anti-burn, it's supposed to be disciplined looking even though I do have long hair. Somebody came up to me last time we played and said you know 'I really like your band, I like the way you guys play but why don't you cut that shit off?...Just take a scissors...and...lower your bass about 5 notches. I said great... I said 'Everybody can't look like a Nazi...German youth you know.' I'm concerned with facism in the church, myself...fascinating. That raincoat fetish... (Su often wears plastic coats on stage)

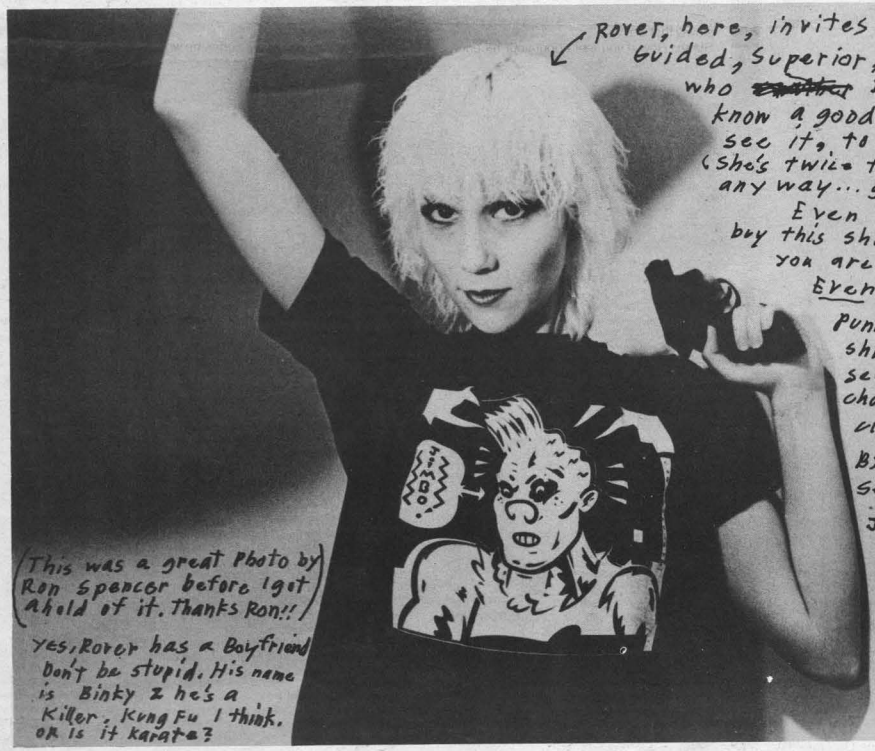
Slash: (laughs) You guys always wear a lot of plastic.
Su: I jsut like them because they're like big bags.
Slash: (to Su) Tell us about this centerfold playmate number you did for Damage.
Su: Well, they asked me to decide where we should go for the whole day, so I went to pick up my wigs and we went to this skyroom, we went up these big stairs, they were really scarey...and then we went over to my friend's house to go swimming and we had cigs and beers and the ashtray in the pool 'cos I could float (Su had big baggy inflatable plastic pants on...ed.)
Frankie: It's pretty gidgetesque.
Slash: Yeah what's this gidget obsession? Your Gidget goes To Hell Song?
Su: I don't know that's Frankie's obsession.
Frankie: It was intended as a sound track to a movie.
Su: We were in this big warehouse and there was these huge monsoons going on...
Slash: D'you guys go on the beach a lot?
Vex: We went to the beach today, it was so hot, that's all you an do.
Frankie: I grew up with the whole beach syndrome...there big thing to cut school and go surfing and all the chicks would drive their dads cars.
Slash: Is there any chance of you breaking through with the surfer crowd?
John: Supposedly people from Surfer Magazine are interested in us whatever that means.
Frankie: They're going to plug the record in the Skateboarder, which is as they say, the sister magazine.
John: Corky Caroll is going to review the record...He's a burned out surfer, he won a lot of surf championships and then went into music and his band was real bad and unsuccessful. Their hit single was 'Tan Punks On Boards' and it's just real bad.

Slash: (laughs) Sue, you're so low key, very shy when you're off stage and when you get up there you get a bit...frighteningly intense. What happens to you? Can you describe it?...
Su: Mm. (thinks)
Slash: We'll cure you.
Su: (laughs) I think it's because I like music more than talking...
Slash: Have you always been like this? Did you have fits and stuff when you were a little kid?
Su: No...my brother smashed his birthday cake.
Slash: Oh and that was a traumatic experience.
Su: (laughs a lot).
Slash: Where were you raised?
Su: Minneapolis.
Frankie: Are there many Indians in Minnesota?
Su: Mm Hm.
Frankie: How many lakes are there exactly?
Su: 10,000.
Slash: Are you guys planning to do some serious touring?

Vex: We're going to play in San Francisco. Then we're going to play in Arizona. Sooner or later we're going to go to New York just for a couple of weeks to try and sell some records and just to meet some people.
Slash: How d'you relate to the rest of the scene here as far as the direction of the music?
John: Not all of us like every band we play with, everyone has their favorites. I really like seeing other bands. You can really reflect off them...
Slash: Which bands do you relate most to as far as what they're doing?
Vex: Bad question...
Frankie: There's nobody...we like all kinds of bands up here, The Plugz and Bags...Human Hands.
Vex: Oh yeah I like Human Hands.
Slash: You guys come on as nice guys. Are you more civilized than most people on the scene or what?
Frankie: Yes I only eat food out of cans...no, we've been indoctrinated pretty heavily with the co-existence policy just from growing up in the megalopolis, not to

say that we're milk toast or anything, I mean we're all pissed off — Su hates herjob, I hate my job...
Slash: You have a manager right?
Frankie: No.
Slash: Does that cause any problem?
Frankie: Yeah, I think it does...mixing business with your music you know, instead of having someone else take care of that.
Slash: What's the most money you ever made?
Frankie: $195.
Vex: At Club 88 with the Brainiacs on a Friday night and there was a bunch of university kids. Oh one band I really hate is Levi and the Rockats — their manager is a fat old queen motherfucking dog. He just really fucked us — they made all kinds of money one night at Club 88, we supplied the PA, Frankie mixed 'em, they sounded great, you know, we were called at the last minute. We got the show going, it wouldn't even been a show, they didn't want us to play in the first place, they just wanted our PA — they gave us $50 and they took home like 600 or something.
Slash: Nice guys.
Vex: They don't call me breath for nothing.
Slash: (laughs) I don't get it.
Vex: Well Billingsgate is a fishmarket in England somewhere and it also means vulgar and abusive language, and vex means to disrupt in a pretty way.





Rover, here, invites even you MISguided, Superior, Spoil-sports, who ~~[illegible]~~ don't know a good thing when they see it, to buy this shirt. (She's twice the man you are any way... give up.)
Even hip-motobs should buy this shirt. You know who you are - keep it to yourself.
Even Huntington Beach Punks should buy this shirt. (I'll tell you a secret, it's a good-luck charm against irate citizens & cops. No shit.)
By the way... you kids settle down!!!
JIMBO shirt $8.95 each
checks payable to:
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Specify: X-small
small
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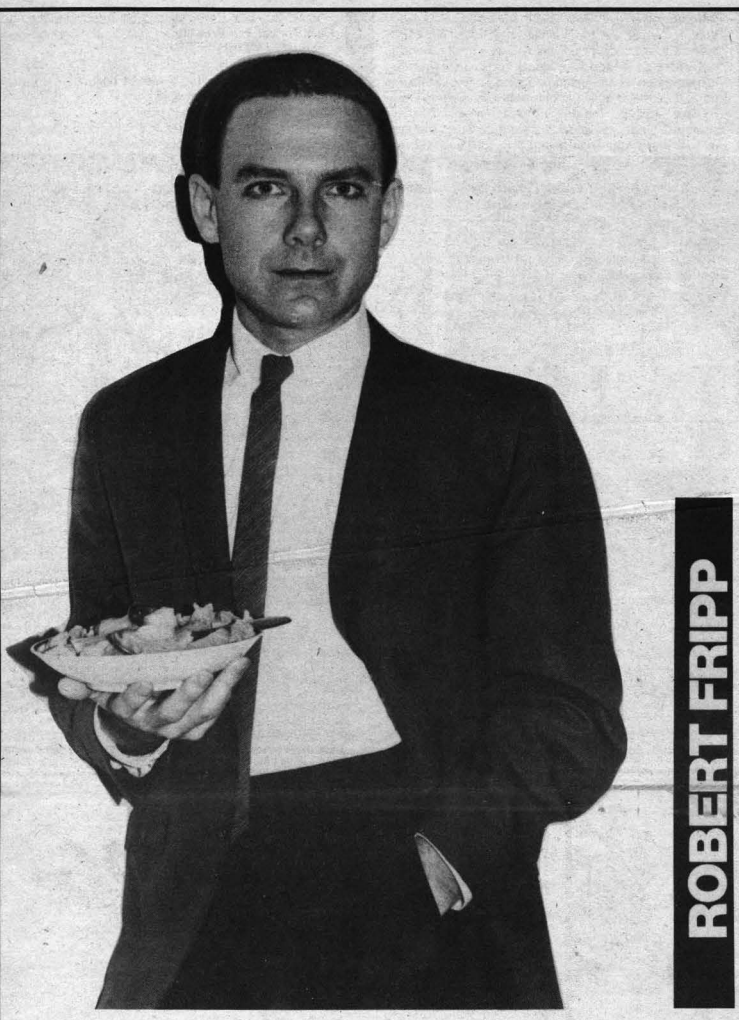
X-Large

(This was a great photo by Ron Spencer before I got ahold of it. Thanks Ron!!)

yes, Rover has a Boyfriend Don't be stupid. His name is Binky & he's a Killer. Kung Fu I think. OR is it karate?



ROBERT FRIPP INTERVIEW
by Juan Gomez, Bill Noland and David Wiley

Robert Fripp was brushing his teeth as he opened the door. He looked neat, like he had been up hours before we arrived, considerably more handsome than in his public years with King Crimson. Gone is the beard, the electric hair, and wire glasses. In their place is a modern, continental-looking gentleman. He employs a confident, decidedly British air — extremely articulate but far from being inaccessible. He was the exact opposite of what one would expect from a man who has created numerous "works" of intimate, cerebral music ranging from complex precision to ultimate simplicity. He now works with what he calls "Frippertronics" (basically described as Fripp and Eno minus Eno), applying it to diverse situations. As he indicated several times during the course of our discussion he rarely has enough time to do the things he needs to. He finished dressing, changed his strongs and tuned his guitar (using a tuning fork and assistance) as we spoke.

Q: DO YOU HAVE IDEAS ABOUT ANY GIVEN PERFORMANCE BEFOREHAND?

"It depends on the audience. If the audience really has no powers of concentration and the work is up to me, I don't like it; resent it even. For someone to come along brained, out of their mind, and expect me to look on and say, 'It's really great that you're putting yourself in a furtive, personal situation where you're totally incapable of accepting responsibility for your ears.' How can I agree with that? This 'rock'n'roll' notion — with Crimson it got to the point where we would have to walk on and plaster people back for half an hour, pummel them into a heap. So for ten minutes we would have time, until they regained their composure, to become right again. We would *play* for these ten minutes then pummel them again and go home. All of this contributed to my contempt. I thought, 'This is not for me, I am not interested in directing the responses of others. I'm interested in a cooperative venture in which people use their ears.' "

Q: IN THAT LIGHT WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THE THIRD MADAME WONG'S PERFORMANCE (THE SECOND NIGHT)?

"Very difficult. You see, the man who brought the cassette machine — after the ticket specifically said not to (record) and after I asked those who might have brought one to not use it — was at very least incredibly rude. It showed a complete lack of human decency."

Q: THERE WAS A DISTINCT AIR OF EXCITEMENT. IT WAS SO INTENSE IT ALMOST RUINED THE DELICATE NATURE OF THE PERFORMANCE. THERE WERE PEOPLE NEXT TO US SAYING THINGS LIKE, 'HE'S ALMOST HOLY' OR 'HE'S A WIZARD.' WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THAT KIND OF THINKING?

"It's destructive, negative and it robs me of the energy I need to do what I do. It only takes, it contributes nothing. It's also an erroneous view of me and exactly the kind of situation that is wrong and would make it impossible for me to return."

Q: BEING INTERESTED IN INNOVATIVE MUSIC I OFTEN RUN ACROSS PEOPLE WHO THINK OF MUSICIANS IN THAT LIGHT, GOD-LIKE IF YOU WILL. VERY REACTIONARY. SOME PEOPLE THRIVE ON THAT AND SOME THRIVE ON DESTROYING IT. I THINK WE HAVE 'POP' AND 'POP STARS' TO THANK FOR THIS EXAG-GERATION OF EGOS AND TALENTS AND THEN SOMEONE COMES ALONG THAT IS DOING SOMETHING INTERESTING AND WHO DOESN'T CARE ABOUT ALL THAT AND STILL THEY'RE REGARDED IN THOSE TERMS. IT SEEMS OUT OF CONTEXT...

"I think, historically, there's always been stars. Paganini as a performer or Verdi as a composer for instance. The reaction to Verdi in his day would make Beatlemania seem irrelevant; horses and carriages taking him to the latest opera, dishes of food named after him, unbelievable! Virtually all the 'good' composers were incredibly successful in their day. It was generally said that Mozart was not but he was a success; he was a turkey with his money, something to do about his wife or whatever. Another point of view says that the way we understand the 'star syndrome' is something very much dictated by Hollywood of the '20's. I think essentially the point of view is that all this particular value approach we've internalised is so much a part of our thinking and behaving that unless we're active within the situation we're stuck with it. This idea of active listening has implications that run very deep. It's almost to the point of worship or be worshipped. We turn up to rock shows and maybe want to get involved but can't. What can we do to change this orchestrated circus, this menagerie of performance in front of us? Nothing. But on the other hand, if we have the opportunity, like last night, we don't expect to because we're so used to doing nothing. So we turn up thinking, 'Go on, be wonderful' and in that situation it's not possible."

Q: WHAT'S AN IDEAL RESPONSE FOR YOU?

"When people listen."

Q: — AND YOU FIND THAT RARELY HAPPENS? DOES IT HAPPEN MORE OR LESS OFTEN NOW?

"My observation on this tour would indicate far better response and an effort made by people in different situations, where people find this unfamiliar and often boring music and they're responding very well. Largely, I think, it's an act of faith in me. People turn up having no idea what it's going to be, wondering if it will be a group or something."

Q: ACTUALLY, THE AD FOR MADAME WONG'S SAID, 'WITH THE GROUP FRIPPERTRONICS.'

"That particular situation was unfortunate because (with no disrespect to Mme. Wong) it was exactly what I was trying to avoid. It was kind of unfortunate for Mme. Wong, whose organization was somewhat swamped and not really used to dealing with this kind of situation. I would rather not play where food and drink is served unless it's in an ambient sense, supper music. I did it once at a restaurant in Paris that no one knew about. I asked to play unannounced but word got out. The second night people from Bram Tchaikovsky were there. It was Frippertronics supper music. I wasn't allowed to do it, there were certain objections, but I just phoned up and did it. The record company didn't want me to."

Q: WE'RE IN A SOCIETY WHERE WE HAVE TO USE MONEY —

"...And there's nothing wrong with that!"

Q: — YES, OF COURSE. AND SINCE YOU HAVE TO MAKE A LIVING AND MME. WONG HAS TO MAKE A LIVING SOME ADMISSION IS UNDERSTANDABLE. THEN YOU WERE TALKING HOW TAPE MACHINES AND CAMERAS DESTROY THE PERFORMING ENERGY IN A ROOM. DO YOU THINK AN $18 COVER CHARGE AFFECTS THE ENERGY?

"It would really piss me off! My contract says five bucks a head. Mme. Wong was genuinely distressed with this. Her point of view is this: 'I don't make money on luncheons and I'm charging $6 for you to have more money,' although my contract says $5 and my aim in playing there was not really to clean up. Assuming Mme. Wong was acting on my behalf thinking 'We'll get Robert a bit more money,' that is. They did try to make it rather nice. They were trying to do me a favor without realising what was happening. She makes money from drinks. So what they did was sell guaranteed tickets to people who phoned up, seventy to eighty guarantees. Six dollars admission, six dollar food guarantee, six dollar drink guarantee. Now my understanding was that there were no advance tickets whatsoever. So when I turned up and someone approached me saying, 'Are you aware that they're selling tickets for eighteen dollars' I went inside and Mme. Wong said, 'Well, this is standard procedure. I don't make money doing this.' And I said, 'But there were no advance tickets.' So, in order to compromise in a working situation, which has its difficulties — this is problem-solving on one's feet — we agreed to a second show at six dollars walk-in per head. I had said for the second night I didn't want food served, meaning I didn't want people to pay eighteen dollars a time. People who already had advance tickets could not get food and Mme. Wong declined a refund saying that her compromise here, which I thought was reasonable, was that if someone's food or drink tab wasn't filled up they could come back and use it on another night. I said, 'You can't have people waiting out there for 7 hours and then not get in, we'll print tickets.' There were maybe 130 tickets we could conceivably sell so people could queue up, buy tickets and then we would put up a sold-out notice so no one had to waste their time. Mme. Wong said, 'People will wait.' I said, 'We're going to print tickets.' So Polydor typed up tickets. Last night was fairly orderly in terms of being outside and disruption in terms of being inside. It was interesting that the first night when everyone, because of the difficult working situation, were in their own way working with the situation. It generated energy which made that particular performance possible. The following night when it was easier and people turned up for entertainment the quality of energy was simply not present. Oh, there was some presence but the overall room was punctured with so many holes it was impossible for energy.

Q: ARE YOU INTERESTED IN ELECTRONICS?

"I'm not interested in electronics although I do use devices, minimal devices. The area of electronics I work in, from a technological point, is very small — primitive if you like. Everything I use is appropriate and applicable, nothing superfluous. The musical area I work in is one that depends on the balance between life and material technology. It's a human approach to electronic music or an electronic approach to human music. People approach me with questions about whether or not I'm extending my technology. No one has yet asked me if I plan to improve my facilities as a musician. The technology I possess will handle a lot more music than I'm able to put into it, so the question should not be about whether I can extend my equipment but rather how can I extend my technology as a human being. In terms of electronic music I sense that there are three kinds in the same way there are three kinds of electric guitar. The cello body, the plectrum guitar with metal strings normally used in a dance band. Then, the electric guitar with no consideration for natural acoustic properties. You then have someone like Hendrix, particularly, who turned it into a music of its own. An electric guitar music. Before that people like Les Paul had designed it but looked back on an era that preceded it therefore reflecting what had already been done. With Hendrix you had *the* electric guitar. The third kind is where it's used as a keyboard for a synthesizer. It's irrelevant that it's a guitar, it simply triggers into a synthesizer. For instance, there's the Chapman stick or the Gitler guitar, which really have nothing to do with the idea of a 'guitar.' There are similar areas of electronic music wherein you have Moogs playing 48 preludes of Bach trying to sound like an orchestra. I don't find that of any interest. Then you have synthesizers that don't have to apologize for being a synthesizer so if it

sounds like just that, say in a rock group, that's fine: it's a synthesizer. You also have pure sound generators that produce what could be called electronic music "various demonstrative effects, i.e. whizzes and bangs'; keyboards and traditional musical notations are not needed."

Q: WHERE DO YOU FEEL YOU FIT IN?

"I tend to be in the middle, leaning either way. I have musical background that enables me to understand and play pre-electric guitar music but that doesn't express whatever I am as a human being. I prefer to work with an electric guitar creating essentially electric music because it manages to capture something and, to me, is the best way of capturing it."

Q: WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT STYLE AS IMPROVISATIONAL?

"Frippertronics is, yes; there are obvious areas that can be repeated but become different. They're almost compositions but they're not. Textural areas..."

Q: WHAT KIND OF ELECTRONIC GEAR WOULD YOU RECOMMEND FOR A FINANCIALLY POOR GUITARIST INTERESTED IN PLAYING PROCESSED GUITAR?

"I can tell you what I use. The Frippleboard, the Frizz pedal board: it's a volume pedal, the very cheapest I could find when I was 21, which I still use — it has no brand name it's so cheap; a fuzz box, a Foxy Lady I think — I have used a Big Muff; and I use a wah-wah. The pedal board I've had less than seven years. That's all I use to modify my guitar. In terms of amps I'm using a Music Man, which is Leo Fender getting back to making good amps. I was actually offered one if I would advertise it but I turned it down. I won't lend my name to advertising."

Q: DO YOU PRACTICE EVERYDAY?

"Yes, well, I am at the moment."

Q: WHAT'S YOUR APPROACH TO PRACTICING?

"I use a metronome. At the moment I have two tricky phrases, which will be on the 'Discotronics' album, that I'm having difficulty with and I work with them so that when I record the album in 6 months I'll be able to play them."

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY AMBITIONS TO TEACH IN A FORMAL SETTING LIKE A UNIVERSITY OR A MUSIC SCHOOL?

"I'm presently looking for premises for a guitar school but formal education doesn't work; the last thing it does is educate. So I sense that there are few things I would do which are 'formal' or 'official' in terms of professional aspirations and so on ... I would like to get in a situation with the industry that when I decide that this is what I wish to do I will be supported without having to go through yet another hustle. If that's a professional aspiration then I have it. This guitar school, I think, will be my main work in the late 1980's."

Q: DO YOU FIND RECORD COMPANIES A PROBLEM?

"Yes, virtually everything I do is against what 'they' want. The conventional wisdom of the industry is 2-5 years behind the actual situation so there are a number of interesting implications. If one is band on target it generally means the record company is not going to give you the kind of financial support desired because they don't really want this 'junk.' Like Atlantic turned down the Knack a year ago calling it rubbish. On the other hand, if a record exec does like you it means that you're years behind what's contemporary and that's the kiss of death. So if one is on target you're not going to get a large budget supporting you and vice versa. I would like to think that after ten years people would find my work sufficient enough to know that even if they don't like it they'll understand that whatever's going on is worth backing because Robert seems to have that instinct. I'm considered catalogue instead of chart because the records do continue to sell. 'Exposure' has done 76,000 to date. The company estimate was 30,000."

Q: DO YOU THINK THAT NOW, WITH ALL THESE NEW BANDS, ALL THE DIVERSITY, THAT RECORD COMPANIES ARE BECOMING CONFUSED, THAT THEY MAY JUST BEGIN TO TAKE CHANCES?

"No, they're not going to do that. It's exactly the opposite. Unless they can sell 150,000 units of 'product,' that's the current figure, supposedly they can't meet their costs. That kind of thinking keeps them dinosauric. I can see an increase in people doing it whatever way they can, selling records and cassettes off the back of a van even, which I think could become normal day-to-day procedure. In England it's Stiff and all those other labels but in America it's different, it's such a commercially-oriented society; everyone believes the dollar is king. In Europe for example, one sells records between lunch and dinner. Here you have lunch and dinner to sell records. In England it's incredibly difficult to be allowed to work. I really have to hustle for that priviledge. Over here I'm worked to death. Different situation altogether. This is a good place to be in the market.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME PROJECTS IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE?

"There's the possibility of a third Fripp and Eno album in September. My last work with Brian was in New York several weeks ago on the newest Talking Heads album, 'Fear of Music'. I play on one track in a prominent fashion. Originally when Brian had disappeared to Bangkok and Malaya, David Byrne had phoned up saying they needed a producer I said, 'Well, I'm off to Europe tomorrow,' and then bumped into Eno who, coincidentally, arrived back from Thailand the same day. He went to New York, then, to produce the Heads.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME OTHER BANDS YOU LIKE?

"I like Blondie. It's fashionable not to like them now but I do. We're friends who both miss each other because we're both back on the road. I don't listen to records that much. I like the Contortions. The first time I saw them James Chance turned up on his knees and spat in my face. The second time James was throwing himself around and threw himself on a table knocking drinks everywhere. Then he threw himself at a young lady I was with and knocked her drink from her hand. But I like the Contortions immensely. I saw the Clash in New York where it was — as a rock'n'roll performance — the most energetic I had seen in 5 or 6 years."

Q: I'VE READ THAT YOU DON'T LIKE THE GUITAR.

" Yes, well I have more freedom now. I simply accept that I play guitar now and having accepted that I have freedom or no choice in the situation. I define freedom as gracefully submitting to the inevitable. I'm a guitarist. I might as well face it. It's what I do best so I'll get on with it. At the moment I'm particularly interested in Frippertronics. I love the sound of it. I think it sounds incredible. I enjoy it so much it must be disgusting."

Q: HOW HAS ENO INFLUENCED YOUR WORK?

"Mainly by introducing me to technology and I think he's given me faith in myself as a guitarist. He's always encouraged me whatever I do, a lot of musicians I've worked with haven't liked my guitar playing. They always preferred that I play like Hendrix.

Q: ARE YOU CONTENTED WITH LIFE?

"Contented? No! We all need a level of contentment. We all need a measure of satisfaction, if only to enable us to do the job. I would say that my life has a quality which it didn't used to have, but in a way it's a lot more easy because I have a sense that what I'm doing is right."

Q: YOU SEEM TO HAVE DEVELOPED — JUST FROM MY OBSERVATION OF YOU AS A GUITARIST, A MUSICIAN, AND HUMAN BEING THROUGHOUT YOUR HISTORY — (ESPECIALLY IN THE LAST FEW YEARS), AN APPROACH TO PRESENTING YOURSELF.

"I've given myself permission to be myself. About three months ago, in N.Y. I had a very nice afternoon spent with some writers; 3 writers and myself, and I found that I was as witty, effervescent, and intelligent, and as friendly as they were and I really enjoyed myself and realized how much I'd censored my intelligence for so many years in order to not disturb or upset, and my life simply wasn't worthwhile. So whereas if someone had walked out of a performance 5 years ago, I'd be heartbroken and wonder what I'd done wrong, if someone walks out of a performance now it's a pity because I feel that what I'm doing is right for me, I'll go on doing it. Not in a callous rough-handed way, and of course there's response and of course part of me is disappointed if someone doesn't like it. But it might not be my fault they don't like it and maybe some people may not be prepared to exercise the amount of work necessary to get into it, or simply it's not their bag of bananas. But I don't take it personally anymore. This is what I do and without worrying about "Should I be doing this? People might not like it," I sense that simply getting on with it is all I need to do."

Q: DO YOU HAVE MUCH TIME FOR READING?

"No. Not at the moment, I'm afraid, although I just had two or three hours the other day to complete a biography on Thomas Hardy, which I was happy about. On the road I like to spend the morning reading, practicing and being human, the afternoon talking to whoever's interested and the evening playing. I like to be civilized and get a feel for wherever I am, the groups playing, etc. ... My friends all get upset when I don't give them a call but given the option of a fifth hour and a social visit ... If I'm going out and giving my full attention to someone it's actually work, yet pleasurable, of course. Sometimes if I work 16 hours a day, as I normally do, I need the remaining time to simply go to the bathroom, change my strings, practice and press my trousers not to mention sleeping. I do read over a range of topics, though. When I was producing the Roches I went through 9 books on Chilean economics and politics. It was at that point I realized I'd have to leave America. It was so insidious. I knew I'd have to go, I couldn't seriously consider staying here after that."

Q: SO, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

"Back to England as a base, a geographic base, and try to found this guitar school, but to commute." +

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INTERVIEW WITH HOWARD DEVOTO, MAGAZINE

M A G A

SLASH – You seem to have had a strange relationship with the english press...like I was reading something that Sounds published a few months ago, in which you were accused of having pulled "a number" on the writer that talked to you. . .

HOWARD – Well, what's putting a number on for some people is learning how to count for others I suppose. That was the 1st interview that I had ever done that really, really annoyed me because I spent over 2 hours talking to that guy and....I don't think I really sold him any lines. What he chose to print, what he chose to put in his piece was so unrepresentative of what we talked about. I mean we talked about quite a few interesting things, certainly we were discreet about some things, but it was no unfriendly thing, and he represented it like it was....

SLASH – A battle of the wits?

HOWARD – Yea. But I don't want to spend a third of this interview complaning about other interviews!

SLASH– Okay. Here even more than in England you definitely have a very "mysterious" image....Do you think it's due to your music and the unpredictable way it has evolved, or do you think it's mainly because of your personality?

HOWARD – I don't think there is anything terribly difficult about the music. I mean we don't play in odd times...I don't think there is anything very avant-garde about it, unless being original, if I dare use that word, is just by definition avant-garde. I'm not saying we are in a totally different world from everybody else, although I think we are, but I don't think it's the music. I don't know what it is, because I also have a naive belief that everybody understands what our songs are about, and that people feel the way that I do, and yet I haven't got a lot of evidence for that, but I still believe it.

SLASH – Do you depend on any feedback on what you do?

HOWARD – Mainly negative things, merely to get off my ass and do something. Something has to be getting up my nose for me to do it, I don't do it for love of (sarcastic tone) rock n roll, I don't do it for any big ambitions, but because....

SLASH – As a reaction?

HOWARD – Well, that's what Punk was. It was also a very disciplined thing. People don't think of it that way, but punk was very disciplined. Every sort of detail was almost laid down somewhere in the back of everybody's head, because it was a reaction, it was like a force for a time, and you didn't mess around. But of course it became for me the thing to revolt against in a way, although there are still some things that I like about it, and I still consider us to have one foot in the door. I've got to have my foot in the door, so people can jam it!

SLASH – Well, you did start as one of the most hardcore outfits with the Spiral Scratch EP, then....

HOWARD – Well for a start it was the thing of finding myself in a movement, which always makes me jittery, suddenly standing with a lot of people who are saying "we feel this way, this is what we represent..." and I just want to go "No I don't, let me go and be a businessman rather than saying we, we..." and. . . where was i? I just shot my own mouth off!

SLASH – We, we? Was it a calculated rejection?

HOWARD – That's what I was gonna say. No, nothing was ever planned. I got like a real push in myself to make a band, and what the hell we were going to do, I had no idea, apart from play one gig, see what that's like. And we did all that, and it was. . . alright. It didn't make me a different human being like I expected it to, it didn't change my life, and so we played another gig, and I ended up playing a dozen gigs or so with the Buzzcocks, and then we made Spiral Scratch. Then that was it, having made Spiral Scratch, I had done as much as I wanted to do. In so much as I was part of that movement, there was now a permanent record of my part in the picture. But by that time I felt no longer – well I never felt committed to anything anyway because when I started it wasn't a movement, there were three bands and we were the only ones in Manchester, the other two or three like the Clash and the Damned were in London , we didn't know it was to become a thriving monstrous baby or whatever – so nothing was planned ever at all...when I left the Buzzcocks I had no plans to become involved with another band either.

SLASH – At that time you were quoted as saying you couldn't ·ve the noise anymore...

HOWARD – Well, it was starting to be a bit of a noise. Everybody was playing very similarly to everybody else, people were stealing their songs from other people, even the titles of the songs they'd take from others' and put it on their own, the same subjects were being sung about, it was just a whole torrent, it became a one-scene cacophony. It wasn't until Spiral Scratch that people realized that our songs weren't quite what everybody else was writing about, because they could hear them somewhat properly, they could hear the words which you can't hear thru crappy PA systems, and it was that which started things for the Buzzcocks. All the record industry is in London, and journalists won't travel out, really.

SLASH – You were talking about not feeling especially committed in those days. How committed are you now? I'm sure you're committed to your music, but to...

HOWARD – I don't know if I'm committed to my music!

SLASH – (A bit taken aback) – Well then, how committed are you to what surrounds your music, the travelling, the dealing with the industry people. . .How do you cope with it all? Are you aloof,does it annoy you, does it amuse you?

HOWARD – It does all of those things to me. I'm just so much interested, 'cos I'm not going to let people run away with me in a way that I don't want, so you have to involve yourself somewhat. You can't stay away from it all. In the music world, if anybody looks on you as a sort of bright. . .(sarcastic tone again). . .SPARK, there is thousand and one people ready to jump in and help you out, you've got assistants ready to take care of everything as long as everything is buzzing along, they'll all disappear very quickly as well, but it never really works out that way. Maybe it's all right for some people, but I just can't live like that, I have to know what's going on more or less. But then again I'm only prepared to do so much, I'm just not interested in doing certain things, therefore you do need other people to a certain extent. But as to being committed, I just... I just watch it. I have my watch dogs, the ones that sit on my shoulderblades, I cannot feel very far into the future at all, enough to make plans, enough to have ambitions, enough to have hopes or anything...

SLASH – Does this attitude make it hard for the people who are pushing your product? Are there things they would like you to do that you won't?

HOWARD – Yes. But being with Virgin Records means that there aren't those pressures, particularly. But yeah, there are certain things. . . .

SLASH – Well, take this tour, to be more specific. Was it your decision, or were you asked to do it?

HOWARD – Well, (doubly sarcastic tone), it's the most. . . natural thing in the world to come to America for a british band, isn't it?? Sort of like going to high school after junior school. We had to come to America to force Virgin to release the record over here. Well, it was almost like that. They were going to release it and they were going to release it and "Real Life" was going to be released a year ago and it never happened, and so it gets released within a week of us coming. I don't know what they do for other people, but I just made it very clear when I was talking to them about our contract that maybe Magazine would never play any concerts, and that's how they would have to take it, and I couldn't promise to go on for years. So maybe because of that they just say "well you could do this tour, we think it's a good idea, we'll help you out this way and that way". Mostly they think it's a good idea, in a way it's cheap publicity, a band doing a tour. Although it's quite costly, compared to advertising costs its quite cheap, and in a way it's the best type of publicity. But it's not their suggestion. It will come from an agent or promoter, somebody in the country who thinks it's worthwhile.

SLASH – Now that the tour is coming to an end, do you see any future at all in your relationship with the american public?

HOWARD – (After a long silence) Well, I don't know. I have no idea. The tour's been very good, but I don't know what we're going to be doing. We're losing money quite substantially, our records go out thru Jem, who is a small distributor, and not thru Atlantic which is who Virgin work with now, so our records have not received really much of a push at all. I don't know how much longer we can go on losing money. I cannot work hard at trying to sell people records. We'll either have to stop touring and work to a very tight schedule or we'll have to have some measure of success. It's really a very crazy situation, 'cos if I go back three years and somebody tells me: "you know,

Z I N E

photo: melanie

you're going to be in a band with two records out that got in the charts", I would have just thought...what world are you putting me into??!!

SLASH – Once you said that before the Buzzcocks your life was a pigsty.

HOWARD – Yes it was, I suppose. I was doing some jobs, I was doing some college, I was doing some unemployment, nothing that worked on my life in the way I wanted to. And although as I said it's not that it made me a new person or anything like that, it's been a way of working on my life, it's been a very valuable process. But at that time the only music that made much sense to me, apart from Blood on the Tracks which I think came out that year, was the Stooges records. Iggy Pop wasn't doing anything but there were those three records out, and that was about the only thing that made any sense. When I listened to it – and I can play ever such a little bit of guitar – I knew that it was so simple, but it was also just about the most vivid thing in my life.

SLASH – Do you think the music you do now will ever have the same impact that these records have had? Do you see it having the same immediacy?

HOWARD – No, I know it doesn't have the same immediacy. But there again, I know that we do have some of that effect on people. Being a musicians' musician or whatever does not appeal to me in the slightest bit. I mean I don't even think of myself as a musician. For me, it's the songs that count. That's the bottom line, that's what it all means. There are very strong impressions and feelings that I have which I cannot resist writing about and I don't hear other people writing about them. Obviously there is a handful of good writers who write for themselves and who obviously write similarly, but not in the same way. Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, Dylan and Bowie, and them intermittently as well.

SLASH – Is your music rock n roll?

HOWARD – No. I certainly don't feel in any kind of a world that's called rock n roll, whether it's the "ancient regime" of rock n roll – some peole over here have been good at shouting at us "yea, rock n roll!", which doesn't happen in Britain – or the new "regime" of rock n roll, but new or old, I increasingly do not feel part of it, and I'm very ill-informed as to what's happening with everybody else. I don't feel myself to be in the entertainment world at all. I accept the idea of it, but I still wish to eradicate rock n roll. I'm not in there. I mean obviously we are linked with it, we play the same instruments, the same places that people that call themselves rock n roll and sing about rock n roll play, I can only deny it so much sensibly. . . .

SLASH – Do you see yourself doing what you're doing for a few more years, or do you sometimes wake up and think it might stop today?

HOWARD – Yea, I wake up like that sometimes. One day I suppose I will wake up, properly. But I can't think that far. At the moment we're on this tour, and I suppose we have to think about another record, and what will come of us thinking about another record, I don't know.

SLASH – As you said, it will have to come from a necessity. . .

HOWARD – Yes, to be to the point, not to be extraneous, a waste. Sometimes it seems like the time to take your time, but there isn't that much time to do that, and there's certainly plenty of music, and I'm certainly not that much interested. . . and when I think of the people that mean anything to me, it's sort of funny to call them musicians. They're also. . .(starts daydreaming, or chasing an elusive term)

SLASH – What is your life like when it's not occupied with songs and things like that? How do you live?

HOWARD – Well I just have a lot of other things to do. Another thing that a lot of Americans have is this thing about "fun". . . The 1st person I spoke to in L.A. said, "well, have you had fun here yet, 'cos there ain't much else to do?!" I don't know what it is. I think I have spotted a few people having "fun", but I've never really understood what's going on. . .I don't want this to sound heavier than it is, but I just have a certain sense of time, or discipline. . .I don't know, I'm just not that sort of person, that's all I can say.

SLASH – How close are the other members of the band to your concept of what you're doing?

HOWARD (openly rather disinterested in this line of questioning) – I don't know. . .I don't really know. Those are hard things to talk about.

SLASH – How do you feel about society, the world? (how precise! Ed) Do you feel any kind of political responsibilities in the way things are, the way they should be?

HOWARD – Yea, I feel part of it. I accept that it is also my responsibility, that goes without saying. It's undoubtedly (sarcastic tone again?) all my responsibility. So, having come to that conclusion, I'm just working out my part in that. . .conspiracy.

SLASH – You appear to be somewhat. . .obsessed by feelings. Do you think the modern world is forcing us to simplify our feelings?

HOWARD – No, I don't. I think we might be out of touch with certain simple combinations of feelings, certain ways of reconciling conflicts. But I think all the elements are there, in quite sharp contrasts, all these conflicts, contradictions, paradoxes are all there, and they've always been there. I think they were faced by the ancient Greeks, and they will be faced by the first people on Mars or whatever it is in the future, and whether that makes me a pessimist or not, I don't know. Maybe a certain way of reconciling those conflicts has been lost.

SLASH – Do you ever see yourself going religious? You were talking about Dylan as one of the main writers that you felt close to, and he's just gone. . . .

HOWARD – I don't know which way he's gone. Has he gone patriotic? Religion? That's another suspicious word. Like art. But I have no doubt that the way certain people talk, particularly about political ideologies, debate about what people should be, are talking much more in religious terms than political terms.

SLASH – Do you think in terms of good and evil?

HOWARD – Unfortunately, yes. But I'm really interested in the amphitheatre beyond them. I mean, I don't know that it exists, but I have to have both suspicious. If you ask me today which side I fall on, well, I fall on the side of the amphitheater. I think there is that beyond...

SLASH – Was "Shot By Both Sides" about the inability to choose?

HOWARD – That's looking at it negatively. It's not an ability, it's a glorious ability of not having to choose. Not refusing to choose, it's not a matter of refusing. It's a secret understanding, you have no choice in the matter. It's not really a position you take up, but a position you find yourself in. You discover yourself there, and you get some sort of secret thrill, some sort of satisfaction out of it, but you don't place yourself there. You find yourself there, and you dance on the spot.

SLASH – Has the punk audience in England rejected you, or have you rejected them?

HOWARD – I don't really reject anybody. I would have thought your paper would have rejected me! We're unfashionable, that's the thing. I'm sure there are people who come to see us that go and see the Damned. But it's not that disciplined now, there is none of that tightness that there was, it's very varied in Britain. In the minds of the trend-setting thinkers and critics I suppose we're pretty unfashionable.

SLASH – Because of the more formal and structured aspects of your music?

HOWARD – It's because somebody got the bright idea of calling me an intellectual once, which of course is kind of a kiss of death. I'm not one, I don't think of myself that way. And we had keyboards, which is maybe a bit unfashionable. . .also there is a very fast attention-turnover in Britain. At one time, when it was all very tight, you wanted to hear every band that was coming along. Now everybody is just going "shhhooosh, shooosh" (approximate renderings of a zooming comet Ed.) and it's just like noting down the number of trains (zooming trains, sorry. Ed.), which is a bit sad really. But that's what happens. So we had our moment of flashing past on the highway, and a lot of people have stayed with us. But, in the free-thinking VIP world, there is quite a lot of people who don't like us. I don't feel it's my problem really.

SLASH – How do you take criticism? What does it do to you?

HOWARD – It gives me this funny little rash, but I have a cream for it. Depends on how clever they are with it I suppose. But even being struck with a blunt mallet hurts, a blunt mallet or a poky little stiletto. I'm still looking for immunity I suppose.

SLASH – Can there be constructive criticism?

HOWARD – That sounds like the worst! Just makes you want to go and splash around in a kiddie's paddling pool, saying don't be nice to me and make me eat my vitamins!

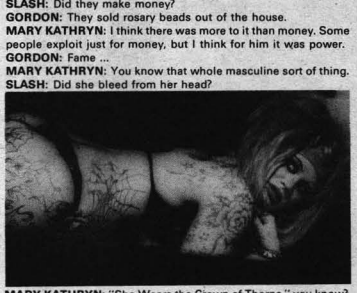
FINI

Ecstatic Stigmatic

GORDON STEVENSON & MARY KATHRYN CERVENKA

Gordon Stevenson (ex bass player of Teenager Jesus and the Jerks) and Mary Kathryn Cervenka (sister of Exene of X) talked about their upcoming movie *Ecstatic Stigmatic,* the story of Little Rose, a stigmatic (a person that develops marks resembling the crucifixion wounds of Christ) that lived in Rhode Island in the 1930's. The film was made in New York City, directed by Gordon, stars Mary Kathryn, and is to be released in L.A. in October. They talked to Chris D., J. Bell, John Doe and Exene in their hotel room in the Tropicana.

SLASH: Gordon, weren't you in Teenage Jesus and the Jerks?
GORDON: I played bass.
SLASH: How did your record do?
GORDON: I don't know. The guy that made the record is not paying me anymore since he thinks the people that stayed in the band deserve the money more than the people who left the band. Lydia Lunch agrees with him.
SLASH: What label was your record on?
GORDON: Our single was on Charles Ball's label, and then we did the album ("No N.Y." — ED.) which was on Island.
SLASH: Would you ever want to be in another band?
GORDON: No. I don't want to. I sold my guitar as soon as I got out. Mary Kathryn and I used to be in DNA. We just rehearsed for about a month, and we both were really frustrated and we dropped out about the same time. I thought I'd never be in another band, but that was before Teenage Jesus. We were rehearsing in Lydia's loft, and she asked me to be her bass player, because her bass player was Japanese and he was getting evicted from his apartment and deported and stuff. So he taught me how to play the songs in their set. He taught me by number practically. I never learned how to play my bass, anything other than these eleven songs that were Teenage Jesus songs.
SLASH: Why are you leaving New York?
GORDON: The weather's part of it, and I think we're a little nervous.
MARY KATHRYN: It's like shuffling the cards.
SLASH: Isn't it fun there?
MARY KATHRYN: It can be heaven on Earth except it can be a chamber of horrors. It's grotesque, but it's awe-inspiring. It's not anything like Los Angeles. There's so many horrifying, pathetically sad things that you see there, and I didn't see too much of that in LA, although I'm sure you can find them if you live in the right side of town. One of the most pathetic things I saw recently in N.Y. was a Puerto Rican woman who got real excited because she found a disco garbage can ... a garbage can with garish silkscreened pictures of Saturday Night Fever people in three piece suits dancing and DISCO written on it.
GORDON: There's a lot of pressure when you're in N.Y., there's a lot of possibilities of doing things, and when you have all these possibilities of doing things, and when you have all these possibilities you sort of feel guilty for not following through on them. That's one of the reasons we've never been able to quit our business, because as long as you're in N.Y. it's possible to have this business that makes a lot of money. Even though it's not important to you, you can't quit it. We work all the time, and I feel like I've worked too long.
SLASH: What made you decide to make a movie?
GORDON: I was in a couple of Eric Mitchell's movies. When we went to vacation in Florida we found this book that we wanted to base a movie on. The title is *SHE WEARS A CROWN OF THORNS.* It was written in 1933 or around then, and it's a propaganda book about a martyr from Rhode Island called Little Rose.
SLASH: Is it a true story?
GORDON: Yeah.
MARY KATHRYN: It's a version of a story that's supposed to be true.
SLASH: And how old was she when she developed the stigmata?
GORDON: I don't remember. She was crippled and arthritic from a very early age, and it sort of evolved from that. We read a lot of cases of stigmatics, and it's usually the case that they are real sickly, and pious, and they would just lay in bed and think about Jesus all the time, and eventually their symptoms would evolve into something more.
SLASH: What about Padre Pio, have you read about him?
MARY KATHRYN: We tried to stay away from the men.
GORDON: I was interested in the sexual side of the stigmata. The whole idea of passive monsters, because most monsters in movies are male and mostly very aggressive, and I was trying to do a horror film where the lead person was passive. Ithought the stigmatic was like the counterpoint to Dracula because it's all based on blood, taking blood, or giving blood from yourself, or being very aggressive and needing somebody else's blood to live, or being completely passive and just laying in this bed and bleeding, as your occupation.
SLASH: Was she famous while she was alive? Did people come to see her and worship to her?
GORDON: Apparently a lot of people attended her funeral. But the most famous one is Theresa Newmann.
MARY KATHRYN: Nobody's heard of this one.
GORDON: That was the part of the book that really fascinated me. It was written by the man that took care of her. The whole book has this paranoid slant on it, where he would talk about how he wasn't going to let anyone come see her anymore because it would make her too vain, and therefore she would no longer be as holy. He had all these reasons for keeping people away ... keeping the doctors away because they were too materialistic and didn't understand spiritual illnesses. Through the whole book he sort of set a trap for her, guiding her and tutoring her and telling her what to think about it. It was a one-to-one relationship where he evolved her into his way of thinking. That's what I tried to bring out more in the movie. In the book it was just barely there, you had to be a real suspicious person to notice it.
SLASH: Did they make money?
GORDON: They sold rosary beads out of the house.
MARY KATHRYN: I think there was more to it than money. Some people exploit just for money, but I think for him it was power.
GORDON: Fame ...
MARY KATHRYN: You know that whole masculine sort of thing.
SLASH: Did she bleed from her head?



MARY KATHRYN: "She Wears the Crown of Thorns," you know? She had the crown of thorns imbedded under her skin, like scarification.
GORDON: There's a picture on the front of the book, like scarification all across her forehead, two intertwined tubes, and then at the junctions there are sores.
SLASH: Is it a real photograph or a drawing?
GORDON: It's a real photograph, but it explains how the photograph was reconstructed.
SLASH: Did she bleed from the side too?
GORDON: Yeah, where the lance went in, and she had marks on her back from the scourging.
SLASH: Who else is in the movie?
GORDON: Well, we fictionalized the movie a lot. We used a woman named Anita Paltrinieri to play her father. I changed the man who wrote the book into her father because I wanted it more incestuous. Brenda Bergman is an actress from N.Y. who played her mother. She did it in sort of a Brigitte Bardot wig with a Jayne Mansfield impersonation. Arto from DNA is in it. Johnny O'Kane plays the sailor/Christ-figure.
SLASH: How long is it?
GORDON: 65 minutes.
SLASH: Color or black and white?
GORDON: The parts with Arto and bew, all the rest is in color.
SLASH: Did you write the screenplay yourself?
GORDON: There was never a really big screenplay. It was never really worked out like that. I changed it a lot, mostly while I was editing. We didn't shoot that much dialogue ... we did a lot of voice-overs.
SLASH: When you did the dialogue, did you do sync sound?
GORDON: Yeah, but there's not a lot of that. I originally planned to do a silent movie and I was going to do cards between each bit (...) a silent movie with music. As it turned out we did so much voice-over and dialogue, it doesn't seem much like a silent movie although ...
MARY KATHRYN: It doesn't have the same feel as a talking movie either.
GORDON: It's a lot of gestures and postures.
MARY KATHRYN: There's music all the way through ...
GORDON: But the music is not exactly music.
SLASH: Who did the music?
GORDON: We took Mark and Connie from Mars and Arto. What we did was we made these tapes with the elements that we wanted, these random types of sounds, then I gave them to this guy, Phil Kline, that works with Robin Lee Crutchfield's band, Dark Day, who does tape loops and things with synthesizers. So I gave him these tapes, and each tape had a different little thing, and he made music from those. A lot of the stuff I gave him wasn't really music, it was more like static, sound patterns. We did each instrument one at a time, and he would pick the parts that he wanted and make the music, completely artificially.
SLASH: Did he do it while he was watching the film?
GORDON: No, we just gave him written instructions. He actually was not familiar with it at all. We got all the stuff in to him at the last minute.
MARY KATHRYN: He understood the mood, though.
SLASH: Any especially exciting scenes you'd like to mention? Any sex?
GORDON: Yeah, Mary Kathryn gets sodomized.
SLASH: By the Lamb of God? ... Do you want to talk about the murder?
GORDON: Little Rose's father is a tatoo artist and her mother is a stripper whose body is covered with tatoos. Her mother runs off with a sailor. The sailor returns to the apartment and kisses Little Rose on the forehead and the hands and she starts to bleed. Then he goes into the other room, takes off his clothes and lays down on the table to be tatooed. The father tatoos the crucifixion scene on his back, and that's intercut with Little Rose going into a trance, and then into a fit. Then the father murders the sailor by stabbing the Jesus tatooed on his back with a kitchen fork. The point is, it's like voodoo because it kills Little Rose who is going through the passion of Christ in the other room. So as he stabs him, she's puking blood and dying in the other room.
SLASH: Is that the end of the movie?
MARY KATHRYN: No ... maybe we shouldn't tell the rest.
GORDON: It was predicted she was going to die when she was 33. So she has this whole cult of followers, or bleeders ...
SLASH: Hemophiliacs?
GORDON: No, they do it with blades. The way I putthe story together, she doesn't die. In the book she did die when she was 33.
MARY KATHRYN: Right on cue.
SLASH: Do you think she really died?
MARY KATHRYN: I'm sure she died, but why?
GORDON: The guy probably snuffed her. She never ate, and he used to say how wonderful it was that she had such divine life.
SLASH: Where are you planning to show the film?
GORDON: In N.Y. I want to show it in bars. Out here I want to show it in theatres.
SLASH: Did you do any optical printing?
GORDON: We printed parts of it backwards, but you can't really tell. We decided to do it that way because it gives a lighter feel to the body.
SLASH: How long a time period does the movie cover?
GORDON: In our movie her ages are very confused, but in some parts we show her looking very young, like when she gets raped by a blackface comedian, and when he's raping her, all the shoe polish is coming off.
MARY KATHRYN: That's all you really see, is the shoe polish.
SLASH: Who plays that?
GORDON: Arto.
SLASH: Gordon, do you have plans to direct another movie?
GORDON: I sort of want to do pornography.
SLASH: That's where the money is.
GORDON: I could shoot in in Super-8, transfer it to video, and sell it like mail order and not deal with the theatres at all.
SLASH: How close were your expectations of what your movie would be like and what it actually is?
MARY KATHRYN: We stayed on the same track. The strange thing was we had a lot of ideas in the beginning that we got away from, and then in the end we came back to those same ideas.
GORDON: One of the big things we had to change was for a long time we thought Black Randy was going to be in it. But then right before it came time to shoot, we kept calling him, but he never returned the calls ... I dropped all the crowd scenes because I realized I couldn't do them. I wanted it to be an hour and a half so it would function as a full-length movie.
MARY KATHRYN: I think it's fine the length it is. Movies are getting shorter now anyway.
SLASH: Just like bands are starting to play shorter songs. People's concentration span is getting shorter ... Mary Kathryn, would you like to make another movie? One with Exene?
MARY KATHRYN: Oh, sure, that's the real reason I came to Hollywood. (laughter) I'm real interested in movies. It's the highest form of art in my opinion. You're working on so many different levels. I'd love to be in a movie with Exene ... as Siamese twins, which is an act we performed just once together in Florida — we won a prize. People think Exene and I look alike, but I never saw it until I saw myself on film. Exene would be very good in afilm, and there have never been any good Siamese twin movies made.
SLASH: What about *CHAINED FOR LIFE*? (about the Siamese twins from *FREAKS* — ED.)
Those women were so ugly! They couldn't act or sing and had those bad 1940's teeth! The only sensation was that they were connected.
SLASH: Do you think your being Catholic has influenced you and Exene more than the average person?
MARY KATHRYN: Every Catholic is overly influenced by their religion. If you're Catholic you get more out of life because you do things you think are bad, and you enjoy them more because of the sense of guilt and punishment. You know you can be forgiven no matter what hideous thing you've done and start over again. That's why so many Catholics go crazy, they don't know any bounds because they can always do a certain amount of prayers and penance. Little girls are recruited from first grade to become nuns, to psychically marry Jesus, this person who's been tortured and mutilated. You're shown all these pictures of the Crucifixion which was really this gross murder. You develop a sense of beauty is sadism. Catholics are obsessed with suffering. They think it's meaningful because they grew up with it. It's said that people who hang around sex clubs like Plato's Retreat or S&M queer bars are mostly Catholic. When I was little I used to have these hideous sex fantasies starting when I was five years old. My grandmother would get drunk and watch crime shows like "77 Sunset Strip" with Exene and me. Oh, God, I used to think it was so sexual and had a lot to do with Jesus. Edd Byrnes was my favorite. He was one of my biggest influences as far as sex, and I used to dream about rescuing him from these hopeless situations where he would be wounded.
SLASH: Does any of this come out in the movie?
MARY KATHRYN: The movie is sort of autobiographical. It shows a facet of people who go really far to be abnormal for whatever reason, which is the direction I've always gone in. There's also the female element ... being a bloodletter rather than a bloodsucker. I think there's something tragically vulnerable about all great women, whether they're just women you see on the street, or as a performer ... like Exene. That's what kind of person our mother was. She saw *her* mother going around with sailors who were getting in drunken brawls, and that's the part of the movie that's verbatim. My grandmother was a big Irish drinker who would drag my mother all over the South side of Chicago to these barrooms, getting in fights and spending my grandfather's paycheck. He owned a tavern, and a lot of that's in the movie. It drove my mother crazy, clinically as well as in the day-to-day way she brought us up.
GORDON: We wanted Exene or Holly Woodlawn to play the mother in the movie.
SLASH: When you were making the movie, did anything affect you strangely?
GORDON: It never did to me, but to other people ... the girl who did the camera work started crying during one scene, and the girl who edited it could barely stand to watch it because of all the blood. But it was nothing to me. I think of movies as a very artificial thing.
SLASH: Did you know that in the Zefferelli version of the life of Christ for TV they couldn't film the Resurrection because of all the technical disasters and weird bad luck? They tried several times, but finally gave up and decided God just didn't want it on film.

GORDON (LEFT), MARY (ABOVE) FROM THE POSTER FOR THE FILM, AND BRENDA (OPPOSITE) AS (WHO ELSE) MOM...

PART 2

THROBBING GRISTLE

PART 2

THE 1ST THROBBING GRISTLE REPORT
(a conversation with Genesis P. Orridge)

GENESIS: (continuing from last month) It was a very incestuous scene at that point, there were only a few people involved, Malcolm McLaren had Sex and The Sex Pistols, and Peter (Sleazy) did the 1st publicity photos of them and McLaren turned them down because he said they were too "Heavy" ... They've never been used. We still got them if you want. Johnny Rotten in a straight jacket in the Y.M.C.A., when he still looked like a little boy ... they were all real boyish, in the shower room, real Burroughish, you know ... so John Krivine had "Boy" (Sleazy and a friend of his actually thought of the name and designed the interior), which really had a lot of trouble that year. The theme of the shop was: some boy had broken in the back to try to rob it and accidentally set the place on fire and got burnt to death, and they found his remains in the shop. He (Sleazy) made the remains, and the police raided the shop and took them away (See "The Punk Rock Movie" Ed.). A lot of people don't realize how closely we were connected with the punk thing then. Scotland Yard was so convinced the stuff was actually real they had it analyzed by a lab. Sleazy got a letter from them asking if they could print photographs of them for their books. You see, Sleazy is in the Casualties' Union, and he's been trained for years in simulating injuries, he's developed it into a real fine art ... He used to make up my face in those days, one side completely blistered and dripping and horrible, and I used to carry a little whisky flask full of blood (you know how they always drink at concerts) and I spat it once all over Debbie who worked as an assistant at Sex, she was really outraged. The punks were really frightened, which I thought was amazing. Generation X even spread a rumor that I was going to hang myself in public ... So anyway when Krivine heard that Malcolm McLaren had got the Sex Pistols, *he* wanted to have a group. The only reason for the Sex Pistols originally was to sell the clothes, and when Krivine heard about it he decided I'm going to have my group, called Chelsea, and they'll sell *my* clothes. We went down to the auditions, we helped him pick Billy Idol. We went down to hear them practising above the factory in Portobello Road with the final line up: Gene October, Billy Idol on rhythm guitar, Tony James on bass ... and Tony James was such a horrible little kid, he was being so arrogant, telling us, "Oh yes, I used to be in a group like yours years ago ..." trying to think of everything he could to insult us for over an hour, and in the end he said to Sleazy, "you're just a tape twiddler!" and I looked at him and I said, "One more word and I'm going to punch you across this room!" He must have thought I was a wimp, as I had some long hair — some of it was cut, but remained, in places — a kind of cross over thing — and he said something else, I don't remember what, so I just stood up and wham! Right in his mouth. I normally would never think of hitting anyone in the face, but ... Anyway I knocked one of his teeth out. His beer shot one way, his shades the other ... I was really impressed. Of course I'm thinking: if he turns around and attacks me back it's over now! But he didn't. He burst into tears and ran out. Gene October came in saying, "Please say you're sorry, he's ever so upset, I know he's horrible, we all know he's horrible, but please, it might ruin the group ..." I said I wouldn't. I was glad I hitted him, and I hoped it hurt! Apparently he is still terrified. Probably thinks I'm a total psycho. Occasionally I've bone berserk, and they always remember that bit, not the times when I'm totally domesticated.

SLASH: Does most of the British Kingdom consider you a total maniac?

GENESIS: Well, they always tend to believe the headlines instead of the reality. Although in one sense we're interested in being "agents provocateurs", we don't try especially to "disturb" people. But we don't try to hide things from them either. We don't go out thinking we're going to be outrageous, we do the opposite. We sit down, we talk, we have cups of tea and sweets. But, if I get provoked, I'll respond. Even if I get beaten to death. That's the way I am.

(About another battle between Genesis and the Queen of England):

... what I used to get into was get loads of the Queen's souvenir postcards and loads of tits magazines, and as they were both equally ridiculous I put them together, and instead of writing letters I just sent all these cards of porno Queens, and in the end the police came, and they had the whole collection. They had been saving them! They had a notice up in sorting offices in various parts of London saying if you find any of these keep them for prosecution. And they prosecuted me for sending indecent mail thru the post.

SLASH: Didn't you think you were toying with trouble?

GENESIS: I had forgotten about it. In the beginning I didn't think about it. I may have wondered about it once ... I could have gotten 12 months in prison! I got the lawyer that defended successfully Linda Lovelace ... Always had a sense of history. I had to borrow the money. They refused me legal aid without any explanation, which they can't normally do, so I took in my high flown lawyer and asked for a trial with a jury, as I was entitled to since it was a criminal offense. If you ask for a trial with a jury, they've got to let you have it. So they said we're not going to allow you to ask for one. If you do we'll have you for contempt of court, so you can't ask. Which is totally illegal. When my lawyer tried to argue they said, "one more word, contempt of court." I asked for right to appeal and they refused me that. They charged me with EACH CARD AS A SEPARATE OFFENSE! and fined me the maximum on each card, knowing I had about 20 pounds in the bank, and I had to pay in 30 days. Normally you can pay over 1 year, even 2. But they said 30 days or you're in jail.

SLASH: Treated you like an enemy of the state, uh?

GENESIS: It's been like that ever since ... When I was in the university I was printing a magazine on how to make molotov cocktails, and in the same issue it would show where the Vice-Chancellor's petrol tanks were, and where the administration kept all their secret files, but they seized all the magazines. I was also a professional pamphleteer, I had an advert in the university newspaper saying I'd write pamphlets for anyone, the Conservative Club, the International Marxist Club, and I did. One week I wrote this thing for the Monday Club, which is the ultra Lory conservative lot, and the week after I wrote a pamphlet for the International Marxists attacking the one I had done the week before. I used to be a good friend of Tom Fawthrop, who later became the lawyer of the Angry Brigade. He was in Ireland with the IRA, went to France with the Situationists. When he left he tore up his examination papers, I just did cartoons of big boots stomping on little people on mine. This other guy also left that year, he was the first anarchist President of the Union. As soon as he got it he resigned, but he resigned by changing the whole process of the student union so there couldn't be a president for years! We put up 40 candidates. The magazine was called "Worm", and it had no editors. We had a pigeonhole, and anything that was put in the box was printed. Nothing was removed, not one word. Even when they'd put "I hope we print this, but don't print my name" we'd print that as well. Every little thing in the box was typed out on stencils, printed on a little machine and stapled together. We had a little room with a borrowed typewriter and when we had some time we'd go in and type some of the stuff from the box. When the election time came for the president we put in an application form to run for president with every issue and asked every one to run. The whole point was that since it was proportional representation it totally fucked up working out who had won the elections. They flew people in from Holland who were experts in electoral reforms to sort it out! It was in the national papers, as it was the first time somebody had discovered this weakness of the system. It had never happened before. It became a kind of test case for proportional representation. And in the end this guy, whose slogan had been "I want to be an academic thug" got in, even though he hardly got any votes, cos the only way they could solve it was that somehow more people had voted for him as their 31st choice, whereas people who got lots of votes had no one voting for them as their 31st choice. When we left the vice-chancellor of the university was asked for a quote and he said that the three most disruptive people had gone and he was very glad. That's why when the police raided me there were 12 detectives, a police woman and dogs! In one room, at 8 o'clock in the morning! They were opening letters I hadn't posted yet, and taking down addresses of who I wrote to, and looking thru the file cabinets. They read Monte Cazazza's lyrics. It was the police woman, and reading all the lyrics she was nearly sick! You could see her choke. They really wanted to do me over. It was so bizarre, I put some muzak tapes on the P.A., really loud, so there was this muzak playing while all these detectives were rifling thru the drawers, and they found my old used tampax collection, all moldy by then. It was all too much for them. Eccentric, but not really what they were looking for. And they took away my checkbook, and then they took *me* away. Locked me up for a day in a cell, with no explanation. They said you're not under arrest, but if you try to run away you won't get there.

SLASH: Do you think England is becoming more fascist?

GENESIS: More puritan all the time. More moralistic, more stupid. Which is hard!

SLASH: Is it going to become harder for the things you're trying to do?

GENESIS: I'm under siege now. Fucking hell, I've got barbed wire, lights in the yard so we can see everyone, broken glass on walls, every window downstairs has thick boarding over it, each window is nailed down inside, padlocked down into the frames, burglar alarms on the floors, burglar alarms on all the doors and windows downstairs, police locks on every inside door downstairs, and that's not paranoia. It's because we've been raided (burglarized. ed.) and done over. And what does annoy is that we're not seen as being in any way radical, but as some kind of arty group! None of us went to art college. Cosey left school at 15, Chris left school at 16 and he's a van driver, Sleazy left school at 17 and he is a self-taught photographer, he hustled his way into Hypgnosis, originally he was just loading the cameras, but he made himself indispensable, and I've been on the dole lately. But this arty thing is the way they've been trying to dismiss us, like in the N.M.E., they have an editorial policy which is never to say anything good about Throbbing Gristle. That's actually an instruction: You are not allowed to say anything complimentary about Throbbing Gristle. And we have that documented. We've sussed it out, we're not stupid. They forget I've been dealing with the media since I was 15. I've learnt a few of the tricks, you know. You can't help it.

What happened was that proved the point — although we had worked it out it was nice to know we were right — there was this guy called Bruce Elder (?) who is an Australian who freelances for European magazines, he's done Pink Floyd and that kind of stuff, and he also knows these people who have a radio station in Sidney, and they really like our records, and as he lives in England they asked him to do an interview for their radio program, and they did 3 one hour programs, plus before that one hour before each one of all our favorite music, and when we were not allowed to go toSidney they took ads in all the papers saying we were there anyway. Anyway he did that and Phil McNeill rang up Bruce Elder (?) three times and said please would he base an article and a review of D.O.A. on these taped interviews. They were the most in-depth interviews as all four of us did it, and each of us went thru every track on D.O.A., explaining our own personal tracks. It would have been a real scoop as it was before it was in the shops. So he wrote an article saying that in his mind we were the most intelligent and radical group working in Britain, that we knew what we were doing and why. He also quoted a lot of what we said. After he sent it in he got a call from Phil McNeill saying we can't print this. He said why not, wasn't it good? and Neill said it's not that, it's because you say they're intelligent and they know what they're doing. We can't print that. If you're prepared to rewrite it and slag them off then we'll use it. Then they went to Ian Penman and said we want you to review this record if you give them a bad review.

SLASH: Did he?

GENESIS: Oh yea. He didn't mention the record once. His basic premise is that we had a bourgeois art education and that's why we're not entitled to do music. Assuming it was even true, which it isn't, what's the difference between an art education and a bourgeois art

education/ And secondly, why is there this stupid kind of prejudice that if you're middle class or bourgeois you're not allowed to pick up a guitar? I don't see that.

SLASH: How many of those scribes are real working class anyway?

GENESIS: They aren't. I tell you, I had to get a dictionary to understand what he had written! That's the irony. He goes on about the elitist language and shit, and you've read the words to our songs, it's not intellectual. And when I analyzed what he said very carefully, it was gibberish, it meant nothing. And he had the fucking cheek .., he didn't bother to check his facts, at that point he'd never seen us play. Afterwards I wrote to the N.M.E. and asked them to interview Ian Penman. Not to try to be clever, but to find what makes him tick, cos he's obviously a bit ... strange. But there was no way he was going to meet me and get asked about his attitude.

SLASH: Why is there this policy? Did you do anything to them?

GENESIS: No. They actually made "United" single of the week. But we're not part of a clique, we're not dogmatic. There is a little group, Scritti Politti, Red Crayola, the Raincoats, and Ian Penman, who lives with Scritti Politti in their commune — it's very peculiar, they go on about hippies and they have a commune — they're all very close to that lot, and one of Scritti Politti came up to me in a pub and I think he said one of the main reasons he didn't like T.G. is because we encourage people to think for themselves and make up their own minds. And that's a quote.

SLASH: I'm shocked. I really liked their single ...

GENESIS: It's okay. I told him I liked the record. These neo-socialists, I don't think they've got very sensible arguments about this social thing, I think if they can't analyze things properly they should keep out of that area. I'm anti political. As far as I'm concerned all politics are just a trick to make people think they have a say in what happens. I know it's corny. But it's really a key to what we're doing. I don't believe police forces, armies, politicians and governments are actually the enemy. They are red herrings. The real power — and power is the thing you've got to shirt-circuit — the real power lies with who controls the information. And that's why you can have coups, and right wing governments and then left wing governments, it does not matter who's running the country, it's the information that stays constant, and the access to it and the control of it, and that's why armies can shift allegiance ... That's the area we're aiming at. Not dogmatic politics or dogmatic religions, that's all just a game. People vote and think if something goes wrong they can blame the government and get rid of it, but that's just a diversion tactic. Vested interests in different historical periods control information and use everything to continue having that control and convince people they're involved in a social system. One of the most crucial questions someone asked me one day is, "How do you short-circuit that system?", and ever since I've been trying to think of a way.

SLASH: Do you really believe you can get all these ideas across as easily on vinyl as you could with the printed medium or with art performances?

GENESIS: Well, we don't like to intimidate people, we think that's counter-productive, we want them to listen. Maybe one out of a thousand, or one out of ten thousands, whatever, we don't want to intimidate that person when they come across it. And popular culture is full of these archetypes that you can use as an acceptable, non-aggressive camouflage, like a rock group with speakers and all. People are used to that, so they don't get frightened. It doesn't normally have an intellectual meaning. I don't think we're an intellectual group, I think we're very uncouth. We're yobs. You should see us live. We just want to get in touch with ordinary kids, but not one type either. And the response we've had is incredible. We felt it couldn't just be us. There must be lots of other people all over the place who saw things in a similar way, who could emphasize to a certain degree with our vision, and then they wouldn't feel as alone. They don't have to kow all the levels fo why we do things. We don't care if they just say it's mad, or it's noise, and they like it. Whatever their reason is, it's valid for them. On the other hand, we try to inject it with as much information as we can, and it's there if you want to find it. Some do. Without any clues. They'll write a letter and tell you everything you were thinking about, just from the record. So it can work.

SLASH: But suppose you find yourself with a definite cult ...

GENESIS: It can't be, 'cos we haven't got a policy. All we want people to do is relax with themselves, and be whatever they are. We see ourselves in the line with sixties anarchist movements.

SLASH: How about violence, its place in changing things?

GENESIS: That's one of the imponderables, isn't it? I'd prefer if it could be avoided, I don't like violence and aggression in itself. I hate violence to be enacted on me. I think it's encouraged subliminally in people 'cos it keeps them paranoid. I don't think it's a genetic thing, it's a conditioning. What I actively dislike is unnecessary stupidity. I don't blame people for it, I have done enough of it (laughs).

SLASH: When "United" came out it was more or less connected with that electronic "cold wave" stuff like the Normal and others. What would you say to people who keep waiting for this kind of sound from you?

GENESIS: They don't really like Throbbing Gristle! It was an experiment, and relaxation. We fancied doing a "nice" song at least once. And people who said we couldn't do anything vaguely melodic or accessible, that put them into a corner. But we made the B side contradict that. We don't want to be just a formula group. We try to find a suitable form for each thing we want to suggest. We spend ages and ages in verbal discussions trying to figure out tactics, trying to prevent as much as possible people deciding they know what's going on. We have no need for a rock career, we're very lucky. Everyone could be in that position if they only tried to do what they want to. When you try to do one particular thing you fail. We're Zen anarchists, we hit the target by doing all the wrong things. If it falls apart it does not matter, 'cos we don't take any of the money, so we don't rely on it.

SLASH: What do you do with the profits?

GENESIS: We put it all back into Industrial Records. We spend a lot on postage.

SLASH: What about being on the dole?

GENESIS: Oh, they know about Industrial Records. They tried to prosecute. One day they took me round the back as I was there to sign on and said we've seen this article about you making records. I said yeah, I make records. It's not my label. Well, what do you do with the money from it they asked. I don't make a penny I told them. If you want to ring the guy who runs it he'll show you all the accounts.

Why do you do it if you don't get paid, they asked me. I asked them if they had ever heard of people doing things because they enjoy it? And it's the truth. I mean, we could have made so much money with bootlegg, they made about 9000 pounds. We could have done that, we could have re-pressed it, but we didn't. And we said they didn't have to give us any money.

SLASH: So they didn't?!!

GENESIS: They gave us 100 pounds, plus free copies if we got friends we want some, 'cos we haven't got any. They're really nice. And one of the guys, a Grateful Dead freak, is now our roadie. He's a really really good roadie. Anyway that's what I mean about being radical. All these groups go on about we want to dothis and we want to do that and we're for the people, man, well, we gave them the mastertape, everything, and told them if want to do do it, if you don't it doesn't matter, we don't care. So they've done it, and they made a lot of money but because they feel ...

SLASH: guilty?

GENESIS: Yea, they said they feel a bit guilty, and they think we're really stupid. But now they've started their label that is bringing out records that haven't been d, and the guy roadies for us for nothing. And that's much better than having a bit more money in the bank. It's more important. But we don't go around telling english papers the anti-capitalist anti-commercial things we do. Same with the Wordide Sentimental french label. Now they got enough money to do another single, and it's going to be with someone who's never released one before. So that's another thing we gave away. They did give us a small royalty on that, but we said they didn't have to if they didn't have any money.

SLASH: Why was the last LP called "Final Report"?

GENESIS: Because we were considering not doing any more records. We didn't want to be obliged to ever do another record. It was going so people felt we were just a group, that we would just keep doing LPs, and after a few years we would split up and do solo projects, and we were sick of that. That's the reason we stopped doing interviews. We gave ourselves an open door. Since it said Final Report, we had the option of doing a record no longer called Report, which is good discipline 'cos we then got to make it more complete. We don't want it to get easy. That's why the last time we played at this University we did the "wall of sound" at the beginning. That's the most unbearable bit. And it really did aggravate people. We got beer glasses flying, etc. It was really nice to know we still could have that effect. It had been getting too easy, we were getting encores, cheers, we had to sign autographs on jackets! They were nice people who really liked it, but it frightened us nevertheless on one level.

SLASH: Tell us about Tesco?

GENESIS: It's a big supermarket chain in Englad, a bit like Safeway. They played muzak in all the Tesco shops as well, and we had a long standing line of jokes about our interest in supermarkets and muzak, and it got so that one night I introduced our music by saying "welcome to the Tesco Disco", which is sinonymous with trash and horrible music, and it kind of caught on for a little while, next time I got a t-shirt that said Tesco Disco, and this bloke made me a big Tesco shopping bag, big enough to make the equipment look really tiny on stage, then we put all the equipment on long tables with red tablecloths so it looked like a shopping display. Then the shop closed down and we put a picture of it on the back of the record, in memoriam.

SLASH: Did Tesco ever look into what you were doing?

GENESIS: No. We always hoped they'd approach us to do some tapes for their shops.

SLASH: Tell us about this "curdler" mentioned in your newsletter? (Curdler: sort of armored car sending out sound waves that drive people temporarily nuts, perhaps used in the near future for riot control, etc. Scientific Ed.)

GENESIS: Monte originally found the curdler. It's from a firm in Alexandria, which is a C.I.A. town. We asked him for anything like that, for useful information dispersal projects, things you wouldn't normally get hold of but that would be useful, just to know what might be used against you, and that's a hell of an advantage to not knowing. That's the biggest leap you can take from being a passive consumer. The next newsletter is nearly finished...

SLASH: Would you agree with whoever said a paranoid is a man who knows all the facts?

GENESIS: I think Burroughs said something like that. There is a lot of truth in that. In fact, there are some people who have a theory that paranoia is actually the normal state of being. +

Siouxsie and the Banshees

A BIT OF BACKGROUND

Siouxsie is 22, Steve is 24. I don't know for sure how old Kenny Morris and John McKay are, but I should think about 21 and 23 respectively. Steve has also been known in the past as Steve Spunka, Steve de Ville and Steve Havoc. Siouxsie was originally known as Suzi. (Her real name is Susan Ballion, though I'm not sure she talks about it much. I read it a couple of years ago in a 'Zigzag' article, but I've never seen it mentioned since.)

Siouxsie comes from Chislehurst, Kent (about 12 miles outside London), and Steve comes from Bromley, Kent. They met at a Roxy Music gig, introduced by mutual friends. They were part of "the Bromley contingent" — the group of early Sex Pistols fans who started going around together because they all lived near each other and all used to hang around 'Sex', Malcolm McLaren's boutique in the King's Road, Chelsea. The others in the group included Billy Idol (now Generation X), Sue Catwoman (Virgin employee and 'star' of "The Great Rock and Roll Swindle") and Nils Stevenson. (Former assistant to Malcolm McLaren and now Banshees' manager.)

Apparently, when they first started out they were truly awful, but I suppose it depends what you measure it against. They didn't get any offers at first from record companies, according to John Walters, who is John Peel's Producer on Radio 1. Then, when they did start getting offers, they refused them all. Except for The Slits, they were the last band to get signed by a major company. In the meantime, they did two sessions for Peel's radio show and Walters suggested to Nils Stevenson that they should do a deal with BBC Records to release the sessions, because Peel kept having to repeat them by public demand. Nils went to see someone high up in BBC Records, and they wanted an assurance that the record would sell at least 4,000 copies, otherwise it wasn't worth the BBC's time and money to get them pressed. They agreed to release 'Hong Kong Garden' first of all, and then at the last moment, Polydor stepped in and signed them. Probably, once Polydor saw that the BBC, the bastion of the establishment was willing to take a chance, they decided to compromise and gave in to what the group was asking, which seems to be total control over what they release.

'Hong Kong Garden' got to no. 7 in the British charts. Then 'The Scream', the first album, got to about no. 11. 'The Staircase (Mystery)' got to about no. 23, and 'Playground Twist' got to no. 28. Their new album, 'Join Hands' comes out on Sept. 7th in England, but they played 4 tracks from it on their latest (3rd) session on John Peel's show. They also played some of it at their last British concert before the current tour, at the Rainbow, in April. Also, Peel got an advanced copy and is playing it furiously.

The band are currently on tour in Britain, and are coming to the U.S. at the beginning of November, playing about 10 dates, including 2 at Club 57 in New York (2nd weekend in November) and others in Toronto, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, possibly New Orleans, San Francisco and Los Angeles. (Venues as yet unfixed, according to Miles Copeland, who is now in charge of the tour.)

They've got a reputation for being horribly difficult, and have had a few punch-ups with the press in the past. Three days before I did the interview, I read in the NME that Siouxsiw had stubbed out a cigarette in a girl's face because the girl had said something that upset her. I never actually found out if it was true, but I shouldn't think so. She didn't seem likely to do something like that. Between us, we smoked 40 menthol cigarettes in 1¾ hours, and she drinks vodka, if anyone cares.

SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES
Interview by Jane Garcia

SLASH: Okay, Siouxsie, perhaps you'd like to tell us how you got started ...

SIOUXSIE: Oh, Lord ... Oh, Lord ... (to Steve) You talk about how it first started.

STEVE: Well, we were sitting round one day, and we thought 'Let's form a group' ... (Siouxsie laughs) No, we invented this fictitious group that didn't have any members and said to Malcolm McLaren, 'We wanna play at the 100 Club', so he got us a 20 minute spot in between The Clash and Subway Sect, and then we realised that we had to have this band ready for the 100 Club ... So Billy Idol was always gonna be in it until the last minute, when he decided that his image and Chelsea could suffer, so he put us on to Marco, who was an ex-Chelsea guitarist, and Sid just sort of turned around and said, 'Well, I can play drums', but he couldn't.

SLASH: Did you actually know what you were going to play before you got up?

STEVE: Well, what happened was we had an hour's rehearsal at The Clash's studio with Bernie Rhodes sitting in a dentist's chair with his evil eye on us thinking of money, but not seeing any, and we just sort of learned how to plug in ...

SIOUXSIE: We just learned how to hold an instrument ... apart from Marco no one else could play at all, and no one'd thought it necessary to rehearse. It was like there were so many bands that were part of a new blood thing that was totally against technique and that, but in a way it was quite hypocritical in that a lot of them rehearsed quite well at what they did, and so we just put a spanner in the works and did it how it should be done.

SLASH: Wasn't the 100 Club gig spontaneous then?

SIOUXSIE: It was spontaneous. I mean, up until the night before there was no definite plan to go onstage, and then there was that rehearsal for an hour. Then we went on and did a 20 minute version of 'The Lord's Prayer', the idea being not to entertain them as the audience but to entertain ourselves.

SLASH: And what was the reaction to that?

SIOUXSIE: A bit shell-shocked really. I mean, we really thought we'd make so much noise that everyone'd chuck us off physically. They didn't do that. There was a few smatterings of claps, and a few gasps, and we finally got bored with it after 20 minutes — but we were in control of the situation.

SLASH: So you said no one except Marco could play — when you decided that you wanted to continue from there, how did you go about getting the band together?

SIOUXSIE: Well, Sid went off his own way. He was initially gonna form a band of his own, 'The Flowers of Romance'. Kenny, our drummer, was in the audience that night.

SLASH: Did you know him?

SIOUXSIE: No. But he came up to us and, well, it was great, and nothing else was thought of it until we actually thought quite a while after that we'd like to make it a definite thing of being in a band, and so we went to him and we had to persuade him to join — forcefully.

SLASH: You were one of the last of the early bands to get a recording contract ...

SIOUXSIE: Yeah. And look what's left of the early bands that got contracts.

SLASH: You were very careful then?

SIOUXSIE: Yeah. We thought we owed it to ourselves and what we wanted to be careful about the sort of contract we ended up with.

STEVE: It's such a sort of epic story really, it all seems a bit distorted now. We can't really remember whether it was us holding out or they didn't want us, but things changed week by week ... Polydor coming along ...

SIOUXSIE: It was a bit of both really.

STEVE: We'd been hunting around and it just went on and on. We were okay cos we'd always managed to make about £5 out of every gig just to keep on going, and borrowing equipment.

SLASH: So how do you feel about how it is now? Do you feel you've become 'part of the system'?

SIOUXSIE: Not as yet ...

STEVE: You only have to look at the BBC playlist to see that we're not part of the system. They throw our records in the bin.

SIOUXSIE: I mean, it's a lot to do with us not being as naive as before I suppose ...

STEVE: The attitude's still the same. It's like being inside it you learn how to get things you want out of them.

SIOUXSIE: It's a lot harder being inside it. Like, we got a lot of disbelievers by us going into it. They felt that it's so romantic to be an underground band, a minority, and staying there for the people who know what you're going on about. But we felt it important to get into a big organisation, get through to people who didn't know anything about it, and you know, we're not into preaching to the converted.

SLASH: What sort of control do you have over what's released?

SIOUXSIE: Control? What do you mean?

SLASH: Well, you've never put out three singles off one album ...

SIOUXSIE: No, we wouldn't. Not unless it was our choice.

SLASH: Is that why it took so long for you to get the recording contract together?

SIOUXSIE: Partly. Like he said before, it was partly they didn't want to know us, and then it got to a situation where there was outcries from John Peel on the radio, or journalists in the papers, and fans scrawling on walls of CBS buildings, and eventually some record companies started to bend, but this one bent more.

SLASH: Do you think that American audiences will be able to relate to what you were fighting against — the fight with the record companies and everything ... the original motivation behind it all ...

SIOUXSIE: Well, it should be quite a common feeling. We've communicated with places where they don't even speak the language. It's not really about knowing what happened here 2 or 3 years ago, it's like feeling the same situation. I mean, a lot of it is to do with perhaps London had more people that were feeling that way at the time and that felt they could come together or something. In other countries, there's probably more separate people who don't actually form a group but they feel the same, and you know, things like bands going over there, or them coming over here probably strengthens that feeling. It's probably more of a fashionable thing to do in some places, but apart from making up rules that we can't have jet-setters at our gig, we can't have fashionable people along, we can't have hippies along, and just picking on certain people, we want everyone to be given a chance. I think it's a good thing if young blood can get through to those people.

SLASH: (hesitantly) Siouxsie, you've been accused in the past of being ...

SIOUXSIE: (interrupts) (affects German accent) A fucking Nazi. Fucking Hitler ...

SLASH: Well, were you? Were you very right-wing?

SIOUXSIE: No, I've never been political at all. No. If anything, what I was accused of was totally the opposite of what I was doing. It was like the symbol, the swastika, was very much a repellent rather than an endearment. But, of course, people like to think the worst of me ...

SLASH: So what were the swastikas about?

SIOUXSIE: It was just very much a repellent and, I dunno, very much shocking people. I mean, at that time it was a very stale period in music, and there wasn't anything representing any youth at that time and it needed a crude way of knocking it out. Everything felt as if it had to erupt. It was just the feeling at the time. It was very crude and maybe a bit irresponsible, but it was about feeling totally irresponsible of anyone else except yourself. And that's why it did a lot, cos a lot of people at the time would look and go 'ugh' ... It was always the very social-conscious arty-farty shitbags that were making a fuss about it ...

STEVE: That's another thing that's been distorted, mainly by certain people in the press. It's all out of sync with what was really happening because it wasn't like until about 18 months after we did all that there actually started to be National Front people going to Sham gigs, and things like that; and so they really tried to move what we did forwards into that time and say it was our fault. Like, there was a review of the first album in NME by Julie Burchill, and it was like 2 years out of date. She hadn't seen us for 2 years when she reviewed the album, so she was reviewing us from two years ago. She didn't say anything about the music, just went on about just one gig. The very first gig was the only time Sioux wore an armband.

SIOUXSIE: Yeah, the 100 Club ...

(I think they're just being overly defensive about 'The Press' at this point because Siouxsie has worn swastika armbands loads of times — probably not since she joined a band herself, and certainly not during the last 18 months or so, but she used to wear them when she followed the Pistols around. There are several photos of her wearing armbands, the most famous one being when she danced onstage with the Pistols at 'The Screen on the Green' gig)

SLASH: How do you feel about the state of things now, 3 years later?

SIOUXSIE: I think it's replaced what was being rebelled against in a lot of ways now.

SLASH: Have you lost interest in your original fight then?

SIOUXSIE: Oh, no. I mean, we never claimed ourselves to be 'part of the movement, man'. We were always interpreted as being self-rule, and not discriminating against a sex or a certain type of person, or a certain type of music. It's just become very narrow now, but we've carried on. We consider ourselves — fighting. We're infiltrating it at the moment. I mean, with the media now — like with the radio and television and that — they feel they have to have a token new band. Invariably they get it wrong and like have a token bandwagon-jumper-onner, and they think they're doing their bit. It's got to change in so far as certain bands have become, and are gonna become successful, and they're gonna be too powerful for the media and the business to ignore them.

SLASH: Do you still go to a lot of gigs yourself?

SIOUXSIE: Unfortunately, no. I don't like to be harassed, so I don't go out a lot now. I get embarrassed. I don't revel in it. I just get embarrassed. I went to see Sylvester at Hammersmith Odeon recently. And Ian Dury.

SLASH: What sort of music do you like?

SIOUXSIE: I don't put on records much. I can still put on albums by Velvet Underground and like them. I can listen to a lot, but I don't like a lot, which is why I'm in a band. I like some of Human League.

STEVE: I like Talking Heads. And The Cramps. (out of the American bands.)

SIOUXSIE: Have you seen the B-52's?

SLASH: Yes. I saw them recently in London. They're cute. A dance band.

SIOUXSIE: So are we. (At this poitn, I couldn't repress a laugh. She got annoyed.) I hate that, when people think we're being funny. We ARE a dance band.

SLASH: But you can't dance at the gigs in England. If you're jammed up the front you can't move ...

There seems to be a barrier that you create between yourself and the audience ...

SIOUXSIE: Yeah. I can't stand seeing a band who say: 'We want to be liked', you know?

SLASH: So do you deliberately go the other way?

SIOUXSIE: No, not purposely. I dunno, we're just not submissive, that's all ... Like in London, if you play in London, there's quite a few people who are very cliquey, and there's a few kids at the front that are going mad, but they gomad to fucking John Denver. I quite enjoy playing to a subdued audience. I mean, that's what it was like when we first started gigging up north in England. They're very subdued up there. It was more like us against them. It was really good. We did one gig, in Hanley, which is near Stoke, and we had a fight with the whole audience after the gig. They kept gobbing at us, the ones at the front.

STEVE: Yeah, it's always the people who you don't wanna see at the front. The ones who gob and act stupid. They're not representative — like, when you look down and all you can see is these people, you think, 'What the fuck is our audience? They're all fucking morons.'

SIOUXSIE: We've always hated being spat on. A lot of bands now are doing an about-turn. It's hip not to like ot now ... Wait till they get fucking conjunctivitis. I got it once. Someone aimed it right in my eye. It just closed up. Horrible.

STEVE: What happened on our last English tour was that they sort of got wise to us cos you know there's gonna be somebody right at the front spitting, and we would point them out to the whole audience and slag them off in front of everybody.

SIOUXSIE: Yeah, like everyone would say, 'Yeah, you dirty scumbag. What are you spitting for?'

STEVE: Now they're really clever. They sort of arrange themselves about 3 or 4 rows back and spit at you — really good shots. They get you right on the guitar neck or in the face or something. Then you look down quickly but because they're a few rows back, you can't see them, or they're talking to their friends or something. Then as soon as you look away, they spit at you again.

SIOUXSIE: They threw fireworks in Paris on this TV show we did. I picked it up cos I thought it was a cigarette butt, and it exploded in my hand.

STEVE: They throw stinkbombs here too.

SIOUXSIE: They do stinkbombs, yeah. I think it's the guitarist that's farted or something.

SLASH: Do you think it's easy for people to understand what you're trying to say? Things like 'Carcass' for example — what inspired you to write that?

SIOUXSIE: Well, it's a song that Steve started and never finished. The rough idea was inspired by a pisstake of Patti Smith. What song was it?

STEVE: 'Land' ...

SIOUXSIE: SIOUXSIE: 'Land'? (slight disagreement here ...)

STEVE: Yeah — off 'Horses'.

SIOUXSIE: Oh ... They're just imaginative, that's all. It just leaves room for people to have some sort of enjoyment in reading them. It's like, it's not, 'this is a,b,c'. It's not spelt out cos I don't like to think people are that dumb, they have to have it spelt out.

SLASH: But some people will think 'this isn't easily understood, so it must be good' ...

SIOUXSIE: Yeah — that's bad as well. Soem people are real arseholes with their lyrics, but there's always something that makes sense in what we do. The main thing is, I mean, what we're trying to do is bridge something between what's considered weird and totally inaccessible and what's considered really trashy and really blatant and bland. I mean, we work within the traditional structures of a band, like guitar, drums, bass vocals, and the actual songs are quite simple. Like, the guitarist is good, but it's good cos

it's simple. It's not fiddling up his own arsehole or anything. I think it makes sense if it's structured round something that you're trying to change rather than make it sound totally inaccessible just for the sake of it. Just because you think you're different you (don't) have to throw everything out.

SLASH: What about people like Alternative TV or Public Image? The minute they think they're getting accepted, they change. It's like sticking their fingers up at everybody ...

SIOUXSIE: I don't see the point in a band thinking, 'We don't want to be popular'. I don't know why they get on a stage. Plus, that's a totally hypocritical thing — I mean, why get on a stage and set yourself above from an audience? A lot of people don't like to admit it; but it's no revelation to say you want to be big. There's something about wanting to be big but not through mimicking the stereotyped rock-and-roll thing.

SLASH: I heard you say on 'Round Table' that you didn't think people had experimented with voice enough — as an instrument?

SIOUXSIE: Did I? I don't remember much about that programme. ('Round Table' is a live singles review programme that goes out every Friday night on Radio 1. They always have two disc-jockeys from Radio 1, plus a guest. It's hosted by Kid Jensen, who told Siouxsie when she was on it that nobody around the BBC building knew who she was — they thought she was Suzi Quatro. Siouxsie has been banned from appearing on 'Round Table' (so she says) because she said 'fuck' three times on national, prime-time radio. She had a lot of interesting things to say when she was on, in between slagging off every single record except 'Gotta Getaway' by Stiff Little Fingers and 'Fairytale in the Supermarket' by the Raincoats. Two records in 90 minutes isn't bad for her.)

SIOUXSIE: (cont) I consider the vocal an instrument as much as guitar or anything. Probably more. It's got more ranges to it.

SLASH: You also said on that programme that you thought people who use synthesizers are being lazy ...

STEVE: I don't think they're well used, that's all ...

SIOUXSIE: It's like what I said before, about people are searching to be different, and they think a synthesizer's the answer because it's not a traditional instrument. I mean, I like the Human League cos they use their synthesizers in a commercial way ...

SLASH: Lester Bangs, the New York critic (and sometimes arsehole) thinks thatmusic like Kraftwerk is the music of the future ...

SIOUXSIE: Oh, DOES he? Oh, we'd better jack it all in then. I mean, we've had it. Washed up, I mean, when critics start saying something like that there must be something wrong.

SLASH: What do you hope to achieve in America?

SIOUXSIE: Sell out, knock out and be no. 1 in the American charts, which is very naive, I know; but you have to be positive. See it's soweird cos certain bands that have gone there and have made some sort of success from England, it's like they're hailed as representatives of an English thing, but they're successful because they're mimicking an American sound. That's why they're successful. People like Elvis Costello. And Dire Straits. The Police. I don't mind The Police, but the fact is, they're very American sounding.

STEVE: I think you really have to ber optimistic about it. We have to think it's just a matter of time. Like, two years ago here there were no decent records in the charts. There still aren't.

SIOUXSIE: There are ... a few.

SLASH: Maybe you should go disco if you want to get into the American charts ...

SIOUXSIE: Yeah, well, I mean, it's fairly obvious why Blondie are becoming successful there ... (thinks, then comes out with 'a quote') I predict that all the record companies are gonna feel a great big hole in their pocket when people get bored with disco.

SLASH: Why?

SIOUXSIE: Well, the companies have put all they believe in — all their money, that's what they believe in, all their money, into disco, and it's paying off at the moment, or it was paying off, but I'll be laughing when it stops.

SLASH: So where's it going to move to? What'll be next?

SIOUXSIE: It'll probably be just as bad as disco. (much laufhter, then, with mock sincerity) But it'll be a change.

HOT BANDS FOR A HOT SUMMER, PART II

One of the more exciting events of the summer has to be the unbelievably strong comback of the almost forgotten *Weirdos*. Although I have only seen them twice at the time this is being written there is no doubt that the Weirdos are almost miraculously back on top, musically as well as in popularity. The first of these two gigs was at the King's Palace, where they shared the bill with the steadily ascending *Wall of Voodoo*. Within minutes after John, Cliff, Dix and new members on bass and drums stepped on that funny little stage with the garish pseudo-greek backdrop it was like the good old days of Weirdomania all over again. Fans bouncing off the columns, swandiving at John's feet, richocheting off each other like souped-up action man toys, the words. The music was loud and tighter than Bruce Lee's biceps, wave after wave of metal assaults that would make the most catatonic basket-case quiver in his wheel-chair. A few days later the Weirdos struck again, this time at the super "new wave" extravaganza at the Stardust ballroom where they shared the pakced bill with *D.O.A.*, *the Dils*, *X* and the *Alleycats*. Everybody was in top form (although the new sound of the re-formed Dils somehow failed to ignite my revolutionary cells the way it used to — their new tunes are musically superior to most of their older material, yet they lack the fervor of the early wham bam anthems. I think the Dils are going thru a serious transitional phase, trying to find a way out of their initial fire and brimstone approach — at least they are taking chances, but the Weirdos came close to stealing the show, so crazed was the crowd reaction to their music. Valley punks, beach punks, Hollywood punks, the whole sweaty mess throbbing like one multi-headed organism, with the more daring elements eventually ending up all over the stage while the band members valiantly tried to keep track of each other. Definitely what security officers call a disaster and everyone else a success. Speaking of stage invasion and security goons, the recent show of the *Buzzcocks* at the Santa Monica Civic was an exciting example of what the new music can accomplish in terms of participation and barrier breakdowns. Even the mighty *Cramps* had failed to ignite the majority of the incredibly mixed audience. There was of course a small contingent on both sides of the stage which rocked itself into bliss throughout their set, and another small batch right in front which found it amusing to drench Lux Interior in phlegm everytime he came within distance (which he did repeatedly with more bravado than a bullfighter), but it took the meek-looking Buzzcocks and their obsessive riff-obsessed metal pop tunes of undefined feelings and out of focus relationships to really wake up the majority of the kids. Although their set started rather slowly with the four Buzzcocks staying glued to their respective spots half a mile away from the edge of the stage and simply reproducing faithfully their vinyl stuff, it started picking up, Pete Shelley and company showing more and more confidence in the interpretation of their tunes while the hard core up front got bolder and started some kamikaze dancing on the lip of the stage, boping for a few glorious seconds above the sheep below before being thrown off by the meathead squad crouched on the sides. It was a game, a totally harmless show of youthful arrogance and joyful participation, cept the overweight black and white heavies who think they rule the place took it as a fuckin' challenge to their dubious manhood (there is something suspicious about a pack of thugs who keep snarling "faggot" this and "faggot" that at every punk that challenges them — rather shaky virility if you ask me and made it a show of how increasingly more brutally they could handle the stubborn toughies who kept hopping back on for ten seconds of risky danding, most of them apparently members of the more extremist elements from the beaches' surf punk contingents — the shout of "Huntington Beach" was even heard thru one of the Buzzcocks' mikes. After one of the kids was dragged backstage by two muscle brains (there no doubt to have the dust gently brushed off his clothing — I know, I as the benefactor of this sort of attention once) Pete Shelley finally acknowledged the ugly situation and demanded that he be brought back immediately or the show would stop. Grateful cheers and clapping from audience for this proof of solidarity and reluctant giving in on the part of the stormtroopers. Shelley then diplomatically agrees to let everyone climb unto the stage, pleading for them throughout the rest of the set to please sit down so the rest of the crowd can see (very short fellows them Buzzcocks). The band may have found it difficult with hundreds kneeling directly at their feet, the bouncers extremely frustrating (read more about their later activities in local shit) but the fans were ecstatic, and the evening really went into high gear after that. It not only improved the atmosphere, it also improved the music, or at least our perception of it. This was the real thing, live and anarchistic, and it made you glad to be there. Now I really wanted to dance. And I did. Los Angeles Times critic Richard Cromelin is an idiot and a bore for moaning about what he perceived as a disruption and an irresponsible display in his review of the concert. That's what the music is about, lame brain, not quiet and reverent worship of the stars, not orderly and thoughtful behavior during the performance. Exeburance is not the prerogative of the handful that gets to play on a stage. Performers are welcome to jump in the midst of the audience (and sometimes do), so let the fans have a go at the spotlight. The Buzzcocks played with ten times more intensity after that, which is natural to anyone but the most stuck up observer. If all this long-needed breaking down of roles and barriers confuses you, stick to the Roxy. It's so civilized there the ice in your cocktail won't even melt!

Photo: Melanie

DEVOTO

Speaking of high class showcase clubs, the ever so elegant King's Palace on Hollywood Boulevard had an interesting night of "parallel" new music the other night with *Moniter* (the musical offshoot of the permanently art-damaged World Imitation gang), *Nervous Gender* (those lovable androids with the fab future wardrobe and the second hand electronic equipment) and *Suicide* (those two New York artists with the mean streets nostalgia). A must-see gig for everyone with experimental leanings and a belief in the music of the future, yet the place was only half full, which proves that even today the crowd still only likes its borderline music in small doses. Monitor played a short set heavy on the repetitive monotonous riffs with bizarre beats, tortured computer sounds and odd lyrics. I was neither convinced nor appalled, some of it was kind of catchy in a twisted way, but the overall effect was a bit too one-dimensional to really stay with me very long. Nervous Gender dabble in the same genre of avant noise except that in their case there is also aggressivity and real psychotic lunacy laced in with the dissonant chords and mechanical rhythms. They all take turns singing (or screaming) which also adds variety and interest to the proceedings. Each one has a definite style of his (or her) own, and it goes from almost straight forward punk

Photo: Scott Lindgren

DENNY

rantings to psycho freak-outs. It might be a while still before the general public accepts what Nervous Gender is trying to do as yet another facet of pop music, but there is no doubt that every time they play the number of spectators who totally enjoy their sound seems to grow. Still in the cult league, but so were the Screamers two years ago. Suicide is a band that will probably never get out of that league, and apparently their attempt to win over the MOR audience of The Cars at the Greek Amphitheatre was a resounding disaster: they wre booed and insulted with all the vehemence a boring rock 'n roll boogie audience can muster. Which probably reinforced their beliefs in being the best underground "band" around. Well, a band they ain't, and while the Palace audience didn't go as far as the Cars' it wasn't exactly love at first sight either. Some seemed to enjoy it, some didn't and shouted a continuous stream of abuse while the majority just stared and waiting for something to happen. It was more like watching some guy and his friend do an audition for a talent booking agent in his office than a real show. That Suicide singer struts like a bullfighter in heat and does some nifty hiccuping and moanings with the mike halfway down his throat, but his partner with the cool shades and the superiorly indifferent pose looks like an obnoxious jerk who'd rather be in more select surroundings and who is doing everyone a favor by consenting to twiddle his knobs and levers. Maybe they intend it that way, but as far as anyone could see it reduced whatever credibility and intensity the pretty boy with the bandana and the silk garments was trying to achieve to zero. Still, it was oddly engaging in a minor way, and I couldn't help but feel some sympathy and a bit of admiration for them, so at odds and on shaky ground they were with the snarling audience that night. It ended quite abruptly with the singer disappearing admist the crowd, his technician trailing behind while the machine continued to drone on by itself (proving the guy isn't that needed anyway) and one audience member grabbing the mike to do some pretty convincing moaning and grunting of his own. Due to some argument with Brendan concerning the fee, this half-assed performance caused Suicide to cancel their show for the next night, making it impossible to determine whether they are routinely as unsatisfying as they were this time.

Incredibly more satisfying that I ever remember them to be were the *Flyboys* at the one and only Mars studios show (see other live review for other details on that ill-fated night). It was as if suddenly all the elements had fallen into place and I was seeing the whole picture for the first time. Every lick, every riff seemed to flow effortlessly, creating the most danceable bouncy music I have heard in a while. Another night that went relatively unnoticed in the trendies' world was the opening of the vast cavern known as the Culver City Arena where *The Others, Fear, U.X.A.* and *The Germs* tried to inject life into themost morgue-like building I've ever heard music in. It was quite fun, actually. The Others did another bland set (the girl singer separated with the band shortly after, so things might be looking up for her). Fear did their usual meaty assortment of hard rocking headbangers and twisted metal agonies. I have an unnatural acceptance for everything these jokers do and the awesome energy they can release everywhere has always stunned me. After Fear, U.X.A. proceeded to wake up whoever Fear had not managed to reach. However "untogether" this bunch might seem in the daily world, they always manage to pull together and give tight and hard performances that grab you from beginning to end. Dee Dee is tougher than a swiss army blade and her harsh raspy voice cuts thru all the bullshit, going right for the tender spot in your leather-coated heart. The gloomy gang that backs her while pulling the most desolate faces you've ever seen on stage are not exactly picking their noses either. Real sophistico multi-layered drumming with bass and guitar fighting each other to fill in the intervals, a real rich yet streamlined sound, much too fierce to appeal to the new crowd of new musik dilettantes, but then U.X.A. has never entertained any illusions as far as the in-crowd goes. Too busy flirting with the edge of the precipice to worry about their social status. Take some time off trying to predict the future and get a taste of honey. This is not an indefinitely running offer.

Another band that has lately been constantly short-changed by the media creeps (this rag included — fuck, although we're pretty close to perfection we do occasionally slip up and repeatedly miss some important shows) are *The Bags*. They have steadily tightened up, added new songs to their collection (including some gutsy covers of California's golden age period by groups as diverse as Love and the Airplane), they have knocked out and converted the most diverse audiences from one end of the state to the other and for all their troubles have been rewarded with indifference or idiotic appraisals. A recent L.A. Weekly blurb had the audacity to label what they do as undistinguished rock or a similarly slimy ut down (probably followed by "with punk undertones"!). Anything stronger tasting than the Zippers has always left that bunch of people baffled and at loss for words, but they should have the honesty to admit that although it's not their cup of tea everyone else around is lapping it up so something must be happening. And while they are at it, why not make a slight effort and change those boring weekly bands' descriptions from time to time. After reading about the Plugz' "fast and furious rock" and their "reggae and Latin undertones" for the 7th or 8th time this summer I feel like skipping the show until I hear about a new kind of "undertones" the band may have popped up with. Them definitions and snappy five-words analysis ain't that enlightening to start with, but pulling them out of the drawer week after week is lame and comical. Wake up suckers, covering this scene ain't no cushy 9 to 5 office job. You gotta work if you want to keep up. Anyway I finally caught the Bags at Gazarris' on the famed Sunset Strip (eechhh!) and there was nothing undistinguished about their set, cept for some of the audience who looked like extras left over from "Riot on Sunset Strip" and probably were. But mildewed hippies and spikey domes reluctantly mingled to dance to the music, the trippy lights from a distant past flashed randomly, the day-glo psychedelic murals glowed and the Bags sizzled throughout. They even added a couple of part time go-go dancers to their set for that final touch to the time-warped proceedings, and for the forty minutes or so that their set lasted everything was all right with southern california (which is a miracle in these stinking days of heat, smog and general madness). The Bags are hotter than ever (their latest Hong Kong appearance was apparently even more impressive) and don't listen to whatever anyone else says.

Finally I'd like to rave and drool about some out of town combos that personnaly (along with a few other hundreds with impeccable taste) knocked me over in spite of silly pre-conceived notions I had before hand.

The first ones are D.O.A., a hard working hard travelling hard playing hard core (shut up! Ed.) band from Vancouver who played a while back at the Stardust and more recently a couple of gigs at the Hong Kong. At the Stardust they started the evening's festivities with more fire and gusto one would normally expect from opening bands. Weeks later at the Hong Kong (first with the B-People, then with Catholic Discipline and the Bags)

they did it again, cranking up the audience higher than many headliners manage to. Their stuff is loud, fast, frantic, wham bam pure punk noise, it's jampacked with hooks, riffs, melodies, negativity, optimism, naivete and cynicism. It's a lot of fun and it's deadly serious. As I said, pure punk. The very thing that pulled us all out of slumber in the first place. The beast is alive, praise the lord. Then there was THE DEAD KENNEDYS, whose not so recent shows at the Hong Kong were beyond belief, more savage and powerful than their mind-shattering single could even hint at. Watching and listening to them was rather involving and emotionally charged, and it was hard to believe this was the same band that played at the Other Masque a few months back. Biafra is now in total control, leaping and singing with the confidence of a kung fu master, and the band have more precision and fire power than a team of marines. Add to this the fact that Biafra is undeniably mad and plagued by more visions and nightmares than any mystic could hope for in 5 lifetimes and you'll start to get a glimpse of what their live music can do to you. Strong stuff indeed my lambs, but with a name like the Dead K. you didn't expect power pop now did you?! Undoubtedly one of the most radical bands this amorphous movement has produced yet. Of course the Dead Kennedys aren't exactly hot property as far as the major labels are concerned (something to do with their name or so I've heard) so you better grab the single and check out the band by yourself, the big window display at Tower Records is definitely not on the way. If you think this is a plug, you're goddam right! They need all the support they can get, and they're not about to get it from the wimps who suddenly decided that new wave is kosher.

Another out of town combo that didn't do too bad is the mysterious MAGAZINE. I don't even like their 2 albums that much (although the Shot by Both Sides single is a definite favorite) but what they turned out to be live is another matter altogether. Let's just say that suddenly it all made sense, what seemed cold and calculated on vinyl became intense and urgent, and that for all his reputation as a wimp Devoto came across as one of the most intense, terminal performers you're likely to see in the contex of a "rock band". The music is certainly more structured and formal than what we normally rave about in these pages, but there is an attitude, a style behind it that defies easy classifications. Devoto may say it all rests on the songs themselves, and sure enough the band (excellent, although it's beyond the point) may act as if technical perfection were their ultimate goal, but I know it is their attitude towards the tunes that makes it go beyond mere rock n roll entertainment.

Devoto is also a master of emotional suspense, dangling a possible clue to this or that song before your eyes before turning around and acting out the opposite feelings. Quite theatrical, but so effective and involving you'll forget your labels halfway thru the set.

Another Whisky highlight was the GANG OF FOUR gig that followed their appearance at the Santa Monica Civic with the Buzzcocks. I missed them at that gig (they were already off stage by eight fifteen — they like everyone in bed early in Santa Monica!) and wasn't at all ready for one of the most exciting live gigs I have ever seen from a british band. As opposed to Magazine, Gang of Four couldn't give a shit about the theatrical impact of their performance. They dress pretty crappy, move around stage like panicked amateurs and generally come on so off beat and strange you first have a hard time focusing on their particular view of the world. Once you do (all it takes are a couple of obvious guitar licks that feel as if they were carved out of your own heart and a few silly notes on a tinny melodica) watch out, it becomes the only music worth talking about, no matter how hopeless the task. If you're familiar with the singles, you may know how simply admirable their sounds can be. There is so much rawness, so much honesty in every tune they do that you almost forget the great beat throughout. Gang of Four are very serious about their lyrics, and when the skinhead drummer steps up to the mike to sing "It's her factory", you know these guys mean every word they say and have very little use for the more mundane rock n roll cliches you have seen again and again on that very stage. Throughout the rest of the set their main singer bops around in a very un-star manner, dangling his arms about, running back and forth from mike to mike, wailing away with no dignity while the skinny guitar player occasionally bumps into him while torturing his cheap guitar and the bass guy pretends he's in a funk band. "At home he's a tourist", Love like anthrax", "Armalite rifle", they do every song off the two singles plus a few more just as intense, just as moving, there are only about sixty people on the floor and it's a bloody saturday night, the in-crowd must be drinking itself silly in another part of town, some girl in a corner hasn't realized the horrendous Rubber City Rebels have been off for 30 minutes and keeps mumbling requests for more macho songs, I feel very sad all of a sudden, I just realized that this band shouldn't be here. I just realized that none of us should be here, this desert was never meant for human beings to crawl about clinging to their feelings as if it was their last tin bottle of water, the joke's on us, I want out.

Notice: bands with a more than average amount of sensibility should think twice before booking themselves blind into the most depressing "night spots" the western world has yet invented. This may sound overly melodramatic but just wait 'til the facts hit YOU in the face. Anyway, another difficult summer is over. Some of it was better than we had any right to expect. The rest we probably deserved.

Kickboy

HUMAN HANDS, B-PEOPLE, PLUGZ,
Hong Kong Cafe, 8/24/79

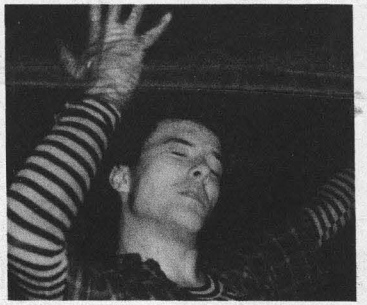
The B-People use dissonance the way some bands use the 1-4-5 pattern — as a very natural musical basis. As a quartet their sound is cleaner and crisper, with lead singer Alex Gibson's melodic vocals providing a delicate balance with the dissonance of the instrumental parts. Some of their songs remind me of the 1940's: Pat Delaney's irreverent sax and Gibson's crooner vocal stylings could have come from some parallel universe's matter-scrambled version of that era's jazz. Not that their music *is* jazzy at all — Delaney is the *one* saxophonist who doesn't depend on jazz riffs — in fact, he totally ignores them, offering instead his unique, rhythmic style that delights even confirmed sax-haters.

Unlike some other experimental bands whose quirkiness is also a weakness, The B-People's eccentricities combine to create an unusual and powerful sound. Individual components, such as Delaney's synthesizer and saxophone, are never over-used. Though several songs need more distinctiveness, most are short, hard-hitting, and to the point. "Give Up" is one of these, featuring a single passage repeated over and over, momentum building with every second. "Wandering Disarray" uses a jolting, sporadic oscillator sound — just a little too loud for comfort. "The Thing" is another standout, with Delaney's sci-fi synthesizer and a superb maniac-funk bass line from Fredrik Nilsen.

Visually, The B-People are a mixed bunch: Tom Recchion looks like the mild-mannered reporter — but when he takes off those glasses and starts pounding the drums, you realize he *is* a superman of sorts. Alex Gibson, looking like a handsome Frankenstein, is a casual and interesting performer, who sings rather like Bowie in his crooner vein, but without Bowie's pretentiousness. Hopping from sax to synthesizer and back again, Pat Delaney seems bemused, as if he's really enjoying himself. And then there's Fred. "Retarded" red Nilsen is the visual embodiment of The B-People's musical iconoclasm: with a perfectly natural twist of the mouth or lift of an eyebrown he can convey the extremities of a most friendly dementia. This is doubly convincing and disturbing because he resembles a fanatic Southern Evangelist preacher. Fred Nilsen should have his own Saturday morning TV show, and The B-People should do the soundtrack. I bet kids would love it, and I know I would. The B-People succeed precisely because what is odd to others is natural to them — any other band attempting their music or image would fall flat on its face.

I missed the Plugz because I went to a party that was pretty much over by the time I arrived — there were some bitchen paintings of robots attacking women in pedal pushers and high heels, though. By the time I returned, the Plugz had finished and Human Hands were starting their final set. I was sort of relieved — you can only take so much input in one evening.

Laurie O'Connell



Biafra/Kennedys Photo: Philomena

UXA/Adaptors/Rik L. Rik at the Troubador

Imissed the first band, IVY and THE EATERS and caught the last few Adaptors' songs. They were much better than I expected. For UXA, this was their gig of gigs, not because everything was by rote, not for nore, but because it wasn't; Billy with a sprained hand, Pat doing his best on guitar, and De De taking that bass and making it another part of her, learning every song in their set in two days. And she sang too. Any other band would have cancelled, opted for a future date. Not UXA, no time for rainchecks because destruction could be right around the corner. So you better play as if tonight's your last night on Earth. The show must go on, no matter how stoned or high the audience is. For any of the mistakes that were made, there were no awkward moments. Gary Ryan got in on the act, taking over bass for the last tune which freed De De to prowl the stage.

Rik L. Rik followed in an unexpected appearance. Pat and Richie from UXA supplying rhythm while one of the Simpletones did guitar. For another last minute slap-together, these guys pulled one more blazing trophy out of the fire. Rik is great no matter what he's doing or how impromptu the performance. The audience loved every minute of it. This gave Rik the confidence to open up his sometimes withdrawn stage persona. The most amazing thing about all the aforementioned is that it was taking place not at the Hong Kong or Club the Troubadour to an almost full house. It's taken nearly three years...

Chris D.

SUBURBAN LAWNS, HUMAN HANDS,
MIDDLE CLASS, 8/25/79, Hong Kong Cafe

Suburban Lawns is a curious group: The guitarists and bassist are technically proficient, but too many of their songs abuse the same old rock riffs. Then Sue Tissue comes out midway through the set and the whole picture changes. In a beige boarding-school blouse and "good" wool skirt, her long brown hair pulled back from the round, childish forehead, she looks exactly like a Jehovah's Witness. But wait — in the prim navy pumps there are several dozen nails driven through the platform soles . . .

My attention never wanders when she's onstage: the music becomes subsidiary to the force of her strained, feverish performance. Eyes popping, over-ripe lips pursed in an asexual pout, she clings to the mike stand, fingers white from the pressure. She is very nervous — her legs shake; ever her *face* shakes. This only heightens the clenched-teeth feeling of her performance.

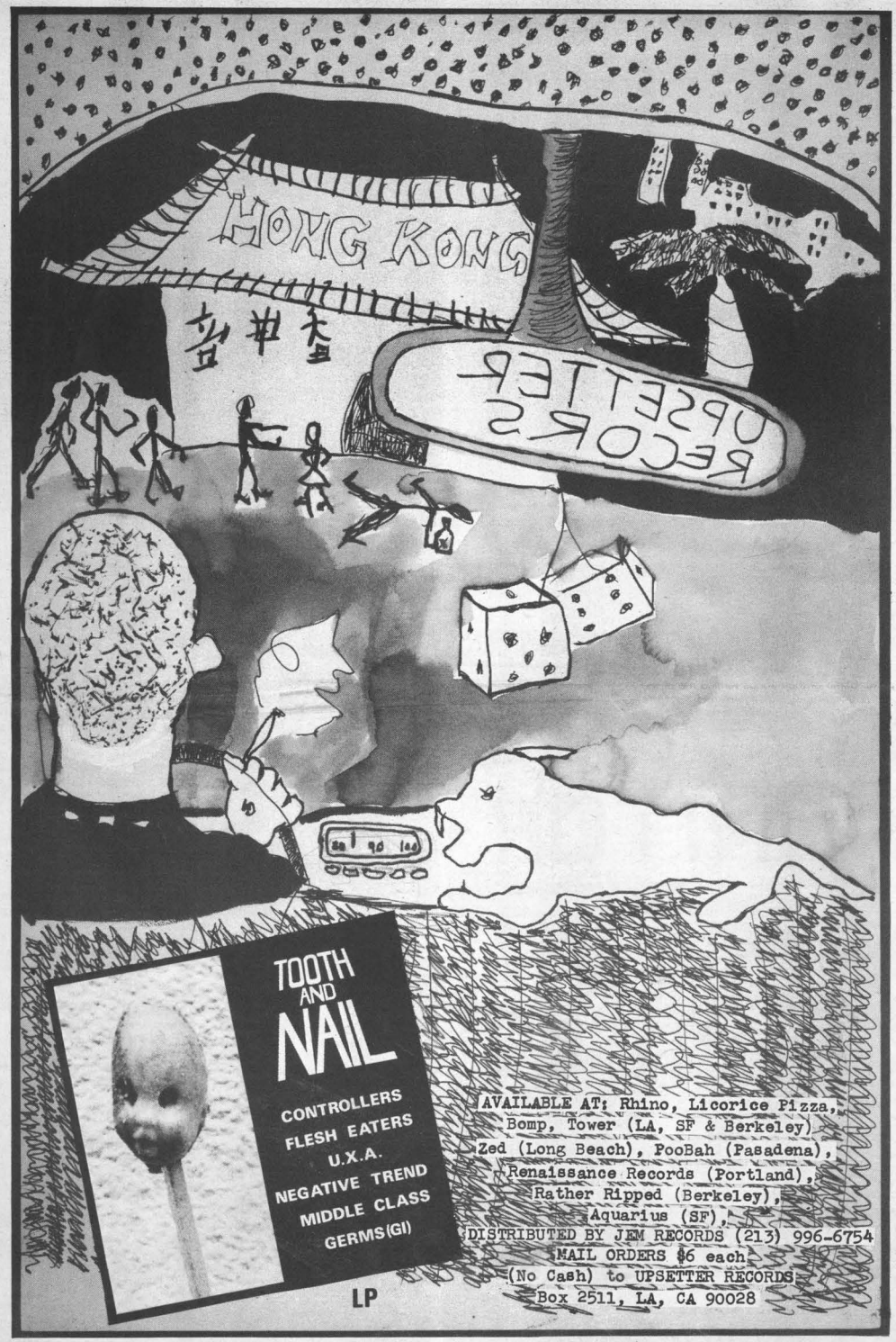
Few people were even standing during the first part of the set, which dragged intolerably. By the end, after Sue Tissue's songs, the audience was jumping and screaming for more. If Suburban Lawns can isolate the most effective elements of the best songs — notably their tight, frustrated, jerky quality — and employ this throughout their material, minus the boring hard rock passages, they could find a much-needed focus. It was plainly evident tonight that, though they have several unusual and arresting songs, Suburban Lawns' saving grace is Sue Tissue. I don't know why she doesn't stay through the set — the waiting business is definitely injurious to the band's health. They may want to save their secret weapon, but they can't afford to. Sue Tissue is an inventive vocalist (her spasmodic style was especially effective on the encore, "Unable", by far the best song of the set) and a sometimes riveting performer. With such a desparate, ill-suited, and often hackneyed sound backing her, she can't fulfill that promise. If Suburban Lawns find the right focus for her, they could very well become one of the most interesting bands in L.A.

I guess by now people have labelled Human Hands — one adoring L.A. Times critic has already called them punks and compared them with the Sex Pistols. Though their musical antecedents are more funk than punk, and their almost-too-normal appearance is light-years from Johnny Rotten, it is true that beneath the "nice" exterior lurks a curious tenseness. Singer David Lively may look like the boy your mom wanted you to bring home for dinner, but don't be fooled — he has the soul of an agitator. "To stir up; shake up. To excite; fluster"* — that is what Human Hands do.

Sorry, Middle Class — I went to a party.

* AGITATE, from Webster's New World Dictionary.

Sanyo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hong kong cafe oct. 5 & 6

GERMS, VS., B PEOPLE
Hong Kong Cafe

Tonight the B People didn't sound so much like Z People. . .the way they did the last time I saw them; they were much closer to B+. I don't go for this style of anti-music that much because there never ever seems to be one strong guiding force (personality) behind it all. Sometimes there's an exception as in Teenage Jesus or Public Image. But most of the time too much experimentation on the part of all band members seems too readily accepted without thinking out what would make a more dynamic whole. The less said about VS., the better. They started off OK but ended up doing their two best songs right off. What was left were too many mundane riffs and superficial lyrics. They weren't horrendous but they weren't good either. And then that often-witnessed-but-never-tired-of spectacle materialized before our very eyes: the Germs religious experience where audience and performers are possessed by strange forces from outside the world of mortals (as we know it). Darby played his usual game of tag with the microphone; Pat, Lorna, and Don followed the drunken pace headlong, unquestioningly, unerringly. One young adoring fan who proved herself too obnoxious was offered a lovingly outstretched hand by Darby only to be yanked, then slammed head-first into the drumset. The set was as perfectly unlike a set as music like this should be. The crowning touch was an encore of their new hit "Juan Corona" stitched together on the framework of that artless AM standard "My Sharona."

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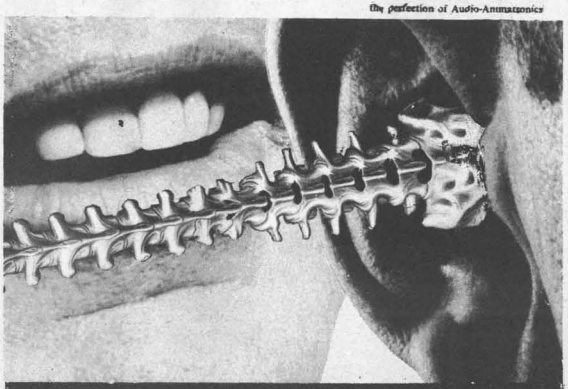

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OUR SMALL TOKEN REVIEW OF EMERGING NEW TALENT:
Catholic Discipline
at the H.K. Cafe

Well, I guess if the Pope can sing so can Claude . . . But seriously, Claude worked each Catholic Discipline song for all the face-twisting emotion and deadman's stare they were worth. Facial expressions getting the lyrics across, no over acting. And me being a sucker for good lyrics, Kickboy covers a pretty fucking full range of subject — situations, from mundane bus riding (that turns into conflict) to lavicious guards watching prisoners undress. And imagine — you can understand the words, even with that massacring accent.

On the music side, the arrangments provide each band member their own undeniable space. Where the keyboards' humming leaves off, the bass and drum rhythm fills in. And a Love style picking guitar "adds a little good talk" to make it easy to move your feet. Each section very sparse, working together for a common goal. And again supplying the audience with a full range of sound — emotions, fast — slow, disjunct — cohesive, the main area where there's room for imporvement is in their performance. All the kinks are not yet smoothed out. But this star-studded band; Craig (Bags) drums, Phranc (Nervous Gender) guitar, Rick (B-People) bass & guitar, and Richard Mead synthesiser and organ, has only rehearsed eight times and formed two weeks ago.

At the beginning of the night a waiting line formed at the door. I guess everyone wanted to see the return of joke bands to Los Angeles. But Catholic Discipline isn't a joking matter.

(*See other reviews for DOA and Bags.)

Cowboy and Cowgirl

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LEVI & THE ROCKATS
X
Whisky A-Go-Go

Its really strange how the Whisky has become so foreign. It almost feels like the Screamers and Weirdos never played there at all. Even when the Damned played, it was like trying to liven up a crumbling amusement park. Anyway, they were treated to a little bit of what they're missing when X opened the Rockats shows over the weekend. And so,

X have a songbook out which everyone should get. It shows their lyrics with a lot of other odd clues and illustrations. Good reading in bed or on the bus. It also reveals that X lyrics are not a big political number, but rather are really about life as they live it. You can inject your own politics behind it, if you want, but I prefer to think X have gone beyond 1977 punk ideology. Stuff like Beyond & Back, Every Other Bed, and Our Love, are very personal and will carry more weight in the long run. It's much harder to give up some of yourself than go on yelling about the queen. X are very urban America in an Iggy/Doors sort of way in that they sacrifice themselves with every song. In a city that begs you for suicide, it's a state of mind that is easy to understand.

Anyway, when it got time to do it onstage, X were truly wonderful. It was really interesting to see them in front of a cold, unknowing crowd. Sort of a hint as to what their shows would be like in a strange city, without us there to support them.

On a big stage, little Exene can really get wild. Pulling hair and tossing herself about the floor. Billy almost on his knees. All of this, without much encouragement from the audience. If they can always rave it up between themselves like this, then they'll have no problem wherever they go. And they will go. I know it's easy to be bitter about their future. They're having a rough time right now. They have to suffer the fate of playing honestly in a world full of bullshit. They don't give away their hearts so easily, and so the game is tougher for them.

But, they'll get to go away. You gotta be like a Rasta and have faith mon. X can't be that good and go ignored forever. They'll go on to other places, and we'll be sad to lose them, but we'll be happy too.

The Rockats are hard band to talk about, because almost everyone hates them or loves them. I may be the first ever to say they're o.k. When Levi is up and in control they're really energetic and good, but other times they're lifeless. The difficult thing with the Rockats is that they are an entertainment medium, and last as long as the show. They don't ride home with you in your head like X. So, it comes down to a choice of taste. Take it or leave it affair. For me, it depends on liquor.

What is good though, is that they are a good weapon with which to make people aware of Rockabilly. It's wonderful to see little teeny-bop girls searching the swapmeet for obscure Warren Smith or Mac Curtis sides. Everybody should be aware of rockabilly records as well as soul records, because they are American music. And punk rock is American music too. That's why I always try to shove it's influences down your throat. Its a direct line from Little Richard to James Brown to Jim Morrison to Iggy & the Stooges to the Germs and Black Flag. All of it, completely animal music. Unrestrained primitive beat and scream. If you don't believe me, go and play "Shake Appeal" by Iggy and then dig out your oldies collection and play "Lucille" by Little Richard and hear generally the same song.

You see, so everybody goes around and calls the Rockats a load of nostalgia. Only its not nostalgia. Its new music. I was born in the same year that Buddy Holly died, so I never heard rockabilly. I never heard Little Richard. My parents kept James Brown records away from me. So you see, its all a fresh discovery. A new influence, because people like Billy Zoom, Jane & Belinda, and the Cramps cannot draw inspiration from local punk action any longer. Most of which emulates the sound and style of 2 years ago (maybe 3 now), and are more nostalgic for 1977 than the Cramps are for 1956. And if its not that, then its the sound of Eno & Bowie in 1975, which was a period we were trying to forget.

You can call it trendy too, but that's alright. Trends educate. They make people function differently and expose them to other ways of living. Or else, we'll all be stagnant asshole glitter rockers who still look like they're in Mott the Hoople. Outside influences are what make the Pop Group, Specials a.k.a., Gang of Four, Contortions, X, Screamers, and the B People all so unique among the competition. You gotta have style or get buried. Style is all anyone has to remember you by.

So you see, you idiots go stepping all over Eddie Cochran, an incredibly influential guy who lived in this city, and has a hell of lot more to do with L.A. that a thousand bands like 999. And I'll bet you that those guys listen to his records and go "wow" "America". So they form bands that play bastardizations of Eddie get the record contracts your home bands deserve, because they're English or something, and look like David Bowie, so everybody runs off to suck the English punk rocker's cocks.

So, Levi, comes to town and gives something other than what you expected. He gives you Eddie Cochran. And you hate him, because, you didn't get punks and politics. Well that's your own fucking fault. You peoplare are English obsessed. From the Beatles to Bowie to the Buzzcocks, its England England straight on down. Only they use American music to influence you, and though I really like English people myself, I can't stomach this blind following for anything they send us. Meanwhile, L.A. bands gather dust when almost any of them are better the "Undertones."

New Music in L.A. will continue to go unnoticed as long as this European fixation prevails over record companies and club goers. And people will continue to hate Levi for giving them America instead of the Queen. Its been too long that people have been looking east for ideas. The ideas are here now. And they are going to be buried. Unless you do something about it. And when that Germs album comes out, you better buy it or I'm fucking track all you bastards down....

Ranking Killer J. Lea

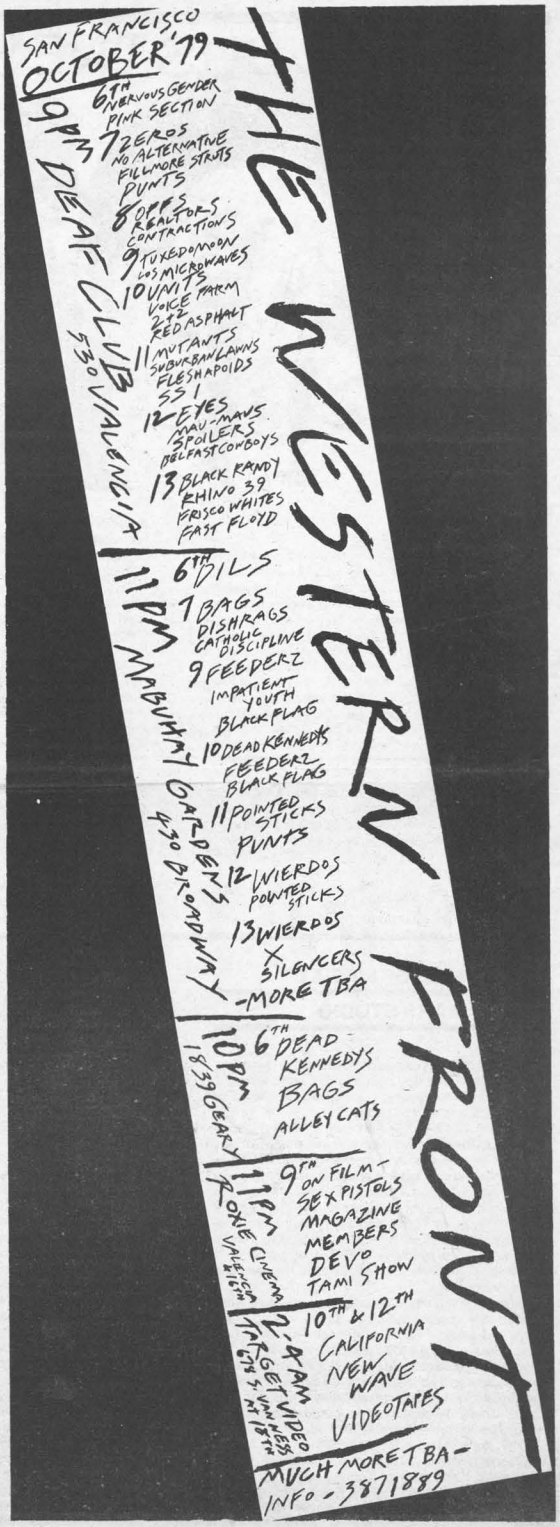
THE SENDERS
Hong Kong Cafe

The Senders are this R&B influenced band which are real big deal in N.Y. R&B meaning rhythmic blues, because the Senders are totally void of "soul". They've fallen into the age-old trap of white men rocking up sad old blues songs and thereby turning them into "fun" boogie. Totally missing the intensity of emotion that made the music appealing to white people in the first place.

Emotion is the key word. The Senders are energetic, but it is emotion that makes "soul", and "soul" is what makes people like James Brown or Jackie Wilson totally devastating to listen to. Although I admire Mr. Billy, (or anyone who remembers Johnny Otis) the band itself just gives us everything the J. Geils Band gave us 7 years ago. Only difference is they dress better. (Senders, I mean) I guess its all a lot of fun to somebody, but up against Ben E. King or Little Willie John, the Senders are just "loud rockabilly."

So, boys and girls, please don't confuse the Senders with the intense soul stirring of black R&B. There's no comparison. It would be like comparing the Police to Burning Spear. They may have fared better if they just used its influence, like the Stooges or Contortions, rather than try to duplicate it. That can't be done. There are no more James Browns.

Little Mr. J



DREAD BUSINESS

JA Singles & likes of

The records that I'm reviewing here got left inside my car all day. It was 100 and something degrees. I thought they were certainly dead, but somehow they lived. I think this is because the Jamaicans use heavy vinyl like American records of the 1950's. So they don't melt as fast you see. Anyway, it is true that they break a lot. I decided to test this by throwing both a Jamaican "Jackie Mittoo" record and an American "Devo" record against the wall at the same time. They both were smashed to bits. Thus, proving that when I don't like a record, I will instantly smash it to bits. No matter what country it comes from.

One record I didn't smash to bits, was the new Dillinger single which is called "I Thirst Pt. II". (Shaolin Temple records) It's a version of "Barnabas Collins" which begins with evil loud voices, (like in Omen or something) then descends into very thick dub, with screams and whispers creeping in and out. Dillinger does his rap while other voices sing along with him, some at higher, some at slower speeds. Without a word of warning the Ranking one will occasionally let out a shout that sounds like discovering an Alien in your recording studio. Its pretty hard to describe, but whatever you call it, you must admit they're taking some wild drugs down there in Paradise. And Ranking Dillinger has come up with the reggae equivalent of "Horse Latitudes" by the Doors.

Another record that didn't hit the wall was "Love Everyone" by Philip Fullwood (Free records), the guy who co-wrote so much of Burning Spear's material. It's produced by Winston Rodney and features that same minor-chord plodding that makes Spear so errie to listen to. The vocals are very soulful and hit certain primitive levels that will keep Spear fans from being disappointed. The dub side is even more interesting. It uses the sound of a restaurant kitchen (or party I think) in the busy hours and fades the effect in and out of the dub track. Very silly, but wonderful in many ways. A little vocal, a little guitar, and endless chattering and clinking glasses. Real cool . . .

On the more normal side of life, there's a new Bob Marley record called "Ambush" and it shows Bob getting back into the groove of things, writing some of his best material in a long time. Along with "Rastaman Live-Up", all those who wrote him off are going to have to eat their words. While Tosh goes into Disco, Marley heads back to his original sound and that's very good indeed. I'm waiting for the new album, it may be quite a comeback. The dub side of this is also very upfull. It's thick dub with the addition of a sort of Martian beep noise that just wins me over in a second. Looks like even Marley is getting into Jamaica's psychedelic phase.

The new 12-inch disco 45 by Peter Tosh (Rolling Stones records) is in fact, a disco 45. Peter, who is much more in a hurry to sell out than anyone, has cut a record that embarrasses anyone associated with reggae. It's got him yelling about reggae, but has him playing another sort of music altogether. A music we all know and hate. Needless to say, this one took a swift flight for the wall . . .

A new record that could teach Peter a few lessons is "Dredda Gravalicious" (no, its not Rasta candy!) by the Wailing Souls. (Massive records) It's a well-produced roots sound with a high voiced lead singer that gets quite intense among the group's moanings. Its really quite good and is maybe what I hoped Steel Pulse would sound like. The Wailing Souls easily succeed at the tropical beat that Pulse feel so short of getting. Wailing Souls have an album out too, which I'll review if I ever find it . . .

Another new (or rather, unknown) singing combo is Well, Pleased, & Satisfied by whom I've found two singles called "Barber Man Bawling" and "News Carrier". (Top of the Pops & Total Sounds labels) Both of these are truly incredible and should be sought out at all costs. A primitive vocal group with an extremely intense lead vocalist who cuts his gig with as much soul as James Brown. They have about five singles released in JA, and I would love it if someone could help me find the others. (Just write to Slash) I love these records, please tell me what you know.

Never ever to hit my wall is anything that sounds like "So Strong" by Leroy Smart (Roots from the Yard label), a singer who I never knew much about. He comes up with a great chord repetition and exercises it to its best possibilities. A really good score for anybody into roots singers, and for people who thrive on the beat more than anything.

The last record here takes us back to the jungle we all came from. (and belong in) It's "Naw Go a Them Buriel" by Prince Ala (Gibbs label) and it sits with Misty in Roots and Burning Spear as far as voodoo atmosphere. You can see the bones and firelight. It uses that creeping organ sound against a Rasta rhythm that turns reggae into ritual. This is the kind of Jamaican music that really gets my animal instincts going and, if I had my way, we'd be back in the jungle sharpening our spears right now.

Honorable mention of the month goes to the Abyssinians' new single "Love Comes & Goes", "Money" by a band called "Reality", "Cross Over" by Junior Mervin, and to Rita Marley who cut something called "Thank You Lord" that is one of the prettiest girl vocals ever heard out of Jamaica. What a voice. Anyway, goodbye, shut-up, and go sharpen your sticks, 'cause I can see them ah come over yonder. . . . .

Ranking Mr. Lea

SLICE OF LIFE AT MARS STUDIO

Mars Studio opened and closed within 24 hours. Located down an alley near Vermont and Melrose, it was a near-perfect setting — just give us an alley to do dark things, and we'll be happy."

The first nite band line-up was X, Bags, Flyboys, Silencers. The stage was high and well-lit with plenty of roomfor fans (human and mechanical) on the sides. The ventilation situation was underestimated, and it was so hot that John Doe almost passed out on stage (no couch available). Everybody played well. The Flyboys are getting much tighter and the Bags baggier (depending how you like to wear your bands). X was and is what we all know by rote — GREAT. They get better all the time; particularly Exene's voice is throatier and more threatening.

During X's set, out in the alley a young male white blonde fool approached three savory looking black guys and asked if he could get some cocaine. One said, "Sure, give me $100," which he promptly did. The blacks sniggered and told the naive thing to get lost. He whined around a while and gathered a gang of punks to get the blacks. Leading the retaliatory troops was "Top Taco" Jimmy. When the blacks pulled a knife, all the tough punks turned yellow and scattered, leaving Jimmy alone to eat iron. He turned for help and as everyone quivered in their own chickenshit, he got stabbed so badly that had it gone a fraction of an inch deeper (about the width of the typed word "die"), he would have bled to death. He tells his own story:

". . . I am more pissed off at the asshole who asked for the coke than the guy who stabbed me. Here's a situation where someone was robbed. It's a matter of principle. I'm no macho man. I'm no Clint Eastwood. I'm just a human being. I don't fight for silly reasons. I don't even know how to fight. But if there's something happening, if you're hurting someone, I'll dive for your crotch and rip your balls out with my teeth like a maddog. There's no rules in these situations. Those black guys weren't playing by any rules.

I saw the nigger stick the knife up his sleeve. It was a 6" blade. He was prepared to kill. I say, here's this faggot, this hustler, but he's a human being and he needs some help. He's gonna get it in the belly. A bunch of us go out to help. I look around and no one is there. Not even the fuckin' faggot who started the whole thing. And he had a long piece of chain! Here's a situation, a war between two countries. It's cut and dried isn't it? He had the only weapon, and he froze.

I see a beer bottle. I go to break it. With my luck, it was imported beer, the bottle wouldn't break. While my back was turned the nigger comes up from behind and stabs me in the stomach. The dude leaves. He says he's going for a gun, and I have no reason to believe he's bullshitting me. I was holding my side bleeding. The butthole faggot is standing beside Billy Zoom saying, don't let those guys get me. He didn't even have the decency to say, are you OK? People said, don't call the police, you're going to get the place closed down. I said, you fuckin assholes, you don't give a shit, I'm bleeding and all you care about is whether Mars studio is closed. And the dude is going for a piece. I'm not Superman you know, I can't stop bullets.

The police came. One of the black dudes had come back, but he couldn't run because the cops blocked the alley. They put a revolver to his mouth and tell him to shut up. They frished him and found a butcher knife, a 6" meat cleaver. I said, this guy didn't come back here to say his friend was sorry. The cops told the guy to walk! They were supposed to at least take a detailed report. They didn't. I don't blame them. They see this stupid bullshit all the time. They stayed around until everyone left, for protection you know. Then they told me to go home and wash off the wound with hydrogen peroxide.

When I went to the hospital the doctor started acting all worried. You see, the wound went 1½mm from the spleen, which he toldme is a blood-filtering organ. it holds about half a pint of blood. Two main arteries go into it. If it is punctured you bleed to death in about 20 minutes.

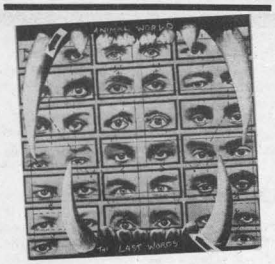
I don't blame the guy who stabbed me. I don't want him to go to jail. He's just a fuckin' ignorant animal. That's how he deals with an argument. He just kills. That's this guy's solution and answer to everything. We are all animals, but some do have intelligence. I don't believe that shit, we are all born equal. And this guy, his level of mentality is that he's a pea-brained animal. I can understand that. But I can't deal with the kid I got stabbed for. He sells his ass on SM Blvd, and if I see that fag out there, I'm gonna talk with the gentleman. I've got nothing against Black men or homosexuals, you know. But in this situation, the one dude is a nigger, and if I see that faggot . . ."

EPILOGUE

The next night the Silencers, Gears, Black Flag and the Plugz were scheduled. By the time I arrived, an angry Mexican was throwing beer bottles at women for leaning on his car, and the alley was filled withpolice who shut the Mars down for lack of proper permits.

V

45's



LAST WORDS Rough Trade/Wizard Records import (Animal World/No Music In the World Today)

OK. Here we go with the usual standard punk single review. It's not too bad, and it's not too good. "Animal World" has a few seconds of thrills in an aimless display of power chording. What's wrong is that these thrills come at seemingly random, accidental intervals, popping the balloon of what could have been a fairly interesting song. "No Music in the World Today" is a predictable bore, on end on end on about the same old thing with nothing new in store.

Chris D.

THE GEARS (Let's go to the beach/Hard rock/Don't be afraid to pogo)
Four Speed Music Records

Well, boys and girls, surf punk is here to stay. This is so far the best attempt at the new hybrid genre, rather cleverly mixing Ramones influences and backing vocal harmonies a la Beach Boys, Hondells and so on. The Gears are just in it for the fun of it, which makes this record a lot more enjoyable than you may think it is. Now, who's gonna come up with the first bondage wet suit???

Kick

The Girls
The Elephant Man/Jeffrey I Hear You
Hearthan Records

Produced by David Thomas, he of Pere Ubu and last month's cover. But the Girls would have been a tough does anyway. This is one of those singles, no matter how many times I listen, I can't gauge what the hell is going on. I mean it's part psychedelic, part rock and roll, part noise, part ridiculous baby voice squacking unintelligibly, long solos for no apparent reason. This record gets closer to real madness than any of that pretentious English crap that's been shoveled out by gallon these days. An extremely confusing, disturbing record, extremely disjointed and is it good or bad? You're asking me to judge? Can you judge a schizophrenic's personality changes as good or bad? If you can, review this record. If not you can listen but you take your chances.

Z.

THE YACHTS (Box 202/Permanent Damage)
Radar import

Won't these guys ever stop? Seems they're churning out a single every 2 weeks! I liked one song off the last one. I don't like anything on this. It's bland and overblown. What's more, I think the word "damage" has run its course. If they'd live here they'd know what I mean.

Damaged Kick

EXPLOSIVES - Black Hole Records (Come Clean/Summertime Come/I Won't Go Back To Work/I'm An Explosive)

This is dippity-doo rock 'n roll, but it definitely won't curl your hair. Too mellow to be mentioned in this mag.

V

"GO GO" (3 songs by King of Siam, JJ 180 and Helen Wheels)

On the A side Helen Wheels sings some bloated pop that uses every gimmick in the book, voice distortion etc etc designed to knock you off your feet but it made me giggle, a shame really as the B side features 2 okay songs by King of Siam (mainly a pretty rough sax break) and JJ 180, the later one recorded under emergency conditions judging by the what-the-fuck mix but still intense and nervewrecking, so keep an ear on these guys.

Kick

PLASMATICS - Vice Squad Records (Dream Lover/Corruption/Want You Baby)

You'd think these guys would have more pride than to release as limp a recording as this. The (momentary) toast of New York horror shock rock produced a few invigoratingly trashy photo sessions. Don't look for that hellish aura of dementia here. Their brains as well as their feet are made of clay.

Chris D.

CABARET VOLTAIRE - Rough Trade Records import (Nag, Nag, Nag/Is That Me (Finding Someone At The Door Again)

I bet all these guys bite their fingernails. "Nag, Nag, Nag" has a good beat, and the synthesizer is put to good use as a rhythm instrument. "Is That Me" seems like more electronic outtakes, but is soothing background noise, like sounds you might hear while half-asleep in an airport lounge.

V/D

LOCAL OPERATOR (Pressure Zone/The Untouchables)
Virgin import

Immoral waste of a catchy caribbean back beat on A side. These guys are straining so hard to be "infectious" they're gonna pop a hemmoroid. Gruesome bizness, pop music.

Kick

THE MAIDS (Back to Bataan/I do I do)
Anemic records

A bit more raw and energetic than most product around, but still miles from being halfway remarkable. Maybe if it said something, anything...

Kick

WAYNE KRAMER (The harder they come/East Side Girl)
Radar import

I'm sure it's nice to be out of jail and all that, but it's no reason to butcher a perfectly good tune like Jimmy Cliff's anthem. B side is no better. There is a certain type of music that is not needed anymore. Times change.

Kick

Essential Logic EP
Virgin Records import

Lora Logic squeaks, sqwacks, burbles and bozos her way through this hiccoughy dose of studied kookiness. And listening to it, thinking its all the stuff I enjoy hearing, I find myself left cold. It's too inflated, the band has two more musicians than it needs, and somehow the down home eccentricies of her first ep have been bloated into a comedy art revue that knows no distinction between off and the wall inspiration and self indulgent silliness. I mean this may be fun and quirky and smart but then so is my grandmother on a good day and I don't have to shell out three bucks to watch her go wacky. This is so hip it's impossible.

Z.

GEZA X (Rexall Rock & Roll/Pony Ride)
Final Gear records

Cult figure boy wonder madman about town Geza X ("rent a genius for your barmitzvah") just came out of the studio, and voila, another single for the alternative racks (now bulging at the seams with zillions of boy wonder projects, mind you). He did it all by himself, from vocals to electronic kazoos (that's what it sounds like anyway — it's probably a church organ he modified slightly) and then coated it with five or six separate layers of distortions, it will make you more jittery than twelve cups of coffee and you will grind your teeth down to the gums trying to figure out which ones are the hooks and which ones the dead ends. B side is an instrumental for manic home activities. Not to be used with more than one person in the room. Bruises may result.

Kick

THE SPECIAL A.K.A. (Gangster/The Selecter)
2 Tone Records import

They know call themselves The Specials. They are black and white kids who dress up real sharp with hats and shades and gave gone back to the ska sounds of early jamaican music to find music they can relate to and have fun with. Their single is a killer, it bops along with more confidence and originality anyone has come up with in a long time. Also totally addictive, I'm already hooked and can't wait for the next one. B side is a tough instrumental that makes me nostalgic for no particular period. This record has class.

Kick

THE HATES (No talk in the 80's/New Spartans/All the Whites are going Negro/Last Hymn)
Faceless Records

More Texas punk. Nothing strikingly original, they bash away with real faith in the cause but each song sounds the same. Kind of a blurry mess, the kind of stuff I play when I get fed up with the strikingly unique offerings all the new little sophistico outfits are squeezing out of their tortured brains.

Kick

THE DEAD KENNEDYS (California Uber Alles/The Man with the Dogs)
Alternative Tentacles Records

"Alles" is a very apparent parody. This months great gimmick record, it should replace "Rock Lobster" in college dorm rooms as a hip single. With a name like Dead Kennedys I expected a lot more than a Jerry Brown as Hitler parody. But I did get more. The music for example — it's not your standard punk slam. True the guitar distort is on full throttle but there's a wierd echoplex warp device too, the drummers rhythms are closer to jazz than to 4/4 slam slam and lead crooner Jello Biafra has a bizzare Bryan Ferry type warble to his high pitched voice. Sweet and nasty. "Alles" has always been a high point of the Kennedys great live performance and though I find the mix too guitar heavy, the impact has not been lost in the vinyl transfer process. You know what? I like "Man with the Dogs" even better. More driving, more sarcastic fun and a great line, "What's inside is a pubic hair, a cobweb there, but you just don't care". The Dead Kennedys are much more than this year's political gimmick joke band. They are more than the Eighties answer to Country Joe and the Fish. In fact they might be one of the most important bands to come out of this scene. This single gives you all the clues as to why...

Z.

THE UNITS (High pressure days/Cannibals/Work/Cowboy)

This E.P. by San Francisco's premier sythesizer band rocks harder than you'd ever think an "experimental group" was capable of, and once you get over the unusual lack of bottom sounds which incidentally tags it as the whitest music around) you might make it part of your regular diet. There are 3 very jerky uptempo tunes (not jerky in the idiot Devo way) and one atmospheric piece a la Eno-Music for Bathrooms. A really good no bullshit record.

Kick

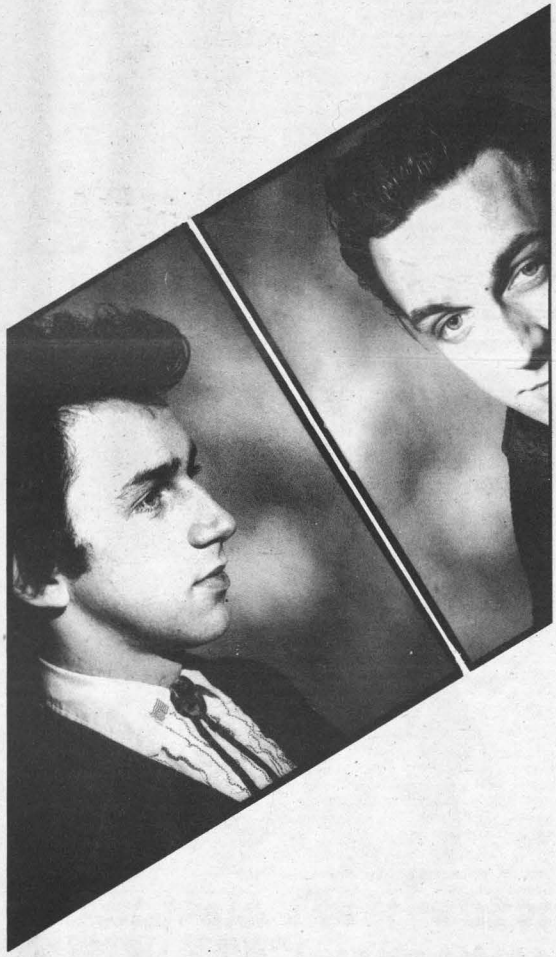
Designed to Kill/Throw Me Away
The Contortions
Ze records

Sounding tighter and more polished than ever, James Chance and family give us their latest excursion into the beat. And the beat is correct, because if anyone in new music understands rhythm it's these Contortions. The funkyness is so intense and so hectic, it's torture to just sit and listen. The sax slices in and out of the song leaving ribbons of horn riffs over the beat

Most important here, is that this is the first really adequate example of the Contortions' sound. The other Ze releases have mostly been filled with the silliness that James gets into occasionally. This is probably why he doesn't use the James White & the Blacks monikker for this one. The Contortions are first band and the "soul" of what Mr. C does. I'm really very worried what will happen without the likes of Don Christensen. A fabulous drummer who I understand will no longer play with this group. James needs a better than good rhythm section to pull it off. Like James

What?

Weirdos 1979



Brown, he needs an outstanding bass & drums that can keep everything on the ground. I'll be waiting to hear his new group, and I hope they're so perfect, that he can level a fine against any bum note played onstage, like James Brown used to do.

Until whenever, pick up the "Contort Yourself" single and this one and you'll have a good example of what Mr. C is up to.

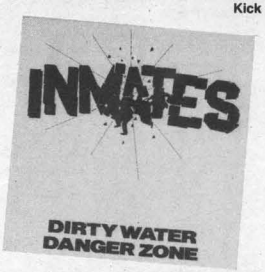
Also, hats off to Brendan Mullen, for his efforts to bring the Contortions to L.A. to play his King's Palace club. Should they get here, you will see what I've been raving about. Brendan is really a pretty clever fellow and without him all the bands in L.A. would have broken up years ago.

Ranking J.

THE FALL (Rowche Rumble/In My Area)
Step Forward import

Let's just say this is as essential as anything the Fall has ever recorded. They are out there on their own, what they do has no real equivalent anywhere 'cept for maybe the Gang of Four. In "Rowche Rumble" Mark Smith rages against the modern world's dependence on tranquilizers (the original title of the tune was spelled roche...), it's full of nightmarish visions of swiss gnomes dishing out shovels full of pills, the music is nicely oppressive and lashing. Other side is less harsh, the focus is more on the melody, Mark still sounds pissed off about something, it's almost pretty but it's still the Fall. I couldn't do without this band. Along with very few other groups, their music keeps me awake while the rest of jokers want you to sleep.

Kick



THE INMATES (Dirty Water/Danger Zone)
Radar import

Ain't no R&B fanatic myself but this tastes like the real thing. Prety dirty alright. God please give me a nice gravelly voice like that.

Kick

"BEACH BOULEVARD" (The Crowd/ The Simpletones/Rick L. Rik)
Posh Boy Records

This should have been reviewed last issue but I misplaced my copy while moving our office. This is much better than I expected. I'm still not floored by the Satintones but the Crowd's cuts are more than okay and Rock L. Rik's stuff is for the most part a must. There are a lot of songs on this compilation album and most of you are bound to find something in it to get their teeth into. Is there any way to get Rick L. Rik back on the road, even against his will? Any suggestions anyone? Also, the Crowd should play the L.A. circuit more often. This is no way to push an album, guys.

Kick

THE RUTS
(In a Rut/H-Eyes)
People Unite Import
(Babylon's Burning/Society)
Virgin Records Import

This first record was financed by Misty (Brit reggae star) who likes these guys because they're cool. When you hear this you'll feel the same. "In a Rut" is the perfect drunk sing-a-along about being on that dull, dreadful treadmill we all find ourselves traversing at one time or another. "H-Eyes" rants about the evils of heroin without denying its good points. Extremely impressive and in some ways more rewarding than their equally powerful, polished (Skids' producer Mike Glossop did the honors) second outing, "Babylon's Burning". Nice, with spare repetitious heavy metal at high speeds until some intoxicating hooks hoist you into the air, making clear that even when you're a little thick you can still write a good song about the downfall of civilization (if you have your wits about you). "Society" is even better with a funny chorus: "You don't know too much about me, I don't know too much about you" that breaks necks with sweaty doses of yobbo growling.

CHRIS D.

SPIZZENERGI - Rough Trade Records import (Solder Soldier/Virginia Plain)

This sounds like the drunken son of an organ-grinder let loose with a synthesizer whose brother-in-law must work at the record company.

V/D

AVENGERS
(The American in Me/Uh-Oh, a Mystery/ Corpus Christi/White Nigger)
White Noise records

Its sad that after so much struggle the Avengers gave up and everything came to naught. But when you keep going around and around in the same circle and the rewards are less....it's the law of diminishing returns. You can also blame it on the collapse of the San Francisco scene as we used to know it; the sudden influx of methedrine that fueled everyone into the fire, then made the disappointments and real/imagined paranoia all the more keen when that brick wall suddenly reared up in front of you out of nowhere and smashed you to bits. "American In Me" has pretentious lyrics that miss every target aimed at. It sould a lot like Patti Smith except for the music which is brash, headstrong. "Uh, Oh" has some nice words but a Blondie mix on Penelope's voice that tends to emphasize the terribly undermixed guitar. Side 2 with "Corpus Christi" and "White Nigger" are

in a whole other league, dodging the technical difficulties, branding themselves on your eardrums forever as the legacy the Avengers deserve.

Chris D.

THE TWEEDS (Underwater girl/My memories/Postcard)
Autobahn records

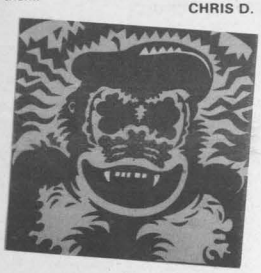
This is apparently a 2nd pressing. No clue as to why there was a 1st one.

Kick

MONTE CAZAZZA
(To Mom on Mother's Day/ Candy Man)
Industrial Records

Somebody's being a bad boy rapping on garbage cans in the alley. All of a sudden out of nowhere, this dark, overpowering heartbeat of guitar distortion wells up, gripping you in an ever-tightening fist, then letting you go, then crushing you once more until, in your swooning unconscious, you start to hear voices ... whispers at first, a soft calm narrative, a letter from Hollywood to Mom being spun with a monotone veneer of sarcasm that slowly grows louder and louder ... and stops. Flipside is a nightmare textbook with a hum of a detached hive (factory life) in the background. Layered textures of repetition disclose the horrifying facts of the Houston boy murderer's victims through a Jungian sleeve. This record's destractors in the British press no doubt suck their thumbs and take thier Rachel Sweet/Kirsty McColl albums to bed with them.

CHRIS D.



SNAKEFINGER (Kill the Great Raven/ What Wilbur?)
Ralph Records

The reggae craze is spreading to the most unlikely places: Ralph records has just been bitten by the bug, and Snakefinger's latest features the obligatory tchak a tchak rhythm track. Of course this is coming from the home of the infamous Residents, not downtown Kingston, so expect a few twists here and there. But all in all this is the most straightforward tune ever released by those loonies. Phil Snakefinger's voice sounds great, in the days when novelty records occasionally hit the charts by surprise this would have been a definite hit. Now that everything is safely programmed and no flukes are allowed it has to rely on the alternative circuits to be heard. What I call a decline in imagination on the part of the country in question. B side almost as good but less subtle.

Kick

CHEESE (She said/Kids don't mind)
B-B-Baby records

Any group that comes up with "cheese" as the one name they want to be immortalized by deserves to be dumped in Angola. If they also wallow in sprightly slicko pop for healthy teens as these goons do they should be donated to a witch doctor that specializes in genetic experiments once they get there.

Kick

POOR BOYS
(Twice a Day/ She's a Photographer)

Owl Cruz

Independent single from Santa Cruz. Gosh I'm tired of people wasting their money to put out ordinary records that don't do anything except restate what's been done and said a million times before. Come on guys you got my five minutes, do SOMETHING new—harder, rougher, slicker, revolt us, entice us, terrorize us, surprise us. Usually I want to be kind to new bands by remaining silent rather than being cruel, it comes so easily to be vicious these days. But goddammit I want more! Not cattle, sheep, sardines in a tin! AHHHHHHHH!

Z

ICE NINE Cool Records (27.3/Out Out Out/Revolting Mess)

Not much of anything special about the words or subject matter except for the cryptic "27.3", Pops, hisses, whines and assorted crackling creep out from behind the nastiest hammering on guitar I've heard in a while. "Revolting Mess" has the most cliches, but surprisingly comes off beat, wears better and better the more you hear it and for no particular reason. It sounds great. There's no information on the sleeve besides names and song titles, so who can be sure what crack in the woodwork Ice Nine crawled out of (although the packaging looks American). Search it out.

Chris D.

MROZINSKI (Hey Brooklyn/Give it Up kid/You're the only one)
Maximum records

I don't know who these guys are, but I know shit where I hear it.

Kick

POLICE BAND Vacuum Records (PB USA/17 Mary 21 Charlie/On the Beat/ Kicks For Cops/DOA/Q&A/Towaway/ Emerald Society

Comedy broadcast from a lunatic asylum. Exclusively full of paranoids who've had one too many run-ins with the cops. It's funny without being cute. This one guy uses radio static, distorted voices of macho lawmen and his own trusty electric violin to transmit the absurdity of being caught in the middle of certain law enforcement situations.

Chris D.

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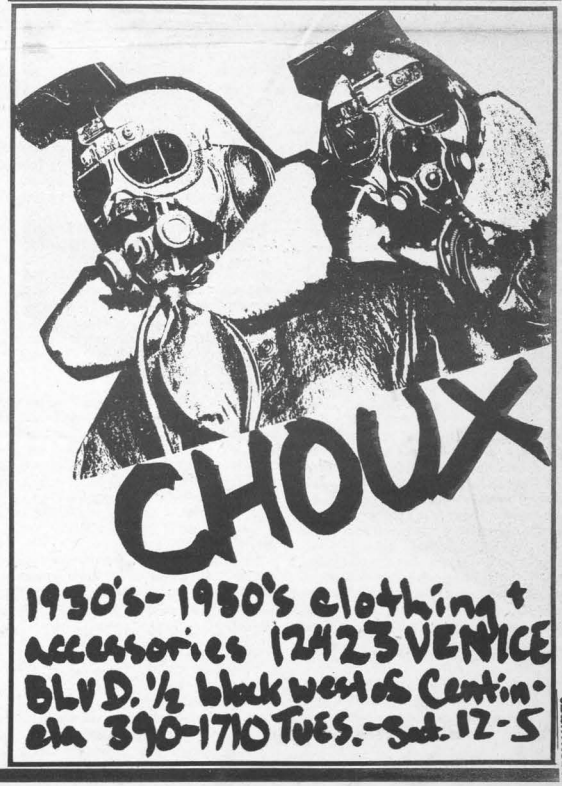


LP's

Talking Heads
Fear of Music
Sire

This is a record. It has music. It's by four people called Talking Heads. They play some music. Its such good music. It has rhythm. Lots of rhythms. Some are disco. Some are slow. Some are funky. Some are funny. Some are fast. Some are jerky. Never boring. Always thinking. They work with rhythms like no one else does. They have a friend. His name is Eno. He works with sounds. Changes theirs. Makes them haunting. Make them strange. He's found his match. It is with Talking Heads. They have a singer. His name is David. He sings real high. He sings real strained. He makes his voice do all sorts of things. Much more different than he's ever done before. He writes the words. They are quite simple. But the meaning — they are not simple. Simple objects — a thousand meanings. One word. One world. One grop. They are Talking Heads. They are geniuses. I am jealous. Critics analyze. I am cautious. I could gush. I could explode. But I paraphrase: "This ain't no punk. This ain't no new wave. This is important." More than you'll ever know till ten years later.

Z.

"FORCES OF VICTORY" Linton Kwesi Johnson
Island import

Better late than never. This has been out for months but of course don't expect to run into it at your local vinyl pusher. It's indeed the classic everyone says it is, more accessible than the first LP (Poet and the Roots), Johnson's voice is the same deep emotional instrument it always is but the backing music is less thick and gloomy, there are even traces of uptempo horn riffs. It's impossible to single out any special cut, the whole thing flows effortless from beginning to end, there is a unity of vision and design here that used to be characteristic of the great jazz classics. If everyone possessed this album, the world would be a better place. Time come.

Chatty

THE WEIRDOS' giant E.P.
Bomp records

Finally, after months of delay, the Weirdos' 6 songs package did hit in the streets. It's probably to early to tell but I don't see how it could fail to reach thousands. From the real slick (how suave those young men can look!) packaging to the echo on some of John's more dramatic vocal moments it is great, accessible and repeatedly fun. It opens masterfully with "Happy People" and its great crashing chords that bounce off your chest, goes into a lengthy dramatic version of "Big Shot" with the bass crescendos and the repeated shoutings, and ends on side one with the only non-Weirdo tune on the record, a super rich and full rendition of the rockabilly tune "Jungle Rock". Note the nifty piano and the hilarious repeated ending. Side 2 starts with "Hit Man", continues with "Idle Life" and ends with "Fort U.S.A.". All first rate Weirdos materials, everyone around here knows the songs by heart, and all three are here in their definitive version. There are really no flaws in this record (except that more songs would be nice) and, coupled with their renewed live activities, it should bring those guys right back to the top.

Kick

THE GERMS - Slash Records

You're not going to believe this record. Seeing the Germs live, it seems impossible to translate the Germs phenomenon into structured songs with beginnings ands. Onstage, each song self-destructs and another rises like the Phoenix out of

GERMS (GI)

radioactive ash. These sixteen songs are the sixteen days and nights of Darby Crash and the Blue Circle Gang, a diabolical diary that is staggering in its literacy and musical power.

Darby has blasted open a door of secret knowledge which is really no secret at all. What Darby reveals are everyone's frustrations which remain hidden under a subconscious veil, because most of us simply can't put these feelings into words. Darby not only says it all, but creates a complete urban mythology. Reason hooks up with irrational thought, and the result is literally magic. Some of you may be snickering, but just sit down with the lyric sheet.

"What We Do Is Secret" breaks the clasp on this forbidden volume of tales of politics, religion, love and death. Keep a fire extinguisher handy, because your record player may erupt into flames. If you small vinyl burning, that's just Pat playing some of the most searing guitar since James Williamson on the Stooges' "Raw Power". Though their styles are different, for density of sound and energy, it's the only comparison.

The cast of characters ranges from Billy Druid of "Strange Notes" (someone's always walking on his grave"), "Young and haggard" Richie Dagger ("Remnant from an outbreak past"), and the Dragon Lady ("the talk of the town, but she's neve been seen"). These burnt-out legends are hanging on by a thread against the stampeding hordes of "Land of Treason", "Media Blitz" and "Communist Eyes".

But all is not hopeless. There's a pathway out, although it may be lined with spikes and cigarette burns. Listen to Darby as Commanding General/Faith Healer on "American Leather", "Lexicon Devil", "Manimal" and "Our Way". The road is rough, and Darby has the scars to prove it in "We Must Bleed"..."The crash as the bottle breaks/Flashes its will through my veins/The pain...the colors...making me sane/We must bleed, we must bleed/I'm not one I'm two/I want out now."

Darby gets intimate, sometimes talking about himself as though he were someone else ("Let's Pretend"), and looks at love in "The Other Newest One". Sex is described as a nihilistic dance routine in "The Slave". The album closes with "Shutdown (Annihilation Man)", a 9-minute descent into Darby's inferno.

The music speaks for itself. Rhythm machine Lorna Doom (bass) and Don Bolles (drums) explode their instruments along with Pat and Darby, all under the guidance of producer Joan Jett. Most of the songs are short and fast, cracks from the whip of the "chaotic master". This record will be a runaway hit because it can unleash in anyone things that they never new existed.

V/Chris D.

SWELL MAPS
A Trip To Marineville
Rather Rough Trade Records (Import)

A tantalising look into a happily troubled world from the new wave's very own Mouseketeers. Taking a National Enquirer rather than a Dostoevskian approach, the Maps jangle our nerve ends with some fine, carefully cadenced cacophony and cute lyrics. The weighty philosophical import of "Bronze And Baby Shoes" (Disused observation posts / Fall snaking through the trees / Earning pocket money / Through re-cycled masonry / Someone left a car in gear / That travelled on for days / The only way it could be stopped / Leave it to gather dust / In the hay), shifts to the sparse consequence of "Full Moon In My Pocket" (which consists largely of the song title repeated eight times), traversing infinite plateaux of musical invective inbetween. Fortunately this is accomplishd with considerable wit and little artistic sycophancy. Also, Swell maps have an engaging command of their instruments, especially Nikki Sudden who seems to've studied Hapsash and the Coloured Coat's seminal red-vinyl album of 1968, the one that upst a lot of Velvet Underground fans nd which you probably haven't heard and don't give a flying fuck about anyway. Well forgetting frames of reference, possible derivative sources and that sort of irrelevant garf for a moment, try and visualise a fairly consistant bang-bang, jang-a-lang rhythmn, usually in 3/4 time, overlaid with lots of histrionic wailing and some well applied metallic slashing and you may grasp the main thrust of the band's instrumental proclivities. Like Pere Ubu, Prag Vec and certain starving, unrecorded experimental jazzmen living in Vienna, Swell Maps are not overly concerned with comfortable (or even recognisable) structures, but their own peculiar/particular brand of musical anarchy works very effectively ... rather like an enema.

Mork Williams

IN STYLE
DAVID JOHANSEN
Blue Sky records

A more radical descent into the maelstrom of MOR sludge. This is almost totally unlistenable from every angle. It made me cringe from the nightmarishly vapid Richard Avedon cover (which undoubtedly cost ten grand by itself) to the customarily 80 lb. weakling Mick Ronson production. David is slipping so far away from any kind of reality or true-to-life angst in his songs that the shame he should be feeling is a hundredfold. No more conscience but a polished egmirror that is as simple-as-pie for the likewise deteriorating, infant-framed media to grab onto. Depressing.

Chris D

GRUPPO SPORTIVO
Mistakes
Sire SRK 6066

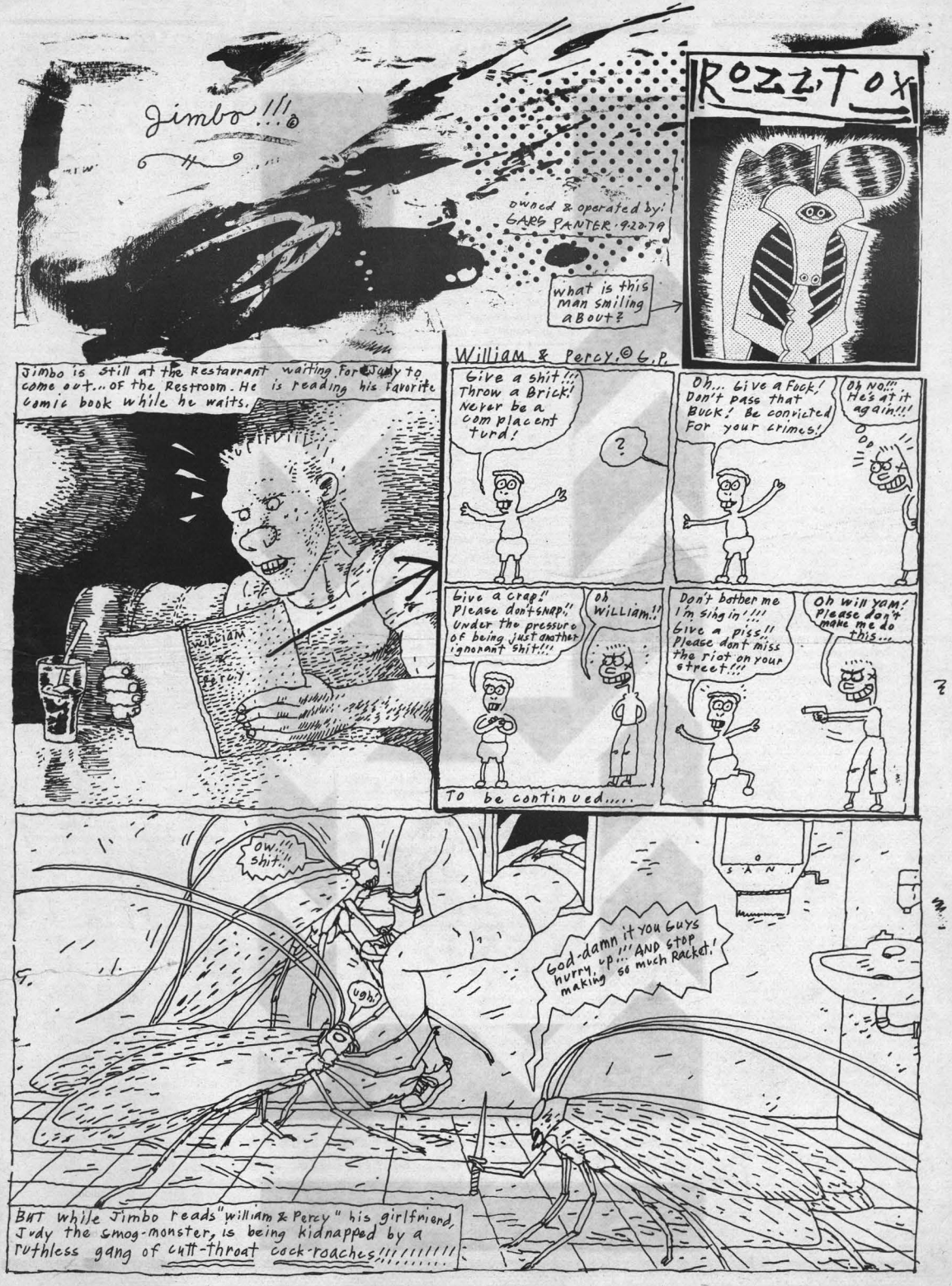
There are a lot of oriental restaurants in Amsterdam and Gruppo Sportivo sound like they ate too much Sukiyaki. Their music is jerky and twittering swamping any interesting hook lines they might have with innumerable distractions. Although the band has obvious instrumental skills, guitarist/lender/producer Hans Vandenburg throws too many noodles in the pan as far as his arrangements go, and the high pitched warbling of the admittedly beautiful, alright, *extremely* sensuous Jose Van Iersel and Meike Touw, whilst effective onstage, pall into irritating contrivance after a few cuts on an album. In fact this particular offering is a compilation of material written and released (mainly) in 1977 and '78, designed to create the same cult popularity in America that the Dutch band have gradually won in Britain, France and elsewhere, popularity that they've achieved largely by touring. Only "Beep Beep Love" made any real dent on the UK singles market and their albums were strictly blah-blah as far as sales go, so I doubt whether this assemblage of quirky but strictly unmemorable stuff will cop interest here. The B-52s on quaaludes, if you want a good, down-to-earth subjective opinion. The album title says it all, anyway.

Murk Wilhems

CHELSEA
Chelsea
Step Forward Records Import

Pull out your barb-wire cutters and get ready for breakfast. Snap off "I'm on Fire" from Side 1, "All the Downs" and "Trouble is the Day" from Two and you've got an EP that can knock you off balance struggling to climb back up to a vertical position until the turntable clicks off. Everything else either can't get started or resolve their noisy ideas to the point of explosion. Very frustrating with more and more progressions building but never finding release. A drag because the "Urban Kids/No Flowers" single said this should have been better.

CHRIS D.


Jimbo !!!
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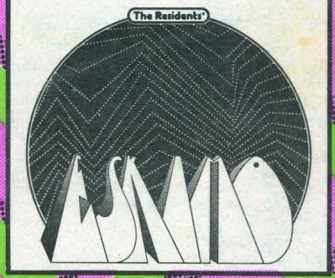
what is this man smiling about?
ROZZTOX
William & Percy. © G.P.
Jimbo is still at the Restaurant waiting for Judy to come out... of the Restroom. He is reading his favorite comic book while he waits.
William
Give a shit!!! Throw a Brick! Never be a complacent turd!
?
Oh... Give a Fuck! Don't pass that Buck! Be convicted For your crimes!
Oh NO!!! He's at it again!!!
Give a crap!" Please don't SNAP!" under the pressure of being just another ignorant shit!!!
oh William!!
To be continued.....
Don't bother me I'm sing in'!!!! Give a piss!! Please dont miss the riot on your street!!!
Oh will yam! Please don't make me do this...
SANI
Ow!!! shit!!
ugh!
God-damn it you Guys hurry up!!! AND stop making so much Racket!
BUT while Jimbo reads "william & Percy" his girlfriend, Judy the smog-monster, is being kidnapped by a ruthless gang of cutt-throat cock-roaches!!!!!!!!!

ESKIMO, The Residents sixth LP represents their most challenging musical concepts to date. The album evokes an ageless Eskimo culture primitively struggling to exsist in a cold and unforgiving reality. The various tracks on the disc are in the form of stories since spoken legends and adventures are a basic element of Eskimo life. The tales are told by the sounds of the Eskimos, their music, and their environment. There is no narration, although the narratives are printed on the jacket to encourage the listener to project himself into this cold barren world of whiteness.

Ignoring the stories, the album is a moody piece of highly abstract music punctuated by primitive rhythms and vocals. Without doubt, **ESKIMO** is one of the strangest, most original concepts available on record today.

The Residents' ESKIMO



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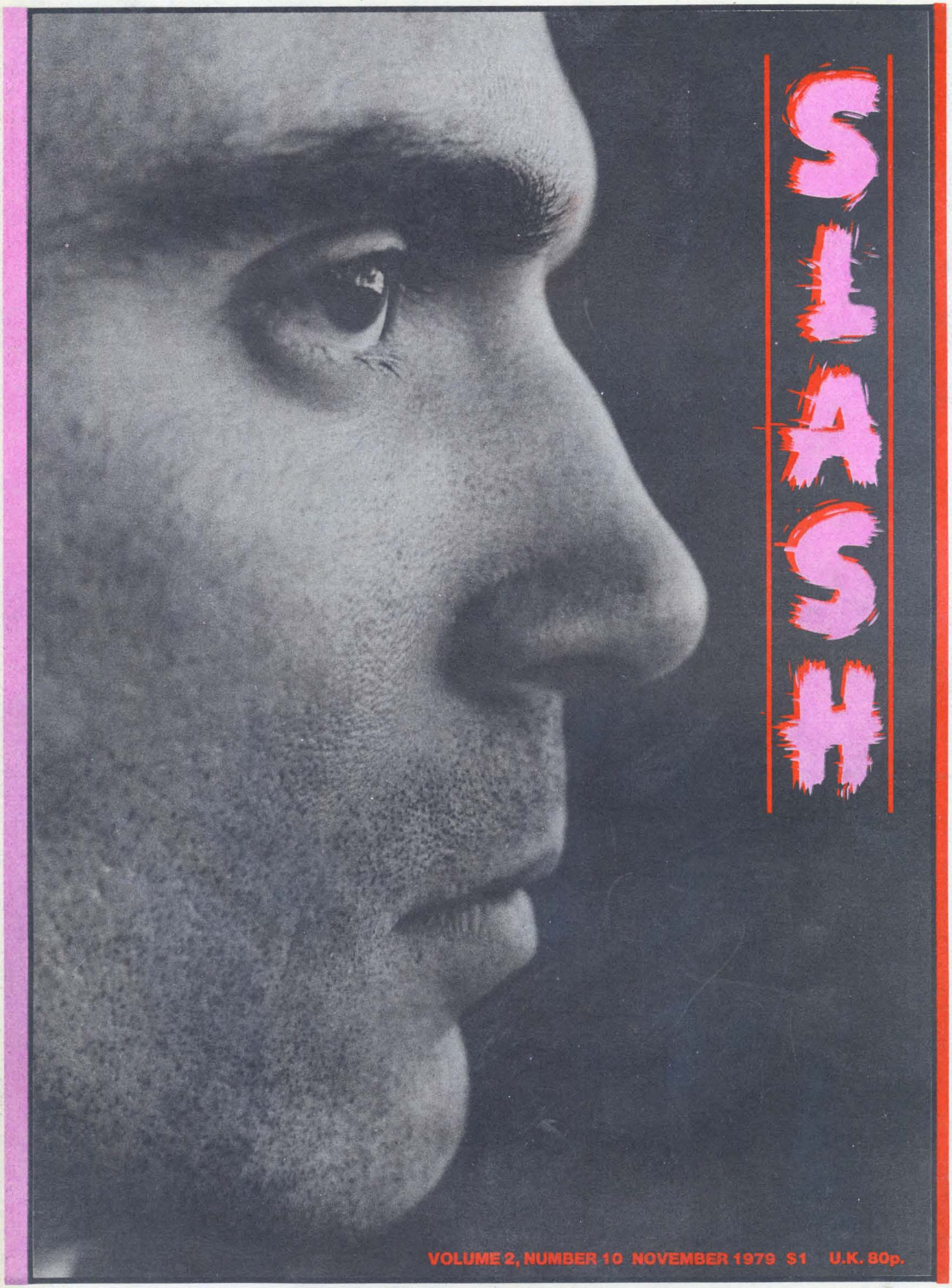

SLASH

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THE READERS' CHART

HIYA ALL YOU HIP, GROOVY, CONSUMING TASTEMAKERS, AND IT IS TIME TO ONCE AGAIN LOOK AT WHAT ESOTERIC SOUNDS YOU LISTEN TO WHY THE REST OF THE ROCK N ROLL MOB DOES WHAT BILLBOARD THINK THEY SHOULD. WELL, NOT US, SUCKERS! THIS HAS TO BE THE ONLY WIDESPREAD RECORD CHART IN WHICH 95% OF THE ENTRIES MEAN LESS THAN SWAHILI TO THE INDUSTRY. SMUG, AREN'T WE? BET YOUR ASS WE ARE!

TOP TEN SINGLES (OR EPs)

#1 GANGSTER (THE SPECIALS)
#2 BABYLON'S BURNING (THE RUTS)
#3 VIOLENCE GROWS (FATAL MICROBES)
#4 BLACK FLAG EP
#5 MY PLACE (THE ADVERTS)
#6 REVOLUTION (TAPPER ZUKIE)
#7 STRANGLEHOLD (UK SUBS)
#8 AVENGERS EP
#9 GIDGET.. (SUBURBAN LAWNS)
#10 COST OF LIVING EP (THE CLASH)

(WINDOW RATTLING ENTRANCE BY THE SPECIALS, RUTS AND MICROBES. THE CLASH GET BACK WHERE THEY BELONG. ZUKIE SWITCHES SONGS, AVENGERS APPEAR IMMEDIATELY UPON RELEASE)

TOP TEN ALBUMS (OR SOUPED UP EPs)

#1 INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL (S.L.F.)
#2 FORCES OF VICTORY (L.K.JOHNSON
#3 ELECTRIFY ME (THE PLUGZ)
#4 TOOTH AND NAIL COMPILATION LP
#5 SOCIAL LIVING (BURNING SPEAR)
#6 NATURALITY (THE GLADIATORS)
#7 DREADLOCK SATISFACTION (TRINITY
#8 G.I. LP (THE GERMS)
#9 SECOND HAND DAYLIGHT (MAGAZINE)
#10 WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE (WEIRDOS)

(NO SURPRIZES. LOU REED DISAPPEARS -BYE, GERMS AND WEIRDOS SHOW UP, PLUGZ, STIFF LITTLE FINGERS AND TOOTH AND NAIL RULE THE WORLD AND THE RASTAS ARE MULTIPLYING IN THE BUSHES, AND MAGAZINE REAP THE BENEFITS OF EXCELLENT TOUR.)

IF YOU HAVE A SMALL BUSINESS AND WISH AN INEXPENSIVE ADVERT. CHECK OUT OUR ID ADS IN THE RECORD REVIEW SECTION.

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LOCAL SHIT

WHO SAYS THE BIG RECORD COMPANIES ARE NOT INTERESTED IN THE REAL GOOD BANDS??? It is now official, X are about to go into the studio to record an LP's worth of songs for Slash records. Needless to say everyone around here, from Kickboy to the humblest janitor, is happy as a clam in a sea of mescal and the celebrating of this historical merging of creative talents has been going furiously, in fact so furiously that the alcohol desintoxication clinic of the neighborhood has agreed to give us all a special group rate. The festivities, sorry, the recording itself is scheduled to take place around mid-November. It will be produced by Ray Manzarek, a talented youngster with a past many of us would give their liver for. Manzarek admits to having done very little lately music-wise 'cept checking out the club scene and collaborating on a James Morrison biography, but sitting at the console with a band like X behind the sound-proof glass plate should renew his faith in the power of real music. Whatever the studio is where these people decide to cook their stew, one thing is certain: there will be some soul in that kitchen! It is not yet known whether mysterious keyboard touches will complement the formidable tunes of America's favorite 80's band.

And, speaking of Slash records and Slash recording artists, our readers in the Northwest area should look forward to an upcoming grand Slash tour featuring both the Germs and X, along with their favorite local hard core combo. No dates have been set, but everyone agrees that it would be a very symbolic way to start another bloody decade. Later, after a rest, the same musical enchilada will carry its wisdom to the eastern shores an the southern part of the country (Boca Raton, here we come!) Of course we will keep you informed, or should I say deluged with pertinent information.

HUMORLESS CLUB MANAGER DEPARTMENT: A while back Dred Scott were booked to play Blackies on La Brea. Dred Scott, who had already played there once when the place was run by Paul Greenstein (who himself was rather crudely relieved of his duties over disagreement on price policies) decided to add the harmless "A tribute to Paul Greenstein" caption to their own flyers advertising the gig. Blackie's management was not amused and only hours prior to the show cancelled Dred Scott's appearance. Will the next band playing Blackie's have to advertise it on their own flyers as "a tribute to Dred Scott"??

MORE CLUB MANAGERS NEWS: We may soon be able to see a short documentary featuring the yin and yang of the Chinatown stronghold, with Mrs. Wong on one side, and Barry of the Hong Kong (along with the very nice owner of same place) on the other. Anecdotes are fondly related, aesthetic opinions expressed and predictions freely shared. This snappy piece of video verite may soon be aired on cable tv, and in case the talking sections bore you there are also liberal servings of Fear in glorious live action and numerous brief glimpses of countless scenemakers and other punkeroos in varying states of sullenness or acute exhibitionism.

Trudie/pic: Melanie

THE LAST BIT ON CLUB MANAGER: According to a Pasadena based paper called the Star News club owner of West L.A.'s Belove Club 888 Wayne Mayotte has had it with punks, "who are just a headache really" and don't drink enough! Well, Wayne, I don't know, but I've never thought of Club 88 has an exemplary center of sobriety! The same article also features a glorious half-page picture of degenerates-about-town Sheila, Dee Dee, Spider and Charlotte, and endless ramblings and general pontificating (look it up, it's a big one) courtesy of Kickface. So, next time you're in Club 88, remember to drink it up. You don't want them powerpoppers to think of us as teetotallers, now, do you?

Speaking of Club 88, a new "game" was recently invented there by a few maniacs who got bored hanging out outside waiting for the X set to start: the rules are simple (as simple as jumping off a bridge). One of you waits for a car, truck or city bus to drive up, you step onto the street, stop the vehicle, and while they patiently (or impatiently) wait for you to get the fuck out of the way your friend sneaks behind, lays down on the street and grabs the back bumper. At this point your pal gives the green light, the car takes off and you do a few yards of body surfing on your back, elbows and knees until the friction heat worries you too much. Before we get accused of irresponsible journalism and of setting a bad example let us say that it is without a doubt totally moronic and can hurt like hell. We know. Teaching bikers to pogo is much more fun and ten times more challenging.

ROCK N ROLL HIGH SCHOOL, CHICANO VERSION: A few days ago a minor riot (meaning a riot by minors) took place on the grounds of Roosevelt High School in East L.A. The Plugz were scheduled to play there at lunchtime, and over one thousand kids gathered around the band who kicked off with their furious version of "La Bamba". Everybody immediately sensed that this was no third rate disco band playing nice background music to much to, and things started happening. Apples, oranges and cartons of milk were soon flying in every direction, the high school principal and security officers were hit several times by missiles, the band kept ducking and playing but shortly after the power was cut off and everyone was asked to return to class. General refusal on the part of the student body, the police has to be called, orders to disperse over the bullhorn, which half of the kids finally agree to by leaving school and going to party, dragging the Plugz along with them. No one was seriously hurt except for a gym instructor who was somewhat roughed up but this is one lunch recess Roosevelt High will remember for a long time. Los Ramones may fantasize about it on film, but Los Plugz do it in real life!

And now, from our San Diego correspondent, a warning to L.A. bands planning to play down there:

AN OPEN LETTER TO L.A. BANDS:

"Recently in San Diego a big time FM station (K.G.B., remember chicken?) decided to put on a "new wave nite" to showcase their local proteges, The Penetrators. A cocktail lounge was booked, complete with tiny round tables and bitchy waitresses wearing dresses too tight for them. There was a five dollar cover charge, no one under 21, tickets available at Ticketron. Great, who cares? Except for the Upbeats, there are no bands in San Diego who deserve anything better. What hurts was that in less than one inch-high strip on the Penetrators/K.G.B. flyer, in a sort of "oh, by the way...", were The Alley Cats! Nobody told the Cats the lounge they were going to play was in a Miami Beach type resort motel, and that their audience would be laid back dope-smoking beach locals and motel guests from the Midwest who heard there was live entertainment downstairs. With thos fucking little tables everywhere dancing was out of the question, and when a few of us could no longer contain our enthusiasm over the Alley Cats' music and tried to clear a dance space we were told to either sit down or get out by one of the waitresses (of course backed up by three uniformed guards). That night the Penetrators made nine hundred dollars. Since the Alley Cats were not headlining, it is obvious they did not get what they are worth."

Our correspondent also announced the formation of a loose organization called "Friends of no one" which, besides putting out fanziness, plans to help out of town bands find suitable venues and bilings.

Any bands or managers interested in contacting them should call either Shawn at (714) 270 6679 or Marc Rude at (714) 234 9492.

L.A. LOOSE DIRT

A new record store called Vinyl Fetishes should open sometimes in November in Hollywood. Besides selling unusual hard to find vinyl it will also feature shows by bands and performance artists and act as some kind of gallery.

"Coco Chanel Is Dead" is the name of a new Concept Design company (What's that? Ed.) that plans to work with new wave acts and light shows. (Nooooo... Ed.)

The Bags are leaving town to tour the Northwest around Thanksgiving. They will play Seattle, Portland, Vancouver and a few other cities. Howard Werth has a demo tape out with some very intriquing songs on it and is shopping for a label.

Dennis Duck is out of the hospital (see Human Hands interview) but Joan Jett is still there ,with pneumonia. Sweet and thoughtful Rodney played the Germs LP for her on his show, forgetting to dedicate "We must Bleed" to all the other patients.

And, to end it all for now, the burning question of the month: Will Throbbing Gristle really play the Marina Skateboard Park when they come back to town???

THE SLASH STAFF CHART

PEA
1) Germs LP
2) The Selecter - The Selecter
3) Gangster - The Specials
4) The Units
5) Reggae Gi Dem Dub - Big Youth dub LP

RANKING JEFFREY
1) Trouble in the East - Ornette Coleman
2) The End - The Doors (Apocalypse Now version
3) Wasted - Black Flag
4) Metal Machine Music - Louis Reed
5) My Brand of Blues - Marvin Rainwater

WILL L'AMATO
1) Pony Dress - The Flesheaters
2) Fear of Music - Talking Heads LP
3) We Must Bleed - The Germs' rehearsal 10/9/79
4) Les Chants de Maldoror - Lautreamont
5) Action Boy - The Brainiacs

BO CLIFFORD
1) Modern Girl - The Dadistics
2) Let's get it on - The Customs
3) What I want - The Donkeys
4) Love Affair - The Tearjerkers
5) Gangster - The Specials

KICKFACE
1) All Night Party - A Certain Ratio
2) You Know my Number - The Undertones
3) Bouncing Babies - Teardrop Explodes
4) germs LP
5) Joy Division LP

CRAIG
1) The Slits LP
2) The Static Single
3) Germs LP
4) Rowche Rumble - The Fall
5) Joy Division LP (in part)

CHRIS D.
1) World's a Mess, It's in my Kiss - X (live)
2) Germs LP
3) Tokyos EP
4) Vancouver Complication
5) Cry Baby Killer - Flesh Eaters (tape)

STEVE
1) It's Her Factory - Gang Of Four
2) Forces of Victory - Linton K. Johnson LP
3) Singles Going Steady - Buzzcocks LP
4) Weirdos LP

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH
1) Ambush - Bob Marley
2) No One Remember Africa - Prince Muhammed/G. Nooks
3) The Selector - The Selecter
4) Cry Baby Killer - Flesheaters (tape)

V
1) Let's Have a War - Fear (live)
2) American Leather - The Germs
3) Back to the Base - X (live)
4) Cry Baby Killer - The Flesheaters (tape)
5) I don't Care About You - Fear (tape)

RANDOM STOATS
1) Making Love With My Wife - Henry Badowski
2) Natty Dred A Weh She Want - Horace Andy & Tapper Zukie
3) Selector - On My Radio
4) 154 - Wire (LP)
5) Night Klub - The Specials

EDITORIAL

(NEVER MIND THE USUAL UNDERFED EDITORIAL, HERE ARE 12 OF THEM !!)

A FEW POTENTIAL EDITORIAL SUBJECT MATTERS WE FUCKED AROUND WITH BEFORE THE DEADLINE PUT ITS HAIRY PAWS AROUND OUR SCRAWNY NECKS:

1) "NO BEATLES, ELVIS, ROLLING STONES OR CLASH IN 1980!"
(A GUARANTEED FOOD-FOR-THOUGHT SUBJECT, BUT WE STILL HAVE HOPE FOR STRUMMER. PROBATION WILL DO FOR NOW.)

2) "PROFESSIONAL BOUNCERS: HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM, WHEN TO STRIKE AND WHEN TO RUN, LEGAL RETALIATION, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SEXUAL WEAK SPOTS AND HOW TO USE THEM, ETC ETC."
(A BURNING TOPIC THAT WILL HAVE TO BE TACKLED IF WE DON'T ALL WANT TO END UP AS PERMANENT RESIDENTS OF THE CITY'S VARIOUS EMERGENCY WARDS!)

3) "THE BEACH PUNK MENACE: THE HYPE, THE TRUTH, THE IDEOLOGICAL AND MUSICAL IMPLICATIONS, AND WHAT IT COULD MEAN TO THE MEDIA FUTURE OF THE TRADITIONAL HOLLYWOOD ATTENTION-GRABBERS."
(WE ALREADY STARTED PEEKING AT THE PHENOMENON IN THIS ISSUE, BUT MORE RESEARCH, STUDY AND BEER ARE NEEDED BEFORE THE COMPLETE PICTURE CAN BE PAINTED.)

4) "THE GOD-GIVEN RIGHT OF ARTISTS, PERFORMERS, AND COMMUNICATION-STARVED INDIVIDUALS TO PASTE, STAPLE, PIN OR CARVE THEIR FLIERS, STICKERS, LOGOS AND INITIALS WHEREVER THEY FEEL THEY ARE MOST NEEDED."
(ANOTHER TOPICAL POINT, WHAT WITH BANDS GETTING BUSTED FOR PUTTING UP GIG ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RETARDED CITY COUNCILS SUING CLUBS FOR SAME REASON. WILL BE DEALT WITH IN THE NEAR FUTURE, IN THE MEANTIME LOOK OVER YOUR SHOULDER WHEN INSTALLING YOUR LATEST XEROX MASTERPIECE.)

THESE ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE MANY HEADACHES AND DILEMNAS THAT COME WITH BEING A NICE AVERAGE NOO WAVE/PUNK/SIMPLY NOISE AFICIONADO TODAY. OTHER TOPICS THAT WERE REJECTED FOR BEING LESS BURNING AND VITAL WERE "WILL I PLAY BASS BETTER ON METHAMPHETAMINE OR M.D.A.?", IS IT REALLY TRUE BANDANAS ARE ONCE AGAIN OKAY?", "WHERE TO CRASH IN SAN FRANCISCO?", "WHAT WILL CONSTANT REGGAE LISTENING DO TO A DEDICATED ATHEIST?", AND THE DELICATE "HOW FAR CAN WE GO AND GROW BEFORE WE END UP WITH A DISASTROUS SERGEANT PEPPER'S TYPE OF TURNING POINT AGAIN?".
SO, AS YOU CAN SEE, WE ARE WELL AWARE OF YOUR EVERYDAY DIFFICULTIES AND DOUBTS. SOLUTIONS WILL COME FORTH, MORE PROBLEMS WILL ARISE, WE'LL NEVER GET OUT OF THIS MESS ALIVE. IN THE MEANTIME, GO FORTH AND MULTIPLY.

THE ARTIFICIALLY SERENE STAFF

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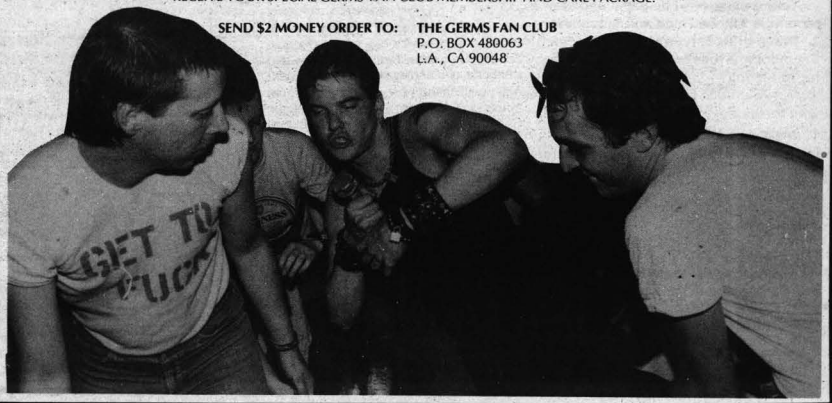

LETTER section

SLASH,
I WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY FUCK YOU TO THIS ALEX/SNICKER/ROCCOFF JERK (OCTOBER SLASH). FIRST OF ALL ITS NOT OUR FAULT YOUR FRIEND STARTED THAT FIRE, AND WHETHER OR NOT YOU LIKE OUR BAND I DON'T GIVE A FAT RAT'S ASS. IF PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND YOUR KIND LIKED MY BAND I'D PROBABLY QUIT THE WHOLE DAMN THING. AND FOR YOUR INFORMATION THE GERMS X, FEAR, PLUGZ, EDDIE & SUBMITTLES RUBBER CITY REBELS(KICKBOY WILL HATE ME) AND A FEW OTHER GREAT BANDS ARE THE ONLY REALLY GOOD THING ALIVE IN THIS WHOLE MOTELS ORIENTED CITY. AND MY NUMBER IS 626 7312, GIVE ME A CALL AND WE WILL SEE IF WE CAN MEET IN A DARK ALLEY SOMETIMES, WE'LL FIND OUT HOW MUCH OF A "WIMPOID FAGGOT" I AM. TIL THEN SUCK THE SCROTEBAG YOU GRAVEYARD SWINGER. THE STEPMOTHERS SAY FUCK OFF AND DIE.
LOVE,
STEVE JONES,
DROOG AND LEADER
OF THE STEPMOTHERS

DEAR SLASH,
GODDAMNIT, ARE WE ALLOWED TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF PUNK THIS NOV. SIXTH (THE PRE-SID VICIOUS SEX PISTOLS MADE THEIR DEBUT ON THE STAGE AT ST MARTIN'S ART SCHOOL IN 1975 IN LONDON)? I'M SURE THE SAME QUESTION WAS ASKED IN 56 ABOUT THE FOURTH BIRTHDAY OF ROCK N ROLL (BILL HALEY AND HIS COMETS RECORDED "ROCK-A-BEATING BOOGIE" IN 52). SHOULD WE HAVE A SWEATY SENSE OF HISTORY AT THIS TIME OR DO WE HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE 80S.
STEVE WILLIAMS

I PERSONALLY CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF PUNK EVERY NIGHT,SO WHY NOT ON NOV 6TH ? WE MAY NEVER MAKE IT TO THE EIGHTIES ANYWAY.
KICK

SLASH,
FIRST OF ALL, RIK L RIK WAS NOT BOOKED FOR THE NIGHT AT THE TROUBADOUR (SEPT 15) REVIEWED BY CHRIS D. (THE KING OF PURPLE PROSE AND "BLAZING TROPHIES"). AS FOR DEDE PLAYING BASS - SURE IT WAS "PART OF HER" - LIKE AN ARTIFICIAL LEG.
QUOTE: " THE SHOW MUST GO ON, NO MATTER HOW STONED OR HIGH THE AUDIENCE IS.." THE AUDIENCE? THEY WISH THEY WERE AS FUCKED UP AS THE BAND!
NEXT TIME, SEND A REVIEWER, NOT SOMEONE PROMOTING HIS OWN PRODUCT.
THE QUEEN MOTHER

OKAY LITTLE QUEENIE,
CHRIS D. WOULD LIKE YOU TO KNOW THAT HE DIDN'T WRITE THAT REVIEW TO PUSH HIS OWN PRODUCT BUT THAT HE REALLY LIKES THE BAND AND THAT IS THE REASON THEY ARE ON THE FUCKING RECORD ANYWAY. WHAT'S MORE, HE THINKS YOU'RE A HEARTLESS AND CYNICAL MOTHERFUCK FOR NOT APPRECIATING DEE DEE'S GUTS AND BRAVERY UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES. DO YOU EVER TAKE CHANCES, FUCK HEAD, OR DO YOU JUST SIT BACK AND SNICKER?
FINALLY, I WASN'T EVEN THERE BUT I KNOW THE WORTH OF U.X.A. SO I WOULD LIKE TO ADD MY VERY OWN FUCK YOU.
KEEP IN TOUCH,
KICKBOY

DEAR SLASH,
HOW COME WHEN THE DILS, MUTANTS, DEAD KENNEDYS AND SCREAMERS SEPARATELY PLAYED NEW YORK THE ADMISSION TO THEIR GIGS AT HURRAH'S WAS EIGHT DOLLARS? WHO THE HELL DO THESE "SUPERSTARS" THINK THEY ARE?
I JUST READ AN OLD FLIPSIDE WHERE THE DILS WERE QUOTED AS SAYING: "BOYCOTT THE WHISKY, 5 DOLLARS, STICK IT IN THEIR (SCREAMERS) EYE." SHIT! TALK ABOUT HYPOCRISY!
I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME THESE BANDS STARTED TO SHOW SOME RESPECT FOR THE PUNK AUDIENCE - THE ONES WHO GAVE THEM THEIR INITIAL SUPPORT - BY REFUSING TO PLAY AT THESE NEW RIP-OFF CLUBS. I NEVER PAY MORE THAN 4 DOLLARS TO SEE ANY BAND AND IF YOU DO YOU'RE A FOOL.
ADAM HAZARD
BROOKLYN, N.Y.
P.S.: THESE BANDS HAVE HAD NO EFFECT ON THE PUNK MUSIC SCENE IN N.Y. ONLY RICH PEOPLE WENT TO SEE THEM.

WELL, LET'S WAIT TO HEAR WHAT THE ACCUSED HAVE TO SAY.

SLASH,
THE GERMS G.I. RECORD IS THE LONG AWAITED PROOF THAT THE GERMS ARE PRODUCING THE BEST ROCK N ROLL OF ANY GENRE AT THE PRESENT TIME IN AMERICA, NAH THE WORLD!

GOSH!
KICK

SLASH,
IS JIMBO JIM STARK'S (JAMES DEAN) AND JUDY'S (NATALIE WOOD) TWENTY THREE YEAR OLD BIOLOGICAL SON CONCEIVED WHILE THEY WERE HIDING FROM GOON (DENNIS HOPPER) AND HIS GANG IN THAT OLD MOLDERING MANSION NEAR THE GRIFFITH PARK PLANETARIUM WHILE PLATO (SAL MINEO) SLEPT?
JIMMY'S DAD (JIM BACKUS) KEPT REFERRING TO OUR REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE AS JIMBO BACK IN 55 SO THE NAME MUST HAVE STUCK IN JUDY'S MIND AS THE NAME TO GIVE JIMMY'S ONLY HEIR. AM I RIGHT OR AM I RIGHT ....
STEVE

SLASH,
FINALLY YOU DO AN INTERVIEW WITH THE SUBURBAN LAWNS, THEY ARE BY FAR THE MOST INTELLIGENT ENTERTAINING L.A. PUNK BAND I'VE SEEN, AND I THINK SUE TISSUE IS THE MOST INTENSE PERFORMER I'VE EVER SEEN. I'D ALSO LIKE TO SAY SOMETHING FOR THE STEPMOTHERS. THEY ARE NOW A TRIO, AND THEY ARE THE TIGHTEST CATCHIEST MOST ENERGETIC NEW WAVE BAND AROUND. LAST TIME I SAW THEM THEY SHOWED A LOT OF BALLS AND REALLY BLEW OUT THE SUBURBAN LAWNS CROWD WHO WERE EXPECTING A PUSSY WARM UP ACT AND INSTEAD GOT THE FASTEST ½ HOUR SET (I THINK THEY DID 20 SONGS!). THEY WERE SO... RAMBUNCTIOUS, THE ONLY THING I DON'T LIKE IS THEIR LEAD SINGER WHO JUST SEEMS TO HATE THE AUDIENCE SO MUCH, I DON'T THINK IT'S REALLY NECESSARY TO KICK SOMEONE IN THE FACE, OR STEP ON THEIR FINGERS JUST BECAUSE THEY TIP OVER A MIKE STAND, YOU'LL NEVER SEE ANY OF THE SUBURBAN LAWNS DOING ANYTHING AS STUPID AND VICIOUS AS THAT, ANYWAY IT WAS AN ENJOYABLE DOUBLE BILL. PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHEN THE SUBURBAN LAWNS ARE GOING TO PLAY WITH THE STEPMOTHERS AGAIN. ALSO, WHICH ONE IS EDDIE IN EDDIE AND THE SUBTITLES?
SHERRY COLA

THE LAWNS (WHO JUST HAPPEN TO BE HERE AS I'M TYPING THIS) DO NOT KNOW WHEN THEY'LL PLAY AGAIN WITH THE STEPMOTHERS. AND EDDIE IS THE ONE STANDING BY A CONDOM MACHINE SOMEWHERE IN THESE PAGES.
KICK

DEAR KICKBOY,
I JUST WANT TO TELL YOU THAT THE WHISKY'S FUCKED ME OVER FOR THE LAST TIME. I WENT TO SEE MAGAZINE WITH MY NEW GIRLFRIEND GINA - THIS CHICK'S GREAT - SHE'S 16 AND SHE OWNS A DRESS SHOP - HER FATHER BOUGHT IT FOR HER. I MEAN, HE OUGHT TO - HE'S BEEN FUCKING HER SINCE SHE WAS 13. SHE'S LIKE THE ULTIMATE COSTELLO FAN - WE'RE SITTING THERE, AND SHE SAYS LIKE, "WELL, SINCE I'M NOT DOING ANYTHIN, I MIGHT AS WELL GO TO THE BATHROOM, SO I DON'T HAVE TO DO IT LATER.." ANYWAY, HER DAD GIVES ME MONEY TO TAKE HER OUT, AND I CAN DRIVE HIS CAR, SO IT'S ALLRIGHT.
THE LAST TIME WE WENT TO THE WHISKY WAS THE NIGHT ALL THE ASSHOLES WERE WATCHING THE SCREAMERS ON THEIR LITTLE TV'S - I WAS FUCKING PISSED! I MEAN, IS THIS WHAT THE SCREAMERS DO TO PEOPLE? BOWIE, MAYBE. GINA SAID THAT THE REASON PEOPLE WERE WATCHING TV WAS BECAUSE THE BAND WASN'T LOUD ENOUGH.
I SMOKED A JOINT (HIS) WITH ONE OF THE TV CAMERAMEN - THE ONE WITH THE FRIPP LIVES TEE SHIRT. HE SAID IT WAS RELAXING TO WORK THE CAMERA, IT WAS THE ONLY TIME HE COULD REALLY THINK ABOUT THINGS. THEN HE STARTED BRAGGING TO ME ABOUT HOW, WHEN HE WAS WORKING FOR KIRSHNER, THEY USED TO MAKE HIM TAKE ACID TO DO THE DISCO SCENES - HE WAS SUCH A PUSSYMOUTH I SHOULD HAVE KICKED THE SHIT OUT OF HIM, BUT YOU KNOW IT'S HARD TO JUST DO IT - SOME PEOPLE CAN JUST TURN IT ON WHEN THEY NEED IT...WISH I COULD, BUT I HAVE TO WALK AROUND A LITTLE TO GET REALLY MAD, AND HAVE A FEW DRINKS. ANYWAY, GINA SAID THAT DEVOTO'S GUITAR PLAYER WAS A FAG, AND I SAID THAT'S STUPID, THEY'RE JUST ENGLISH PROS, THEY CAN'T HELP THE WAY THEY LOOK. SO SHE SAID THAT MAYBE HE WASN'T A FAG, BUT HE WAS UGLY, AND THAT'S JUST AS BAD. AND THEN I DID NOT DIG THE HOUR AND A HALF BREAK, I MEAN THE WHISKY DOESN'T NEED TO SELL ALL ITS LIQUOR OUT BY 9:30 EVERY NIGHT. SO WE BUZZED BEFORE THE SECOND HALF,
WELL, GINA WAS HUNGRY, BUT I DID NOT DIG THE JAPANESE RESTAURANT AT ALL. I MEAN, IT WAS DOWNTOWN, AND THIS OLD JAPANESE MAN SAT DOWN IN THE NEXT BOOTH, AND A LITTLE WHILE LATER A BUNCH OF JAPANESE PEOPLE STARTED RUNNING AROUND, AND THEY LAID THE MAN IN THE BOOTH DOWN ON THE FLOOR, THEN THIS NIGGER CAME ALONG AND TOOK OUT TWO BIG LONG STEEL NEEDLES - LIKE A FOOT LONG- AND HE DROVE THEM INTO THE GUY'S CHEST, AND THE GUY SCREAMED AND THE BLACK GUY SAID HE WAS DEAD AND CLOSED HIS EYES. WELL, MAYBE HE WAS A DOCTOR - HOW THE FUCK SHOULD I KNOW? I ADMIT WE WERE PRETTY FUCKED UP BY THIS TIME, BUT I SAW IT HAPPEN, AND I JUST DIDN'T DIG THAT PLACE ANYMORE. SO WE PUT OUR FOOD IN SOME PLASTIC BAGS (GINA ALWAYS CARRIES THEM IN HER PURSE).
SO WE WENT TO GINA'S PLACE, AND HER FATHER WAS DRUNK, AND HE KEPT SAYING "GO AHEAD, AREN'T YOU GOING TO FUCK HER? THAT'S ALL YOU KIDS EVER DO IS FUCK, ISN'T IT?" WELL, HE IS A LAWYER, AND AN ASSHOLE, AND IT SHOULDN'T HAVE BOTHERED ME, BUT I DIDN'T FEEL VERY GOOD BY THIS TIME I MEAN I COULDN'T EVEN SIT DOWN. THE ONLY THING I COULD FIND ON TV WAS THIS UNDERSEA MOVIE - ALL IT WAS WAS FISH SWIMMING AROUND, AND I TURNED DOWN THE SOUND AND PUT ON THE SUICIDE ALBUM, AND I FELT BETTER - I MEAN SUICIDE IS SORT OF LIKE UNDERWATER MUSIC. BUT GINA WAS MAD AT ME, SHE'S USED TO PEOPLE PAYING HER A LOT OF ATTENTION. I MEAN, MY OLD GIRLFRIEND, WHEN SHE STARTED TO CRY I'D FUCK HER AND THEN SHE'D BE HAPPY, BUT THIS... WELL, I WASN'T IN THE MOOD TO TAKE IT, SO I SPLIT.
ANYWAY, KICK, DON'T TELL ME THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME - I MEAN A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE PISSED AT THE WHISKY, AND LIKE, I DIDN'T HAVE TO GO THERE, I MEAN, IF THEY HAD BEEN DECENT, THE EVENING WOULD HAVE GONE OKAY. SO FUCK 'EM, I'M NEVER GOING THERE AGAIN....
RED

HEY RED, SURE YOU'RE THRU ??
KICK

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1. Take a piece of white paper and draw a rectangle 2 inches high and 6 inches long.
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FASTER THAN YOU

Another in a continuing series of social essays by Phast Phreddie

Whoa, there, and greetings to all the faithful FTY readers. I hope this column finds you all in a righteously drunken stupor and not a painful hand-over ala the author. Yes, indeed, last night was one for the books. I only wish that I could remember it. It was the fabulous show at the Hollywood Paladium featuring the Clashes, Joe Ely, and the Rebels.

I remember this: It's a real drag watching real good performers like the Rebels and Joe Ely get shit thrown at them for no particular reason except maybe that they weren't the Clashes. The Clashes went out of their way to get Joe Ely flown in from Texas to play on the bill. The Clashes demanded the Rebels on the bill a good six months ago. The Clashes wanted to give their fans a good show for their money. After all their work on the show for such an unappreciative audience, I wouldn't blame the Clashes if they never play in Los Angeles again. I, for one, really enjoyed the show, no matter how blasted I was.

But enough soap-boxing. Let's have fun. All the dirt I promised in the last installment of this fab column will not appear here in order that I may bring you better dirt. Dig it.

POP QUIZ — What is the best Rock'n' Roll record of the year?

GET THE KNACK. GERMS GI. FEAR OF MUSIC. TUSK. All wrong. The answer is the APOCALYPSE NOW Sound Track. Huh? It's true. Not since Lou Reed's fabulous METAL MACHINE MUSIC has an album been so extreme, so intense and so mind bending. Especially if you've seen the movie (I've seen it twice and will see it again). Now I'm no film critic or nuthin', but I know what I like in a movie: blood and gore, and lots of it. No movie fills this bill better than A. NOW. The sound track is like watching the flick if you have no eyes. All the blood and gore is transferred from celluloid to vinyl. All you have to do is check the song titles to know what I mean: "Clean's Death," "Chief's Death," "Chef's Head" and the brilliant "Strange Voyage." Plus the sound track includes selected dialogue from the movie. My faves are "Saigon" and "Napalm in the Morning." Also included is Marlon Brando's recitation of T.S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men". And if that ain't all, the best ever Rock'n'Roll band the Doors have a tune here, "The End" — which features not only the sound of helicopters but a vocal track that was mixed off the first Doors LP which was Jim Morrison singing the words "Fuck, fuck, fuck." Ya gotta listen close, but it sure is there. The two album set is eerie and awsome, and reminding me of the first time I heard "Mystic Eyes" by Them on the radio when I was real little real late on a real dark night. It's that scary. You should check it out.

FORTY-FIVE REASONS — Some cool singles that real people should own are as follows:

(A) The Human Switchboard — "Prime of my Life" (Square Records). This is the best track yet by this struggling Ohio band. It's really wild and sounds like the Velvet Underground if they had recorded in Memphis in the mid-Sixties with a Stax/Volt horn section. Send a couple of bucks to Square Records, 146 South Water No. 2, Kent, Ohio 44240. Also, there is a rumor that James Williamson (of Stooges fame) wants to produce them. I'd like to see that happen.

(B) Chares Brown — "Drifting Blues" (United Artists re-issue series) This classic R&B blast from the past is still in print. Originally recorded in 1945 for Alladin Records, the song became much inspiration or many a blues singer. Ray Charles, BB King, Bobby Blue Bland, and almost any other singer I care to name either recorded the tune or was deeply influenced by it. Find out why — pick it up.

(c) Marvin Rainwater — "My Brand of Blues" (MGM). I can't hold it back any longer. I've been wanting to write about this tune ever since I found a copy for a quarter at the Capitol Records Swap Meet. I know a lot of you have heard it because Lux Interior snuck it on Rodney Bingenheimer's turntable when the Cramps were on the ROQ show. Lux informed me that Mr. Rainwater was a full-blooded Cherokee Indian who made many Country & Western/Rockabilly records in the fifties. This particular song is a mild Rockabilly tune with a Johnny Cash flavor. The song is about a fella who is hopelessly in love with an evil hearted woman. Check some words:

The right to choose my brand of blues
That's all you ever give me
The right to choose which way I lose
The right to die or live with the blues
With the blues

Marvin's voice presents a broken hearted doom that'll make you wanna cry. I doubt if the single is still available, but the song is featured on the MGM Rockabilly album, an import.

DANNY'S DOGS UPDATE: Other people known to frequent the fabulous OK! DOG on Santa Monica Blvd. and Gardner are Miss Bonnie, Thorn Gardner, Miss Connie, Blow-Up, Mr. Jay, Carol & Beth, the Model, Gears, Miss Robie, Miss Sandy & Michael, Miss Jamie & Miss Cindy, Sue Sawyer, Danny Holloway, Mau-Maus, Kari Krome, Larry Lazer, and Michael Barakman. And about a thousand other people who are gonna be bugged because I didn't list their name in detail, with addresses and pertinent facts about what they like about the government and other fetishes.

SHOVELING MORE DIRT: Last ish I mentioned the involvement of ex-Doors keyboardist Ray Manzarek with the Zippers. Mr. Manzarek will soon also start working with another fine local noise ensemble — X. If everyone says their prayers, the resulting project will be an X album on SLASH (I've heard that name somewhere) Records produced by the Ranking Mr. Ray. The last time I spoke to Ray he was very excited about working with both bands — for sure, two of L.A.'s best.

If, on the next LP by the Clashes, we hear instruments not normally associated with the Clashes will we go proclaiming the British quartet geniuses or will we damn them for over production? We will see. We will see.

I READ YOUR MAIL — You must realize that in order to answer all the mail I get I would have absolutely no room to put all the hot dirt that I have quoted above. I will, however, attempt to answer a couple below.

Roberta Hatfield of El Monte asks the Fast One: "If I cannot afford to buy every record by Little Richard, which album do you suggest I purchase?" The answer to that one is quite simple — LITTLE RICHARD'S 17 GROOVIEST HITS (Specialty Records) has all of the absolutely essential tunes. To be lacking any of them is like not having any meat with your potatoes. It is still in print and can be ordered from any police record store.

Jimmy Harvest of Encino asks the Fastest: "I understand that you are a real Rock'n'Roll historian. Who would you say was the first Punk Rocker?" An excellent question and one that I've been hopeing someone would ask me for years. I can probably argue that it was someone like Socrates and be correct, but I will limit myself to people of this century and only people who made records. With this in mind, the answer is unquestionably Robert Johnson. Robert Johnson was the greatest blues guitarist/singer who ever walked this planet. He recorded some tunes in a hotel room in November of 1936, and again in June of 1937. Before I go on I should define my terms in order for them to make sense. Punk Rock is the purest, most honest, most extreme form of Rock'n'Roll. That is if you count all the other garbage to be Rock-'n'Roll at all. If you don't then there's no difference. "Be-Bop-Alula" was Punk Rock. So was "Tutti Fuiti," "Hound Dog," "Talk Talk," "I'm a Man" (Yardbirds OR Bob Diddley), "Satisfaction," "I Wanna Be Your Dog," "Personality Crisis," "Anarchy in the UK" and "Nothing Means Nothing Anymore." Plenty more, too. But not too many. In other words, the joke bands are not Punk Rock. They are jerks. But you knew that. Another thing must be kept in mind. Music, lyrics and image are equally important. I can give examples all night. Hell, I can write a book on the topic. Just believe me. If I'm pressed I will go into greater depth next ish. Anyway, Robert Johnson was Punk Rock in 1936 because he was a great delta-styled bottle-neck guitarist. According to his lyrics, life was really no fun — he had to put up with cheating women, women who didn't return their love, women who ripped you off, women who were cruel (don't think I got anything against women, I'm sure if Robert was a girl she'd say the same things about men); there was always a devil afterhim; and the only time he was happy was when he was on a train, leaving a mess behind. He spent time in jail. He owed girls money. He was killed by either a jealous loveror some girl's husband, nobody knows. There are two fine recordings available of his entire career: KING OF THE DELTA BLUES SINGERS Vol. 1 & 2. Both are recommended.

Connie Carver of Costa Mesa writes to El Rapido: "In the last issue of SLASH you mentioned a band called the Crawdaddys. Who are those guys and why do they exist?" The Crawdaddys are a groovy new pop/teen combo from San Diego. Their songs comprise of old R&B songs that were covered by the British Invasion R&B bands of the early Sixties — Rolling Stones, Pretty Things, Them, and Downliners Sect. They have a swell LP out on the Voxx label and they are very exciting in concert. Steve, Ron, Mark and Dan make a cool noise together and are certainly one of my fave new acts to watch.

David Ericson of Hollywood corresponds thusly: "Phast, I know you must listen to a lot of Eno records while you write the FASTER THAN YOU column. It really shows in your writing. Pure genius." Genius, yes, Eno, no way. When I write my monthly column I only listen to Stan Kenon. The one I have on now is VIVA KENTON — a cha-cha record. It gives me all of my inspiration. "Cha Cha Chee Boom" is a really terrific song. Also, I'll occasionally listen to Earl Bostic while I write. Being as fast as I am, I require movement type music in order to write. To be quite honest, I don't even own an Eno record. I highly recommend Stan Kenton and Earl Bostic to anyone who wants to break into Rock'n'Roll writing and become as much of a success as myself.

That's all we have time for in this issue, boys & girls. Be sure to check-out this column next month — same fast magazine, same fast price. Don't forget: NEVER GET OUT OF THE BOAT!

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cont. page twelve

SAN FRAN CISCO

one Belfast Cowboy

by Caitlin

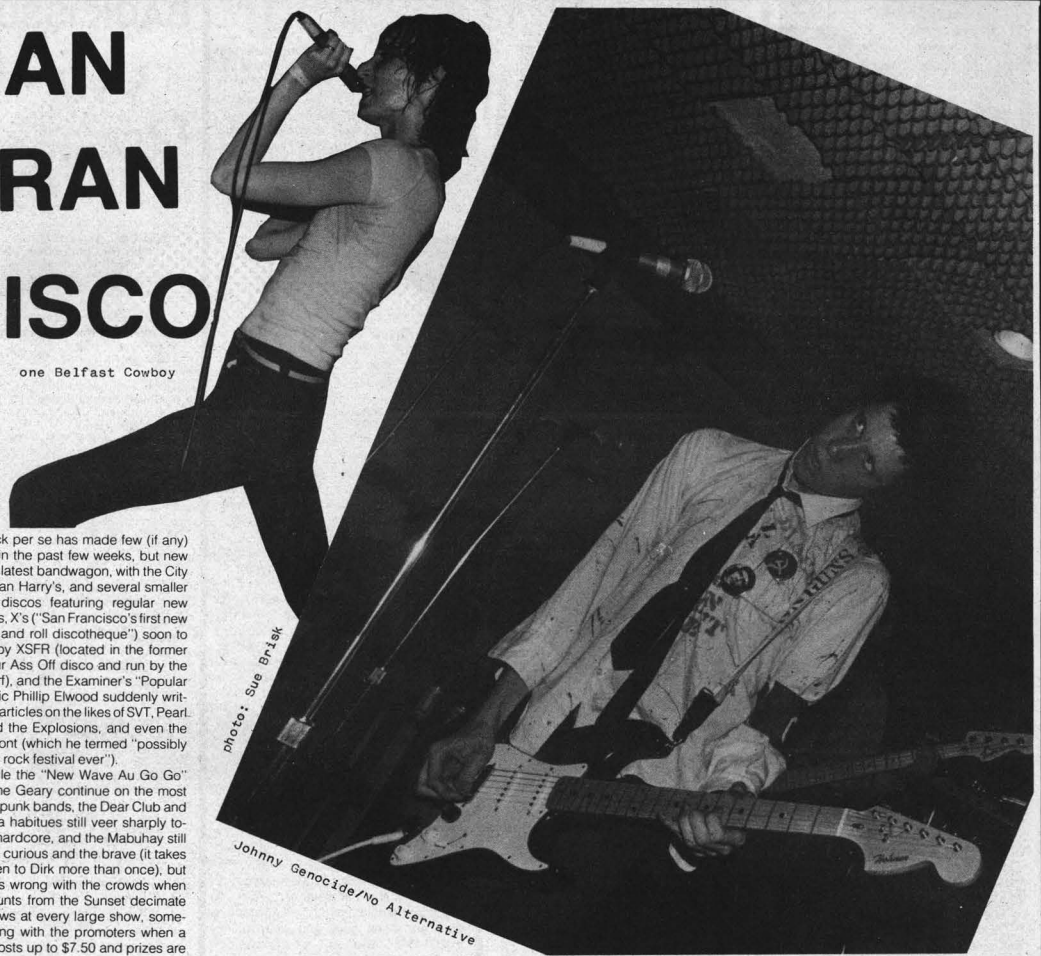


photo: Sue Brisk

Johnny Genocide/No Alternative

Punk rock per se has made few (if any) advances in the past few weeks, but new wave's the latest bandwagon, with the City disco, Oilcan Harry's, and several smaller bars and discos featuring regular new wave nights, X's ("San Francisco's first new wave rock and roll discotheque") soon to be joined by XSFR (located in the former Dance Your Ass Off disco and run by the Old Waldorf), and the Examiner's "Popular music" critic Phillip Elwood suddenly writing feature articles on the likes of SVT, Pearl Harbor and the Explosions, and even the Western Front (which he termed "possibly the biggest rock festival ever").

Meanwhile the "New Wave Au Go Go" shows at the Geary continue on the most part to star punk bands, the Dear Club and Loma Linda habitues still veer sharply towards the hardcore, and the Mabuhay still attracts the curious and the brave (it takes guts to listen to Dirk more than once), but something's wrong with the crowds when 20 huge cunts from the Sunset decimate the front rows at every large show, something's wrong with the promoters when a good gig costs up to $7.50 and prizes are offered for the best "punk" costumes, and something's wrong with the bands when Crime refuses to move their drum riser off the stage during another band's set (it's in their contract, you see), or when Chip of the Dils points at the audience during a gig that's not going well and says "this song's called "You Don't Matter Anymore". And most of all there's something wrong with you and me when we don't say a fuckin' word about any of it.

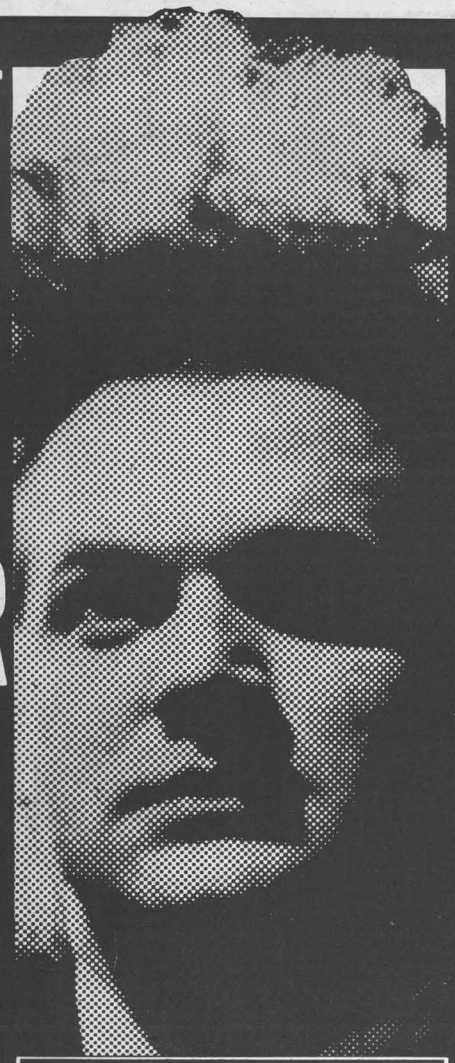
* * * * * * * *

In a month full of big names, there were remarkably few great shows. The Buzzcocks, having drawn every punk from Santa Cruz to Cotati to their Geary show, proceeded to bore most of them to tears (although opening acts Gang of Four and the Dils were warmly received). The only really memorable gig was Linton Kwesi Johnston's R.A.R. show (with special guests the Mighty Diamonds). He's released a solo LP called *Forces of Victory*, pretty straightforward reggae except that, being as he's British and all that, Linton doesn't pay too much attention to Jah, relying instead on armed insurrection. Although the album has a band on it, he played live without benefit of music, simply chanting his poems. It doesn't sound like it would work, but it did. You could tell this guy wasn't kidding. Even the Mighty Diamonds paled by comparison.

* * * * * * * *

On the local front, there are lots of new records coming out: the Dils are going up to Vancouver to record for Quintessence, the Punts may be putting out their own single (although they've just lost their guitarist to a band that's put him on salary), and Subterranean Records (founded by Mike Fox of the Tools and Steve Tupper), will in the near future be releasing a double single of the Zeros and Negative Trend. On one side will be two new Zeros songs, "Getting Nowhere Fast" and "They Say That (Everything's Alright)," and on the other side will be the original Negative Trend versions of their classic "Black and Red" (heretofore available only on their limited pressing EP) and "Meathouse". Since the demise of Negative Trend, their first EP has been much sought-after (only 1,000 were ever pressed), and certain rather poorly recorded tapes have been getting wide circulation. These tapes are a far from adequate representation of the real Negative Trend. As for the band members, Will and Steve are in Flipper, Mikal's in one of the two Fillmore Struts — his is called the Struts and features John Silvers (ex-Dils), Fast Floyd, and an apparently nameless former Rockat; the other Fillmore Struts is Fred (ex-Offs, ex-Struts), Hector and Baba (of the Zeros), and Fast Floyd. Both bands are good, but you never know which one's going to be playing...Negative Trend's founder and guitarist Craig Gray is putting together a new band, the Toiling Midgets, to include among their members Johnathan (the Trend's last bassist), and possibly Danny from the Avengers. If all this sounds confusing to you, don't worry, it is.

The Western Front is about halfway over as I write this (which just goes to show you how much time elapses between the writing and the publishing of this magazine). It's a little too soon to tell, but it looks to be on the whole a success, with at the least a lot of media attention being paid to it. There were certain problems from the outset — pitting two out-of-town bands against each other on the same night that a local heavy is playing can cause a small draw for the lesser known bands — but overall it's been fairly interesting, with all sorts of groups converging on the city all at once (and everyone needing a place to stay and equipment to borrow). Among the many bands who participated in this event were Vancouver's Pointed Sticks, Dishrags, and Female Hands; LA's Bags, Alleycats, Black Flag, Germs, and the one and only Catholic Discipline, Phoenix's Feederz, etc. etc. The Deaf Club had shows every night instead of just on the weekend, and if you went to the Mabuhay after going to the Deaf Club, it cost a buck less. Maybe we should start a foreign exchange program...Speaking of which, San Francisco's (or, more precisely, Vallejo's) own Impatient Youth will be playing LA in the near future...new names in town include Animal Things, the Frisco Whites, Regime, C.I.A., ad infinitem...(it's impossible to keep up with them, they breed too rapidly)...Dils manager Nico Ordway has been put out to pasture following an abortive attempt on his part to book them at the Mabuhay (it's been over a year since they last played there). He is now their resident North Beach correspondant-...Mayoral candidate Jello Biafra of Dead Kennedys infamy had his first public debate with reigning major Dianne Feinstein and hopeful Quentin Kopp (with Tweedledum/Tweedledee opponents like that, he may win after all)...The Tools have released their own single, "Adopted Procedure" b/w "Smoke Filled Rooms" on Work Records, as have Monterey's Insults ("Population Zero" b/w "Zombie Lover" on Ric-Mar Records)...the Mutants are back from their colossal NYC tour, consisting of two nights at Hurrah's...the most popular of the newer bands is No Alternative, though I think any band that's still doing a cover of "Stepping Stone" has some growing up to do...R.I.P. Belfast Cowboys, this city's best punk band ever in that they never in their sweet short life played a single punk song. (I could laug about anything now)...As I said earlier, punk rock has made no advances.



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A FILM BY DAVID LYNCH

AN EXERCISE IN POOR TASTE
Pink Flamingos

NUART

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N.Y.

by Speedy

Minx

HOW MANY SIT-UPS MUST WE COLLECTIVELY DO TO HAVE A MIDRIFT AS PERFECT AS IGGY POP?

HALLOWEEN — Is this the end of civilization? New wave bands on the charts without even a single or club date, Alan Suicide and Iggy Pop on Midnight Special, grimacing Gloria Vanderbilt toothy on the New York Times Sunday Magazine cover wearing a gold-studded dog collar, Pat and Dick moving into their 53rd St. townhouse near Hurrahs in time for Trisha's birthday and the B-52s will be playing? Bone-deep thrills: at least the ecological safety-minded bike-lanes painted on the Avenues last spring have been converted into disco-roller-skating routes.

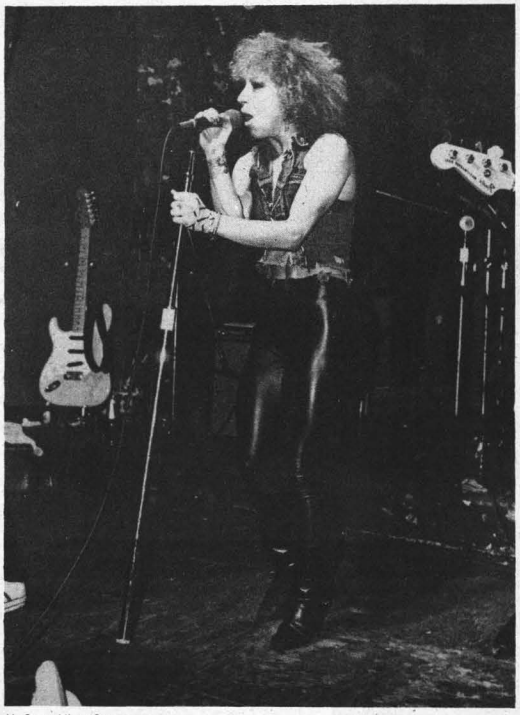
The Scene: Everybody is working, there's lots to do every night, but the winter season hasn't really shown its teeth yet. It's just being kept going, being kept available, for Woody Allen's movies. Look for some kind of punk party scene in his next, some of the locals have been signed for walk-ons.

Actually the '80s are over before they begin; it's the '60s here again. St. Mark's place is throbbing, Andy's cocaine film has its opening celebration at the Mudd, John Cale, Taylor Meade, Nico, William Burroughs — all out in the cold on the lecture circuit for so long — have returned to the well-well-defined Gnu Wave context, a happy marriage of superstar labels, music, fashion, art and cinemathetiques. Steve Rubel of Studio 54, in between court dates, appers on TV news to announce his club's imminent conversion to a rock/new wave disco, ala *Hurrahs* and *Mudd* in between sets; he sayd the mechanical funk has been improperly overplayed by the corporate DJs; he'll also spin *Motown* too, right on top of things, what with noise from *James White and the Blacks* and the newly-formed *Johnny "Dynel" King and the Dynels* pointing the perversest anti-aim in beatnik city.

Non-event of the month: the *Mudd Club* decked out like a funeral parlor, organ music, massive processions through the streets, shrines to dead songbirds Elvis, Janis, Jimmy, Sid, Keith, Marc, Brian, etc. for a two-day goodbye festival. Only histrionics here when frenzied fans throw themselves across coffins and rip apart holy authors. They thought Elvis looked too Latin. More '60s: *Taylor* was the star, with eulogies for the dead from *Jackie Curtis, Viva, Gary Indiana.*

Every day is a halloween party. What's the fashion lately, outfit of the month? Same as last; wigs are definitely in; fashion irony goes too far — some outfits are a tad too authentic, we think!

Long Hair is Beautiful: Newest venue, good location, 23rd next to the Chelsea, *Squat Theatre,* in between Artaudian plays by Hungarian immigrants, rock and jazz — the stuff has beautiful long locks. A truly decadent place, sells only Tubourg and Screwdrivers, word is children live there (!). *Nico* played there, sitting by herself at the electric piano, crooning moaning ballads to a young audience, applauding after every song. Boringest set N.Y. has seen, but not obnoxious; none of her friends came, she drank like a champ, and people think she looks terrible but she's still got super-magneto power. Sounded like *Jim Morrison* — but then so does *David Byrne* on his new single.



Helen Wheels

Tara/Youth-and-Asia

photo Speedy

Another new club opened: An after-hours place that nobody goes to and everybody hates and we don't remember its name. Also *Pravda,* a club tailored to SoHo's disgusting mix of art, performance, film, rock music and drinking, we hear had its liquor license denied — to try again in six months? Opening binge was to be a tatoo performance (?). Meanwhile, newly-discovered hot spot, midway between the Mudd and *TR 3,* the *Baby Doll Lounge,* a strip bar that gives free cheeseburgers.

Best musical return award: Shared by old man *Sylvain Sylvain, playing the only wretchedly hard rocking resurrected Dolls rock in town, and the new Contortions, James Chance* fronting his new band, which whatever you might hear, is fine. Musical vision clear as shattered crystal, short hard illogical phrases from each instrument entering over and over over transfixed surreal disco beat, James in pompador rotating his ankles. Supremely perfected from last year, even if new contortions (like the old) can't all stop at the same time.

New Music Wise our favorite notes from serious serious *Jeffrey Lohn,* of the late *Theoretical Girls,* appearing recently at TR 3 and Squat. Keyboard sheets of sound stuff, driving, with a sitting-down guitarist. We don't want to see another guitarist stand ever again.

Standing drummers are all right, though, one plays with *Buzz and the Flyers,* also an acoustic bass; Elvis-style rockabilly, very popular here among the nice-dressing swing and jitterbug young set. *Levi and the Rockats, Nelson and the Rock-a-fellas,* god knows who else, also make favorable impressions on the nervous young.

Girlbands: There's never enough of them. *Lydia Lunch* cancels out; the *Minx* jump and jam like the *Ramones,* almost; *Judy Nylon,* chant-singing like a girl *Lou Reed,* appears with *Pat Place* and others in a 12-or-so minute sci-fi set, movies lights music behind sheets of bubble-plastic. *Helen Wheels* out at *CBGBs* and *Hurrahs* with a new band, four looney-tunes playing Saturday Night Live punk, muscular biker full melodic noise.

And So On: First date for the *Raebeats,* some ex-contortions to be the *Ventures* of the '80s. No singing, and they're the only band here still remembering the virtues of short songs, short sets. One for the girls: *YouthandAsia,* screaming and posing, pretty, pretty. We like *Ludacer,* three brothers plus one, sing college, all dress in grey, grey instruments, they are pretty too. Popular also the *Futants,* real rock, everybody sings, dresses right.

Coming Soon: Neon Leon, Cheetah Chrome and the Casualties, Klaus Nomi, rock films, rock cable show, Policeband, Containers, Walter Stedding, the Commissioner of Power and Energy from the State of Illinois, the Jimettes, etc. etc.

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LONDON

RANDOM STOATS

OR THE BITCH IS BACK

It's not very hard to deduce from even the scantiest perusal of *Slash* that the paper is written by, and put together by people who're all slightly derranged. Biggs' tearful pep-talk on page 8 of the last issue brought that home to me with a certain amount of self-disgust. Sanctimonious clap-trap is fine, just fine, but expecting people to pay to read it is just too fucking much. Expecting other people, rich capitalistic people especially, to pay to advertise amongst pages that are full of it is not just blindly optimistic, it's supeme arrogance.

Still, this is London and that's Los Angeles and the peculiar madness of So. Cal. that seduces my rationalizing processes whenever I'm there to the point where I actually think I like being in L.A. better than I like sitting here at 3 a.m. swallowing large quantities of cheap speed so that I can crank out another jaundiced appraisal of all that's wild n'whacky in this rat-hole of a city after several days and nights of murdering facts for a living, fending off bailiffs and watching the rain leak through the ceiling for days on end...well right now that insanity looks just like insanity and the jolly camaradie that Biggs was trying to galvanize us with in the face of "oppression" is hardly sufficient to compel me to pay $24 to rush this garf across the Atlantic in 36 hours so that Samioff and his cynical cohorts can put the knife to it for the sake of a cheap chuckle.

But that's getting off on another and wholly bent tangent that it would perhaps would be as wel to suppress right now. The last time I worked (and incidently got paid to work for) an "alternative" newspaper, a band of acid crazed Hell's Angels were hired by certain aggreived parties to stomp into our offices, empty the files into a heap on the floor, piss and shit onthem, kill any bystanders and finally set fire to the building. The business manager of that paper was London's biggest dope dealer, had three passports in three different names and has never been seen since his cabin cruiser sank in the Thames poisoning the fish for several miles downstream with what was later diagnosed to be pure LSD. None of which is relevant to what's going on now.

And to the irate *Slash* reader who complained that Random Stoats didn't contain enough stuff on the BUZZCOCKS, XTC. and varous other entertainers she considered to be prime movers in the battle against musical totalitarianism, I must in all humility apologize that the Boy Bessy didn't print your letter in the last issue, along with my response which was, basically, "Fuck Off."

'Cause what's going on here, just to return to matters of impartial consequence for the moment, is this:

KENNY MORRIS and JOHN McKAY were in fact *not* elbowed from the BANSHEES as reported last month (SIOUXSIE and her manager were trying to save face by implying that was the case), they left because they didn't like it. Whatever, S & The Bs had to cancel a few dates of their tour whilst they scrabbled round for a replacement drummer and guitarist. They forced a marriage with BUDGIE who recently overcame his misogyny in a similar stint with THE SLITS and ROBERT SMITH, who now plays two sets a night on the tour, the first one being with support band, THE CURE. The result is awkward, but not totally out of the question, but then I don't particularly go for SIOUXSIE's brand of shrieking cant anyway.

What I prefer are THE BOOKS, currently the object of half the cheque book wavers in the record business, who are a bit like the SCREAMERS only jollier. The bass player dresses from the same wardrobe as CHEAP TRICK's Rick Neilson, but this should not be held against him. Singer and lead synthesizer player STEVEN BETTS has natural thespian abilities and can outinsuit any audience and between him and LYN BERGER on keyboards synthetic and otherwise, The Books manage to remain fast, fascinating and frighteningly accomplished without being at all arty, this last criticism the bedrock of my disaffection for the aforementioned Screamers when I saw them in September. TOMATO and SHEILA are becoming the SONNY & CHER of the '80s.

Alright, with customary disrespect, a malevolent art director I use the phrase drunkenly, attempted to undermine the import of the current Mod revival with an irreverrant headline. I can see that Los Angeles will not be interested in Union

Jackets and button-down collars until a couple of years after they've gone out of style again here, so I'll refrain from cataloguing the activities of all the bands that are emerging in the wake of QUADROPHENIA, the violent clashes between Skinheads, Punks and Policemen, the facts that the charts are crawling with Mod bands and that the Mod predeliction for Ska and Reggae is going to fuck up the heads of bigots like Kickboy who opine that skanking is the sole perogative of people with either dreadlocks or crimson dye in their hair.

Instead I shall mentioned briefly THE GANG OF FOUR whose first album, "Entertainment" was qualified thus by the ever-objective *New Musical Excess*: "After 'Entertainment', everything else is nursery rhymes." Well maybe that's a bit over the top, but it's refreshing to those jaundiced ears to hear a band who have not only proressed immeasurably on a technical level since I saw them nine months ago (i.e. they can now play their instruments properly, simultaneously and in tune and time with one another), but also have the balls to make explicit political statements which are considered as well as loud. The CLASH, in my opinion, merely make them loudly. Well I got the album, got stunned and trekked off to see them in a haze of alcohol and junk food (Burgerking is now poisoning the bodies of young Londoners) top of the bill at the London University. The student bouncers, who could at least speak words of more than one syllable, were adamant that the place was full to capacity and neither myself nor another journalist (sic) Pete Silverton of *Snouds*, could gain entry to review the gig. And whilst we were standing outside with a throng of perhaps thirty other crazies trying to get in, frolicsome members of the appropriately named OXY & THE MORONS, who were the support band, poured beer out of the dressing room window, ruining my friend's hand tailored ego. It's nice to see a band that respects their audience, isn't it?

Still, you're undoubtedly waiting with baited breath for this month's SEX PISTOLS news. Well it's, er, *interesting*. Sole survivors STEVE JONES and PAUL COOK have been seen and heard rehearsing with a *very long haired* bass player ANDY ARTHUR in a London studio with Jones acquitting himself very well as a vocalist. "There's no stopping this boy!" muttered Cook, "This is what he lives for - playing guitar, doing the overdubs, hearing them and being told how good he is." (N.B. that quote was unashamedly ripped off from *N.M.E.* They owe me).

FAULTY PRODUCTS who have brought us some of the most intrepidly off-the-wall music in recent years, including a fab new TRANSMITTERS' 12-inch e.p. and a new FALL album with new line-up which in an unparalleled fit of democracy, includes their roadies, are about to sub-contract their distribution through a major record company, instead of doing it themselves as one of the two remaining new wave independent set-ups, (the other being Rough Trade). The very wonderful NICK JONES says this won't affect their policy at all, the company they'll deal with (obviously A&M in view of partner Miles Copeland's management of THE POLICE and SQUEEZE, both on that label) will have to take what they're given. But will they push it with the same enthusiasm and integrity you do, Nick? "Do me a favour," came back the answer.

Well dawn and (probably) the bailiffs are creeping around the rooftops and it's time to reach for the Mogadon and pretend to sleep for a few hours. However it would be remiss of me not to mention MILITANT BARRY & THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS who are the ranking-est full-tilt reggae band I've seen in many months and who still don't have a contract, or PSYCHEDELIC FURS who do, with Epic, and although I cynically tongue-lashed them last month a test pressing of their album hs just come my way which I have to gudgingly admit shimmers with charismatic despair so compelling, I think I'll kill myself. Also high on the personal fave list is the HUMAN LEAGUE's first album (synthesizers + downers + offkey vocals = fun for the kids) and HENRY BADOWSKI who has this years' best single "Making Love With My Wife" out now on Deptford Fun City Records. Badowski plays everything on the 'A' side of this cute and n'compelling little vinyl turd, and is joined on the obverse by such luminaries as Alex Kolkowski (no relation) on violin and the Dave Berk form the legendary JOHNNY MOPED band on drums. (I'm trying hard to gather together a definitive article on this shady but seminal influence on the British new wave who now, as always, lives with his mother in a grey London suburb, but it is not easy as he is completely mad and perpetually drunk on cheap cider. A state of consciousness that you Los Angelenos can, I'm sure identify with.)

MORK WILLIAMS

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Lots of record Reviews

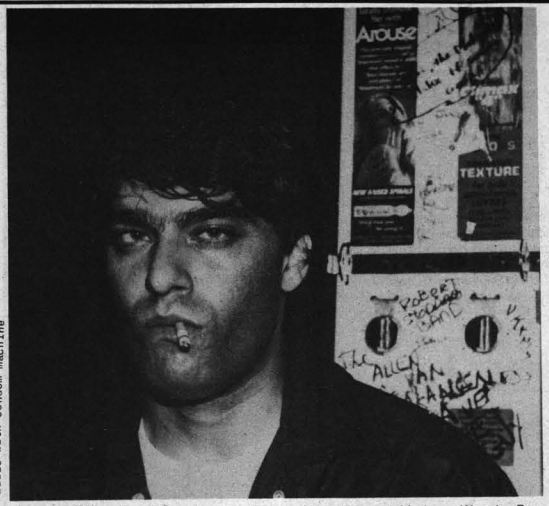
EDDIE WITH NO SUBTITLES

YET ANOTHER (BIASED) LOOK AT ORANGE COUNTY (AND OTHER DUBIOUS TOPICS)

Eddie, of hardly famous Eddie And The Subtitles, may these days be without a most permanent line up (lately vacationing members of Middle Class have been made honorary Subtitles) but the man is certainly not without opinions. And since we at Slash have always been suckers for opinions, especially the libellous incendiary variety, we was delighted (my maaaan!) to look at this little ol' scene thru Eddie's eyes. Looks like pretty good eyesight to us!

Slash: You live in Orange County but you play almost exclusively in L.A. Is that because the few places that are down there aren't suitable for your band?

Eddie: Orange County is an unbelievable mindless, sexless, funless monster that should be permanently shut down. There's only four places to play: colleges, private parties, The Renaissance Cafe, and The Cuckoo's Nest. Colleges are rip-offs (get your money first!). Private parties are dependent on who throws the party. The Renaissance Cafe is like playing in your closet (so I'm told). The Cuckoo's Nest is just plain fucked. Since we've been banned from The Cuckoo's Nest and aren't even allowed to be spectators, I might be a little biased on that one. Jerry Roach is a rip-off of the maximum degree. He expects you to provide the P.A., print up and distribute flyers, print up and distribute tickets, play under bands you've never heard of (and never will), pay full price for your drinks, play a long danceable set, and don't play loud or "I'll turn the power off." All this and your band goes home with $30. Sorry, Jerry, lose my number and fuck you! Huntington Beach seems to have a scene. There's several cool people but a great deal of punkers (what?) who according to the Herald Examiner are doing "the worm" on broken glass, graffittiing their high school bathrooms, vandalizing private homes, carving swastikas on their bodies, throwing beer bottles at non-punkers (who?), having sex on people's front lawns and adding to their dossiers that the police keep as a "precautionary" measure.



Eddie with condom machine

Slash: What's your opinion of the L.A./Hollywood club scene?

Eddie: I hear Neil Bogarde, president of Casablanca Records, is financing a movie about the L.A. street scene that will be centered around Madame Wong's. Presumably she'll be charging $18 at the door. The Troubadour's another one, worst P.A. system that's ever been made, and the lowest paying gig that we've ever done despite a sold out crowd. Just to show my appreciation I ended up littering the club with the rest of our tickets. Doug Weston, I'm told, was furious and vowed never to have us back. Then there's the real dumps like the Rock Corporation, Bla Bla Cafe, Palomino, etc. etc. Theys hould have The Balls play there every night.

Slash: The Subtitles seem to be pretty much ignored by the above ground press. Does that concern you?

Eddie: The press in L.A. is for lack of a better word, horrible. Robert Hilburn is senile and has too many Bette Midler, Bob Dylan, etc. records on his turntable. Christine MacKenna's copy of "Tooth and Nail" doesn't have the Middle Class or UXA on it. Her copy of Yes L.A. has the Germs doing Lexicon Devil. One must assume both records are rare collectors items that exist only in her collection. Richard Cromelin is fair and actually quite good but doesn't use, or isn't allowed to use his power nearly enough to help the local scene. Ken Tucker thinks John Doe is the brilliant lead guitarist of "X" (enough said). Meanwhile, the underground press goes about providing us with the only first hand account available.

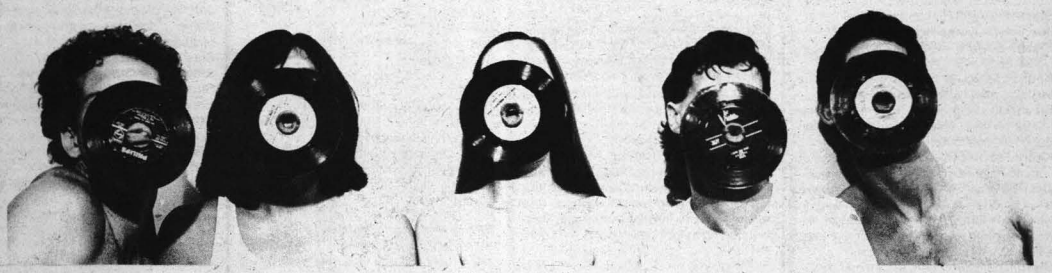
Slash: Your lawyer, Jay Jenkins, who also works with "X", The Plugz, Rodney, and The King Bees, claims several record companies are interested in your services. How does it feel to be in a band on the verge of signing?

Eddie: The record companies are blank, and I mean that in the true sense of the word. You ask them what they think of the Alley Cats and they think you're talking about some bowling team. You ask them about the Middle Class (who I manage) and they say, "Oh, yes, they definitely carry the burden of taxation." You ask about Black Flag and they say, "No problem, haven't seen a roach in weeks." Jesus, if it weren't for the record biz these guys would be cleaning the streets.

Slash: In closing, do you have any advice or inspirational comment to pass on to our readers.?

Eddie: No.

SUBURBAN LAWNS



GidgetGoesToHell *MyBoyfriend*

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TROUBLE AT THE CHURCH

This is a story about the church. You see, the church is this old rotten grey building on Pier Ave. in Hermosa Beach. It used to be a house of God, but now it's a house of chaos, since the whole So. Bay punk contingent have moved inside. It's a crowd consisting of Black Flag, the Last, Red Cross, the Descendants, the Disposals, the Urinals, and friends, plus various people hanging out at different times. It's a crazy place to go to, and a good example of L.A. punk music existing outside of Hollywood & Chinatown.

In the wastelands of So. Bay, being a punk is much closer to what it was a couple years ago than it is now. People like Black Flag or Red Cross, with their pinned-on pictures and scroungy look, often find themselves living in a part of town that does not prefer their presence. People at the church get threatened, chased, harrassed, and picked on by both surfers and policemen. One night when I left the church to go home, I was pulled over by three squad cars who searched and questioned everything just to give me a ticket for a broken tail-light. The police often bust into the church looking for weapons and "punkers".

Anyway, Slash got together a bunch of them for an interview, including Ron Reyes, the drummer of Red Cross; Keith, singer in Black Flag; and Joe Nolte, leader of the Last; as wel as Gregg, Jeff, and Steve (who's only 12 years old) of Red Cross. Plus some guy named Scott who is 17 and ran away from home to live at the church.

Slash: So the police have become very aware of you lately?
Ron: The copys know we're here, they don't like us. One night these guys drove by and yelled something, so one of us threw a bottle. They came back and there was a fight. When the police finally arrived, they immediately took up sides and started coming down on us without ever listening to what we said.
Keith: When we first played down on the Strand, the cops knew us.
Joe: There was a party after that Polliwog Park thing and the cops didn't come in, they just stayed outside and busted people as they left. Now, they come in a lot...
Slash: Is this kind of harrassment any different an in Hollywood? Like at the Masque or something?
Ron: In Hollywood, you can walk around with balls hangin' out and no cop will say anything!
Joe: In Hollywood, they don't get harrassed unless there's some kind of legit reason. Like a big crowd or something. Here, they come around without a reason.
Slash: Personal Harrassment...
Joe: Anybody who looks like us...
Slash: So why don't you just move to Hollywood?
Keith: 'Cause we hate Hollywood! That's the big scene out there. Fuck that scene...
Slash: I heard Black Flag had some trouble with it. Like getting dropped off good bills and stuff...
Keith: People think we're real bad boys or something. Everybody knows we're really just nice guys...(laughter in the room) We all work jobs, so we like to just get wild on weekends. Crazy every chance we get. We were dropped off maybe three or four bills. One with X, One with the Alleycats.
Slash: I heard you were recording now...
Keith: We're getting ready to make an album, we can keep it together. We're getting all this free time in the studio at like, one or two in the morning. This guy wants to give us free time, so he can establish himself as a punk-new wave producer. He wants to get Robo to use different drum sounds. Lots of guitar overdubs. We're a "Live" band, we don't need that crap...
Slash: You don't care then?
Keith: Yeah, we do. But we're gonna do it our way!
Slash: Who's it with?
Keith: It's gonna be Upsetter, with Chris, hopefully...

Steve/12 yr. old front man for Red Cross photo: Deborah Schow

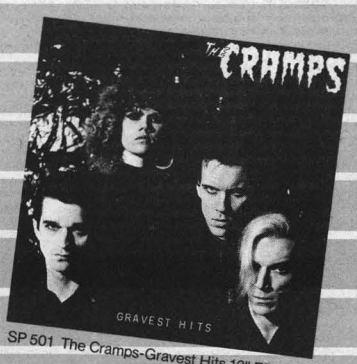
Slash: Did you like San Francisco?
Joe: You walk into Mabulhay and get instantly high.
Ron: It reeks...it reeks.
Keith: We'd go over real well at the deaf club, 'cause we use lots of sign language. (he flips us off)
Slash: But, you did well?
Keith: The reception was great. We're playing and people are going "commit suicide!" I said, "Go kill yourselves, you fucking homo-pot-smoking jerks!"
Ron: They're all dancing and at the same time yelling "L.A. sucks!"
Slash: Joe, I heard you had a bone to pick with Slash?
Joe: Yeah, I do. Slash editorial policy has been to ignore the Last, because we're on Bomp or something. For some reason, Slash catagorizes us among the likes of 20/20, the Pop, and Motels, and we don't belong in that category, because the roots of the Lsat are basically hardcore. We've been involved on the scene. We debuted at the Masque when it was essentially a showcase for the Skulls...
(at this point everybody in the room screams "hooray for the Skulls!")
And our music is pop-influenced, but not any more than the Buzzcocks, or the fucking Clash! Anybody who's seen us, know we're not some fucking power-pop Knack clone. The Buzzcocks are more wimp-rock than us.
Keith: Maybe we should throw a benefit for Slash...
Slash: Why do you think the Buzzcocks can get away with it?
Joe: Because, they're from fucking England man! And its hip to be from England! The only guy who mentions us is Bo Clifford, who's on Bomp...
Slash: So you wanna be in Slash, huh?
Joe: Its a great magazine! I read it religiously. I wish we could see our names in there. We wanns be written about by the great writers like Kickboy!
Slash: Well, you're in the rag now...
Ron: The Go-Go's do basically the same thing as the Last and they get accepted...

Right around this time, we decided to go up to get some pictures before the sun went down. While we shot photos on the sidewalk, at least two motorcycle cops cruised by and told us to get out of the street. Keith and Joe went to the liquor store and came back with not 2 or 3, but four six-packs of beer. They took some pictures around the area, then Keith had to leave to go to work. So we went back and finished the interview, while the rest of Red Cross and a bunch of friends showed up. At this point, Slash began to get the real dirt.

Slash: Let's get some dirt now. Who wants to be rich?
Ron: Me!!!
Joe: Me!!!
Jeff: Joe does!!!
Scott: Me too!!!
Joe: Of course, I do! There's no shower in the church! There's no stove in the church! There's no refrigerator! None of us have a car! We're all fucked! We're stuck here in So. Bay and we're piss-poor!
Ron: I just want tall girls! Negro love!
Joe: Anybody, who says they don't wanna be rich is a liar!
Slash: So, this isn't aesthetics or anything, you're only after money?
Ron: I think everybody knows there's no money in this...
Joe: It would be stupid to play music to make money! It would be so much easier to go to law school! Everybody down here is playing exactly what they want to play.
Ron: We played a full house with the Germs and didn't make anything for it!
Jeff: You made that agreement...
Ron: Yeah, fine, but...
Joe: You made the agreement, you didn't talk to anyone else in the band...
Jeff: Ron set up that fucking gig! So fuck you all!
Ron: Now, wait a minute!!!
Slash: Shut-up! Shut-up! Shut-up! How do you fuckers ever live together?
Scott: Dirty!
Steve: You got showers at the beach! Why don't you use them!
Joe: I haven't had a shower in weeks...
Scott: You! Me!
Slash: Shut-up! Shut-up! Now listen! Next question, who here is directly influenced by David Bowie?
Joe: 90% of punk-rockers in L.A. are just old Bowie freaks...
Scott: No! Not me!
Jeff: Not me!
Joe: First time I saws Mary Rat she was all glittered out at a Bowie concert!
Slash: Yeah! More dirt!...
Joe: Hung out with my brother Michael back in 1976...
Slash: What's your collective influences?
Gregg: The Avengers!
A Girl: David Bowie!
Scott: Church music!
Joe: Rockabilly!
Ron: No, I don't like rockabilly too much. It's a good joke...
Slash: Marvin Rainwater is god!
Gregg: Penelope Houston is god!!!
Jeff: Penelope Houston is god!!!
Steve: If you changed the bass lines in rockabilly, it might be o.k. Some bass every song...
Joe: You can also say that about rock and roll...
Slash: What's the general opinion here of Penelope Houston?
Gregg:
Steve: GREAT!!!
Scott:
Slash: How did you like the Clash doing Be-Bop A Lula?
Scott: They're assholes!
Prescilla: They sounded jsut like a normal rock and roll bank...
Scott: It was cosmic...
Slash: How do you like San Francisco in general?
Jeff: Fags!
Joe: There's more fags in Frisco than anywhere...
Slash: What are some other bands around here?
Joe: The Urinals, the Descendants. The Urinals are great. The most minimal band ever. The Descendants have a lot of real good songs...
Scott: The Disposals!
Joe: The Dispoals are an all girl group. Their drummer is this 31-year old housewife...
Jeff: She's an alcoholic!
Scott: Fuck the Descendants!
Slash: Who's paying for the Red Cross recordings?
Steve: I paid for it with my paper route...
Slash: Have you played around town?
Jeff: We played at the Soul Palace once...
Steve: I don't think it's fun being kicked offstage right when we went on...
Slash: At King's Palace? Why?
Steve: Underage...
Slash: What do you think of pornography?
Steve: I only like kiddy pornography...
Ron: Yeah, like see Jane take off her clothes. Look at Jane.
Steve: They asked me if I...
Jeff: His teacher is into punk rock and stuff.
Steve: He looked at my notebook and got all excited.
Slash: What do you really hate?
Steve: I only hate school.
Ron: I hate ugly girls!
Jeff: I hate the Buzzcocks!

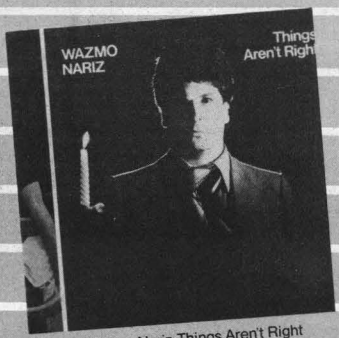
After that, people started toying around with the instruments, it all turned into a wild psychedelic jam. Next thing I knew, Red Cross was playing their whole set right there in the room. We left the place, which was littered with beer cans and garbage to go see X. This gang of people pretty much have their days numbered at the church. They all know that pretty soon somebody's gonna put them out of a home. Then, there'll be no where to go. So as Jim Morrison said "get your kicks before the whole shithouse goes up in flames." They certainly will down here...

The first release from the I.R.S.



SP 501 The Cramps-Gravest Hits 12" EP

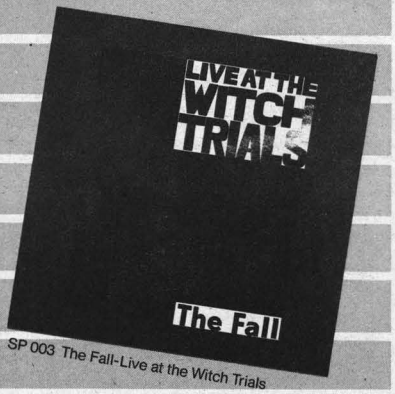
SP 001 Buzzcocks-Singles Going Steady



SP 005 Wazmo Nariz-Things Aren't Right

SP 002 Fashion-Product Perfect

SP 006 Root Boy Slim & the Sex Change Band
-Zoom



SP 003 The Fall-Live at the Witch Trials

Auditing the 80's

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ANGRY SAMOANS

photo: Deborah Schow

ANGRY SAMOANS
by Audie Murphy, Jr.
Gregg, Mike, Tod, PJ
Interviewed in Tod's North Hollywood dump.

he can't read baby, he can't talk
he's L.A.'s favorite punk-rock jock
glitter bands and Bowie's cock
are his ideas of new wave rock

you're just a fucking piece of shit now Rodney
I don't think you're so hot
you make me laugh with those clothes you wear
and those lamebrain teeth you've got

8 PM and Rodney's on the air
he's beating off in Joan Jett's hair
Christmas Eve and whattaya got
4 hours of Phil Spector rot
GET OFF THE AIR
GET OFF THE AIR
you pathetic male queer you don't impress me
GET OFF THE AIR
YOU FUCKING SQUARE
you're just a jerk as far as I can see

—"Get Off the Air," the Angry Samoans

SLASH: How come you hate Rodney so much?
GREGG: It's a matter of having a bogus element representing itself as new wave, I mean how could anybody consider it a new wave show? You'd think more people would be up in arms about it but it's such an apathetic town.
PJ: He's just the antithesis of everything the music stands for.
MIKE: I still haven't forgiven him for all those Suzi Quatro records.
TOD: I think he's a glitter faggot, a glitter dropout anyhow. But there's nothing wrong with statutory rape, I can't object on that level.
SLASH: But what's the reason for all the *vehemence* behind this anti-Rodney crusade?
MIKE: The Samoans had gigs set up at the Hong Kong Cafe, the Flipside benefit and one with Fear. And Rodney Bingenheimer found out we were scheduled, he called up the club and made threats and had us put off the bill.
SLASH: The way I heard it is Barry Seidel at the Hong Kong said he did it on his own as a favor to Rodney. Why assume Rodney would actually initiate anything like that himself?
GREGG: He may be too much of an insect to have initiated it but whether he does or doesn't there's just too much respect paid to him as somebody with power he doesn't merit.
MIKE: Irregardless, the band got kicked off. Anyway it's just good mindless vehemence, we were mindless before Rodney became a factor.
TOD: Why is hating Rodney not just some other aspect of living in L.A.? It's as viable as the Eyes singing about blowing up Disneyland.
SLASH: You ever run into him since all this started?
MIKE: I thought about setting his hair on fire at the Stardust gig, he's about four feet away and the first thing that came into my mind was ...
TOD: I saw him at the Orchids gig at the Troubadour. Kim Fowley was trying to waste time because they had guitar problems, I was shouting that Fowley should get off the stage, that I hated his guts and that Rodney should die, 'cause I know those guys are pretty tight. Well Kim just asked me to come up to the stage, he says, "Who do you work for?" I said, "The Angry Samoans, we hate Rodney." He says, "Why do you hate Rodney, does he get more girls than you?" I said, "No, it's because he's a glitter faggot," and the whole place applauded, so Rodney ran up to the stage ...
SLASH: Some people think it's all for publicity, like you'll end up signing a truce with him and pose for photos ...
MIKE: With our fist in his face!
GREGG: If it was wrestling we could turn good guys for a second and then throw salt in his face. But no, we're not trying to parlay any of this into a forced identity that'd maybe eventually work to our advantage, it isn't conscious like that, we don't even have a manager to issue press-release manifestos. We do it because we'd like to say on stage what we've been saying to our friends all along, to at least four or five people that we don't know.
SLASH: Even before Rodney you guys already had this rep as being an obnoxious band, troublemakers, you've somehow become the official bad boys of L.A. new wave.
MIKE: I didn't think we even deserved a reputation yet!
GREGG: The whole thing started at the Club 88, we were banned there for what they initially called "continued obscenity." The facts are the band we played with, Blow Up, ripped off a six-pack of beer from Mike...
MIKE: A case!
SLASH: Of what, Coors?
MIKE: Schlitz. And then their scumbait cockroach of a manager told the club owner's wife how obscene and offensive we are to their fans, all 26 of them.
SLASH: Well you guys probably *are* the number one angry cuss-mothers of L.A. right now, why not take credit where it's due?
MIKE: No, Fear's the best, we're still trying. Besides, the other bands just have too big a vocabulary. And as far as anger goes we only get excited when you give us something to hate, even if they hate *us* it's great, if you can't enjoy a band it's still great if you have something to heckle. The main reason everybody hates us though is we're all so fucking ugly, except for Tod that is.
PJ: Speak for yourself!
SLASH: Also, you guys seem to have an elitism about your relationship to your new wave brothers so to speak, you snarl at them a lot more than they snarl at each other.
MIKE: They're all a bunch of recycled glitter queers, the Love Butchers are the only cool ones I've met. The only band better than us right now is Black Flag, Fear, we're certainly better than X.
GREGG: So many of them are down deep diametrically opposed to what new wave in principle is supposed to be. Two years ago at this party Darby Crash...
MIKE: Yeah they're watching the Midnight Special at the Germs' slut bass player's house, David Bowie comes on and he's dressed like a fucking glitter faggot, all these insults come out of our corner of the room, "Turn off the homo!" They finally kicked us out, meanwhile Darby just goes on watching the faggot.
TOD: Anything that comes out of Hollywood sucks.
GREGG: What pisses me off most is I don't see any deliberate, or even non-deliberate, sense of humor in most of the other bands. They take a serious party line on everything they say and do, they don't leave much room for just playing around. Anyway it's mostly mutual. Musically, we're closer than you'd think to a lot of them but the feedback I get when I phone places to try to play — "Hey can we play with so-and-so?" — the other bands seem as adverse to accepting us, either they've all got friends in the other bands they want playing with 'em or they hear our name, forget it. It's like that UXA song, "Social Circle."
MIKE: Like we'll open for anybody, going on first is best anyway, you can take all the time to tune your guitar you want. Look, we'll even play with Rhino 39, we've existed for a year now, played 18 gigs, and still never played in front of 50 people in L.A., give or take a few homos. You have to have some exposure even for the audience to know what it's hating.
SLASH: A lot of your anger seems like shy person's anger...
GREGG: Yeah, we're non-gregarious.
MIKE: It's like being laughed at in Austin, Texas, in 1972 for playing Stooges albums, all the hippies made fun of me when I was going to school there from Arkansas.
GREGG: We hate ourselves just as much as we hate anything else, we sing about stabbing our own brains, poking our eyes out, as much as we sing about "you stupid asshole" or "you dirty fucking whore."
MIKE: Self-directed mania and psychosis is much more reliable than boy-girl anyday.
SLASH: All you guys live in the Valley?
PJ: I live in Ventura. I work as a loony bin hostess at Camarillo, I get to look through the medical records and watch patients eat cigarette butts.
TOD: I used to live in Beverly Hills, I lived there with my adopted Jew parents and my twin sister ...
PJ: Who's real hot.
TOD: You never met her.
PJ: I fucked her!
TOD: Yeah sure. Anyway I did used to live in fucking Beverly Hills ...
GREGG: Tell him about the sewers!
TOD: A hippie showed me the sewers, I was 15, I was a sophomore at Beverly Hills High, bunch of snot-nosed Jews went there, there was a little drain across the curb from the school, it's at Spalding and Moreno in case you wanna check it out, on the east side of the street. You pick up the manhole and you get down inside and close the manhole, let it drop down over your head, you gotta be careful, you can break your skull with those things. We'd close it up and try to come up in a different locale. Then we'd have to slide through this tube on our bellies about 20 yards unless you have a skateboard you can put under you. Then you get to a larger hole that was about four feet in diameter, this one you could crawl like a duck until you get to the main pipe, of which there were probably only two or three running the entire city of Beverly Hills. There's no light at all, we used flashlights, one time in a stoned stupor we only had one flashlight and the guys holding it got into too much water, the skateboard slid under his feet and he broke the flashlight, we spent about an hour and a half trying to find our way out.
SLASH: You ever get up to your knees in shit?
TOD: This wasn't a shit pipe, it's a water drain, water from the Japanese gardeners, rain, dogpiss from all the fucking poodles. Anyway the main pipe is square, about 20 feet tall, 20 feet wide, there's one running about every two miles under the basin of L.A., like there's one under La Cienega for instance, one under Spalding. We could take it all the way into the hills by Coldwater Canyon, we could've taken it all the way to Venice Beach if we wanted. There was graffiti there that must've been 30 years old, there was one that said "Red Shit Here 1956" but there wasn't any shit, it was too old. One time me and some creep ripped off a couple of bicycles and drove them in through the wash in the park at the bottom of Coldwater Canyon, we took it into this opening and drove all the way down. Once we were on acid, we took turns on a slut that we found in a local park, a 17-year-old high-on-dope cunt, one guys held the flashlight, I still remember her moans in the sewer acoustics. See, we love life as much as everybody else, at least I know *I* do!
SLASH: Any recording plans for the immediate future?
GREGG: There's no rush.
PJ: Oh come on, we've got the uniquest sound in town and we gotta let 'em know, we've got enough material right now for a goddam LP!
MIKE: I just wanna play with Rhino 39. ●

D. O. A.

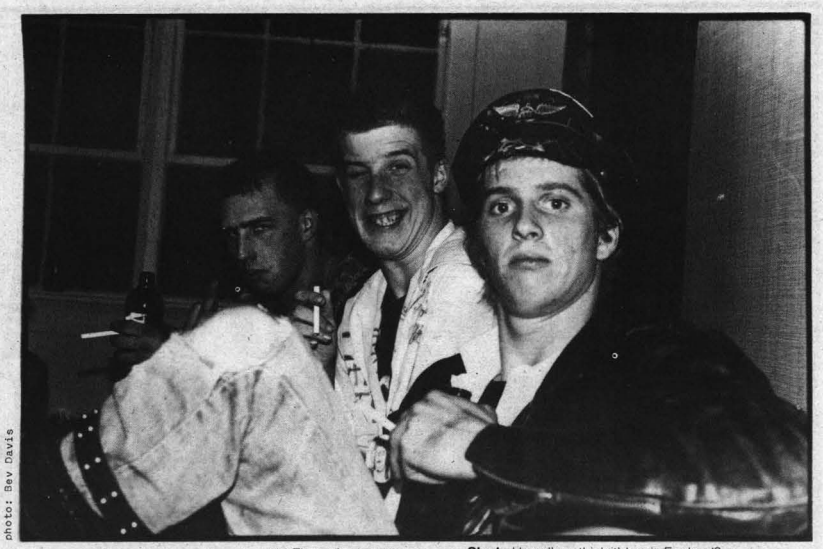


photo: Bev Davis

DOA from Vancouver
Randy Rampage on vocal and bass.
Joey Shithead on guitar & vocals.
Chuck Biscuits on drums.
He interviewed them the day after their gig with four other bands at the Stardust Ballroom.

Slash: What was the deal as far as the 5 bands last night?
Joey: Well I guess we probably got paid the least . . . they probably broke even or something.
Slash: Do you know how many people came?
Joey: I think it was like a thousand paid.
Slash: What d'you think of the price they charged to get in?
Joey: $6.50 seems pretty extreme to me, but then you've got 2 out-of-town bands . . . but then again neither us or the Dils were paid a lot of money, so . . .
Slash: I suppose you play a lot more in Canada than you do in the States.
Joey: Well not letely . . .
Slash: What's the situation as far as clubs and all that up there?
Joey: Well it's kind of similar I guess to what LA used to be like you know, they'd open for a little bit and then the police'd close it down or the liquor board would got on it or something like that. The only club that's really regular up there right now is called the Smiling (?)
Slash: Is there as much police pressure in Canada as there is in the States? as far as punk gigs?
Joey: Yeah easily. It doesn't matter whether the gigs are really calm or really wild, they're always there you know. The real problem is like the under age thing you know, here you get that special liquor stamp. Drinking age is 19 in Canada, you CAN'T be underage.
Slash: So what do the underage kids do?
Joey: The way it started was like rented halls and there was no liquor served. Say here the average age is 18, 21. In Vancouver you've got a lot more 14, 15, 16 year olds.
Slash: Are there a lot of bands?
Joey: Yeah. It's picking up.
Slash: What about the media — do they have the same attitude to punk in Canada, all the cliches?
Joey: There are some bands that are considered nice you know.
Slash: I don't suppose you're one of the nice bands.
Joey: No. there's a band up there called The Pointed Sticks, their new single is getting played on radio stations.
Slash: Does your single get any airplay at all?
Joey: Just like on campus radio stations and there's a co-op radio station. As soon as we get back we're recording ew single . . . sort of with our own label and with a record company up there helping us you know. Friends Records might be helping us.
Slash: Tell me about the rock against racism gigs.
Joey: We've done one in Vancouver & we've done one in Chicago. It's good to do stuff like that because racism is fucked . . . It depends who organizes them.
Randy: This girl in chicago, she's just interested in becoming promoter of gigs and she figured it'd be a really big gig, so it'd be a notch on her belt — she was more interested in her own games than what the thing was about. Us and another band, it seemed like we were the only people who were really aggressive about it. They place more emphasis . . . Well we must have speakers . . . They got so ridiculous, they'd have somebody that talks about, let's see, a nuclear plant or something like that in the Chicago area, OK, then each group would have to have 5 minutes each on that subject . . .
Slash: When the fucking message is suppose to be in the music anyway
Joey: Chicago is not a really big town for punk. We were the only punk band there.
Slash: Do you mind playing with bands you have nothing in common with musically?
Joey: I think it's good to be on a bill-er to play a cross section of music.
Slash: Where d'you think the hardcore music is going? D'you think it'll eventually be accepted or is it just going to stay on the fringe the way it is right now?
Joey: Audiences are growing, the hardcore isn't really . . . it is but not nearly as fast as the general audience.
Slash: Where d'you want to go as a band? D'you want to go on performing live, recording or what?
Randy: I think we're a stronger live band than we ever could be recording . . .
Joey: I'd like to get to the point where I could make a little more money off it you know — it doesn't have to be a huge amount but it's really thin right now . . . If we could go around North America, headline a gig with a thousand people in there or something you know.
Slash: Have you played Texas yet?
Joey: Yeah. It was the first time I'd ever seen people dancing couples at a punk gig. It's kind of mild there in a way . . . There was this band the Juns and the cops came down really heavy on them because they printed posters of cocks forms which is illegal — had stuff on the posters like 'Kill your mom kill your dad, kill the police, kill everyone' you know.
Slash: You guys seem to have quite a reputation as trouble makers.
Joey: A lot of people don't like us. The first time we played in San Francisco a couple of stupid girls that I guess went there regularly didn't like us and started bottling us and throwing glasses at us in the middle of the set and we say 'Come on just one fuckin' more!' you know and we started our next song and Bash! this glass hits the back wall and Joey goes right out in the audience and unzips himself and pisses in about 6 drinks on their table right. Dirksen comes up and starts going 'hurrhrrr!'
Slash: D'you guys find it a disadvantage being a Canadian band?
Joey: Yes, definitely. In Vancouver or Canada even the only major record labels just reprint American records, they don't record their own bands. There's only a couple, like in Vancouver there's Mushroom Records which is just like, a local thing. Down here there's a disadvantage because we're Canadian. On the East coast there's a double disadvantage because we're Canadian and we're from the West Coast.
Slash: D'you think as it goes on you might have to move or what?
Joey: Vancouver's OK as just a place to live you know. I think the idea is to travel around a lot.
Slash: How d'you think it'd go in England?
Joey: I think we'd have a good chance there.
Randy: We could just play all the time instead of getting fucked around. Practising gets to be so unnerving after 3 weeks of practice and then you don't have a gig coming.
Slash: D'you get hassled for being a punk in Vancouver?
Joey: It depends - I never got hassled once.
Randy: I got chased a bunch of times, I never got beat up.
Slash: What do people do for kids up there, people who aren't into the music?
Randy: Break things. People like going fucking nuts, like going to a party and ripping down a wall or something.
Slash: When you started with the band a year and a half ago, was there already a scene?
Joey: Not much of one.
Randy: Reall small...(pause).
Chuck: Did you say anything about live e.p.?
Joey: Plug, we're going to do a plug.
Slash: Are you going to do a live e.p.?
Randy: Well we did one about a year ago in Vancouver in this place called the Body Shop which is like where all disco commercial rock bands play...We didn't even get in to the finals...we just fucking killed every other band that was there.
Slash: Who was juding then?
Chuck: These people from AM radio...I won an award, it was partly a consolation award. I won a drum award and they gave me this $300 snare...he started to announce it and you see all these bottles start flying, people went mental.
Slash: So is a record going to come out of it?
Joey: Yeah, it's a 12"
Slash: Are the other bands on it?
Randy: No...just us, just 4 songs, there's some pretty funny songs.
Slash: What are some titles of your songs?
Randy: Oh boy...there's Nazi Training Camp, Oral Police, Rich Rich, Disco Sucks, The Enemy, I Hate You.
Chuck: My old Man's a Bum...that was the first song we ever learned (laughs)
Slash: Are there any fanzines in Vancouver?
Joey: Yeah there's Snob Rag...
Slash: Snot Rag...
Joey: Public Enemy.
Randy: It was a hippie that they kind of funded off of. Everybody quit or got fired from that paper.
Joey: Yeah, the thing that supports that it's George Straight's thing is they have a porn paper called Mercury Star. They'd been doing it for 5/6 years and the major finally discovered they were doing it...'aah I'm gonna have to clean this up' - you know.
Slash: It's pretty conservative up there?
Joey: Yeah, it's really conservative.
Randy: The kids, they don't really have anything they can actually do you know. Businessmen are trying to feed the kids this fucking whitewashed laundry over the radio, put 'em into teen discos.
Slash: What about the French speaking Canadian's? Are they into this music?
Joey: They're into disco.

HUMAN HANDS HUMA

THE HUMAN HANDS

Dennis Duck on drums, Juan Gomez on guitar, Bill Nolan on synthesizer, David Wiley on vocals, Rick Botts on bass guitar.

Slash: Well the obvious first - how d'you feel Dennis? (Dennis badly smashed up his leg in a car accident and is walking on crutches.
Dennis: I feel good. I made it up the stairs!
Slash: What's in your leg now?
Dennis: A big steel rod, about a foot long.
Slash: Really? Is it going to stay there forever?
Dennis: They're going to take it out after a year.
Slash: What's the point of the steel rod?
Dennis: To keep the bones together so they don't come apart so they heal together . . .I'm ready to play drums again tonight.
David: It might last 15 minutes
Slash: Did they tell you you shouldn't play?
Dennis: No, I didn't even tell them about it . . .I'll just have to do it without using this leg.
Slash: So what's the next project with the band?
David: Getting back to routine...We have some recording that we want to do, we have like 3 things in the can right now and we're going to spruce them up a bit.
Slash: What songs are they?
David: Trains Versus Planes, Dilemnas and I Got Mad. We have a show at Thanksgiving, we might be playing at the Whiskey.
Slash: So when is the first single coming out?
David: No real plans...we have a lot of tentative plans actually.
Juan: We don't have the money to put one out right now.
David: We had talked about doing a LAFMS (Los Angeles Free Music Society ed.) sponored single and some other people have asked us to be on compilation albums and stuff like that but nothing's really happened yet.
Slash: What about this song of yours that's going to be recorded by a folk singer?
David: (laughs) A born again Christian by the way.
Dennis: How did you know about that?
David: She was the one who converted Roger McGuinn nd supposedly she had a lot to do with converting Dylan.
Slash: So what song of yours does she want to do?
Dennis: It's a song called "Walking Beside Him." (laughs)
Slash: (laughs) I wonder why with a title like that.
Dennis: No, it's a song called "My Kitchen."
Slash: Do you wonder why she picked on that song?
Dennis: Well supposedly she has a scout...
David: If you've ever heard one of her albums, she never does any of her own stuff.
Dennis: Apparently the scout decided it would be perfect for her to do and we're supposed to send her a tape of it so right now I'm supposed to be getting a publishing thing together so I can publish it you know.
Slash: Is it going to happen?
Dennis: I don't know - she hasn't even heard the song yet so...
David: She's away. Her publicist was raving about it though, I guess she's going to be back from her tour at Christmas.
Juan: You know what, the other day, weren't you reading a review of one of her albums and it said 'Jennifer Wards has the ability to pick the worst song...".
Slash: (laughs) What kind of sound d'you guys think you have? Are you a pop group?
Human Hands: Yeah...I do...Mutated pop.
David: Our audience is very diverse.
Slash: Also you guys are definitely what they call the 'Pasadena School of Music'...
Bill: That's good - I'd rather be called that than pop.
Slash: Pasadena Pop?...Why do people coming from Pasadena sound different?
Bill: Well they are real different - Van Halen I hope to god doesn't...
Slash: Are they from Pasadena?
Bill: Yeah!...There's all sorts of weird different sounds in Pasadena, The Flyboys...
Juan: I just didn't want to do what everybody else was doing and I never intended to just start a band just because everybody else was doig it, but that worked out well because we all had interest in like experimenting without being too pretentious.
David: Everybody had a real need to be in a band...I met Juan at a Mutants show and after that we decided to get together, I'd known Bill before that. We decided we had a lot of musical tastes in common.
Slash: Who was in a band before? Dennis was in a band right?
David: Why don't you give them (Slash) a brief synopsis?
Dennis: The first time that Juan and I played together was in a band called The Newlyweds which was a free music band, we did improvised music...Tom Mechion of the B people was also in that band. Then Juan and I decided we wanted to play rock and roll, so we started a rock n roll band and it was called the Monitors and we played for a year, year and a half.
Juan: With Billy our manager.
Dennis: Oh yeah Billy was in the band and he played guitar and we did that for a while and then...
Juan: I had to teach the bass player how to play guitar so I figured it was just a little too difficult.
Dennis: Then we decided that the band wasn't working out so we just played by ourselves for a while, it was just a duet.
Slash: What did that go under the name of?
Dennis: That was The Monitors...Then we got Tom and Fred and Rick Potts as our bass player and we got a band called Paul Is Dead for a while...with Edward from Nervous Gender...Then Edward decided he wanted to start Nervous Gender.
David: Tried to talk me into singing with them. I didn't really want to, I didn't think it was really what I wanted to do.
Dennis: He got Girardo and Michael, and we were in a band called The Young Nazis...so they started their band and Paul Is Dead broke up then we all got together and here we are. So 3 bands basically came out of Paul Is Dead which is Nervous Gener, B people and Human Hands.
Juan: Have we ever played together?
David: Yes, once, at that Crenshaw party.
Bill: I was in a band in high school that met twice and then broke up. Out biggest aspiration was to get on this cruise ship and go through the Panama Canal as the house band. (laughs)
Slash: I think that's a great aspiration.
Bill: Well we wanted to travel and we couldn't afford it...apparently the lead guitarist had all these connections and then I was going to play organ and they already had an organ player so they wanted me to learn how to play bass you know...it didn't work out.
David: I guess I have to tell my background.
Everybody: Yeah let's hear it.
David: My first group was in 8th grade called The Grapes of Wrath, and we played at a battle of the bands and came in 2nd place. Then I wasn't in a band for a long time, just played experimental type freebee noise, music-noise is good by the way - with Paul Cutler who was in the Consumers, Greg Jones who was also in The Consumers and another guy called Mark. We were called Modern Tribal music or The Local Lobsters and we did mostly impromptu performances like at large parks in Phoenix, you know where secretaries go lunching and stuff like that and then we formed The Consumers and forgot about all that...played around Phoenix quite a bit and moved to LA...played around LA for a while, broke up after 2 months due to conflict of interest and...here we are.
Slash: Why are you called Human Hands?
David: That's Dennis' story.
Dennis: It's becoming my biggest regret because there are a million bands that are called Human something.
Bill: Kim Fowley told us we should change the name to The Hands...He thought we should have a logo where we should have each member of the band on a finger tip - our face on each finger!
Slash: That's so honkey, that's pathetic!
David: He called us up at 3 in the morning and wanted to produce us.
Slash: How do you want to produce you?
Dennis: David Byrne...Georgio...
David: No actually we've been working with a guy named Ed Barger, he's really a good guy. He works with this famous band called Dove.
Slash: (sarcastically) Oh yes the famous Dove.
David: I didn't want to say their real name, I guess I have to - Devo.
Slash: How did you get that gig at the Whisky with Howard Devoto?
Juan: Our manager just got on the phone and harranged them.
David: I have a question to ask you...How come we didn't get mentioned in your review?
Slash: I don't know...We don't do show by show any

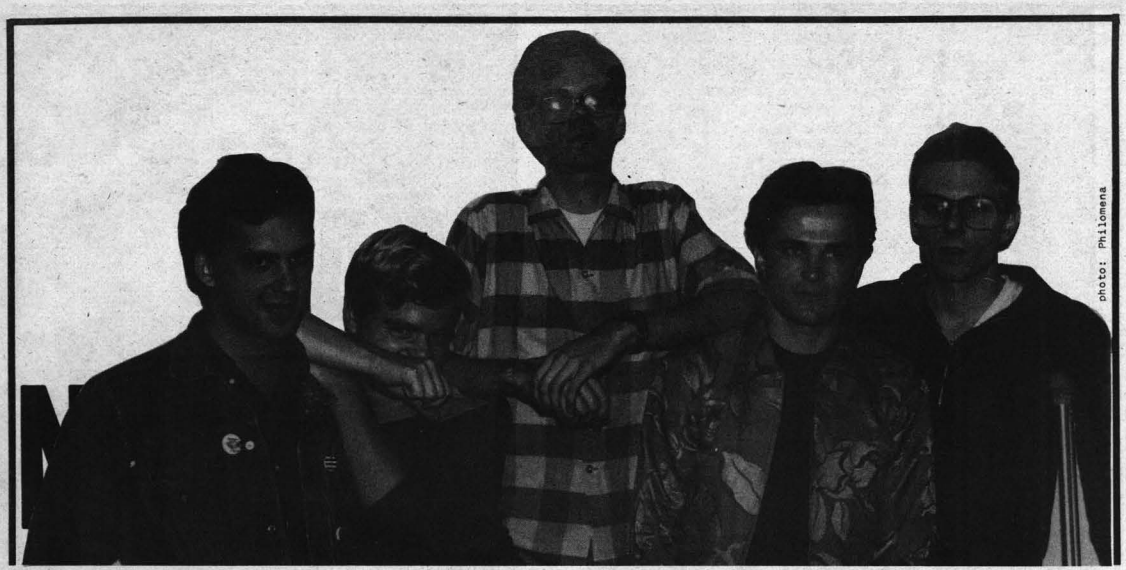
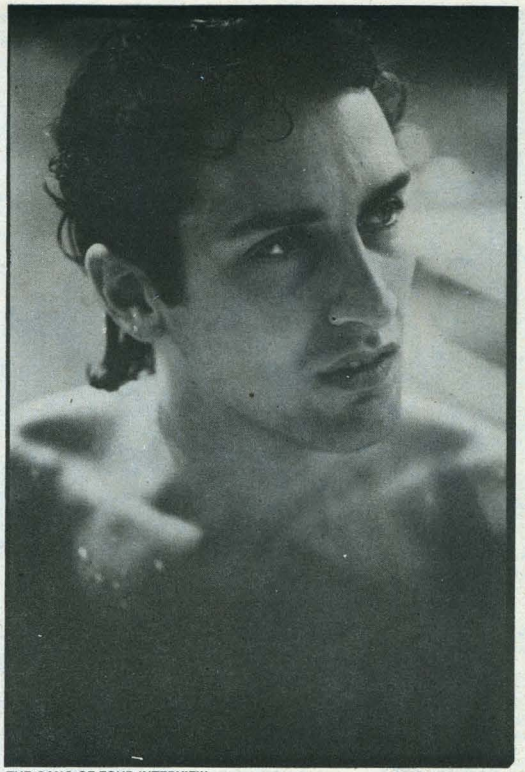
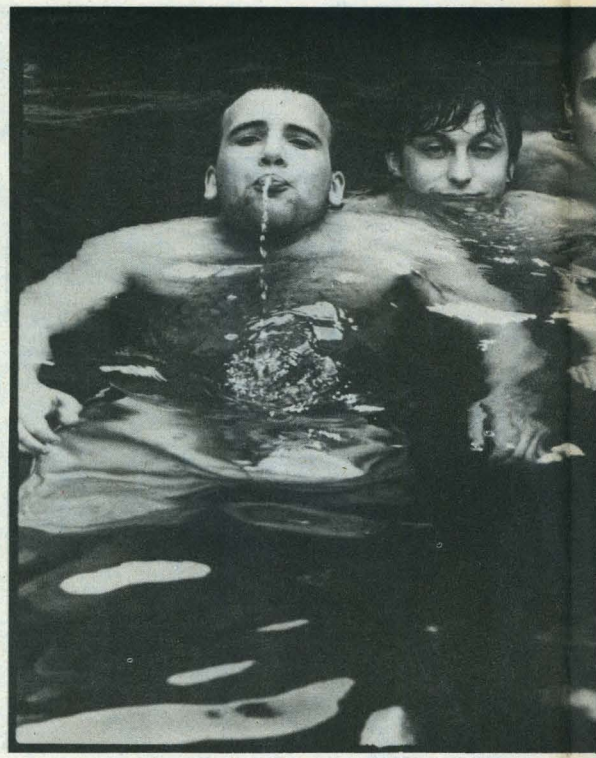


photo: Philomena

more...Anyway The LA Times is giving you pretty good coverage.
Juan: Actually there's a critic there who really like us, Terry Atkinson, have you ever talked to him?
Slash: Yes for something coming out in Rolling Stone about the LA music. He's been working on it now for 3 or 4 months on and off and finally they told him it couldn't be over 1,000 words.
Juan: They did that for the Buzzcocks piece.
Slash: But for Carly Simon, lay it on, 4,000 words.
Juan: Why haven't the Talking Heads been featured? I can't understand that.
Slash: That's true. They're so out of touch...Has Sire approached you yet?
David: Yes they have, they want us to submit a tape.
Slash: How d'you want to come across on stage David? D'you want to express emotions...
David: Yes, emotions, thoughtfulness, I like to be forceful, you know, when it needs to be, I like to, you know, make the lyrics come alive if possible.
Juan: I think what a good performer needs to learn is what nt to do. When I watch him (David) he's doing a lot and I think now what can you withdraw from that to make it more effective...'cos that's the way musically we try to do things too.
Bill: I think it's really hard to be a singer in a band.
Slash: What d'you sing about? Is it Romantic, realistic, futuristic?
David: We do a lot of love songs.
Slash: Give me some titles of your love songs.
David: Dilemnas, Checkout, Crazy Upsidedown...
Slash: Typical love song titles...Give me a line of a love song.
David: 'Why do I do why do I do what I do...
Slash: Sounds like Pooh Bear...Rigger.
Dennis: Oh Great.
David: 'I can't stnd what you say I can't stand what you do I can't stand you thinking of as if I'm standing on you.'
Slash: Who writes these wonderful love lyrics.
David: Dennis wrote the ones I just quoted.
Slash: D'you write most of the lyrics for the band?
Dennis: Well I guess I've written a lot of them at this point, other people write...Juan and I wrote, when we were just playing as a duo, we wrote 3 songs.
Slash: Tell us about New Look, I realy like that song.
David: You do? It's basically anti-fashion...
Dennis: Everybody thinks, who cares about fashion, but you have to care, you always care and then you don't care, you can't get away from it.
Slash: Yeah, people say it doesn't matter what you look like, but what else have you got to go on? Unless you know people.
Bill: There are so many different ways of living in the city especially and they all seem to have certain fashion styles too and they sort of label you as either a cowboy or a skier or a student, a surfer, a biker.
Slash: Do you think people labelling themselves like this is a fight against being anonymous.
David: Yeah, but I think that's what's good about this movement.
Juan: Any anti-movement becomes a movement, I like to think you see ahead of that. If something is becoming cliche it's like you're responsible for thinking for yourself now.
Slash: It gives standards right?
Juan: Well I think it does the opposite, it keeps you from developing standards...
Slash: A standard against standards.
Juan: Yeah right.
Slash: Is there one type of contemporary music that you're closer to than another?
Bill: No. I think we've already discovered that it's impossible for us to define ourselves in a category, because I like to think that we're gonna remain unpredictable in our approach in other words one minute we can conjure a certain feeling and then the next minute destroy it completely and set something else up.
Juan: We've been going that like in rehearsals. Somebody will come in with an idea, like it has maybe the basic structure of a song, maybe I know the chord changes and the tempo and I might have certain ideas for what I want the guitar to sound like but pretty much each song we try to approach it differently.
Slash: D'you consider yourselves professional musicians?
Juan: Personally speaking I can't think of myself as a professional guitarist, I've never learned a lot of techniques, I've never had a teacher. We push ourselves all the time.
David: What do you define as professional? Self-supporting?
Slash: I mean you go around thinking, I'm better than most, I know my chops type of thing.
David: Well that's bullshit.
Slash: Suppose none of you were in the Human Hands, separately, how would you talk somebody into going to see the gig, how would you describe how the band sounds?
Bill: I like the term cerebral dance music.
Dennis: I don't know what I'd say, it's hard to remove yourself.
David: I'd say danceable electronic pop.
Slash: But you don't sound electronic.
Bill: I've tried to keep the synthesizer fairly low key, because it can be overbearing at times. If you can just have it underlying, sort of textural. (Rick enters)
Slash: What about you, Juan, d'you have any snappy definition of the band sound?
Juan: I think something that makes you want to move around a lot.
Bill: So many energetic things and danceable things can tend to have really banal lyrics and we're trying not to fall into that.
Dennis: Just for me, a lot of what I expect out of pop music, I know this sounds so cliche, but a lot of it comes from the Beatles, just because for me they were perfect pop music.
Bill: Oh it did for me too because I thought every song was different.
Dennis: A lot of the criteria that I go on for songs and lyrics have very strong roots in that band.
Juan: Well if I can say that, I will say The Velvet Underground me because they represent a lot of nice dark things in me.
Slash: What about you David?
David: Well I have to admit I was an early Beatle fanatic.
Slash: Who's your dream singer who you're aiming at sounding like?
David: I dunno...Roger Chapman. I don't want to say Johnny Rotten, but I did like him.
Juan: Don't say it then.
David: We were written up in The Times and it said I sounded like Johnny Rotten...I like John Cale a lot, I like David Byrne a lot.
Slash: Rick can you tell us your musical background?
Rick: My parents had a piano that I grew up with and I wrote a song, I was about 10 or 11 years old. Then basically I got a hold of any instrument I could and taught myself how to play the way I wanted to and usually I'd reach a point on the insrument where I'd really have to learn how to read music to advance myself so I'd just get sick of it and get another instrument. So I'm really mediocre on about 15 different instruments but I still like to play them for myself.
Juan: Now that you have to play them for millions how do you feel?
Rick: Oh it changes everything. I've just been working really hard on the bass lately.
Bill: How long have you been playing bass?
Rick: Well I played it on and off last summer, not this summer but I didn't play it regularly until I joined the band last February.
David: Actually it should be noted that we had another bass player for a while, his name was Cole Palme. He's in a band in San Francisco called Factrix.
Bill: It's just synthesizer and process guitar.
Slash: Were you in a band Rick?
Rick: Ah, yeah, since I was really a soul pop musician, I'm in a band called Les Forte Four that's improvisational we use a lot of traditional and non-traditional instruments...for a while we used to do a lot of cover songs of like cartoon shows like Speedracer and just a lot of Japanese cartoons.
David: They have an album out on LAFMS.
Slash: So how does it feel to go from the aesthetic experimental field down to a crass commercial pop group?
Rick: (laughs) It's strange, most people tend to go the other direction and I needed a change to try something new myself and figured what the hell, might as wel.
Bill: We were going crazy wanting him to join.
Slash: So why did you give in?
Rick: I just decided I really didn't have any good reasons not to.
Slash: (laughs) You guys must be proud...Tell us quickly what you guys do for a living.
David: Bill's a gardner, Dennis is on workman's comp. Juan and I are unemployed and collecting welfare.
Rick: I go to art school and sell plumbing supplies.
David: Ssh, (in a whisper) art school!
Slash: Too late!





GANG OF

THE GANG OF FOUR INTERVIEW

All four members were present for the interview. They are John (vocals and melodica), Hugo (drums and vocals), Andy (guitar and vocals), and Dave (bass). They have recorded 2 singles and an album on EMI, which should be out any day. They're a fuckin' great band.

SLASH: Hugo, how come you only step up to the mike once and sing a song ("It's Her Factory" Ed.)? Is that your song?

HUGO: Yea, basically. All the songs are Gang of Four songs...

JOHN: They come from ideas. One idea is you don't have this hierarchy in the band. People tend to ignore drummers.

DAVE: And bass players!

HUGO: One of the ideas behind that song is to stress the equality of the band.

JOHN: It happens in a number of songs, like "Armalite Rifle" where I leave the stage entirely, or the songs where Andy sings and I'll be playing melodica, or there will be interchanges...

ANDY: And we sort of move around, there is no central spot.

SLASH: That was one of the most striking things about your shows, this lack of rock theatrics...

JOHN: What happens with a lot of rock bands is that ... well, when we started playing we were more of an r&b band, our model might have been Dr. Feelgood or something, but we got dissatisfied with using this sort of established thing, and as you get more confident with what you're doing you develop something which is more appropriate to the ideas you're putting over. A lot of rock bands tend to have certain ways of behaving, like you write songs about love for example, and the whole stage thing comes from that, 'cos as a group if you accept this whole way of behaving you tend to accept the other things as well, and you accept the cock-rocking guitar poses, the vocalist using mike stands as pricks, the in-thebackground-but-solid rhythm section, and the occasional drum solo. This is the way people tend to inherit music, and if you don't start some sort of debate among yourselves about that sort of thing, you're never going to transmit differently.

SLASH: In other words, if you want to do away with the cliches you have to do away with the poses that go along with the cliches?

JOHN: You see, music does not exist in a vacuum. Say with Tom Robinson — it's unfortunate to bring him up, but he's often thought of as an example of left wing musician — to sing songs with radical subject matter in a manner which is completely conventional and establishment means that this subject matter can't breathe, and it's totally negating.

SLASH: When you decided to come over here, did you have any kind of illusions or belief that american audiences would relate to your type of subject matter? Do you think they know what you're singing about?

ANDY: I think a lot of it is wasted. The only response we've had to the content of the songs has been from traditional far left groups, maoists and the american equivalent of the Workers' Revolution Party. Some of the maoists that talked to us individually seemed attracted because our name has a connection with the Chinese revolution.

DAVE: I don't think we have any illusions that people knew what we were singing. That's what interviews are good for, to clarify a lot.

HUGO: It's a whole process of communication, it's not just the songs ...

JOHN: But people can get the idea from the way we present it even if they can't hear it.

SLASH: What happened in England? Do you have a following that relates to your songs, stands for the same things you do?

ANDY: The people that really click and identify with us are in a minority, but they tend to be more vocal, they come up and actually discuss things with you.

HUGO: But that isn't to say there isn't your normal pogoing crowd ... but hopefully more than just a good time will eventually get across to people.

SLASH: The music you write is not obvious, and neither are your lyrics. Do you think it might take a long time for what you do to be accepted?

DAVE: Well, take the Rubber City Rebels. I thought some of their lyrics were hilarious, but music like that, we probably could knock out ten a day and become successful. I don't mean just them, but all sorts of bands you listen to.

JOHN: They write to a formula. The way we write takes longer, and more care.

ANDY: Take Nick Lowe. He himself says that he likes to think he's conning everybody. It's a strange sort of idea. He does write good tunes, but if the only target you're gonna set yourself is to write good commercial pop songs, it's not very difficult to do that, and it's not a very high ambition. There are a certain number of chords, a certain number of tunes, and you can plagiarize all sorts of old pop songs and stick them together, it's very easy to do if you have a bit of experience. And he admits he's doing that.

JOHN: At least he's honest.

ANDY: (quite heated) I don't think it's a particular advantage. He thinks he is a step above because he admits it, but I don't think that particularly matters.

JOHN: Yea, but the punters think those songs are terribly difficult to write, but him saying they're not at all is revealing for people.

ANDY: It just reveals a cleverer than thou attitude, I'll take the money and fuck you! I think it's pretty sad, if he is admitting that what he is doing is a load of shit, that his work isn't worth anything.

SLASH: How did you feel about being on the same bill as the Rubber City Rebels, who have such a sexist macho image?

DAVE: The first night we didn't catch them properly, and they sounded like any other heavy metal band. And when I listened, the lyrics ...

ANDY: They're not serious ... the second night we realized ilt's quite a complicated sort of joke.

HUGO: At the same time, it's still no excuse to sing these sexist songs.

JOHN: We made that mistake ourselves in the past with this complicated joke, with that sort of song intended to be ironic, but after a while you realize that the subtleties that you intend just don't come over. It's not a very subtle market place, up on the stage. There's not much time for reflection on ambiguities.

ANDY: I'm not sure about that. I think that song was good at its time. Some of the best rock groups, like the Feelgoods, Rezillos, have been tongue-in-cheek, with a strong element of humor. Either you get it, or you don't.

JOHN: I don't entirely agree. I think some of them were into that macho stance. In the Rezillos at least the humor was clear.

SLASH: How come you didn't decide to bring another english band to play with you on all these gigs in small clubs?

ANDY: Originally Fashion were supposed to play with us. But they went back.

SLASH: But what about a band that has the same outlook as you ...

JOHN: We were originally going to come with the Mekons ...

DAVE: And we were looking forward to playing with Red Crayola ...

JOHN: Captain Beefheart tried to get in touch with us and jam with us ... but he didn't turn up. Pity he didn't come, 'cos he liked the singles. And the Mekons couldn't afford it. We couldn't even take our full road crew with us.

ANDY: Too many people, and not enough money. We just about broke even.

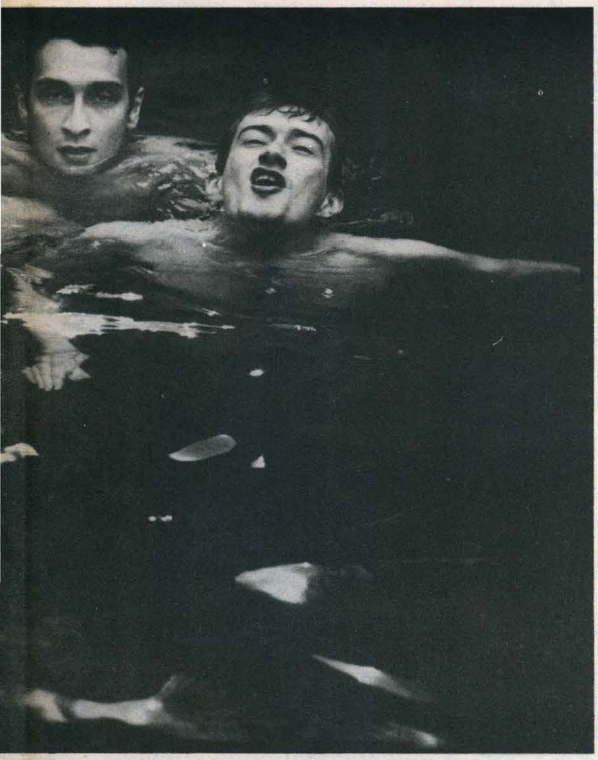
JOHN: For a month we've been living on 10 dollars a day per person. We've driven everywhere, 'cept for the flight from Minneapolis to San Francisco, and getting vans has been a problem ...

SLASH: So EMI had nothing to do with the tour?

JOHN: Nothing at all. In fact it's not in their interest for us to come over here. We have no record company in America, and our records are only available as imports.

SLASH: Is that about to change?

ANDY: It's not about to change. There's interest to the extent that quite a few record companies are turning up, but there's



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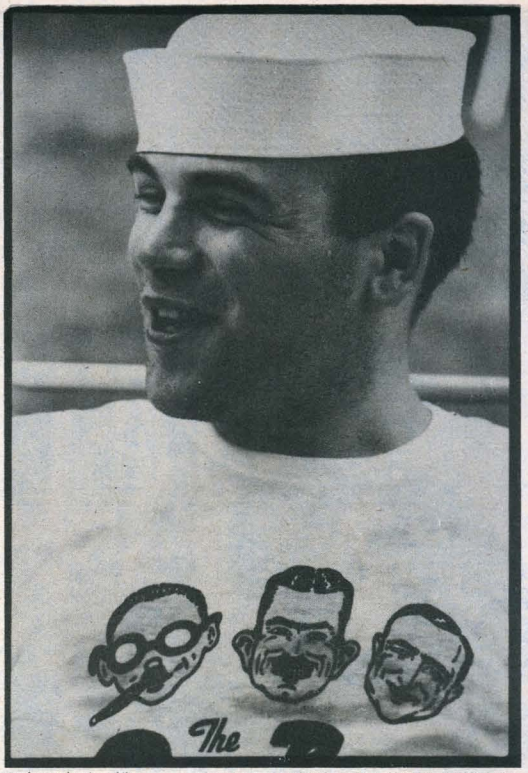
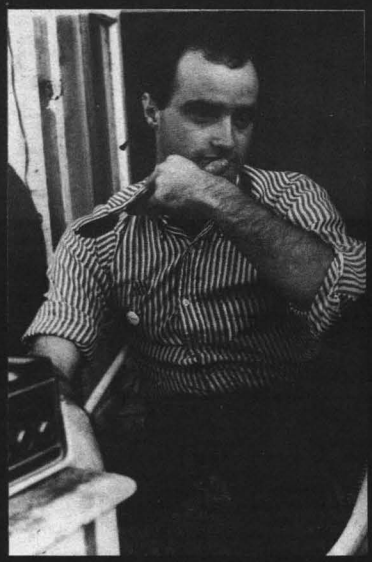
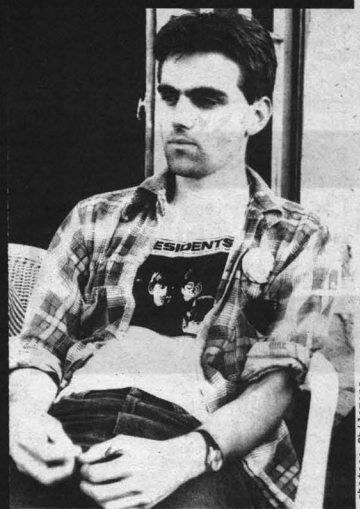


OF FOUR

no way anyone is going to sign us in the near future.
HUGO: We heard there was interest on the part of the fans over here, so we came over on a very tight budget.
JOHN: We just wanted to play here.
DAVE: It might not have been incredibly successful, but it's better than not doing it.
JOHN: And it's actually been our first tour of any sort.
HUGO: Having been students, well three of us, up to a few months ago, we've only been able to do at the most 2 or 3 gigs a week, with long gaps in between. And there was a european thing on which we were away for five days and did 3 or 4 gigs.
JOHN: And we did the Rock Against Racism gigs, the Fast thing, and the first Rock Against Sexism gig.
HUGO: In Leeds, where we're based, there's this R.A.R. club, which, as much as it can operates once a week, and we did things with them quite a lot, helping each other build in a way. And we did those 4 dates on a national Rock Against Racism tour, which was organized in the period before the elections.
SLASH: Tell us about the coming album.

JOHN: It's called "Entertainment". There was a certain amount of debate as to whether to put a question or an exclamation mark (the conversation degenerates into 5 people talking at once. Later ...)
SLASH: Are you still students?
HUGO: We're not. John and Andy were studying history of art, and I was studying english literature. John and I finished a year ago, and Andy finished a couple of months ago, so we were doing two things for a long time.
SLASH: Dave, are you the only non-student?
DAVE: Yea, I worked for a long time on various jobs, like weaving carpets, making shoes, then I jacked it in and moved to Leeds. I was playing all the time with various groups, then I got in with these guys.
HUGO: Then he's gone downhill ever since!
SLASH: What other bands are coming out of Leeds that we should know about?
HUGO: There are the Mekons, which you know about, and the Delta Five...
JOHN: The Delta Five are good friends of ours that aren't students...
SLASH: Are you still art-damaged?
HUGO: Art-damaged?? I like it!
JOHN: What does that mean?
(long explanation follows at to the various subtleties of the damage theory...)
HUGO: I think the art or student connection would apply to most bands for years.
JOHN: I don't think we're interested in problems of art at all. Problems of communicating ideas, which might be one form of art ...
DAVE: When I joined the band, all I needed was drawing out ... had nothing to do with education, it's just the way I played it. What's it got to do with being a student?
SLASH: Since you're talking about it, would you say there's a strong black influence in your bass playing?
DAVE: Yea, I was into jazz rock. All there was was heavy metal or Tamla, or there was jazz rock. It just happened that the first band I ended up with was a traditional jazz band. It was a big band, with a lot of old guys, and me and the younger members like the drummer and the lead tenor and the guitarist we branched out and started playing Sonny Rollins and things like that. That's what I got out from. I play more toppy than most bass players. I reckon if you broke it down and made all the bass players play toppy you'd realize they're better than you think, it's just if you play it deep you get this rumble ... when you get a rock band you got a guitarist, a bass player and a drummer normally playing all the same, duh duh duh ... How can anyone branch out in those areas?
JOHN: We work from the premise that all four positions being equal, they should all have something particular, and we try to work out these inter-lock rhythms, rather than playing the same thing. Everything going on side by side rather than going wham and hitting you in the face.
DAVE: It's not what you put in, it's what you leave out. Like "Damaged Goods" for example.
SLASH: That's almost like a reggae concept, this stuff about what's left out...
JOHN: Yea, that's a big influence.
SLASH: What about your melodica? Do you listen to Augustus Pablo?
JOHN: I must confess I've never heard an Augustus Pablo record. I learned the melodica when I was at primary school, up to the age of 11, it's got a very nice thin organ sound, and it was appropriate for what we're doing.
HUGO: It certainly isn't grandiose!
JOHN: Only problem with it is it's impossible to record. On stage it's all right.
SLASH: John, are you as jittery off stage as on stage?
JOHN: No, when I'm off I'm not like that. When we started, Andy always used to run about like that, then sort of standing absolutely still, all the time trying to find a way to conduct myself that I felt happy with. With this american tour we've got more and more manic. I think there's been more and more running about, especialy from Dave. Now I couldn't imagine not being able to do this. I mean, none of us look like the rock star type, and it would be very difficult to be in a band where they'd expect you to behave differently, I mean we don't try to hand it to audiences. I can't see myself being in another band. This one seems the best way to put over things you're interested in.
DAVE: If the Gang of Four finished, I don't think I'd ever join another band. I'd much rather start from scratch.
SLASH: Let's talk about your lyrics for a few seconds ...
JOHN: Okay.
SLASH: In the song ...
HUGO: That's it!
JOHN: Yea, time's up!
SLASH: ... as I was saying, your lyrics are more socially conscious than most rock songs, and ...
HUGO: There was something in the english press in England where Squeeze were interviewed, it's really classic in a way, one of the band members had watched us play and listened to us, and he said "the things the Gang of Four sing about I don't really want to know about." It's almost like an admission of his insecurity, about living in his own little world, girls, beer drinking, playing in a rock band, and nothing happens outside that life.
JOHN: And taking a girl home, calling her a dog, treating her like shit, thinking that's the way you ought to behave yourself.
SLASH: Tell us about the political situation in England since the elections. How different is it from the previous government?
JOHN: The Labor government was putting forward policies which the previous Tory government certainly wouldn't have been ashamed of, policies which were encouraging profits for large corporations, cutting the benefits for the poor and the unemployed, and now the Thatcher government has gone even farther, like cutting income tax from 85% to 60% for the people earning over 60,000 dollars a year, and cutting it by 2% for the people earning less than that!
SLASH: How do you feel about being part of EMI, which is a corporation dedicated to profit?
JOHN: Well, we're competing in an area where we can get our ideas out to people. In a country of mass communications, what good is it to sit in a field and sing about ...
SLASH: The good old days?
JOHN: Yea, the good old days, or whatever.
DAVE: We have autonomy at EMI, we only basically deal with only one guy, the guy who signed us. He knew what we were about, what we were singing, and that we'd push for what we wanted. And if we want to put out records, we got to have a company to put them out.
JOHN: And we produce ourselves, do the art work ourselves, and even do the advertisements to put in the papers. Basically they pay the check.
SLASH: Any problems so far with your art work or whatever being judged unsuited?
HUGO: Not yet!
JOHN: They got no right to. It's in the contract.
HUGO: That doesn't mean they won't, or won't try to.





photos: Philomena

BP

INTERVIEW WITH THE BPEOPLE

The Bpeople are now Alex Gibson, Fredrik Nilsen, Pat Delaney and Tom Rechion. They sing songs with titles like "Give Up", "Persecution", "Special Kind of Fun", "Can't Can't".

Slash: Pat, have you finally found the band you're going to stay with, or are you going to start travelling from band to band again?

Pat: I jsut did that for a while until I could find something worth being in, 'cos after the Deadbeats I couldn't really find anything interesting to be in, you know. But the music of the Bpeople has more of an edge.

Slash: Tell me about this tape of Bpeople music that I've heard people talk about.

Tom: People talk about it??...Well, it has 2 and a half songs on it.

Slash: Half a song?

Tom: It's a dub version of another song...

Fredrik: It will be out maybe in February on a Los Angeles Free Music Society record.

Tom: It will be another collection of various people, the Human Hands, Monitor, Non, Le Forte For, Doo Dooettes, the Pablums, we're not really sure yet who's going to be on it, but these are some of the people.

Slash: What does the B stand for?

All: Boring...Bitchin'...Bombastic...Boss...Bad...Brian...

Slash: Are there any running themes in the songs you do, in the things you sing about?

Tom: We don't particularly want a special style for the band, we want each song to be approached on a different level. We also want to push things...

Slash: How far do you want to push things?

Tom: You push things in order to come up with something different.

Slash: Musically?

Tom: Yea, musically, conceptually. What's kept me interested is that we keep changing the music. Having been in improvised music before I get really bored doing the same tunes, the same arrangements, unless they change.

Slash: Who comes up with the initial ideas for a new song?

Tom: So far Alex comes up with the initial idea, and then everyone comes up with their own parts, and we keep reworking it until it solidifies itself.

Fredrik: We all write words. Sometimes someone will write words, someone else won't like them and do a rewrie.

Alex: It's a democratic band, we're all equal.

Tom: No leaders here!

Slash: How do you think the audience reacts to your songs?

Tom: I think the first time they are puzzled. I think our songs improve with age, the more you hear them the more you hear the subtitles that are there. It comes off loud and aggressive but I think there are some nice details.

Slash: Would you say the band is progressing along the same lines as when it was Little Cripples?

Fredrik: Well, it still has that aggressive edge...

Tom: But the way that we work is different. Now that everyone has found their place, I feel more comfortable working with the band.

Fredrik: It's not power plays anymore, it's cooperation.

Slash: Do you think your music is bleak?

Fredrik: No, it's pretty passionate music.
Slash: I mean the sound of it...
Fredrik: But if you listen to the music, we juxtapose very sweet melodies with noise elements, harmonic stuff running aongside noisy contradictory sounds.
Tom: I find it real pretty...
Slash: Could be your own twisted sense of aesthetics! (everyone cracks up, insults are exchanged and we lose the thread of the converation)
Slash: Where were we? Ah yes, BLEAKNESS.
Alex: Color me grey.
Tom: Above all, the music for me is fun. It has to be fun, or why bother. We don't make any pretenses that it's super serious or that it's the only music.
Alex: We had no mold we wanted to fit in, this is just what happened.
Slash: How do you like being based in L.A.?
Pat: I like it, I think it's the best place to live, the center of all he dirty messy stuff.
Tom: I'd like to live somewhere else. It's wrapped up too much in the star system, and I can't get involved with that or relate to it. I think I would feel more comfortable in someplace like San Francisco or London.
Fredrik: I find L.A. to be an acid environment if you want to do anything that's challenging the protocoles that exist. We've been doing experimental music for many years, we've put out 8 albums with L.A.F.M.S. that sold zilch in L.A. but sell great everywhere else.
Tom: I kind of believe you can't expect to get a great response from the town you live in. It does seem like the grass is greener on the other side.
Fredrik: Pere Ubu said they never could get any response Cleveland until very recently.
Slash: Are you going to put out a single before you do this compilation project?
Alex: Sure, we'd like to. But it's money...
Fredrik: Our equipment is really falling apart.
Tom: What's most important is putting out music you believe in. But it's hard in L.A., all the record companies are here and everybody comes to L.A. to be music stars.
Slash: Tell me about the L.A.F.M.S.
Tom: It's a disorganization!
Fredrik: It's the bunch of people in their living rooms...
Tom: The majority of the mail we get from interested people is from Europe.

Fredrik: I think there are interested people in L.A. but with the way this town is set up it's very difficult to reach them. All the communication systems are tied up...Are we getting too serious and boring?
Slash: Okay, what did you eat last night?
Alex: Two bottles of wine.
Tom: I made some horrible braised chicken.
Slash: What do you do for survival?
Tom: I deliver flowers.
Pat: Nothing.
Alex: I work in an art shop, framing pictures.

Fredrik: I'm a registered nurse in a critical care unit. I like it a lot, it's really interesting work. It's also pretty intense. We have a song about two people having their heart stopping at the same time while in the critical care unit and the confusion that results.
Slash: You wrote a song about that?
Fredrik: Yep. I've seen it happen.
Slash: Tell me about it.
Fredrik: Well, depending on the night, sometimes the teams and the combination of people in them are very competent, very skilled, and they handle it very well, and sometimes things don't work out so well and it's mass confusion and people die. The song is about one time it didn't work too well.
Slash: Since one half of you was into a rather different sort of music before this band, what did punk mean to you?
Tom: Well punk brought us back to the basics. And I was rally glad to see singles coming back.
Fredrik: And the local scene came back because of it. There was a real dead period when all that hyper technical music was being made, although even during that time there were these obscure people and bands carrying on, like Henry Cow, real important bands that I was listening to.
Slash: What were the rest of you listening to in those days?
Tom: Everything I could. I like classical music, ethnic music, the european improvisers.
Alex: Rock n roll.
Tom: Fred and I are vinyl junkies...
Fredrik: African, Balinese, Japanese
Slash: What do you want to do to people with the Bpeople music?
Fredrik: I think we want to dig into peoples' psyche in a different way. Our music is pretty angular sometimes. Music can make your brain work differently, it can make you think about things in ways you haven't thought before. There is a lot of music that has changed my thinking.
Slash: Since the Bpeople started having you stopped your other musical activities?
Tom: We're still pretty active with the other stuff, but this band demands quite a lot of time.
Alex: When ws the last time you did a performance?
Tom: The last thing with the Doo Dooettes was a couple of months ago.
Slash: How do the people involved with this other music scene react to your involvement with this band?
Tom: The people we align ourselves with have a very open mind. That's what we confronted in L.A., purists, in every scene we tried. In the art scene, jazz scene, purists everywhere! People didn't understand our sense of humor or they didn't think we were serious...
Fredrik: We faced lots of resistance doing improved music. The reception for this band has been so warm, but in the jazz scene it's all so dogmatic and stagnant. So he groups we got involved with were all outcasts from that scene.
Slash: Are you outcasts as far as the hard core of the punk scene goes?
Tom: I'd rather not be, but to some we may be.
Pat: I like all those bands, I go and see them play, we're not outcasts. ●

Siouxsie and the Banshees : AN UPDATE

Siouxsie and the Banshees' second album was released in Britain on September 7th. It's title - 'Join Hands' - proved to be ironic, to say the least, because on that very same day, after only one date of the band's biggest British tour yet, guitarist John McKay and drummer Kenny Morris walked out on Siouxsie, Steve, two years' hard work and over 20 sold-out venues-worth of audiences.

The group had agreed to promote the album by visiting a record shop in Aberdeen, prior to playing at the local theatre that evening. Although refusing to sign autographs (unlike like the singer and bassist), McKay and Morris accompanied Siouxsie and Steve Severin "to talk to the fans". When the shop sold out of their supply of the new album, Banshees' manager Nils Stevenson sold the owner a box of the band's own promotional copies, which were in turn sold to the fans well below the recommended retail price. McKay apparently disagreed with promo copies being sold, and showed his objection by handing out the albums free, provoking a verbal assault from Siouxsie. When the guitarist refused to stop giving the records away, Siouxsie hit him. McKay stormed out, taking the drummer with him. When Steve, Nils and the admonished Siouxsie returned to their hotel, they found McKay and Morris' tour passes clipped to two pillows, which were propped up against the fugitives' beds as if denoting a symbolic reference to the Great War memorial motif used on the cover of 'Join Hands'. The drummer and guitarist had passed on. Siouxsie and Steve went onstage that night and explained the day's events to the 2,000 fans in the audience. Then, backed by support band The Cure, they performed "The Lord's Prayer". The Cure had never played it before. Siouxsie and the Banshees had come full circle from their first gig at the 100 Club when they improvised with whoever happened to be available at the time.

Obviously bemused and hurt by the sudden "fucking off" (her own description) of her lead guitarist and drummer, Siouxsie spent the 11 days between the Aberdeen fiasco and the first date of the hastily resurrected tour sounding off to the British music press, stating that she had been considering throwing out the deserters anyway, because they were "too serious". Amongst other things, she has accused them of being "dilettantes" and "arty". (She appears to have total abhorrence of the word "art", which is rather unfortunate as the main criticisms levelled against 'Join Hands' by the reviewers was that it was "self-conscious intellectualism" and "arty".) McKay and Morris have also been referred to as "two old women" by their former co-Banshee who ended, just for good measure, by saying they were "like a couple of queens". Siouxsie, Steve and Nils are currently involved in legal proceedings against the other two for losses incurred by their departure. Meanwhile, the runaways have made no attempt to put their side of the story, and haven't been seen since they wound up the window of their taxi on Nils Stevenson's arm, crying "We can't take the pressure".

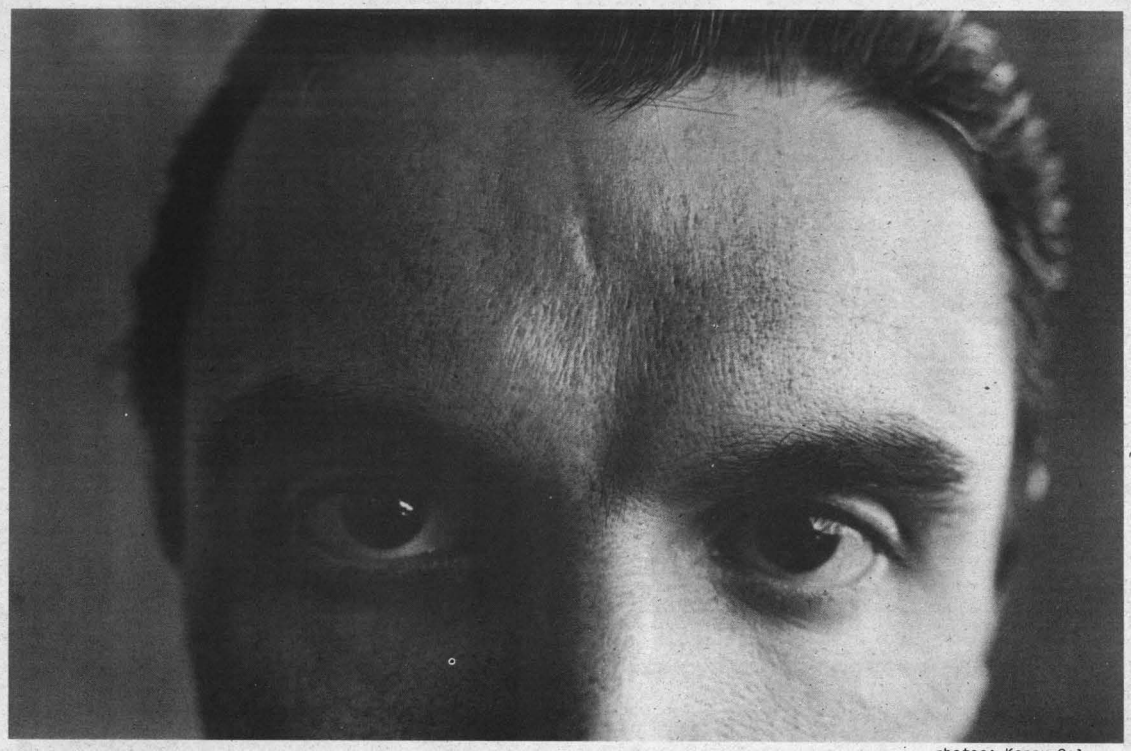
Siouxsie and the Banshees are now back on the road with temporary replacements - the drummer is Budgie, ex-Raincoats, Big in Japan, Public Image and Slits. McKay's place has been taken by The Cure's Robert Smith, which means the guitarist is currently playing two sets a night as The Cure are still the tour support band. Siouxsie and Steve have said they are considering having no permanent new Banshees, and quite fancy playing with a fluid line-up, changing the members when they feel like it. It was rumoured that Marco Pironi, the original Banshees' guitarist from the 100 Club gig, would step in. John McKay was responsible for most of the band's music, and Marco, as leader and main songwriter of Banshees' soundalikes Rema-Rema, looks best equipped to fill McKay's shoes.

And so, as these events rather overshadowed my original interview (see last issue), I once again spoke to Siouxsie after their Malvern concert, and asked her about the new situation.

Slash: Did anything happen immediately prior to the signing session that led to a build-up of tension between you and John and Kenny?
Siouxsie: Well, before what happened in Aberdeen John and Kenny had been behaving very marital - like a couple of newlyweds. No, oldly-weds. But like nothing particular happened just before the signing thing. Basically, they just fled. Copped out, with a total disregard for everything and everyone.
Slash: When did it all start to get heavy between you, cos it seemed like you were split into two camps - them against you and Steve . . .
Siouxsie: The only camps there were were John and Kenny. So by that nature it forced like, you know, two there and two there . . .
Slash: You've hinted in the press that all this could've happened because of their relationship with each other, because they were living together . . .
Siouxsie: Well, towards the end they were 'living together' (ADOPTS PISSTAKING DRAMATIC TONE) They did everything together - they felt sick together, they felt happy together. Like Tweedle-Dee and Tweedle-Dum. You know, it was never like that before . . .
Slash: But you were going to throw them out anyway?
Siouxsie: I'd thought about it. I mean, I'd asked them before the tour if they still wanted to be part of Siouxsie and the Banshees, and they said they did, so . . . I think they were getting a bit fucked up with each other and they wouldn't have been much use to use if they'd have stayed like that, and just continued to get fucked up . . .

They were just both really weak as far as being confident in themselves was concerned. They'd fallen into a trap of like projecting an image, a cliche. It was very frustrating up until before they left - for about 6 months before. I think they just felt stronger as a pair.
Slash: So what happened in the record shop?
Siouxsie: I dunno, it was just so stupid.
Slash: What sparked it off though? Was it the fact that John was giving away the albums?
Siouxsie: No, not really.
Slash: Did he know the shopowner had paid for the albums?
Siouxsie: Yeah. And the silly thing was that they were being sold at a reduced price. Three quid or something.
Slash: Did you hit him?
Siouxsie: I just shoved him. I wasn't violent or anything. It could've been, but it wasn't. I just asked him what the hell he was doing.
Slash: Have you heard from them at all?
Siouxsie: Only from their solicitor. We had a letter saying that Nils had broken his contract as manager and the way it was signed means they don't regard themselves as being in the band.
Slash: Have you got anyone in mind as replacements?
Siouxsie: Anything's possible really. It's been working well with Budgie and Robert, but they're only temporary. I've been really enjoying the gigs more than I was. We did the warm-up dates with John and Kenny and they were just being ridiculous, and very pretty and small-minded. They made it feel like a job whereas now it's just - damned enjoyable. (LAUGHS) But as far as replacements are concerned, we'll just have to see where we stand at the end of the tour.
Slash: What about Marco?
Siouxsie: It didn't work out. He's got his own style, and he couldn't play the stuff that John could play. He didn't really fit in.
Slash: Most of the musical ideas came from John, didn't they? So where does that leave you?
Siouxsie: Well, the whole Banshees thing created a guidance for someone like John who's like maybe got no influences and doesn't particularly want to be a guitar hero or anything, but who feels they've got something to offer. I'm sure we'll find someone with that sort of attitude. It did fade a lot with John, and as far as writing songs, it wasn't him saying 'This tune is good for blah-blah-blah.' It was very much (that) he'd like play stuff, and I'd say, 'No. Yes', and I'd fit the arrangements to the lyrics. (NOW DO YOU KNOW WHO'S BOSS?) So it's very open for someone who thinks for themselves.
Slash: This idea of keeping a fluid line-up might mean a complete change of sound. Don't you think the fans might be dubious about it?
Siouxsie: Yeah, well, it's up to them really. The last thing we want is for someone to try and be just like John and Kenny. Budgie and Robert have both got into the songs their own way. It's not a carbon copy of what it was before, and the atmosphere onstage is much better now. It's a lot freer. As far as recording is concerned, I was just wanting to shatter some sort of image we had. Do you know what I mean? Come up with something unexpected.
Slash: So what's happening about the American tour - is it off?
Siouxsie: Yeah. 'Until further notice', or whatever it is they say. It's all off - Japan, Australia, New Zealand.
Slash: Are you pissed off?
Siouxsie: Yeah, but there's not much we can do about it.

At this point, Nils comes over with Steve - they're almost ready to leave for Bradford, the next night's venue. I ask him if they're planning to reschedule the U.S. tour, and he says they're forgetting about it for the moment. From the way they were talking, I should imagine the tour will happen early in 1980, as November, the month they originally planned to come over, has now been set aside for rescheduled gigs from the British tour that had to be cancelled "due to unforeseen circumstances" . . .



photos: Kerry Colonna

D.BYRNE, T.HEAD

DAVID BYRNE INTERVIEW

SLASH: You were saying they dance more to the B52's than to your music.
DAVID: Yeah, that's what's been happening lately.
SLASH: D'you consider yourselves a dance band among other things?
DAVID: Yeah, well sort of, I think we play music that's possible to dance to. Actually I found though, what happened last night, when the B52's were playing lots of people were dancing and there was a railing in front of the stage and it started to crumble and there was this little pit and people would've fallen into the pit, so they had to go out after the B52's played and tell people not to go forward and push against the railing.
SLASH: How did the double billing with the B52's happen? Was it your choice or was it a joint decision with the record company?
DAVID: I think it was a joint decision ... we're acquaintances, sort of friends. We have the same manager, that makes it easy to work out the logistics of playing gigs in the same place.
SLASH: The reason I ask is because, it's a nice billing, but it's an odd billing because it seems like they're focusing on the past as far as gimics, and you seem more oriented towards the future ... d'you think I'm wrong?
DAVID: I see what you mean. I think our feeling was that they were fun and that they're a good band and it doesn't matter what kind of band we play with as long as they've got something ... we've played with reggae bands ... various different bands. Sometimes it seems to work ... sometimes we've gotten somebody to open for us that we think our audience might like to hear; sometimes our audience doesn't feel the same way ... (chuckles).
SLASH: The B52's are a fun band ... are the Talking Heads a fun band?
DAVID: I think so, I think people can have fun when they see us ... it's a different sort of fun.
SLASH: You wouldn't say fun is what you're singing about?
DAVID: No, but I enjoy myself when we perform.
SLASH: So is it some kind of second degree thing where actually you can have fun singing about things that are quite scarey?
DAVID: Yeah. I think so.
SLASH: D'you think that the growing audience that you have sees it that way as having fun with very unfun subjects or d'you think they just pick up whatever they want in the music?
DAVID: Well, I'm sure they just pick up whatever they want. I like the idea of presenting things that aren't necessarily entertaining ... some of the songs might be depressing or whatever, but if they can be enjoyable at the same time ...
SLASH: It seems to be a more ambitious project than most musicians have — which is to present a certain subject matter in another way. D'you think this difference is going to lead you to try with other media or d'you think just the music is good enough of a vehicle to carry your ideas across?
DAVID: No. I'd like to try other things, but I haven't had the time really ... I'm going to have to slow down on the touring soon in order to investigate other things.
SLASH: Have you been approached by people to do a movie or anything?
DAVID: Yeah on and off, things like that. I haven't had the time to think about what would be the best way to do it. I tend to think that if you just accept something that's offered like that, even if it's a good genuine offer, if you just go into it then you might be ... you're not sort of challenging any of the assumptions about those various mediums, I think I had something that I had to do I would have to stop and think what's the best medium for it, what's the best approach for that, instead of just saying, oh, I'll do a book or I'll do a movie. I tend to think that TV or movies are not generally suited for rock n roll, although they can be used to generate some of the same ideas and feelings, but just having bands on the screen doesn't work very well.
SLASH: You seem to be more word-conscious than most rock n roll writers, were you writing at all before Talking Heads?
DAVID: Yeah, a little bit. Some songs, and a lot of things like questionnaires and lists of things, that was the format I was using. In a way, it seemed to be leading the same way, I'd get sick of art that seemed to have no ambition to communicate with people, so I started working with things that would get disseminated, things that persons could read and throw away.
SLASH: Do you think you're communicating now?
DAVID: Yeah, I think so. I can't really tell, but I think so.
SLASH: Does getting across worry you, or do you take it for granted that only so much will be understood?
DAVID: I think more of it comes across than people can verbalize, because a lot of the ideas I try to communicate aren't just in the lyrics, it's in the lyrics in contrast with the music, they way the music is arranged, our attitude on stage, all that sort of thing, sometimes just the sound of the instruments implies one point of view that isn't very easy to verbalize but is very easy to understand, but you can't quite put your finger on what it is.
SLASH: I know this is quite a cliche of a question, but which comes first, the tune or the lyrics?
DAVID: It depends on the song. This last record, almost every song is written using a different process. Some of them the words first, and those words set the music, and then I'd figure out what the chords were and then sometimes the whole song was written but it had no words and I put words to it that completed recording. I really made a point not to get into a method of writing songs 'cos I thought if I find something that works and stick to it, then all the songs'd start sounding the same ... maybe not, but I was afraid that would happen.
SLASH: How satisfied are you personally with the progression between the second and the third album?
DAVID: I think there are some things that are starting to move away from ... er ... whatever we're supposed to be and I think the sound of the record on a turntable to me is much better than the previous album and that's something I can't explain ... We didn't spend any more time trying to get a technically better recording or anything, if anything the recording was sloppier.
SLASH: What about this song written in a totally foreign dialect — is that African? What is it?
DAVID: No, it's nonsense, it's a nonsense poem.
SLASH: 'Cos I've read some very serious stuff explaining the roots of that (laughs).
DAVID: Well, the music is serious. I know that song has been accused of sounding disco. My intention was — I'd been listening to quite a number of African songs and I wanted to have a song that was really percussion oriented and had this sort of high life guitar style. The lyrics are from this old nonsense poem by this guy Hugo Ball.
SLASH: You played in New York with Dillinger ... How come you didn't keep the same double billing when you toured that time? Was there absolutely no interest in other parts of the country?
DAVID: Yeah, that's ... to some extent that's what it is. Logistically it's hard enough to get those people together.
SLASH: Out of Jamaica, out of time ... (laughs).
DAVID: (laughs) Out of Jamaica, out of time ... get them on the stage ... I mean I don't want to sound condescending but it's just ... it's very difficult, it's not very good for touring. We were scheduled to have the Mighty Diamonds or somebody playing in Berkeley.... at the last minute they just called up and said they weren't coming ... Aside from that somebody like Dillinger might be known here and in New York and a couple of other places but otherwise, it's not fair to him to go

somewhere and have people just sit there.

SLASH: As far as the band, what is your affinity to the Jamaican sound? Almost every new wave combo that comes out has to have their token reggae tune by now, and you haven't touched the stuff. Is it white people can't play reggae?

DAVID: I've heard some white people play reggae songs — they're not the same but it still sounds good. I wouldn't wanna just go in and play a straight reggae song, a faithful copy of the original seems like imitation ... we tended to adopt some of the techniques that they use, like on some of the songs we use some dub techniques and stuff like that, although it sounds very different when we use it.

SLASH: You did do a pretty straightforward version of Take Me To The River, which was quite impressive so don't you think you would get away with ...

DAVID: Yeah, but when we started playing that I thought that was more acceptable because it was ...

SLASH: American?

DAVID: Mm ... No, it just seemed like a choice for us to do almost a gospel number.

SLASH: Is there any other chance that you will perform with other reggae artists? I'm pushing this a bit but we've had such an incredible response from the reggae coverage we do so I know a lot of people are interested.

DAVID: I think it's possible — I think it'd be good if we could get some of the other types of Carribean music.

SLASH: D'you find yourself under certain pressures that you find distasteful?

DAVID: It hasn't been too bad like that, since we don't go around opening to big bands or anything, we're usually playing to an audience that's come to see us out of curiosity or whatever. We haven't had to do all those things — cocktail parties or anything. Sometimes you end up at some place you think might be interesting and it turns out it's not, but that happens no matter what you do, we've stopped doing store appearances but we did those at one point; after doing them I thought, ah, this is what these are about! In a way it's nice because it's a chance for you to talk to your audience firsthand, but the bad thing is that it reaffirms that star/audience relationship, so now instead if there's a good record store in town I'll go by myself 'cos it's a good record store and they might have something good,

SLASH: Talking about this star thing ...

DAVID: I don't think we get it that bad ...

SLASH: But you do get it.

DAVID: Yeah, but it's nowhere near the way those other people get it.

SLASH: Do you think it will ever get to the point where this unnatural relationship will disappear, where there won't be that distance between performer and audience?

DAVID: I feel we're making progress like that. It's not working a hundred per cent, but I feel we're getting somewhere.

SLASH: Do you ever feel that press interviews can also reinforce that distance between audience and artist, by implicitly stating that whoever it is that is being has a "message" to share, or whatever?

DAVID: It does not have to be that way. Sometimes there is a reason to interview people, because they have had experiences, because of the nature of their work, they know more about certain things than the average reader. In our case we've had experiences with touring, record companies, recording, that sort of thing, and that's probably more than the reader has had, but it does not mean we think we're better than them, it just happens to be what we do. You could say the same about anyone. Whatever job they do, they are more knowledgeable about that subject. It just happens we're in a band, which is the sort of job where people tend to get put up on a pedestal, but somebody who works in an office knows a lot more about that than I know, and I would be asking *them* questions.

SLASH: What about people working in offices, doing all these boring repetitive jobs, leading the kind of life you hinted at in "Big Country"? Are you familiar with it?

DAVID: Well, I worked for a few years as a dishwasher and a hash slinger, stuff like that. I found it depressing after a while, it wasn't depressing because of what I was doing — if I had a friend that was working with me it was okay — it was horrible because of the way you were treated, it was sort of assumed that you were a dope because you were washing dishes ... of course, you don't get paid very well either! But I've worked real boring menial jobs, but with a friend working in the same place it's not too bad, I mean, I can think of better ways of spending my time but I wouldn't necessarily go home depressed all the time.

SLASH: What did you do when you did end up going home depressed?

DAVID: I guess I would read, listen to records ... you come home feeling depressed and dive into your own projects, telling yourself, "Oh, they treat me so rotten but they don't know, they don't know that when I get home I'm doing all this interesting stuff and I know this and that!" ...

SLASH: What are you doing after this tour?

DAVID: I think we do a short tour of Germany and England, then I think it's time to stop and think about things for a while. I like performing and touring, but the drawback is that I can't do anything else, it's so time consuming and physically exhausting I can't really work on anything else, I can't write songs. I assume that while touring there are ideas brewing, but I don't have the time to work on something intensively. It's a shame, but it seems I can't do two things at once.

SLASH: Now that life is somewhat materially easier for you than when you were washing dishes, do you find it as easy to be creative? You know, the old cliche about having to be going thru hard times to be at a creative peak?

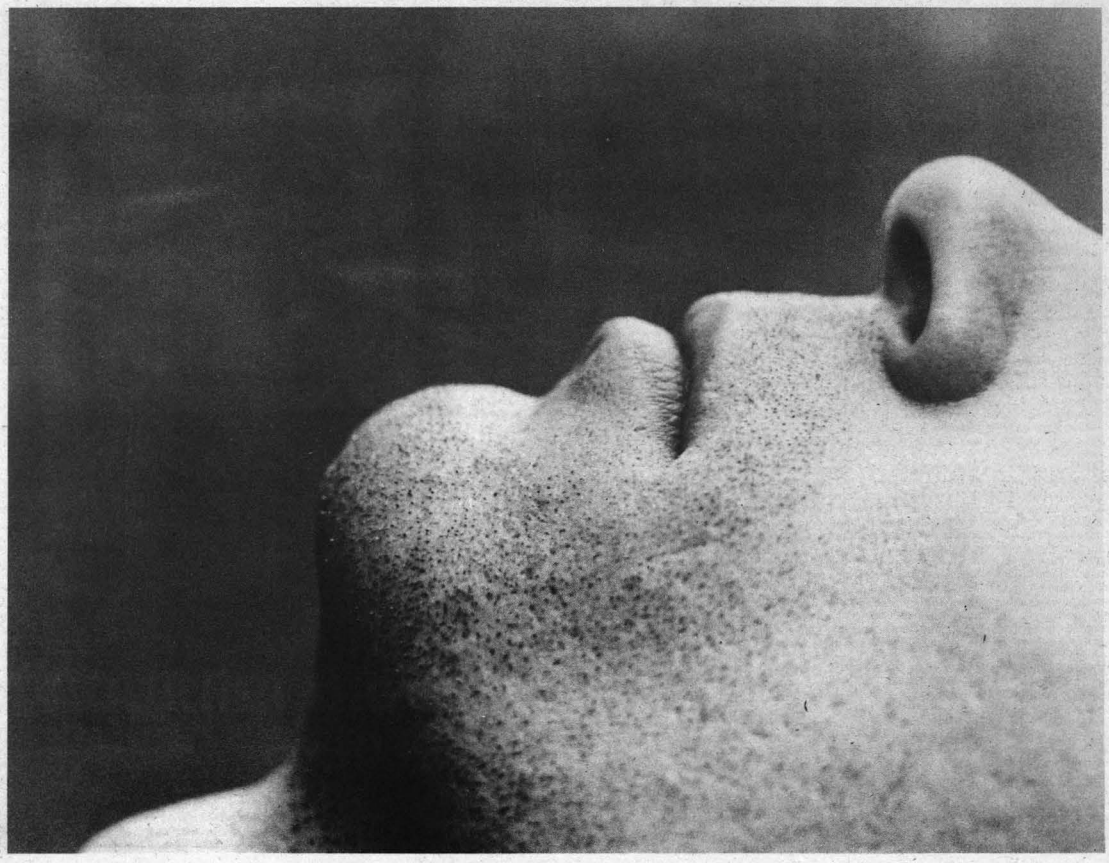
DAVID: Yeah, I know the cliche ... I wouldn't want to reinforce it, but in a way it's true. I guess if you start being comfortable your work might stop having any relationship with normal people. I don't make that much money and I don't think I have that problem, if I do make some I'll spend it on studio time or something like that rather than buying a giant house, and most of my friends are just ... regular people. I mean they're not regular people, but they are real people. There is another problem when you start having some success is that it makes it difficult to try other things.

SLASH: Does success also make it harder for you to keep your critical judgment intact? I mean, how do you know when something you've done is good or when it is just okay but probably will pass?

DAVID: It's mostly down in myself, whether I get excited when I'm writing something. If I get excited I'll jump around the room and think I really got something. In your last issue David Thomas said he really gets excited when he comes up with something that he doesn't really understand, and I feel a little bit the same way. If I get a combination of words that sems really interesting but I don't understand where I got that point of view, when I think I got something, or if the music, the instruments have a relationship to one another that I can't quite figure out, that sounds new — not just as if we go we'll do this and this and it will sound like this, let's go ahead, that's not very satisfying — but as long as I can keep having that attitude I can assume that people that listen to what we do will feel the same way.

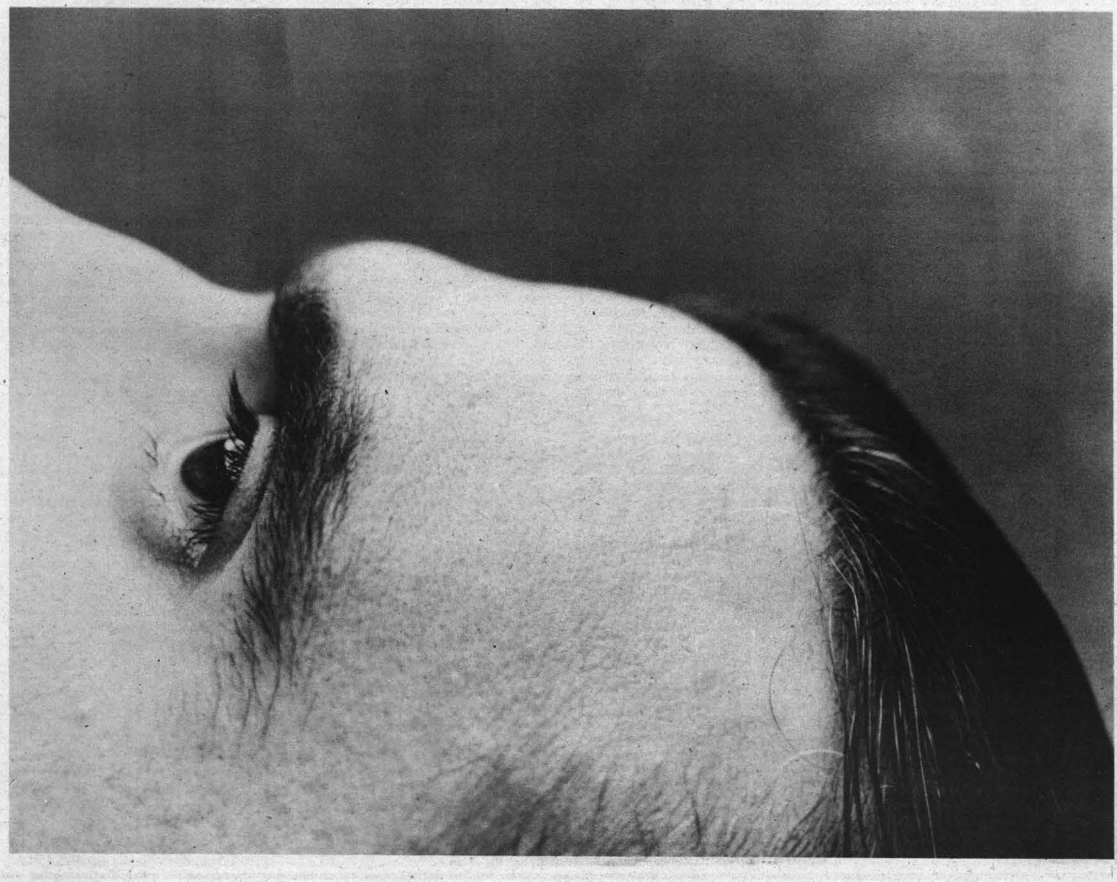
SLASH: How do you go about working out new songs with the rest of the band?

DAVID: Sometimes I feel I got something and I can see where it might go but it really sounds pretty primitive at the stage where I present it, but they're very good and understanding. If I can explain what I'm after they make suggestions ...



SLASH: Do they write songs of their own?
DAVID: Not that I know of. They might, but they haven't brought them forward yet.
SLASH: Hope you noticed we haven't mentioned Eno! And we won't.
DAVID: (laughing) okay ...
SLASH: When did music enter your life?
DAVID: 1966 or something ... pretty late for getting into rock n roll. I didn't have a transistor radio until then (David Byrne is 27 — Research Ed.) I had a band in junior high school, after that I did things on my own, played coffee houses, then I made tapes, played around with tape loops, that sort of thing, then I played with this guy. I played violin and ukulele and he played accordion, we played real old songs, mostly on the street (giggles). Shortly after that I got acquainted with Chris and we got together a primitive version of this band, then we split apart and met again in New York and decided to do it for real.
SLASH: In those days, did you ever think you might be one of the most talked about American groups to enter the 80's?
DAVID: I didn't think about it too much. I thought there certainly was a lot missing in popular music, and if somebody could come along and start playing music that had some meaning, then all these bands on the radio would just go bankrupt, I just assumed that as soon as the audiences heard something new and relevant they would immediately throw out their old records! It hasn't quite happened that fast! It's been a little slower than that. But I think it is happening, slowly and not as decisively as I thought it would.
SLASH: Do you think the new wave means some fundamental changes in the whole pop music structure, or is it a more superficial matter?
DAVID: Obviously, it's supposed to mean some changes, but in general, listening to the radio while crossing the country, thru the newspapers, according to a regular person's impressions, there may be a little element of that, but it's still just a new style of clothing, some new bands, and that's about it for most people. It's about the same as it was five years ago, like glitter or whatever it was. On the whole there is about the same percentage of interesting music on the radio, which isn't entirely bad. People tend to make the mid-sixties sound better than they actually were, there was a lot of crap on the radio then too! Sometimes I get optimistic and I think something is happening: like the Sergeant Pepper's record was a big failure, and you think, "Hey, something IS happening!' and they are cancelling the huge concerts everywhere, that sort of thing.

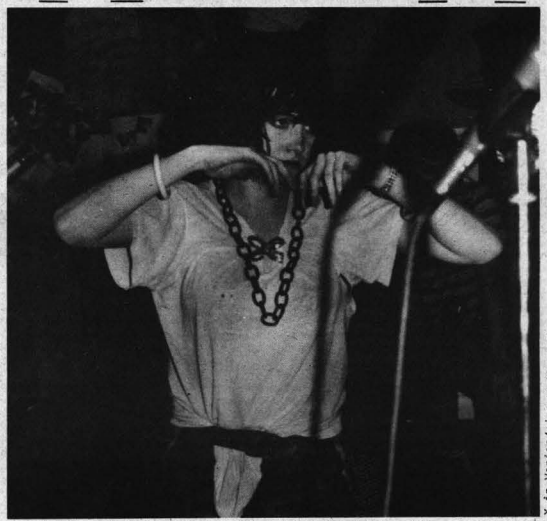
SLASH: Can I ask you about certain songs that intrigue me, or are you getting bored?
DAVID: No, not at all, go ahead.
SLASH: How did you come to write "Animals"? Did you have a conflict with your cat, or something like that?
DAVID: In that one the music and words were written completely separately. It was an idea I have had for a while. For a few years I have been curious about the idea of the "noble savage," of being at one with nature, live with one another, harmonious balance, that sort of thing. After a while I just thought "this sounds too trite, it really must be bunk!" So I thought it'd be interesting to write a song that took the opposite point of view. But it seemed that to write a song like that about some primitive tribe would be a little bit too much, so I chose animals. At one point I was going to tie religion into it, it started off saying "Jesus was hairy," talking about Jesus being all covered with fur, but (cracking up) I chopped off that part!
SLASH: I took the song as an extreme example of paranoia ...
DAVID: In a way, but I think it's more challenging to present a point of view like that as a really legitimate point of view, not just the rantings of some paranoid person, which I tend to get portrayed as!
SLASH: Why do you get portrayed that way?
DAVID: Well, lots of the songs are a little bit like that, but what I think makes them interesting is that, however off the wall the point of view, I try to make them sound believable and plausible. I have to convince myself when I'm writing them. If I can convince myself then I feel it's successful. I have to write from a point of view that is plausible to me, although it's not something I would go out and tell somebody "this is what I believe in!" In other ones I might take one aspect of my point of view and exaggerate it out of proportion until it's bordering on the ridiculous.
SLASH: How do you react to being portrayed as some paranoid schizophrenic that's made good?
DAVID: Sometimes it's funny, if it's written in an amusing way. Like there was a Lester Bangs review of the album that was real funny, so I didn't mind that at all, but in some of the other ones, I think they're not quite seeing all of it.
SLASH: Another song off "Fear of Music" that strikes me is "Drugs." What was the idea behind it?
DAVID: When it was originally written it was called "Electricity," then I changed the words and the music got changed considerably. It was originally just a description of somebody's perceptions, not necessarily a drug-induced perception, but one particular aspect of normal perception, and I thought it had nice contradictions in it, like someone is feeling sort of blissful and then they throw in a line about murder, they feel mean but blissful about it, enjoying feeling mean. The way the music worked out, we had recorded a different version of "Electricity" but it didn't translate very well onto tape, and so Brian and I started eliminating things from the mix and substituting other things, and by using that process we managed to get something quite different from the original, and a lot emptier. That worked good, and then some parts that were our favorite ones we copied them on other pieces of tape and added them on the beginning and the end, to extend it a little bit. I always liked the idea of psychedelic songs, although I always felt that during that period a lot of the stuff went too much one way or the other, either the music was interesting ... but the words were all love and peace ... I heard one of the 13th Floor Elevator's albums about a year ago, and I thought that was real good, psychedelic music should have been more of that and less of the other stuff.
SLASH: Another song that still obsesses me is the older "Big Country" off the 2nd album. It seems to reflect the feelings of someone who is literally torn between opposite feelings towards his country, who can love it and loathe it at the same time ...
DAVID: Yeah, I like that. I like the idea of about eighty per cent of the song being a fairly objective description of the view from an airplane, the daily life, nothing really objectionable described, and then the person suddenly switches and decides he doesn't like any of it. I had trouble with that song until I got to that one part where I created that contradiction, and it was one of those songs that when that happened, I didn't understand why it worked but it really seemed to do something, and I was happy with it.
SLASH: Talking Heads is such an all-american looking group, this attitude towards the country surprised me quite a lot ... Did you get any feedback as far as the message of that song? Such clean looking young people ...
DAVID: Republican looking?
SLASH: Almost ... expressing such feelings?
DAVID: I must say I was wary of it at first, because expressing a negative attitude towards normal people's lives in the suburbs or wherever has been done a lot in rock n roll, and it's an easy target, a cheap shot, and it does not really serve any purpose. But then when it was finished I thought, no, it's not quite as cheap as that, it's not elitist, it's not looking down your nose at somebody.



staged events

FROM A VENICE CLASSROOM TO THE GREEK THEATRE, WITH A LITTLE DETOUR THRU SAN FRANCISCO: DISJOINTED FLASHES IN A RAPIDLY DETERIORATING BRAIN

On Saturday the 13th, X played what must have been the most unusual set of their career in a tiny classroom type of thing at the Beyond Baroque poetry center in Venice. No stage, alphabet charts and children's crayon doodlings on the walls, local long haired poets sitting on the floor and bewildered Hollywood punks clutching paper bags full of nutritional liquids on the steps. This incongruous culture clsh was meant to celebrate the happy days when John and Exene met some years back in the same cultured surroundings. Things have happened since, and poetry is once again where it belongs, in the street. They played two loose but formidable sets, with Exene reeling with wild abandon in and out of the dancing crowd, wailing all the familiar tunes of urban despair and derailed love affairs inches away from the spectators' faces, tripping over the various cables and monitors scattered around the crowded floor, while John and Billy flanked her demented outbursts with their steady volleys of guitar and bass sounds and Don shook the very foundations of thie ex City Hall with the crazy relentless beat. I observed a few skateboarding kids who had dropped in out of curiosity and who must have gone home with some story to tell their peers. Two hours after this it was time to check out another pretty bizarre happening at the other end of townz: Nervous Gender were playing a midnight show in a little theater on Las Palmas along with the mysterious Joanna Went. When we got there a strange duo known as Fat And Fucked Up had already finished performing. Apparently those two loonies (Michael Entrier and Josie Roth) sit and play some impromptu chamber music on cello and violin, which in itself is nothing to write home about, except that the bows they use are in pretty bad shape, some strings are missing and the rest keep breaking! After this intriguing approach to the Destroy All Music concept a strange character called Zev came out with about half a ton of stainless steel restaurant containers tied in bundles. The lunatic would grab one bundle by a string and drag it in circles around him, grab another one made up of different buckets and pans and bang it against the first, and I'll be damned if it didn't sound great. I can hear the load of you muttering about art shit and all that but that's your problem. And now wait til you hear this: that Joanna Went girl came out with boxes and plastic bags full of stuff and things, she sang odd little snatches of tunes (backed by the Zev character on drums and someone else on I didn't remember who), moved frantically from one pile of props to another, pulling out strange costumes and masks and discarding them immediately afterwards, falling to the ground, getting back up, speaking in tongues, pouring a bucket of red paint on herself and collapsing in a heap. Everything was really fast and unexpected, like broken segments of obscure rituals, like disjointed film clips of unrelated primitive ceremonies. While most so called "performance" artists I've seen stretch one thin concept until resentful boredom sets in and negates whatever blurry point they might have intended in the first place, this really gave your imagination a run for its money. Then Nervous Gender added their own final touch to this evening of modern american entertainment. This was without a doubt their finest performance to date, their discordant shrieks and electronic bitchings left red welts on your brain. Visually they also took their collective madness one



X in Venice/pic: Philomena

step further, with Gerardo looking like some bondages android who's been exposed to too many radioactive fallouts and Phranc playing the part of a West Point cadet in official mourning garb. Every second of their anti-music set made sense, it turned every notion you've ever had of sound and tunefulness upside down and left you groping for any thread back to normalcy. Strong stuff, my little punk rockers, for once totally devoid of any trace of self indulgence or smug experimentalism. I left being both elated and humble, as once again I had found it that nothing can really be taken for granted. And I still love Black Flag.

Some days before that there was a first rate traffic jam on the outskirts of Griffith Park as every cool rock consumer in the city was trying to park his BMW in the picnic areas surrounding the Greek Theatre to catch America's latest thinking and singing darlings, the Talking Heads. No doubt a sizable section of the young and hip and affluent crowd had also come to catch the fewly elected queens and kings of kitch rock, the B-52's. Due to the parking mess mentioned above I missed most of their set, sitting my ass down in time for only one song and the encore. The little I saw and heard was fun fun fun and forgotten ten seconds after they were off. I mean it rocked real fine and smooth, the costumes were zany and colorful, the voices loud and clear and kooky beyond reproach, the audience frugged and shrieked on cue, every aspect a very accurate example of what bland fun the future may have in store for us.

The Talking Heads are in another league altogether, and their apparent smoothness and polish hides some rather disturbing understructures. They are reviewed somewhere else in this paper but I want to say that at times the intricacy of their song patterns, the delicate layers of careful chosen progressions that support David Byrne's knotted wails and shrieks make me think that they have taken a certain type of music just about as far as anyone can. Of course they haven't taken it that far yet in terms of popularity, and there are still many many people who have yet to discover their magic. What's more some of the ones who have discovered it or think they have are not that discerning as there were repeated shouts of "Are we not men?" between songs!! Such sophistication warms the heart! Before I close this erratic chapter of haphazard memories, a brief holiday in San Francisco during the opening salvos of the Western Front marathon should be mentioned. I only caught a few of the bands that participated on some of the first nights, some were great, a few were awful, some others were nothing special but came from far away to prove it. There was the Urge, who haven't exactly improved since their Hong Kong disaster, an all girl trio called the Contractions who rocked pretty hard but who lack any kind of focus or direction except for their lesbian core of fans who certainly have plenty of focus and direction along with an appalling inability to dance with any kind of rhythm. There were the Bags who have more rhythm than half of the other bands put together and Geza X' brand new Mommy Men (with Brendan on drums, Kira and Paul Roessler on bass and keyboards and Geza himself on guitar, secret pedals, mental ward singing, whining and hungarian story telling who once and for all convinced the San Francisco observers that L.A. is indeed a gigantic psychiatric ward where everyone talks about normal matters like butt pliers, mommy men and practising mice, there were the Stingers who are from Long Beach and who I've not yet figured out at all, the Dishrags from Vancouver who I figured out very quickly (boring — no, VERY BORING), The Female Hands from some beach somewhere who look like nice suburban kids (all boys) but sound real tight and occasionally very interesting (a budding Buzzcocks?), and there was Noh Mercy, a band I had heard about and read about many times without any special urge to check them out and what a fool I was. There are only two of them, one looks like a cracked actress (and interestingly enough does a song about Frances Farmer) with jet black curly hair, she plays the synthsizer with inventive fire and sings like a chanteuse in hell, the other girl has very short hair, dresses like Buck Rogers on his wedding day and makes love to her drum kit (which includes a hub cap), she also plays guitar like no one I've ever seen plays guitar, their sound goes from gothic cabaret to exorcist top ten to melodic death chants to other areas not yet categorized by musicologists and it is sometimes incredibly beautiful. The Public Image of another planet. Intensity comes in many shapes these days.

DISEMBODIED MIND CULPRIT IN MASS HYSTERIA

SANTA BARBARA (SPI) Santa Barbara's a clean city, a green city, a pretty city. A sleepy-eyed hamlet smack dab between Lost Angles and Dont-Call-It-Frisco. You won't find disenfranchized intellectual scum hovering about these neat streets pal-o, no matter what time you look. Some folks say it's environmental factors, conditions tailor made for active siestas: sun surf and psuedo-cigarettes, vital healthy living oozing out each pore, all psychic tensions sweated, bleached, or belched out of the natives before it drives them to desperate evasive activities in ungodly hours of the night. Makes it kinda . . . quiet around here.

But heck fire, there was this wierd thing that went down a few weeks back . . . it kind of upset the parents and parishioners of the community to no slight degree—being they're not quite sure what prolonged effects it may have had on the adolescents exposed to it.

It was a concert by the Talking Heads (how's that for a name? Haw Haw) and the B-52's (oh boy! I'll get to them!) at the old Arlington Theatre. Nothing dangerous you say? Read on.

Now mind you, The Arlington is a converted ovie house who's interior is so constructed to resemble, with fantastical detail, entire pana-rornatic spanish township, I mean with the windows and walls stickin' right out at yuh. And awesomely yawning into enternal infinity is a canopy of phosphorus stars painted all over the ceiling. As Lottie Goya Tortilla used to say, she used to say: "If Ethel Mertz weren't deader than a dustpan, then Ricky Ricardo could serenade her at the Arlington and even Fred would swoon."

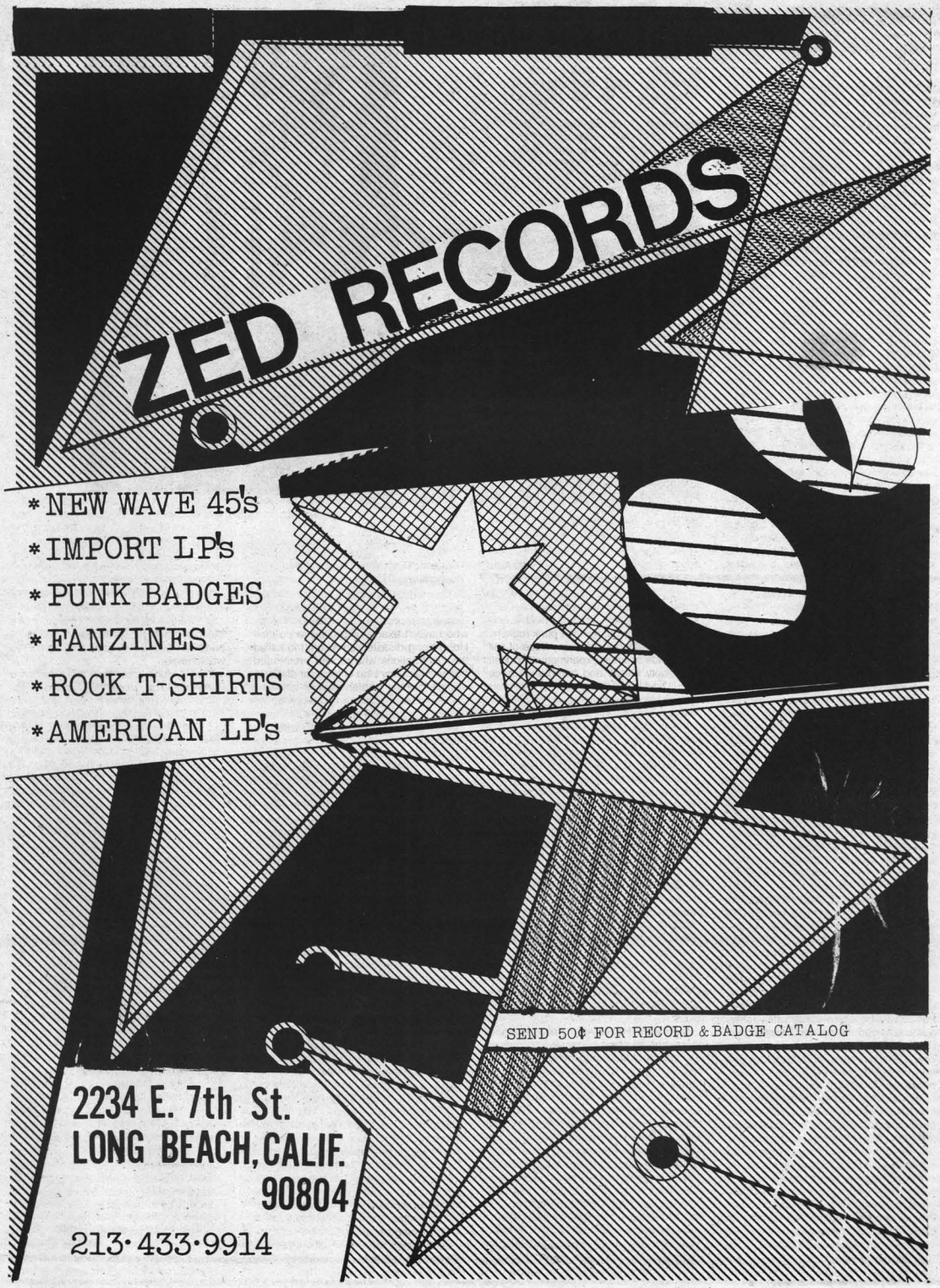
Well, I don't know how that you David Byrne would go over at the Club Tropicana (thats New York, where Lucy and Ricky lived, not the Tropicana Hollywood where old Ethel lives ad infinitum in the TV set in Room 1a) but he sure knocked 'em dead at the Arlington.

Backed by mafia-backed record moguls, these insidious characters lurched into our little town and for three hours stole the hearts, minds, even the sould of a sold-out house. It was shockingly over-stuffed with youngsters, many of whom showed signs of being out of touch with our reality — possibly through the use of alcohol and cigarettes, though ace reporter Will L'Amato also "personally witnessed the inhalation of large amounts" of marijuana.

I found it a distressing mess, seeing our young people within inhuman proximity to each other, writhing in slimey layers,seizing in spasmodic animals seizures, groping and jerking with dripping genitals pulsating in their tender, eager young mouths. My whole moral code was hot and bothered!

Then the first band came out and I almost died of chuckles, I mean these guys were weird. The two . . . women dressed in plasticene geometridresses and zombieconal protowigs. The young men playing electric guitar and drums looked innocous enough, but that singer was a smutful character. He looked like a respectful banker's boy who ran off to subterranean beatnick coffee shops with bongos and rubbers in his wallet.

They play that kind of music in those wonderful Gidget flicks, only something about it was weird. It was like waking up in a familiar room...only to find you're on the ceiling and there's a window where the door should be. And the disorienting exhibition was relentless, the women screeling and golowanging their staccoto wails while that sinful singer danced the shy tuna and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sang with a Ricky Ricardo sneer. While the two nice boys would set up a solid rhythmic framework, the odd ones would interject alien farfisa pulse rates or violate the bongos. That singer would distort our kids sense of spacial sanctity by playing a palmsized piany. Golldangit, I didn't know what to think!

As if under a spell, the teens were moving in unison, up-and-down, down-and-up, and back down again, their once dull eyes lit up as if with the devils own cigarette lighter, their once apathetic muscle tone excited and contracting in time.

I hardly had time to push tears out my ducts, when Fire marshall Tortilla gave the 10-4, and The Talking Heads treaded softly out to a frightening reception. All the more frightening because of how safe and sane they *appear*, especially after a spectacle like the B-52's. That name should have made me wary, I mean, just what is a Talking Head? Does it not imply an entity distinct from the body, like Donavan's Brain, directing and manipulating those around it with its biorhythms, its staggering intellectualism cut cold from the common heart of humanity? Does not a Talking Head rely upon listening heads for its very life? Yes, my friends it does, and in this instance it was the organic network of our innocent young who were preyed upon. I'll tell you, I almost threw up when I read about Freud in high school - but this David Byrne makes him seem like a swiss clockmaker. Sigmund was a frustrated exhibitionist who exposed his particular id-iotic pathology in general terms, this Byrne snatches the darkest aspects of society in general and distills it down to his particular ontological insecurities. Thus, he offers himself up as a package of our unexpressed fears - fear of relationships, fear of love, fear of idleness, fear of music - all with enough pragmatism to fill three free schools.

He and the three other members of the band work as if a single organism - supplying heartbeat, breathrate and kinetic/motor ability. Byrne is the Talking Head. In fact, this fellow's sallow head is perched precariously on a neck like a rubber hose, resembling a whooping crane on an amphetamine binge. Sounds like one too, gushing forth with a manic/panic range of whoops warbles and gutteral growls, all impromptu yet structurally perfect. Same with his guitar playing, it's the quirkiest twanging and textural twittering I've ever heard, but it all works perfectly. It's scary as all get out to hear his songs and feel their implications.

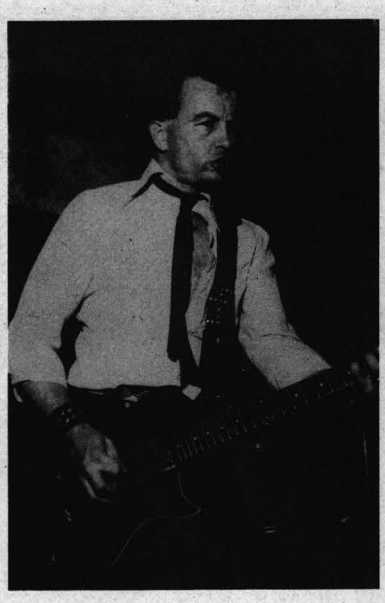
What better method to share the body, and immobilize the mind, than through rhythm? Our beloved Reverend Frijolie warned us about the voodoo beat when Ed gave us Elvis, and it's not to be taken lightly. The Talking Heads stratify their rhythms onto multitiered traintracks, bulldozing the youngsters into brainwashed consent, an adoring anherence that ballooned into a frenzied worship by the concert's end.

And the whole time, this David Byrne never *said* anything at all except "Thank You", and that in the quietest of tones.

All in all, it was the most frightening example of total audience manipulation in Santa Barbara history - except, well, maybe when the Indians built the mission, but there were no guns involved in this one, only an explosive personality.

My friends, what more can be said. Kids will be kids, but this weren't no party, this weren't no disco, this weren't no fooling around. Religion, science and money won't change our kids, but The Talking Heads just may have.

Billy M. Auto



Fear/pic: Scott Lindgren

Germs, Middle Class, Black Flag, Red Cross
the Hong Kong Cafe

The Germs hit the big time? Well maybe. $5.50 admission etc. you could say that. The truth is, this thing of ours, this Cosa Nostra, has turned into something bigger than we expected. From its humble Masque beginnings to the next big New Wave scene. L.A. may soon find itself another money-sucking, back-stabbing, C.B. G.B.'s-Max's circuit, complete with stars and cars.

The Germs may not have expected what they got. A record crowd that made the Hong Kong like living on the equator. Red Cross hit the stage, with most of the crowd still waiting outside in the line. (Me included) I've heard tapes of them which are very good, and was pissed as holy hell to miss them. Anyway, Kickboy said they were great.

Black Flag were totally devastating. They were the real thing in the same manner that the Damned or Iggy and the Stooges gave us the real thing before. No hesitation, no intellectualization, no contemplation, just 100% unrestained anger. Keith sings with the attitude that soldiers must have killed each other with. Black Flag are unusually successful at attaining complete chaos at a period when everyone tries for it. Gregg's guitar playing is sharp and accurate. And Robo! Hands down, my favorite drummer in L.A. He just ours like a machine. Robo has more energy than all you assholes could ever hope to have.

Middle Class fit into things quite well. I don't like what they play so much, but I like to watch it. Unlike Black Flag or the Germs, they don't have the tunes to hold up the act. On the other hand, Jeff Atta is wonderful to watch and with a little more time could be really interesting. Guest vocalist this night was Mike Patton, who sang rather ferociously for being such a nice guy.

Now to the meat of the matter. The Germs. The Germs really can take advantage of this large crowd, big hustle, scene, just because Darby is a real showman and the more people and noise, the more excited he gets. People were freaking out right and left and there wre more fights than at bar full of sailors. Lots of suburbanites sat around screaming "Darby is the Master" and shit like that, which really ticks me off, because Darby is not the master of anything. He's just a really good singer who is striving more intense levels and emotion than usual. There is no perfect master who wastes his time singing in front of a band. Worship for fucking rock and roll singer is one of the worst things this country has ever allowed.

I guess we don't have royalty to admire, so we make royalty out of entertainers who only exist for our enjoyment. Movie stars, rock stars are like war heroes in this country, which is pathetic, since one Vietnam veteran deserves a million times more respect than Mick Jagger or some shit.

Wasn't the original idea of this to bring down idols and to enjoy rock & roll without all the pretentiousness, stardom, artistic bullshit, that turned rock and roll from Little Richard into Led Zepplin. Didn't the Clash say "No Elvis, Beatles, or Rolling Stones in 1977!" and what have you done? You've simply turned the Clash into "Elvis, Beatles, and the Rolling Stones." Now you wanna turn Darby Crash into that too. Well, it's your fault what will happen. You'll just have the same bullshit you were originally against. Fuck you for that.

I have no mroe respect for any rock and roll singer than for anybody else who hangs out in Chinatown and Hollywood. They are just like you and me. Only you and me decide upon their success. They don't create themselves. When they got their heads up their asses about being an artist or something. They have forgotten that it's all just entertainment, and their lives depend on other people. So don't go making idols out of anybody around here. 1977 may have dissapated into New Wave, but a lot of us remember what it was all about in the first place. Godd bless Little Richard...

Ranking J.J.

Catholic Discipline, Fear, the Dils
Hong Kong Cafe

Its hard to write about Catholic Discipline in here. We've been accused of running a hype sheet before, but there's no reason to hype Claude. He isn't trying to hustle his way into rock & roll hall of fame, and there's certainly no money in it. So, if you can believe that writers live double lives, (Mark P. and Patti Smith did) then Claude is just the singer in a band comprised of one Nervous Gender and one Bag and one ex-Bpeople that are taking advantage of an interesting situation.

An interesting thing it is. It's some kind of melodic/minimal/Screamers-like/art-rock that's embellished with the elaborate lyrics of Mr. Bessy. Lyrics that I would rather read than listen to. Rick is so very precise on the bass, and Phranc has turned into a pretty clever guitarist. Claude himself is still very stiff onstage and his voice hoarse and shouting. Nonetheless, he does make an interesting figure to watch, and nobody really took their eyes off him for a minute. Like any other kind of band, the Disciplines need more experience together and to play in front of wilder crowds. Should Claude become more loose onstage, we can probably count on some wild nights at upcoming Catholic Discipline gigs, but so far, not a bad start. The songs are very good and that's 50% of the whole thing anyway. So be patient.

I have to apologize to Fear, because I missed the whole set when Keith B. Flag offered to buy me a beer in the bar next door. This is my weak spot. One beer led to another. After about fourteen, I realized Fear was onstage, so I dashed out of the bar into the Hong Kong to find Fear walking off stage. Shit! Anyway, they're a good band and don't need a review from me. And so...

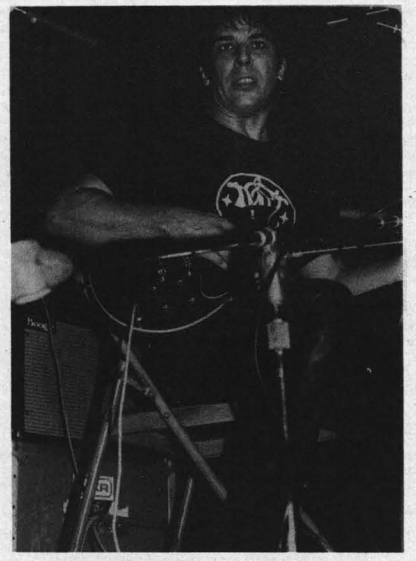
What can I say about the Dils. You almost are not allowed to like them anymore. Well, I do. They're one of the first bands on his scene and certainly were arresting at a time when the Germs were a stupid joke. They are still a great band and even more competent than ever in their lives. Admittedly, they sound slicker and cleaner than most pop/punk bands on this side of the world, but fucking so what? They aren't any different sounding than the fucking Buzzcocks or Clash, which you ass-holes run off to shell out $8.50 in cash to see. Only the Buzzcocks don't have half the energy and charisma that Chip and Tony got. This is great music. Wouldn't you rather hear this on the radio, instead of shit you're stuck with now. The Dils may not be as militant as they were, but they're still a damn good rock and roll band...

Politics does not enter into even punk rock. It does matter a holy shit, if a band sings about guns on the roof or anarchy in the U.K. The only thing that counts is actually picking up a gun and going it yourself. Pick up a gun and be happy to get shot for a cause. That's the attitude that makes things work.

You gotta like the color of red. You gotta never doubt you're right. You can't flinch a muscle when the time comes to string up your best friend. That's revolution. That's politics. And one million Johnny Rottens ain't worth one Che' Guevara. The Dils know this too, and so they don't wanna play militant no more. They wanna be rock & roll. You can't hate them for losing their politics. Real politics makes world turn around. Rock and roll/punk rock/reggae/art-rock/ jazz or anything etc. etc. is all just fucking entertainment. Amusement for bored people. It doesn't affect anybody or change anybody's life. So don't come down on the Dils for refusing to give politics. The Dils are mean fuckers, who put a weed up this scene's ass, and if you're insulted by this, well, tough shit.

Until you can come up with songs half as good as theirs. With energy close to Chip's. With the hell-raising attitude they exist by everyday, don't tell me the Dils have sold out. Fuck you! The Dils just know better than to make assholes out of themselves by trying to look like English politics bullshit. That means nothing. If you wanna change things, get used to life as it is in Apocalypse Now. That's the way wars are fought. That's the way wars are won. Its dark all around and there is no light on the distance.

Ranking Jeffrey Lea



John Cale/pic: Philomena

JOHN CALE AT McCABE'S

John Cale, the man who thinks like a gun, in this West L.A. organic hang out? What is the world coming to? I deliberately missed the first act, it sounded too mellow and wistful for my degenerate tastes, the sounds of violin and healthy feminine vocals drifted thru the shop while I browsed thru countless guitar handbooks, dobro manuals, Joan Baez songbooks and Pete Seeger biographies, there was tea, coffee and home made cookies and I felt lik a Martian. Before Cale came on for his acoustic set (with the exception of one stunning moment) we were asked not to smoke. I suppose nicotine is bad for growing guitars. I suppose these people are determined to impose their gentle ways by force if necessary. I suppose the Dead Kennedys will never perform there. But Cale is one of the few artists from the past that will make me put up with almost anything, inane peace and love creeps included. The man eventually came down, his head covered in some palestinian guerrilla veil and headband, his eyes hidden behind big black shades, his stomach tucked in tired leather pants. Definitely not mellow or together looking. He finished his beer, and for the next 40 minutes or so destroyed my soul with some of the most involving, touching and disturbed songs that have ever been written. On a couple of number he was accompanied by his pal Peter Ivries on harmonica and esoteric gymnastics, I think most people were turned off by Peter's unique approach to performing, I also think most people there were boring assholes who really thought of themselves as part of some top secret elite. Peter's harmonica on Heartbreak Hotel was stunning and haunting, almost as beautiful as Cale's stripped down interpretation of the tune. The sole non-acoustic moment of the evening was Cale's rendition of "Pablo Picasso" in which he traded the regular guitar or piano for a beat up looking electric guitar which he tortured for almost 10 minutes. He played an incredibly distorted and fuzzy intro to the song, all atonal angry full of reverb noise, slamming the chords with malicious vengeance, and I'm surprised the mellow organizers in charge of the place didn't have a collective heart attack. Such viciousness in such peaceful surroundings! Finally the anger subsided and the song itself started, and it must have been the all time definitive version of that masterpiece of nasty rock n roll frustrations. Cale didn't so much sing as growl and spit out the words, swaying on his chair and grimacing with pent up hatefulness: "Pablo Picasso was never called an asshole...not like YOU". He also gave us a superb sand paper textured version of "Guts", pounding on the helpless piano like a boxer, and a few surprisingly gentle and romantic ballads which sounded ten times more vulnerable and moving than in their lush record versions. Every moment of this hardly advertised show was the perfect complement to his earlier Whisky appearance, where he chose to only give us the hard-rocking side of his work. Here he exposed himself as a complex subtle and romantic songster whie on the Whisky stage he hid behind the image of a rowdy out of control rocker. Of course in both shows the other side occasionally seeped thru, for in no way is he a slick calculating show biz creature who can slip in and out of his various personas. The small audience of obnoxious connaisseurs (how I resented these mellow fuckheads daring to appreciate a music that speaks so loud of pain and fear when everything about them smells of satisfaction and complacency - how stinkingly elitist I can be!) forced him down for countless encores, the best one being the heart-tearing "Cable" or whatever this mysterious lament is called. "Why, why did you leave me here" moaned Cale, and there were goose bumps on the inner walls of my cranium. Unfortunately the insatiable bunch of students didn't realize that nothing could ever top that one for the evening and stomped and cheered and yaooed until the Welsh poet came down one last time for a chopped up messy version of "Waiting for my man". That tune has always been a favorite of yobbos who get their thrills by proxy, not ever having taken the plunge in that highly specialized area of despair themselves. I believe there were even some out of beat attempts at hand clapping in unison, and I felt like slapping the closest longhairs. Cale stoically went along, forgetting some lyrics and bringing the tired tune to an early ending.

Well, as he once said himself, "If they're alive then I'm dead", although I suspect it just might be the other way around.

Kick

THE POLICE

The new Police album, REGGATTA DE BLANC, has been released.

Includes the single "MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE"

Produced by The Police and Nigel Gray. Agency: Frontier Booking International.

A&M RECORDS

Reggatta de Blanc

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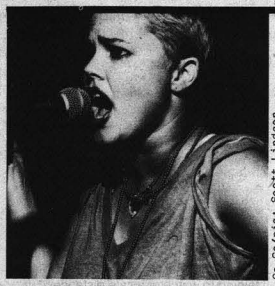


Go-Go/pic: Scott Lindgen

Extreme, Go-Man-Go's, Vut issdahs veerdohs?

Frankly, I was planning on spending The Extreme's set crouched in a comfortless corner, muttering about Cruel Fate and drowning journalistic sorrows in a hideous hop and barley swill. It wasn't a pretty way to march towards death, but someone has to fabricate this puffy muck for you guys and gals. It's not easy, some words don't assemble as easily as others, and reviewing a band that's constipating is worse than shit in a bottle. Not that they don't try hard, it's just that something had always prevented The Extreme's positive elements from jelling into a palpable whole, leaving both band and listener wired out somewhere twixt esoterica and erotica. Strickly yucky pooh.

But they've changed their game, accessabalized and substantiated their approach. For starters, they have a new key boardist - a waif-like stangeling who environmentalizes the melody with eerie decodrones, set against a pinpoint percussive precision and the seashore surge of Shaun and Maicol's guitars. It holds your balls tighter and surer than any other performance of theirs I've seen, and that's a lot. It's also less daring, but that's the most eccentric Heartbreak Hotel in town, and the instrumental encore was a real dinghummer too. Every extremity finds it recepticle, and The Extremes finally found a groove. Forward the future!

The Go-Go's almost defy you to take them seriously, but you really should. They were splendid, no getting around it. All that "getting better" dribble has been hard on them, but they've come a long way in penetrating that sexist rap, stripping down their campiness and laying out their throbbing and pulsating undulation of sound in a cocky, ballsy, yet still tittilating performance. Sex no longer slips a finger into it, even the menfolks would be hard pressed to beat them, to whip them at what they do. In a world of social purgatory, the only meaningful activity is on stage. Even if its not all that meaningful, it still beats going steady with some whimpy limp queerbait, breaking your nails over nothing, or gossiping in Denny's with dull little cuntflaps.

This...this is really hard for me. I'd like nothing more than to rave about The Weirdos, to say they were phenomenal, better than before, the same overdone energizers that drove us bananas in the old days. Sadly, it's not true...*these* are the old days, for both them and us. You can fart in church now, and yawn at a Beatles reunion, and you can stand still for the Weirdors.

Perhaps they were too professional in their performance and too serious in their intent. They were trying incredibly hard, with visable trepidation, to present themselves freshly and powerfully while minimizing their connection with the past glories - built on neither professionalism or seriousness, but often the lack of either.

Yet, unlike the Screamers, they didn't risk performing a whole set of new songs, salted with golden oldies. Instead, they opened with "Happy People" and proceeded to give a medley of weirdos classics interspersed with a couple of new onés. Thus, they opened the way toward inevitable haunts from the past and a plane of question marks towards their future. If it's not a process of re-establishing their vitality, then it came off pretty stiff.

John Denny has not lost his stature, he's still one of the great monuments in LA rock, a singer and mover par excellence. But Dix has gotten "slick" on the guitar and lost his retarded boy charm and Cliff seemed set to sign the contract and usher the kiddies into bed. They sounded almost too good for their own good, no rusty pins or ripped vinyl to hand your ears on, no happy faces sticking to your eyeballs as you do the dance. There's no way in hell this group could be bad or boring, but the magic was gone.

Many happy people out there have joined the party during the Weirdos artistic vacation, and it was them I saw desperately leering in pistonized gyrations and clawing each other for strategic vantage points. They are essentially a new audience for the Weirdos, one that they may well conquer like Day Glo Knights of old. For the new audience, without fond pictures hanging in their memory banks, the Weirdos project an urgency and power that's hard to resist - for the rest of us it's muttering about cruel fate over hideous hops-and-barley swill.

Will The Shabby Romantic

TRIBAL STOMP
Soul Syndicate/Robert Fripp/Joe Ely/ Chambers Brothers/the Clash

Tickets to this non-event were a paltry $12.50 (though I must admit that their press list was very generous). In case you haven't heard, the organizers lost their ass on this one. They were expecting 12,000 per show and instead got at the most 1,000. Rumor has it that not all the bands were paid in full, and that consequently Peter Tosh demanded full cash payment before he'd go on stage (Jah live, brothers and sisters).

Soul Syndicate was about halfway through a truly skankin' set when we showed up, already squirming under the heat, already hating being there. By the time they got offstage, however, we had almost forgotten that we were in Monterey, CA, and not Kingston, Jamaica.

During the break a funny-looking little man began casually fiddling with a tape loop while acid-casualty emcee Wavy Gravy demanded to know the true meaning of Doo Wah Diddey. He was finally silenced and Robert Fripp began to play. One guitar, one live loop, one long and constantly modulating barrage of harmonies which left the frisbie-mentality crowd completely confused (even the token punks seemed uncertain as to their response). I liked it.

Next up was the thoroughly mundane Joe Ely. Johnny Cash he was not. Grand Ole Opry he was, to the core. A good old boy who tried hard to convince us he was lotsa fun. He was not well received.

Then came the really swell and groovy Chambers Brothers, who I had actually been naive enough to think might have been a plus (wrong again). In the first place they looked like they were at least sixty years old and were singing strictly for the bread. I would ten times rather have seen one of those cool old sax players who play on street corners for spare change and can tell you great stories about Billie Holiday than these old farts.

Finally, the Clash came on. A lot of people were there just to see them, so when their nifty all-nations flag came tumbling jerkily down, there was a cheer. When Joe came out in a clean, ironed pink shirt, there was another cheer. When Paul came out in a sleeveless black shirt with his hair slicked back and wraparounds on, there was another cheer. My stomach started to turn. They opened with "I'm So Bored With the U.S.A.," certainly fitting, and then threw "Complete Control" and an awful new song which might be called "Down By the River" at us. Joe proceeded to make jokes about the high cost of gasoline. Here he was treading on dangerous ground as you can drive for an hour for less money than it costs to watch the Clash for an hour — the difference being that the Clash aren't a commodity (or so people keep telling me). Mick "Guitar Hero" Jones played a lot of sloppy leads, more than is healthy for any band. And Joe lied when he said "I'm the all-night pub-crawling wolf/Who looks so sick in the sun." He looked alright. At least they were talking to the audience and had stopped a lot of the stupid theatrics of the last tour. It was nice to hear "White Man," "Janie Jones," and "Garageland" (they must have a fuckin' nice garage by this time), but it was a little slow and stale for my tastes, and I don't know why they played filler like "Capital Radio" and "What's My Name?" when they've got songs like "Cheat" or "Deny" (except, of course, that they were promoting product, namely the re-release, and neither of the latter songs are included on that record). And then they were gone. The crowd cheered. They came back and did an interesting new reggae tune, followed by a fairly spirited "Career Opportunities." Joe announced a special guest. Sham 69 rumors were flying (not entirely unfounded rumors, either, as they had stage clearance and were known to have been in Los Angeles the day before). We held our breaths and were rewarded by the reappearance of Joe Ely, who sang a song called "I Let My Fingernails Grow Until They Click When I Play the Piano." The Clash played backup band. I laughed. Then they broke into "White Riot," with Joe Ely playing and singing along, a big grin on his face. After all, it's just a song, innit? You don't have to understand it or believe in it to sing it, do you? Of course not.

And that ended their set and the first show of the Tribal Stomp (Sh-Bomp Sh-Bomp) In Hey Hey Monterey, a semi-okay idea which turned out to be a farce. Despite exhortations from the emcees to stay for the second show (at no extra cost, and we coulda seen Maria Muldaur), we picked our way through the beer cans and the burnouts and left. All this for only $12.50. Wotta deal.

— Caitlin

THE BPEOPLE, THE UNITS AND THE MUTANTS AT THE HONG KONG

I have seen the B people already quite a few times since they emerged from the short-lived initial combo successively known as Little Cripples, Curtain, Strict Ids then the Ids. Everytime I've felt differently about what they do. Sometimes I've liked them, probably more out of gratefulness for their sounding different from the L.A. punk norm and the L.A. experimental norm than for an actual genuine affinity for their music. Some songs did come close to my musical heart but then they would take a radical turn and sink in grey expanses of grating repetitive attacks that would leave me shrugging on the bank. Other times even those attractive moments would leave me cold and unaffected, although there was *never* any way to deny that this music did exist on its own, that it was probably even moving forward in its very peculiar crooked way, and that something distinctively original was being laid on the mostly reluctant pack of boozed up scene makers and bored poseurs. And I didn't expect my lasting inability to grasp this group's music to ever subside. Well, I was wrong. I finally saw and heard a Bpeople set which I totally liked from beginning to end, give or take 5 minutes here and there that my impatient nature discreetly choked on. It's not an easy sound to describe and convey, no obvious directions in either form or content, there is an above average emphasis on riffs and murky hooks and some admittedly offbeat type of singing, the beat is omnipresent throughout and the atmosphere a bit chilly but don't ask me to get more precise. Then I could spurt out a list of bands that very loosely could be connected to the Bpeople sound (or vice versa) but it would end up being a pretty eclectic list and simply add more confusion and misunderstanding. I could even mention odd little facts like the front row of most Bpeople's gigs always seem to be made up of members of other bands, two Human Hands here, one Nervous Gender there, but you would deduct that they are just another bunch of elitist Musician's musicians which would be off target since these spectators are not really musicians themselves, not in the dreaded sense of the word, and the same thing happens at Monitor gigs anyway and *they* have nothing in common with the Bpeople and what they are working at. Out of desperation, I would have to pull out a nice fuzzy label out of my collection like "modern beat music" and throw it on the page and hope it sticks but some of you would probably start thinking of the B-52's or the Pop! So no descriptions, labels, evocations, comparisons. (Glad you were so brief in reaching that conclusion! Ed.) Hope I still like them as much next time around!

It was only the 2nd time I saw the Units, and they were even better than the first. I was delighted to notice that the multimedia paraphernalia they vaguely toyed with the first time around was gone and that there was now nothing to distract from their great future dance music. I mean it's not all dance stuff, but most of it really sways and moves, not in the accepted pogo sense of the term or the disco sense or the get down boogie sense or the skanking sense (shut UP! Irratable Ed.) but in a new sense (brilliant!). As already mentioned a few weeks ago, the line up is about half electronic machinery half traditional boom boom instruments, now there's a girl on back up vocals that could convince anyone this is the only music she's heard all her life, and with that amazing rolling beat put out by their drummer and the barrage of riffs, notes and tight vocal harmonies provided by the rest you find yourself totally immersed in what must be the most accessible and immediate sounds ever produced by the experimental edge of the pop world. Devo can go back to the biology lab and Cabaret Voltaire to the art history classes. And to top this wonderful evening of fun musical mutations was up to S.F.'s loose aggregation of comics and maniacs daintily known as The Mutants. The Mutants are what the B-52's could have been if they hadn't moved to New York, married Warners and skipped thru too many fashon design and kitch magazines. The B-52's want to symbolize fun and work overtime trimming their concepts and their image, the Mutants are fun, have fun and work overtime getting plastered, falling down and creating chaos. The Mutants' music may not be the most sophisticated avant guarde collection of intense sounds ever to come out of the West Coast but their presence and attitude is as close to the essence of what this all meant when it started as any of your fave heavy new music representative. And don't think it's all ha ha let's have a party stuff, sometimes the aggression and the tension between the singers and the audience, between one singer and another or between them and the rest of the world (meaning whatever material object is in the way) is a bit disconcerting and keeps the excitement on a nice disturbing level. No matter how wild and crazed the audience gets during the show, you can be sure that the Mutants are always wilder and crazier. By the end of the evening audience and performers have pushed each other into a fine state of sweaty delirium and it takes a while to gradually readjust to the normal state of things. I left with the tat tat tat tat tat tat chorus of "Insect Lounge" clicketing in my skull, lurching away in the Chinatown night.

Kick

CRAMPS, CROWD AT THE WHISKY

With the greatly detested David Forest gone from the booking office, and the moreunderstanding Gaylord taking top reign, the Whisky seems ready to return to it forgotten position as premier night club and showcase of *new* bands. I mean it started to feel comfortable in there again. The fact the Crowd played was a good example of the change from a static paranoid club for rich Beverly Hills kids to a place where real bands can play on a real stage with real sound and lights, you know those optimun conditions that just never exist in Chinatown or West L.A. So The Crowd were the first of the punk bands return to the Whisky like swallows to Capistrano, god forbid the sickening metaphor. The Crowd are the center of the growing Huntington Beach scene that is terrifying local parents and police. The Crowd did not seem terrifying — they seemed like a good, honest, energetic band, a blend of Sham 69, Weirdos, Dickies. But still true to themselves — the lead singer has some of the most unique dance movements around while singing in a bust-the-veins-in-the-head voice. This band makes a lot of people feel old, they're so young, and seemingly innocent, Hollywood seems like a tired old dowager while Huntington Beach gets ready to crash into the first of a series of walls. Let's hope they don't burn out as fast as some of us did.

The Cramps are the Cramps — they can be perfect or they can be — well I love the Cramps, I can't be objective. Ivy gets the sex goddess award of the month for her striking ensemble of Kiss tee-shirt and nothing else. Bryan is the best dressed man on the Gris-Gris Mars, Lux is still the most hyper-active vocalist in town, so what if his voice is basically one-dimensional, its the passion, its the feeling and he's got in spades. If you've seen the Cramps you know their sound by now, needless to say they did some of my favorite songs which I hadn't heard in a while — "Strychnine", "I'm Cramped", "Garbage Man", "Sunglasses After Dark". The stage show has been perfected. Now all we need is an album.

Craig

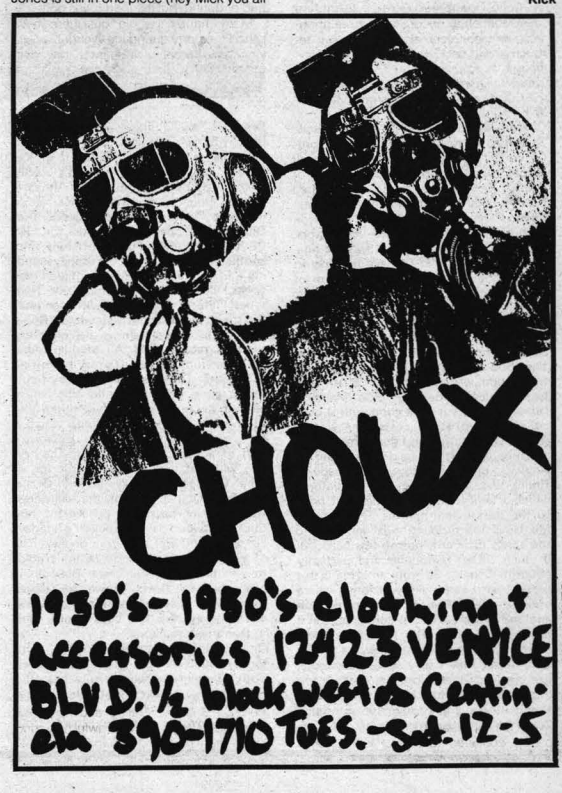
Strummer/pic: Scott Lindgren

THE CLASH AT THE PALLADIUM

Yesterday I ran into a friend who was carrying a book called "The Twilights of the Idols" (by a real gone Kraut named Nietzche). She said it seemed an appropriate thing to read after seeing the Clash at the Palladium. I thought that was real funny. But it's also a bit sad. There were so many aspects of that long-awaited concert that simply stuck to your throat and made it so hard to enjoy the fucking show that we all felt a bit stupid and disillusioned for days after. First of all, the Palladium isn't a punk heaven by a long shot. There is a fucking line half a mile long that winds around parked cars and while it slowly crawls closer and closer to the high security entrance you're being eyed by cunts in uniformed t-shirts who think customer-bashing is one of their god-given privileges. I think paying 8 or 9 dollars for a show also entitles you to a minimum amount of respect and politeness from the pea brains that work the fucking joint. They should say please and thank you and smile when addressed. Seriously. But we're just bloody sheep, aren't we, and we take it for granted that we have to be treated like second rate citizens if we go en masse to important gigs. What fools, what meek suckers we are! I for one ain't going to one more Civic/Palladium extravaganza, it just takes too long the next day to unknot my intestines and extinguish the rage I feel. In England they have something called "Campaign for The Registration of Bouncers". I believe something similar should be fought for here, that bouncers should not be allowed to work if it is obvious to their employers that they have a chip on their shoulder the size of a meteor, that they should be extra-calm and without social prejudices, and that any one of them who is also a subscriber to "Soldiers of Fortune" should be barred from the profession forever. Also, when challenged by an asshole in the crowd, the resulting fight should be on a one to one basis.

Complaint numero dos: The price stunk. And the idea of raising it one more dollar on the last day was odious. I don't know if the Clash are routinely charging 5 pounds for their gigs in England nowadays, or if it's something they only do to filthy rich yanks (I'm so bored with the U.S.A., but I don't mind their money!) but I know many many people who simply COULD NOT AFFORD TO GO. I know, tough luck. Where have all the ideals gone? What's more, it wasn't exactly a must of a bill for your average punker. The same 8 or 9 bucks is less grudgingly spent if you know that you will hear 2 or 3 bands that mean everything or at least a lot to you. But opening with a (good) rockabilly band and following with a so-what honky tonk good-time cowboy they just became all pally with ain't my idea of a shattering package of modern urban music. I know, it's only rock n roll. Fuck you. The Clash are trying so hard to find their niche in the rock n roll hall of fame, polish their credentials, find themselves roots in the american culture by pulling out of the grave Bo Diddley, Willie Dixon or any old bemused cow hand that might be even remotely connected to some bygone classic era they've read about and smoked joints to in rainy little island, not realizing that we are not into nostalgia in this part of the world yet, the music we love is not accepted as just another step on the grand stairway to rock n roll heaven *yet*, that all this quaint shit that makes them moist around the eyes (bet the suckers went to see Elvis' grave!) is just normal, straight, and more often that not *reactionary* americana nonsense that is in our way. I mean it's fine with me if Strummer and Co. want to be played on KLAC (country/western station for you out-of-towners) but they better realize that those people might find it hard to sympathize with a "White Riot" singalong. And instead of showing off their musical culture by bringing us (once again, the Rolling Stones did that years ago anyway) the blooze masters (not this show) why don't they stick to the present and bring us the only blacks that matter in music today, the reggae maniacs that inspire so much of their present music? Well, I guess they did in a way, as the majority of the songs being played between sets were of the jamaican persuasion. But that brings us to another shitty little highlight of the evening: the incredibly snotty and superior british jerk that was spinning the records. The asshole went on and on about the audience behavior, what a load of retarded cunts we all were, to just relax so the stage could be set up, do you want the best rock n roll in the world or do you want to be sent home, control yourselves, grow up, be nice or we won't play, in England we're much more civilized, on and on and on with this horrible we're-brining-you-some-heavy-stuff-here-so-you-better-be-grateful-and-humble-and-play-it-our-way shit that made you feel like disrupting the proceedings even more. There may have been problems with the rowdy crowd and the stage crew but it's no reason to treat your audience with undisguised contempt. Especially when the importance of the moment has somehow been defused by all the crap mentioned above. Finally, the Clash came running out. "Yeah alright, get down, too much, oh my god," goes the audience, everyone moves closer to the stage, people left and right are being squeezed like over ripe bananas and squiring at both ends, it's so crowded if you pogo you just go up once and stay there until the tide chanes, and sound ain't exactly a knock out but it doesn't seem to matter, people are going to have a good time no matter what. The Clash do some old stuff and a lot of new stuff, there are some real knock out tunes, especially one heavily reggaefied number where the drums and the sparcity on the other instruments compliment Paul Simenon's fantastic solo singing in a most righteous manner, "I Fought The Law" is another good one much approved by the mob. Strummer's voice must have been left at the customs counter but he wails away anyway, all shaking and itense and still immensely likeable, Jones does his funny jamaican steps, leaps, runs and eventually falls into the audience during a brief scuffle when two or three overzealous beach kids (them spiked surfers sure have become highly visible in a matter of weeks) invade the stage and get pushed back along with the unfortunate guitar player), the song comes to a halt in spite of Strummer trying to carry on, the band's flunkies make sure Jones is still in one piece (hey Mick you all right mate? bloody yank wankers I'll get them...), there is a constant parade of bopping suicidal kids that pop up on stage and either get dragged out of the way within half a second or dive back in the throbbing mass before the forces of law and order get their paws on them. I'm sure it's a bit nerve wracking for the band, they must feel like they're holding a fort or something, but this has been the name of the game for the past two years, they were part of the committee that rewrote the rules and weren't they the ones that urged their audience to literally rip the place apart at one of their early gigs in London? You reap what you sow, now lie in it and all that. Anyway it's mucho entertaining to watch at a safe distance, it gives a new dimension to the music, and at times the music can use a new dimension. A few of the old anthems get butchered, partly because of a pretty crummy sound system, party because of sloppy playing. The Clash have now added a keyboard player to their line up, it doesn't really change anything 'cept fill in when the guitars get too thin. Throughout the set Topper keeps it all together, juggling with reggae beats, wham bam sprint races, a truly awesome source of varied rhythms that makes the more jaded observers rock his fanny to the beat. As an encore the Clash brings back the Rebels and the Joe Ely crew for "Be bop A Lula" another prehistoric classics, I suppose it's fun and all that but it's also a bit boring and pointless, like saying ha ha we fooled you with this anarchy and modern world consciousness this is only entertainment don't take us too seriously kiddos. Okay, I won't. Promised. The audience has finally merged with the stage, having been given this token victory by the sharp manipulators in charge. Everybody's rocking away, it's only rock n roll and I don't like it. I guess my bullshit detector is more reliable than theirs. Oh well, I did hear some nifty reggae tunes during intermission.

Kick



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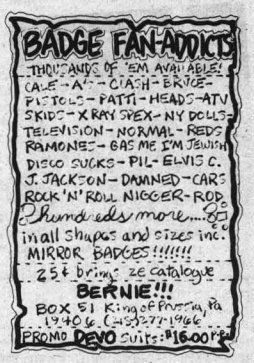

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COCAINE IN MY BRAIN
by Ranking Mr. J

The point of all this bullshit you are about to suck up, is to give mention to some "older" reggae discs that helped to change the face of Rastafarian beat music. A few of them, became available at Rhino records recently, and if you were cool, you were there to grab 'em fast, because you don't see them too much in this part of Babylon.

Case at point;

(Studio One/Coxsone record company. 13 Brentford Road, Kingston 5 Jamaica, W.I.)

Coxson Dodd was pretty smart fellow. Somehow he managed to put out records by almost anybody who was cool, well before Island/Virgin were even aware of them. Through his studio, has passed Burning Spear, Bob Marley, the Heptones, Pablo Moses, Dillinger, the Meditations, Max Romeo, the Gladiators, Jacob Miller, etc. etc. on down the line. And so, many of them have pre-English records that give a surprising account of the development of many of these guys. The Meditations, Max Romeo and others eventually had their recordings picked up and put on the United Artists Reggae Series which can be found anywhere. The Bob Marley stuff was bought by Island and was released as "Birth of a Legend" and "Best of Bob Marley." All of this stuff is very good, and should be picked up at all costs. The Marley stuff is very soulful, and the Romeo stuff, much better anything he did for Island.

Anyway, one good score to be made at Rhino was "Presenting the Gladiators" which I believe to be recorded just prior to the session that gave us "Trenchtown Mix-Up." The production is identical and the songs different, but no less beautiful in their lilting harmonies and perfectly structured songs. So truly amazing is this group that it can make you forget where you are. (Hell). They sing with conviction and the lyrics are social conscience on a more subtle level. The Gladiators write more with a concern rather than a threat. Like Spear, they worry about the people, not challenge them. The melodies are too much too stand for. Makes I want leave this shithole right now for Ethiopia. When does the next train leave?

Also, on upfull list, is "Ready Natty Dreaddie" by Dillinger. This album was bought by UA, but never got to the pressing stage or something. Cuts off of this appear on UA samplers. It's really melodic almost pop music like Althea & Donna. Bounce, bounce, bounce. Quite different from the extravagance that Dillinger has become famous for. No CB2000 or Funky Punk stuff here, just another new toaster on the scene, sounding a little like U-Roy with couple of new twists. On this are versions of the Heptones' "Pretty Looks Isn't All" (another Coxsone record) and the standard "Rub a Dub Style" which shows up on every toaster's record once. All of them done up under funny titles. It's real interesting to see that Dillinger was capable of cutting a good pop record like this before he lost his mind and started things like "I Thirst Pt. 2" the new Dillinger which is the reggae equivalent "The Exorcist." Sort of a Ranking Linda Blair. The new one will just end all DJ records for all time. Dillinger even gives the Pop Group and Pere Ubu a run for the weirdness. (Chatty may have you believe his boy Clint Eastwood is the rocker of today, but Eastwood will first have do even half of what Dillinger can do in the studio, to win my vote. Mr. Lester Bullocks is probably like James Brown for reggae toasters. Or maybe Screamin' Jay Hawkins) Anyway, this is a cool record. Find it. Don't be a square...

On into infinity, there's a pair of Heptones albums on the Studio One label. Both of them are wonderfully beautiful records. Like a lush picturesque tropical beach. The Heptones have a way of making you envision picture postcards from paradise. Their lyrics are mostly of love and rudeness. (They're not Rastas, you know). Although I never cared for them before, I'm totally devastated by these two classics. They sound so sweet and soulful, that even Smokey Robinson might get a chill up his spine.

Now to the rough stuff. For those of you who don't know, there are two Burning Spear albums preceding their signing to Island. One of these, "Rocking Time" was apparently put out by Buddah for a little while in 1975, but labeled as "Island Collector's Series" and can generally still be found. Its a reissue of the same album as put out by Coxsone Dodd. Its an amazing fucking record that proved Winston Rodney had his vision long before he met Rupert Wellington and Philip Fullwood who later became his backing vocalists. It contains versions of much of his Island material, but under a much cruder production, and more righteous arrangements. Especially great is "Call On Me" which later showed up as "the Sun" on the Dry and Heavy album. Once again Winston is calling upon the people, for the time has come, and when he does will they be ready. Look, sample lyric,

"When the Sun goes down
and we move along,
I will call on you" ———W.R.

Sounds more like revolution chatter to me. All these jungle men sitting waiting for the time to move. No wonder they all dress up like Che Guevara down there.

The other album which I think follows, is called "The Sounds of Burning Spear" and includes the full trio. Once, again, there's versions of his Island material, but also there's stuff never heard of before. There's a version of "Don't Mess With Bill" by the Marvellettes from Motown days. (changed to Jill) There's a chilling spoken intro to "Door Peep Shall Not Enter" that reveals Rodney's speaking voice to be moving as his singing voice. All in all, a record to cut your arm off for. Especially cool is "Get Ready" which may be one the best things ever done in reggae. Its tinkling piano and background hum all there to serve up a jungle extravaganza so perfect, that you are inclined to worship tikis and climb trees for food. Spear's voice lilts through the song with all the emotion of a hundred starving hearts. He's like someone to cry for the them. Someone who expresses eveyone's pain as if it all passed through his heart too. A song to stand above all else.

Lastly, at the end of the line here, is an honorable mention for Chicago soulmen, the Impressions. They did not make records for Coxsone Dodd, but rather cut all their best stuff ABC-Paramount around 1963-5, and have as place in this article as any reggae band, because they were the most major influence on reggae. The Impressions were Curtis Mayfield, Fred Cash, and Sam Gooden and their hits "Gypsy Woman", "It's Alright", "Minstrel & Queen", and "I'm So Proud" had an impact on Jamaican songwriters that will never be forgotten.

They took a basic doo-wop format and through in a swing-jazz feel that resulted in some of the first "soul" records of 60s. Little Bob Marley and little Leroy Sibbles were quietly lapping this stuff up as it came over on the radio from New Orleans. The Coxsone recordings of Marley and the Heptones sound so much like the Impressions that it can't be denied. (Certainly, Marley doesn't deny it. He invited Curtis Mayfield to play and sing on his "Exodus"album.) Even Burning Spear's incredible "Get Ready" which I just raved about, is taken from an idea by the Impressions called "People Get Ready" with similar lyrics. Mayfield was one of the first soul writers to use black cosinceness to a success, and Marley etc, certainly heard this.

For a closer look at reggae and the Impressions, listen to "Gypsy Woman" by the Mighty Diamonds or "Birth of a Legend" by the Wailers, and see that what I say is true, but for now,

Syonara

Ranking Jeffrey Lea

45's

THE UNDERTONES
(You know my number/Let's talk about girls)
Sire

This guy Fergal has a voice I don't believe: an incredible combination of real teen quivering with underlying forcefulness and pathos, a real born to sing brat that could put soul and meaning into any song by the Archies. To top it all he happens to be in a group every member of which must have come out of mommy's womb humming the perfect pop hook and grabbing for the closest sterilizing pan to bang it on. To cut it short, the Undertones are the most important pop/rock group of today, everyone else flirts with it, toys with it, hints at it or slobbers on it but they embrace it and give it the fuck of its life. They are the best reason for every lame mop top in town to quit fucking around with their renditions of sixties cuteness and go back to accountant school. B side is a version of a minor classic by the Chocolate Watch Band, never heard the original myself Phast Phreddie is the only scholar around here and I don't feel I need to after listening to this version: It suits me fine the way they do it. First rate bopping music. Which we need as much as foaming at the mouth punk and probing experimento noise excursions and you name it, none of them at the exclusion of the other.

Kick

THE CULT FIGURES (Zip Nolan/Playing with Toys) Rough Trade/Rather import

More zany nonsense from the Swell Maps. It's not them, but it's produced by them, and it does not sound terribly different from what they do. I'm sure they had fun doing it, ha ha. By giggling smartasses for giggling smartasses. I just don't know about the english sense of humor.

Kick

SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES
Mittageisen/Love in a Void
Polydor import

The German song is "Metal Postcard" in the father tongue, with a different vocal, some spooky background vocals, actually I don't see why it was changed, the album track seemed to work fine, the embellishments make this seem a little bit more forced and almost silly. The first time I heard the Banshees it was ona tape of a John Peel radio session from England. I loved the tape, it had a lot more direct energy and impact than the album, and the standout track was a song called "Love in a Void" one of the Banshees earliest songs. I was excited when I say it had been recorded — but I was not excited when I heard it recorded. A perfunctory recording, with Sioux's vocals a bit buried in the echo chamber, and the performance seems routine, lacks an edge. This band is polishing themselves into oblivion...

Craig

THE MISFITS
(She/Cough Cool)
Blank Records

This record came before "Bullet" so actually there's been an amazing progression as far as material and production "technique". That's if you like the Bullet EP. It seemed a little too one-dimensionally cruel for me but that's obviously what they're striving for. Both "She" and "Cough Cool" have so-so melodies that croon from subterranean pop caverns though the recording is so dismal it's hard to tell what's going on.

Chris D.

THE STATIC
My Relationship/Don't Let Me Stop You
Theoretical Records

Label so named because one of the members of the Statis is in the Theoretical Girls, one of these groups lumped in the 'no wave' department. But don't expect a scratchy abrasive negative exhibitionist anti-noise. This single almost approaches a new form of classical music (yikes!) in its overdub discordant guitars building up and crashing into each other. Never mind the weak warbling vocals (there's not that much of them, anyway) just listen to the guitars create the Spector Wall of Sound of the avant loonie. Completely different from anything to come out of New York, this single *never* bores me. "Don't Let Me Stop You," is a crazed classic — it's like a journey through the seven rings of hell — goo goo for the brains.

Craig

THE MAD
Fried Egg/The Hell/Disgusting
(Disgusting records)

Disgusting is exactly right. The Mad pride themselves at reeking stomach-upset on even the most hardcore lovers of gore. This is what the Plasmatics wish to sound like. The Mad also write pretty punk-chaos-music. They sound unusually like our own beloved Germs, but they seem to possess even more intense malevolence. Probably like an Alice Cooper type of hustle which isn't unusual around here these days. Anyway, strictly for lovers of the most hardcore gore/sex/violence/death/terror type of entertainment. Not a bad beat either...

R.J. Lea

RUBBER CITY REBELS (Paper Dolls/ Young and dumb)

Paper Dolls is remarkably devoid of the usual Rubber City Rebels heavy metal antics and gets to the point. "Young and Dumb", on the other hand...

Kick

"First to Fist Rub A Dub"
by Nigger Kojack and Liza
(Joe Gibbs label)

These are two jokers who did that wild shank version of "Ain't That Loving You" by Dennis Brown, called "Hole in the Bucket". I guess that did so well that they've apparently teamed up for a few singles and this is great. The humor is ridiculous, and the beat is pure bounce. Like all good toasting, Kojack and Liza get so loose, it becomes a dance marathon, with plenty question/answer/teasing that ends up in complete chaos. And how can that be bad?

Ranking J.

MIKI ZONE ZOO (Coney Island Choas/ These boots are made for walkin')

Obnoxious and boring. Shut up.

Kick

COCKNEY REJECTS
(Flares n Slippers/Police Car/I wanna be a star)
Small Wonder import

Straight ahead xerox punk stuff right down to the graphics. If one two three four is still your meat and potatoes, be my guest. Some limeys are still bitching and banging away. But when I think we was recently accused by some british rock weekly of being backwards and uninventive, and then I hear this...

Kick (we'll get your ass Deanne!)

FRANTIC ELEVATORS
Voice in the Dark/Passion/
Every Day I Die
TJM Records

A manchester group (you know, Buzzcocks, Joy Division, the Fall) on one of the cheapest pieces of vinyl I've seen deteriorate under my normal needle. "Voice in the Dark" is an all right pop song, nothing to rave about. Passion is a minute little crazed number with a staccato machine gun verse and a slow haunting chorus, interesing. "Every Day I Die", is a modern chant just voice and drums. These guys may be inexperienced but the ideas are definitely all there, let's wait and see what develops...

Craig

GROUND ZERO EP (4 songs)
Ground Zero records

Could be pretty good but tends to wallow in its own heaviness. One great blasting tune, called "Nothing". A Boston based Atom band, or so it says.

Kick

Orchestral Manouevers in the Dark
Electricity/Almost
Factory Records import

Very nice. Very pretty — rhythm machine, simple organ, xylophone, nice voice all constructed quite well and totally lacking any real distinction. All those modern music fans will jump on this but I lay on the floor, slowly pounding my head, it leaves a buzz, quite pleasant after a while, the room goes dark, darker than the single cover, yes I too can almost hear the xylophones...

Z.

Penetration
(Come into the Open/Lifeline)
Virgin Records Import

I don't want to summarily dismiss this because it isn't bad. It's just not much of anything. It's pleasant, slightly catchy, but so vague in both words and music that it's another "so what?" chunk of vinyl. C'mon, Virgin isn't that desperate for product. Let's rack our brains a bit more conscientiously and get a taste more precise poison onto those hungry lathes.

Chris D.

The Nuns (Los Nuns)
(The Best/Media Control)
Rosco Records

These guys are beat. It's not particularly effective in the soul-churning department nor does it make me want to take off and jump around the room. Somewhat tired-sounding and more-of-the-same with not as much frenzy as "Decadent Jew" So, why bother?

Half-Cocked

METABOLIST (Dromm/Slaves/Eulam's Beat
Dromm Records import

Excellent background music for snortin some M.D.A. and watching your friends fall asleep. Will make you question more aspects of your life you knew were questionnable. Probably part of a communist plot to weaken the youth of the country.

Kick

THE MARINA SWINGERS (I'm a swinger/Little swine)
Lax records

Pretty vicious satire. Will quickly get on your nerves, which is undoubtedly the point.

Kick

TOKYOS EP
(Party Dress/Test Tube Baby/Copy Out/ You're So Silly/C.I.A./Daddy Says I Should be ich)
Dusty Roads Records

This isn't the phenomenal masterpiece I thought it was when I first heard it drunk at a party. Despite that, it's a jackhammer elixir that exposes 90% of everything else out this month as the crudest dross. Too many snatches of pop in the vocals? Maybe. But you see, there's this roughness around the edges of the guitar that'll send chills up your neck. Listen especially to "Party Dress", "C.I.A.", and "Daddy Says I Should be Rich" That could be difficult since this was a limited edition of only 800. Write Jeffrey Mitzo, 643 4th St., Encinitas, CA 92004.

Chris D.

"My Brand of Blues"
Marvin Rainwater
(MGM records)

This is supposed to be rockabilly or something, but its not. What this is, is rambling music. One of few songs in history that really makes you see that road. Like Johnny Cash sort of, but so much better. Nobody will ever come up anything this lonesome again. Maybe one of my favorite songs ever written by anyone on this planet. Other planets too...

Ramblin' Jeffrey Lea

I'M THE MAN

JOE JACKSON

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MEN IN BLACK
(S&M Bar/Gypsy Lid)
Electric Eye Records

"S&M Bar" is a frenzied overlong, Frank Zappa-inspired piece that I wouldn't listen to if I had the choice. These guys are enthusiastic but not till the B side are they enthusiastic about the right thing: a mysterious, minute epic about a "Gypsy Lid" (?) with loco puffs of Seeds/Monkees organ pervading all the way through.

Chris D.

SWELL MAPS (English Verse/ Monologues/Real Shocks)
Rough Trade/Rather records import

They did come out with a hell of an album a while back. Granted. Here they become coy and self-indulgent. Two cuts were recorded in somebody's bedroom, although this isn't the reason why they are also entirely dismissible. It just sounds like something the Incredible String Band would have done while waiting for the bus. Cute and hollow. It was done over 2 years ago and I see no reason for its release now. The real track on the other side is a bit more meaty but still lacks any real fire. You can be flat and monotonous and everything the Maps consider necessary to their attitude and still be exciting. But here nothing comes across.

Kick

THE BOLIVIANS
Spy In the House of Love/Underground Passion
(Bolivian records)

Wonderful name. Pretty funny tunes. The singer is an exaggeration of all those sexy rock and roll singers from the dawn of time. The guitar lines like somebody learning how to play right in the studio. "Underground Passion" comes complete with odd rhythm and chaos, but its in the faith of silliness. So enjoy.

R.J. Lea

ART BEARS
Rats & Monkeys/Collapse
(Ralph records)

This record is ridiculous. All uptempo with opera-like vocals and bullshit going inside and outside of the whole thing. Gave me a nicotine fit. The other side is called

VINYLLY

by Bo Clifford

Back from vacation, fingers tingling, ready to go! Sent my ears out for a SEC (severe ear cleaning) and spent many hours listening to whatever I wanted to hear. Great therapy . . .

SLOW START:

And what's the very first record I confront in my reborn state? The most disappointing single ever from the BOOMTOWN RATS. "I Don't Like Mondays", (ensign) a simple and effective song when debuted here last winter, has been saddled with one of the soppiest arrangements one could imagine. I mean if it wasn't for Geldof's non-vocal you might mistake this for Queen, Sheesh! The flip is a somewhat more spirited rocker that still doesn't match their wonderfully silly singles of yore. I hope the album's a lot better. Next up NICK LOWE. I'm sure you've all heard "Cruel To Be Kind" (Radar UK, Columbia US) by now. I mean, my God, it's an honest to goodness hit on the radio even. Although the earlier version (flip of "Little Hitler") rocked harder, this is still a snappy little item that sounds real fine on the air. The flip, "Endless Grey Ribbon" is pretty bland and Nicko is gaining a rep for boring B-sides. Watch it! The PRETENDERS follow-up to the Lowe produced "Stop Your Sobbing" is "Kid", (Real) an unusually constructed near-ballad that takes several listens to sink in. The band stays mostly in the background and lets Chrissie Hynd cut loose with a great, expressive vocal that owes a lot to Sandie Shaw (look it up). "Tattooed Love Boys", on the other hand, is the hardest rocking cut from this band yet. Chrissie turns tough and the band wails through a story laced with all the intimate details of a street level romance. FINGERPRINTZ have had several fine records and "Tough Luck" (Virgin) is no exception. When will there be an album of their melodic hard pop? Soon I hope. The other side "Detonator" would not be out of place in a set of Jam songs. Good stuff.

MORE GOOD VIBES:

Those rude boys from Ireland, RUDI, have a new EP called "I Spy" on Good Vibrations. Four tunes, any one of which could stay on your turntable for days. The title tune is about keeping tabs on that wandering woman that yo don't quite trust. "Genuine Reply" slows things down a bit and then jumps into an Undertones like chorus. Another song concerned with the heart. Turn it over and "Sometimes" will soon have you singing and dancing; digging the handclaps and the low-down bass. It's over all too soon. Being "Ripped In Two" can be painful; not knowing if she does or she doesn't. Love may be blind, but I'm sure glad it's not deaf. You'd miss these great sounds. Very convincing and I'm paying attention! And they've (G.V.) found yet another great band called TEARJERKERS. Their first single is called "Love Affair" and it really reminds me of the Alleycats. For those outside of LA, there's a solid mesh of bass, drums, and guitar that just has no holes. Teenpunk that just wont quit!! "Bus Stop" on the other side is just as good, too. I just keep flipping this one over and over! Where do they find these bands?!

DOMESTICITY:

Still nothing real inspiring; maybe things are better on our side of the big ditch. Being from Cincinnati is probably no great advantage, but the CUSTOMS are the only band besides the Cramps to make their very heavy rockabilly influence seem fresh and new. No small feat. "Let's Get It On" (Shake It) takes hold slowly, but damn if it doesn't make you jump and bop like almost nothing else! "Bring My Cadillac Back" is nearly as strong with its nifty Bo Diddley beat that goes straight to the feet (Hi Phast . . .). I guess you could call the HUMAN SWITCHBOARD veterans of the independent record scene with one EP, two singles, and an album cut (on WAVES) to their credit. They've honed their unusual style until they truly sound like no one else. "Prime of My Life", (Square) their new single, is also their best. Certainly different and kinda hard to get used to hearing such a head long rush of sound. Crazed guitar, a sax, some sex, Farfisa, and drums crash thru the speakers and ya just gotta listen! From Minneapolis, the SUBURBS have an EP (w/9 songs) and now a new single called "World War III" (Twintone). These guys can play and the sound on the record is excellent, clear and hard. The band is really coming into its own. "Change Agent" is on the other side. You may have noticed

"Collapse" and that's exactly what it is. Its the collapse of this record...

R.J. Lea

R. STEVIE MOORE
(New Wave/Same)
CMI records

Smug underground jive. Anyone who can say Johnny Rotten and Cheap Trick in the same breath either has a warped sense of humor or is out to lunch.

Kick

THE VANITYS (Coconuts for you/ So far away)
Rings of Saturn records

If someone out there truly believes it's time for a Dan Hicks & His Hot Licks type of revival, who are we to argue? Let them drown in syrupy good time music for all we care.

Kick

A CERTAIN RATIO
(All night party/The Thin Boys)
Factory records import

"The Thin Boys" is reallly bleak city, makes Wire sound like the Mouseketeers but "All Night Party" is right up my alley, it's as desolate and cold and suicidal but sounds fuckin' great, chilling intro, morning after voice "work all day, drink all night, my life's just a blur..." A record for those special moments of doubt and despair.

Kick

THE TEARDROP EXPLODES
(All I am is Loving you/Bouncing Babies)
Zoo import

Maybe we already reviewed this a while back. I mean we don't keep track of those things, you know, got other stuff on our minds, like where's the next party, why is there blue smoke coming out of my car, why is the new Banshees album 10 bucks, anyway if we did I sure hope we said how great it was. But just in case, let me say (again) that Bouncing Babies (nice title, too) is right up there in the new music hall of fame. It was a great boom boom bouncing (of course) beat, nifty breaks, intriguing lyrics, fuck it's good. This song won't leave me alone.

Kick

that I haven't said anything about the songs themselves. The sound on this record is much more important than the actual content. I don't know what the songs are about. Simple as that. Surprisingly few records seem to come out of the Chicago area. Bands like the DADISTICS could be lurking around just waiting for the chance to record. I take that back; there couldn't be any bands like the Dadistics. It may be just a lucky fluke, but this band from Chicago (Oak Park more exactly) has kicked out one of the finest singles this year. Believe it. "Modern Girl" and "Paranoia Perception" (Braille), despite their cliched titles, are well written slices of eternal rock n roll that comes from all time frames at once. 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's; they're all there! Boys and Girls bouncing off one another like there's no tomorrow! You think I'm full of shit; you haven't heard it . . .

TWO FROM ZOO:
One of the brightest new labels is Zoo Records based in Liverpool. Several fine releases including a Big In Japan EP and the Echo and the Bunnymen single. THE TEARDROP EXPLODES has released its second single, this one called "Bouncing Babies". Actually the group is pretty well named; their sound comes in kinda small, wet bursts. Sorts like XTC minus osme of the pizazz. Good if you don't dwell on it. The other side is a slow, moody thing called "All I Am is Loving You". The guy's lamenting the fact that he's nuts about some dame. He's walking in a daze. He cant't understand what's happening. Reminds one of those crazy psychedelic love songs from way back . . . LORI & THE CHAMELEONS is quite a different story. "Touch" is the story of an English bird's trip to Tokyo and falling for a lockal named Kato. Krazy, dad. It's related by the girl speaking to her latest flame; all dressed up in electropop punk clothes. Remember Cowboys International? The flip is "Love On The Ganges" qand this time one of the Chameleons (presumably) takes over the narrating duties. Mid-tempo with the rhythm machine and the piano combining to give it a floating down the river flavor. Nice.

FINALLY SOME INSPIRATION:
It's usually the left-field records that seem to be the best these days. I mean who could expect much from a band named the DONKEYS? And here they are turning out a great Modish rocker loaded with guitars, guitars, guitars, and hooks aplenty. "What I Want" (Rhesus) is a fairly typical "what I want, baby you got" theme, but it's delivered with punch and confidence. These guys sound pretty cocky! "Four Letters" is a not-too-obscure story about swearing (hence the title). A good debut, although the Donks material could be a bit stronger. CLIVE PIG (& his band, the Hopeful Chinamen) touches a nerve inside me on "Happy Birthday Sweet 16" (Waldo's). It's about the pressures of growing up, though differnet ones than I faced at the time, they're even more real. The song is done with sincerity and the feeling of common experience definitely comes through. Just the record to hear after a hard night of ear damage. "Our Movement", the B-side, is another paean to solidarity among the ranks. Some good points made and you should see the sleeve! One man bands tend towards stiff sounding two dimensional records or else electronic machine groupes that are really boring. CLIVE CULBERTSON has made one of the better records of the one man variety. "Time To Kill" (Rip Off) is a solid Edmunds/Costello rocker with nifty organ parts. "Busy Signal" is a lot heavier on the guitars and rocks a bit harder. Packaged in a brown paper bag, it's one of the definitive D.I.Y. records. Well worth tracking down.

LAST ONE IN:
This one just landed on my desk, so I thought I'd squeeze it in this time rather than wait. The SLITS have had an enormous amount of press in the last two years and their first single has finally been released. "Typical Girls" is a song about stereotypes, something you certainly could never call these girls. A much quieter sound than I expected; produced by Dennis Bovell who mainly works with reggae groups but who also did the Pop Group single. The flip is a tasty version of "I Heard It Through The Grapevine" that is a complete surprise. The studio seems to have taken away much of the raw energy of their year old demos. What next.

In case ya forgot, just send those cards, letters, and vinyl to:

Bo Clifford
5734 Laurel Cyn. Bl.
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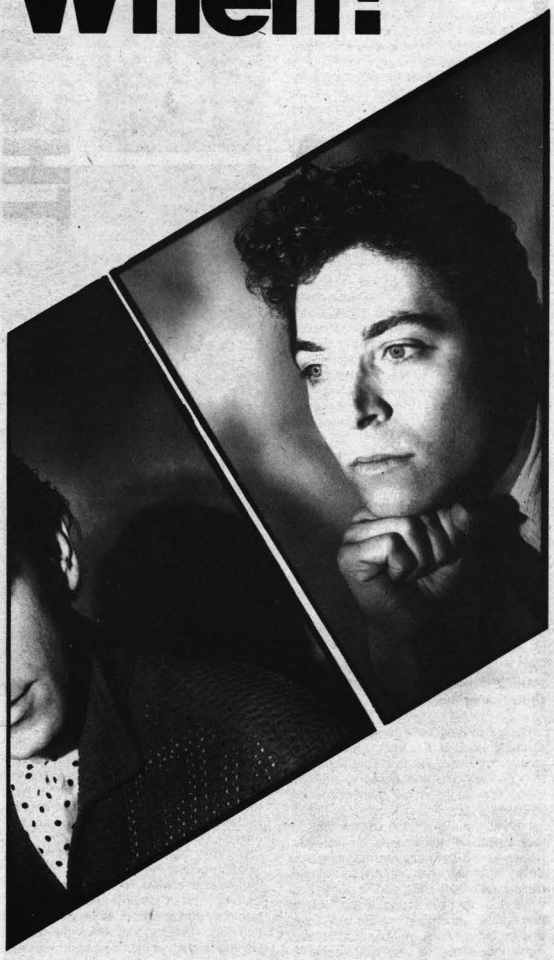
When?

Weirdos 1979



Who? What? Where? Why? On Bomp

LP's

THE SLITS — "CUT"
Island Records

A real big surprise. Maybe I was expecting some sort of half retarded punk noise, but what this is, well it's actually white girl pop reggae, kind of. Whatever, fellow Slashite Mark Williams called this 'playtime in the studio'. Me, I like to play and these girls seem to know all the right games. One look at the album cover should give you an idea. Even though the picture is a total send up of white people getting back to roots, nature, I mean they look like refugees from the last great Love-In with their grass skirts and mud tits. But the hippies are still gonna love this album, because it's actually kind of mellow. Quirky and quaint with tinny guitars, a million vocal overdubs, constantly surprising time changes, studio gimmicks galore. A lot of this can be credited to Dennis Bovell, their Jamaican producer, whose last assignment was to consign the Pop Group to dub obscurity. But even though I know the Slits could never play like this live, that it took seven weeks and who knows how many re-takes to record this album it's still fatally charming. The lyrics have a keen eye for social observation, the rinky tink guitar bounces off some surprisingly innovative bass runs and even though Ari Up is no great shakes as a vocalist, I kind of like her low warbling throaty voice — in this day of post-Siouxsie, Styrene, Lovich imitators it's refreshing to hear a girl singer who doesn't find it necessary to squeak and hiccup her way through a song to get the point across. Dare I say it — this seems to be the irst of the post-punk pot albums — I know some of you run screaming from the room at the thought but there's no way around it, this is definitely spliff music for white kids, real pleasant, smooth, makes me wanna become a mellow agitation creep. So get me a mud bucket, it's time to have some fun...

Craig

"NO ONE REMEMBER AFRICA"
PRINCE MUHAMMED/G. NOOKS
Unity House Music records

Before picking up a reggae album it's always a good idea to check out the back sleeve: if the list of songs, credits and whatever philosophical nonsense that adorns it contains more than a fair share of spelling mistakes, typos and grammatical embellishments there is a good chance that the record itself will well please and satisfy you. (Now you know why this very mag insists on being at times near unreadable: simple roots credibility!) Mind you, it doesn't always work, and I've ended up with albums that feature uncomprehensible liner notes and are equally unlistenable. But "No one remember Africa" is very very listenable, it's loosely divided between straightforward singing and toasting with two or three occasional dub fillers, there are two names on the album cover but I have no idea which one does what, might be the same character for all I know as the toasting and singing voices sound awfully similar. The backing tracks by the Revolutionaries are super solid no nonsense ground work with some pretty melodic lines weaving in and out. And if your local Licorice Pizza won't order it for you (ha ha) there is a Miami address out of which this thing is distributed: D. Tatham, P.O. Box 1793, Miami, Fla 33056.

Chatty

JOY DIVISION —
UNKNOWN PLEASURES
Factory Records

The split is apparent — one side of the label is black and white, the other side is white and black, so the conflict in the title is real apparently, get it? And the music is dark, moody, oblique, straightforward with enough reverb to keep it all somewhat mysterious. The vocalist is Jim Morrison's latest incarnation, I really like hearing a British singer without one of those fucking obvious accents, and by being melodic they group avoids some of the greyer pitfalls of their existential buddies in the industrial wasteland. But sometimes it strikes me as strange that they would choose to represent a crisis not in terms of energy tension, but in a medium-slow manner that sometimes threatens to think itself into dissipation before the song is over. And the one straightforward 'rock' song on the album is such a jarring intrusion that you begin to wonder about the sincerity of all this living dread sound. Surely the wolves waiting to snap at the latest trend will take this subterranean opus to their trill-seeking hearts. Adolescent poets and new wave journalists will ponder and debate — but so what. This album has all the intentions but one shortcoming — it just doesn't stick. The textures are pleasant, the songs recognizable but somehow not memorable. This week's hit. Next week's obscurity? How fast we move these days.

Craig

"Teenage Warning"
Angelic Upstarts
Warner Bros. Records Imports

Don't say anything. Don't bother making any excuses . . . I'm sick of being disappointed. Hardly a record's been out during the last six months (save the Germs and Tooth & Nail LP's) that could really sink teeth into frustrations and tear them to pieces. This isn't one though I thought it would be. Jimmy Pursey turns in a ho-hum production that's too top-heavy on vocals and drums but otherwise energetic. So what. For the most part these upstarts sound like a bunch of jerks who like to scream and yell a lot. There's nothing wrong with that, that's what I wanted. But, not only do they not do it very well, they don't have that much to scream and yell about. The same old subject matter's here and when it does get to the roots of anybody's problems, aggressions, or simple party-time listening habits, it's only for two songs. If you want to save money, buy the "Teenage Warning" and "I'm an Upstart" 45s.

Chris D.

VANCOUVER COMPLICATION
Pinned Records (Canada)

An exhaustive and uneven representation of all Vancouver's new music. Some of it's retarded but nearly everything is hardcore. Groups faring best are the Pointed Sticks, Wasted Lives, Subhumans, and the Shades. There's other assorted nice crackling stuff but nothing that lodges in the memory for long. And there's ten other bands! Oddly enough D.O.A. doesn't seem to have been very lucky in their vinyl outing. The two tunes included are pale imitations of the firestorm that sweeps an audience when these mean-business boys hit the stage. One other thing that's worth mentioning is a haunting almost mellow piece called "Quarter to Eight" by Tim Ray and A.V.

Half-Cocked

"PRIASE JAH" THE TWINKLE BROTHERS
Virgin Front Line import

This is pretty slick. Samey backing tracks with a dab of echo, a dab of this, a touch of that, it's so tasteful it's boring. Assembly line inspirational reggae. I admit them twinkies bros can sing and all that. But when Jah passed the fire and the passion around to the brethren these guys were somewhere else taking a piss. I don't know how the Chatty character and the Ranking one feel about this, maybe I'm just an infidel, no roots, no soul, I know the tune, but this leaves me cold. And that's a sin in any religion of mine. One exception: a super silly tune called "Shu Be Dup" that's just real fab to drink to.

Kickboy

THIS HEAT
Piano records import

Basically one of those loose-ended experimental discs that makes you feel dull and outdated if you don't like it. Built along lines, planes and spaces explained in music theory 334, or demonstrated by the chance intersection of a bagpipe, a bale of barbed wire and a crate of insulated milk bottles. Conceptual reality encounters and emotional modelings whose structures are so subtlely drawn that I fail to see them at all. Most tracks blur into each other like a day's incidents, separated by the movement of the needle across their surface. One track, consisting of an oscillating high-pitched buzz, both begins and ends the album - a clever loop effect not seen since Finnegan's Wake. Occasional eastern omming and chanting, a few tasty guitar attacks, and some Zappa meets Cage dissonance excursions. Evidently such diffuse stratagems are intentional, for the only track with a steady downbeat is called "Horizontal Hold". The rest are stictly diagonal.

WLA

THE CURE

I guess they thought it real cute that they put little pictures instead of song titles on the album label, but I really think it's a pain in the ass. Guees it's a cheap device to get you to pay close attention so you can figure out the song titles — or are they that meaningless? Anyway this group has such a fashionable approach that I reel back from their cleverness. The current trend is to underproduce — it's an obvious reaction to the recent wall of distortion that engulfed London. So now we get undermixed, clearly separated simple and apparent songs where less means more — folk-punk if you would. Well I really wouldn't, except that the songwriting is very good, the musicianship is very good, the album is nice and harmless and thoughtful and I never play it. Should do well among the Melrose Avenue crowd. Any band that would blatantly lift The Stranger by Camus for a rock song (Killing an Arab) says it all about this group's intent. That and the reverent spirit of Ray Davies. Thank god we haven't become that precocious — yet.

"Minutes to Go"
The Sods
Step Forward Records Import

Another half-way listenable record that would be more interesting if it were one extreme or the other, really good or really bad. It's neither. Surprised? There's some commendable attempts at generating that old hypnotic trance feeling that can only be accomplished by players who know each other inside-out and have the ability to loosen themselves up into the necessary "groove". Like, wow, man! at least four to six minutes a song (minimum). I don't know why I'm panning this so heavily. It's definitely an OK platter. Unfortunately no excruciatingly beatific insights, soul-wrenching discoveries, or hair-trigger pyrotechnics, just a few words in out-of-the-way niches that seem not-so-typical at all. Well, the Sods are from Denmark and obviously had a rough translation to English . . . which works to their advantage

Chris D.

JiMBO "the Brilliant specimen" ©b. Panter 10-7-79
JiMBO! JiMBO!!!
wait... i'm at the most exciting part!!!
that can wait. judy's been kidnapped by cockroaches
she has!!! i wondered what was taking her so long in the restroom...!!
SNAP!
I thought 3 hrs. was a awful long time; when i get my hands on those things!!! where did they go?
I don't know. we'll have to track 'em!!
have you got a car?
OF COURSE!!! STOP holdin me up! she may be your girlfriend-but she's my sister!
wow!!! when did you get this?
WOULD YOU shut up & git in?
SLASH PAGE THIRTY-NINE

MUSIC FOR MOLES!

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Volume 2 Number 11 December 1979

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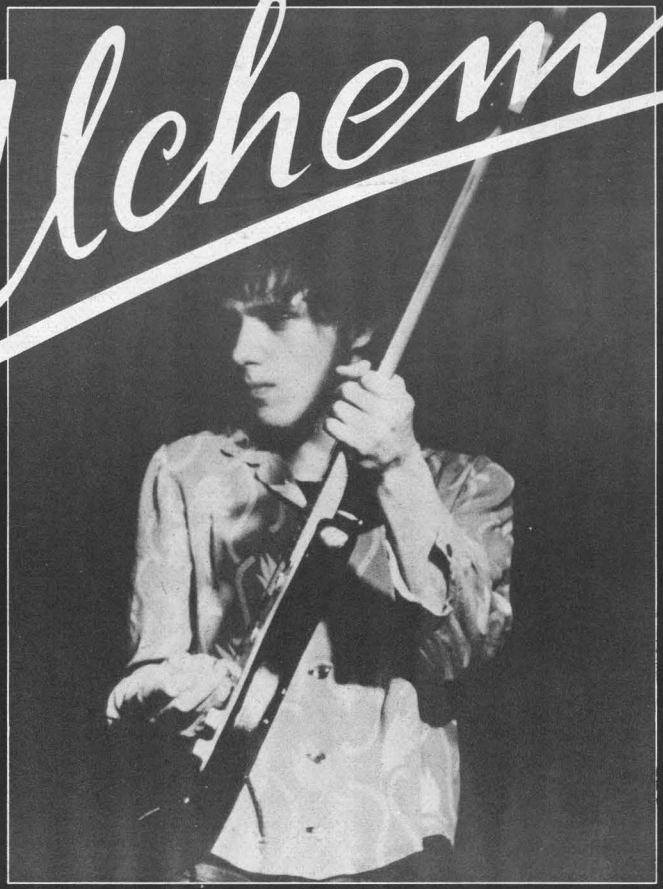
RICHARD LLOYD

Alchemy



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THE READERS' CHART

Okay noise and music lovers, we need more feedback! A hundred or so monthly replies is not a wide enough response from such a supposedly outspoken bunch of readers.

TOP TEN SINGLES OR EPs

1 AVENGERS EP
2 STRAW DOGS (Stiff Little Fingers)
3 GANGSTER (The Specials)
4 SOMETHING I SAID (The Guts)
5 REVOLUTION (Tapper Zukie)
6 BLACK FLAG EP
7 WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG (The Jam)
8 GOTTA GET AWAY (Stiff Little Fingers)
9 SLEEPERS EP
#10 I SLEPT IN A LAUNDERETTE (Black Randy)

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1 FORCES OF VICTORY (L.K. Johnson)
2 SURVIVAL (Bob Marley & The Wailers)
3 INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL (Stiff Little Fingers)
4 WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY (The Weirdos)
5 ELECTRIFY ME (The Plugz)
6 ANOTHER KIND OF BLUES (The UK Subs)
7 THE CRACK (The Ruts)
8 (equal votes) G.I. (The Germs) CUT (The Slits)
#10 NATURALITY (The Gladiators)

Some stay, some disappear, imports still rule but that is also changing. Very black and white tastes, either hard core punk or reggae, typical fanatics' aesthetics, congratulations!

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LOCAL SHIT

LOCAL SHIT (and grass roots opinions that have no other outlet in this paper of little social conscience)

Punk Violence is as we all know a grossly exaggerated media cliche that sells issues along with providing thrills for the gullible public but there is another type of violence plaguing the scene that is growing largely unchecked and uncriticized: the systematic violence on the part of blood-thirsty bouncers at every major fashionable concert. Recently we witnessed it at the Santa Monica Civic (Buzzcocks), at the Palladium (Clash), and we screamed bloody murder in these very pages, which is about as effective as tickling a rhinoceros with a feather. But bloody murder is what might just happen one of these nights unless some despicable tactics in vogue now with certain promoters and hall owners are not denounced. Not long ago the same shit happened again during the Ramones concert at U.C.L.A., kids were pushed, thumped, tackled and chased left and right by assorted missing links responsible for (irony) security. That particular commando had replaced the usual U.C.L.A. security force for the night after one of the organizers had convinced everyone that Ramones crowds called for extra-special handling. Extra-special it was, and their collective finesse left marks everywhere. As nobody is going to come forth, apologize and promise to be more careful next time, may we suggest a less apathetic and resigned frame of mind on everybody's part if you insist on attending this type of show. Look for witnesses if nasty incidents occur, obtain the name of the security organization, the name or number of the uniformed ape, report it to the police if sufficiently serious and since nothing will result report it to this paper, if we can focus the blame on the most blatant goon squads it's always possible to — if not put them out of business — at least warn concert-goers beforehand of their presence at particular future shows, and perhaps put pressure on the promoters, leaflet the unsuspecting sheep lining up at the ticket office or spoil the fun with advertising or undercover counter-attacks ("Warning — this concert may be hazardous to your health!" banners plastered across street posters and billboards). But if you make your quiet little way to the hospital, get stitched up and shrug the whole thing off you're as stupid as your assailant and you desert each other 'cos you got the perfect relationship going.

Of course we're not saying it's all lilly-white and good vibes galore in the punk world, objects do get broken and fists occasionally meet faces, but it's mostly disconnected, ritualistic or cathartic outbursts of no consequence. A few nights ago at the Hong Kong personalities clashed and blows were exchanged between Kim Turner, co-manager of the place and Willy, bass player of the once-again active Weirdos. The Weirdos had originally been scheduled for that night but pulled out in disagreement with the club's rising door prices (the one drink coupon addition). We don't know what took place but when the Weirdo in question tried to go in and catch the action "things" took place at the door. We saw Kim and Willy bursting out clutching each other by every grabbable section and collapsing into the charming entrance fountain. A reconciliation seemed out of the question. At the same Hong Kong a few thugs have lately been seen pressurizing more peaceful elements, commenting on the appearance of the customers and lisening to the music with their buttholes. It must be pointed out that the Hong Kong bouncers have repeatedly proven themselves to be more decent tolerant and appeasing than anyone should expect them to. The fact that they are regularly there and by now know their crowd pretty well is very helpful. It takes experience and observing faculties to tell a regular headbanger from a one night shot tourist on a punk binge, but it can prevent disastrous misunderstandings.

Before we leave the club world anyone interested in live music performed in halfway human surroundings should know that besides the 3 or 4 punk/new wave meccas we spend half of our conscious life in there are now others that regularly feature the best and the worst of what's going on. Besides Blackie's on La Brea where the bills have seemed more lively lately the King's Palace is becoming the home of the unsigned, unfashionable or unsignable. More bands for less money, and the free entertainment rags and their action-detecting scouts haven't found it yet, so you still can savor the music before the label goes on. Finally the El Capulin/Anticlub is at it again on Thursday, the Dils are about to play there along with Middle Class and others, the beer is cheap (so far), the acoustics too and it's hard to find have said many people who must have felt nervous cruising this part of town, so the slumming contingents are nowhere in sight.

Last minute news (well, solid rumors): Gazarri's, psychedelic palace on the Strip and home of the day-glo murals may start again with its new music shows (Bags, Go Go's Last and one or two others already broke the ice there once), this time on a more regular basis. Grab it before the pop bands do.

Speaking of pop bands, they may be proliferating at the rate of methedrine rabbits these days but other groups of meatier substance are also popping up in the night: The Screws have played at King's Palace, are from one of the beach satellites and had Hanking Jeffrey, the Slash writer with the least warped judgment, literally still drooling the next day. There has been one or two strange reports coming our way about another outfit called the Slashers (no relation) but the most eagerly awaited debut we know if will take place at Club 88 when Castration Squad opens for the No magazine benefit on December 4th. Originally an all girl band (in concept) it will appear that night with a couple of Mau Mau's in the line up, always eager to join any nasty sounding enterprise. Jill, go-go dancer for the Bags, is one of the founding band members. The No bill will most likely also include Catholic Discipline and their "unabashed punk rock" (most perceptive label of the year thinks the band — L.A. Weakly scores again), the Bpeople and the unbeatable Top Taco Jimmy's All Drunk Stars band, THE party band of the year and next year too, and it's all for a good cause.

Another good cause that will leave no heart unturned is an upcoming benefit concert by Plugz, Gears and Go Go's to pull Margot (member of the Go Go's and life of the party) out of hot waters. The money raised will pay the fee of the lawyer Margot had to hire after her recent bust at a Members concert. The place: The Starwood. The Villains: the bouncers who accused Margot of stealing drinks and threw her out. The nasty twist: the cops who waited for her outside (having been notified by the inside heavies). The outcome: a felony bust for drug possession (tiny amount of expensive substance more common than Sweet & Low). No jail or probation for the cocktail bandit but there is a slight money problem and what are benefits for? There are millions of good causes but the one that beats them all is one's very own freedom. Which means your friends' freedom too. No date or place has been set, keep an eye open.

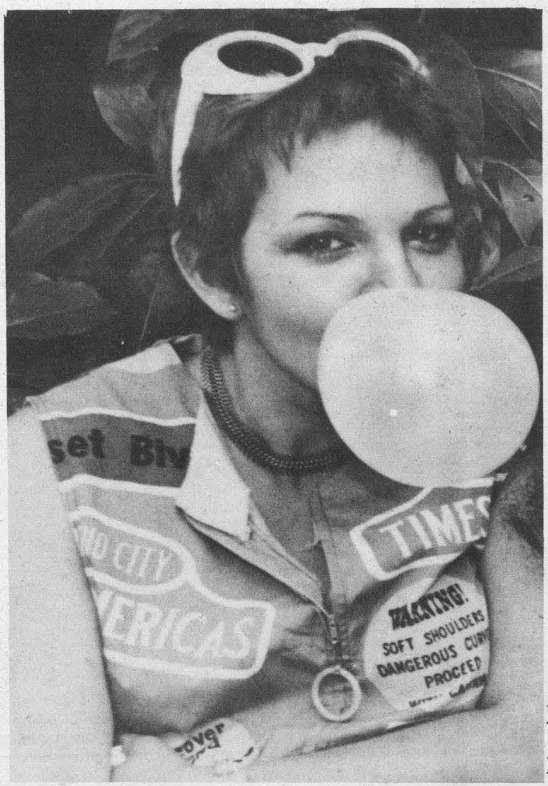


photo: melanie

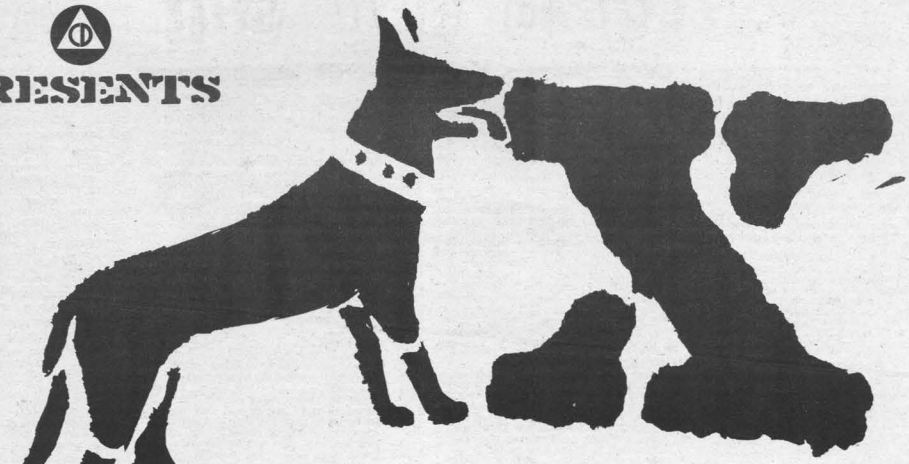
Some people may not think the upcoming movie "Cruising", a Friedkin film dealing with gays and their lifestyle, is a good cause and deserves to be brought out at all, gay organizations are promising boycott and more, but the Germs are not impressed. Popularity has never been their guideline, and now they are about to contribute a couple of new original songs to the soundtrack of that controversial movie. The music is being produced by Jack Nietzche (ban criminals, not guns) and will of course be available on records, tapes and cassettes. Another version of "Cruising for a bruising" was stumbled upon by Nervous Gender (minus Phranc but with Germ Don Ballses and band member Edward's wife) when they did a guest spot on Richard Meltzer's Saturday night/Sunday morning hip music marathon on KPFK (wildlife refuge for endangered liberals). Nervous Gender and friends used up their last flickers of sobriety in name calling and dirty laundry sniffing. It involved the Bags, who happened to be listening, and especially singled out Craig Lee the guitar player as a target. Phone calls were exchanged and things got pretty slimy. Whatever their reasons were, Nervous Gender (or the line up of that night) proved that they are justified in being nervous if they go on stinking up the collective atmosphere with insidious crap. We won't go into the "Gender" part. Incidentally the Meltzer radio show on which this shoot-out took place is the most intelligent way to negotiate the delicate passage from Saturday night to the Day of Our Lord if you have conquered the primitive urge to sleep. You will hear music you love and music you know shit about, guests, program crashers and official apologies for the language used.

Another radio beachhead is developing on KCRW, 89.9 FM in Santa Monica, where on Sunday from noon to 2 you can hear some *real* reggae, everything from old ska classics to the latest toasting nonsense, the two deejays responsible for this know what they're talking about, don't impose their preferences and don't pull any elitist stand.

(Before we hit the last item of this rich and colorful column, here is sometning to really get your teeth into: The Extremes are looking for a patterned bassist. All patterned bassists please contact Maicol at 820-0160, or 828-5211. Whadda ya mean what kind of news is that? This was our token community service item. Remember folks these pages are your pages, our duty is your pleasure, oh what a great happy family!!!.....)

Now for the last bit of dirt to stick our noses in until next month, same place same time and slightly closer to the grave: The Angry Samoans, those charmers featured in last issue, have gone too far decided Angry Rodney Bigenheimer who is suing them for everything they've got (a year's supply of dirty t-shirts?). Not only did the Samoans write and publish a song attacking Rodney, but they have seized every opportunity to badmouth and even threaten him charges Angry Rodney. Not being the type to willingly add fire to the fuel we refrained from contacting the Samoans and finding out about their strategy to come but the thinly veiled, almost official Samoans' latest press communique stated that if Rodney is the prince of punk rock in L.A., it is time to firebomb the palace. A sweet prince no more, Pissed Off Rodney is pulling out the heavy artillery. We will keep you informed of course unless something better happens, like governor Brown finally decided to shut Jello Biafra up or the Pope throwing the (holy) book at Big Youth and the rest of the heathens. So long rabble. Remember, if you don't make the news someone else will, and they won't taste halfway as good.

PRESENTS



GERMS

&

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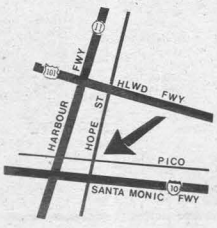

2 SHOWS
8 & 11 PM

SLASH- WAS THAT PHAST PHREDDIE I SAW AT THE CLASH CONCERT BEING THROWN ON TO THE STAGE AND THEN BEING HASTILY THROTTLED OFF? WHAT A GOON! AND WHAT IS WITH ALL THIS CLASH HATRED AROUND TOWN? I'VE HEARD 3 BANDS OPENLY PUT THE CLASH DOWN, THE SPEEDMOTHERS DO A SONG CALLED (OBVIOUSLY) 'I'M SO BORED WITH THE C.L.A.S.H.' AND THEY HAVE NO ROOM TO TALK. STEVE JONES IS A MICK JONES RIP-OFF. AND NOW YOU, KICK, MY GOD THE CLASH ARE PARTIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WHOLE 'PUNK' VENUE. WHY DO YOU JUMP ON THIS SMUG LA BAND WAGON? TSSK, TSSK.
AND SPEAKING OF RIP-OFFS, FEAR = (POOR MAN'S) CLASH COMPLETE FROM THEIR RIP-OFF SONGS TO BRET'S COMBAT BOOTS. I CONSTANTLY CAN'T STAND PEOPLE SAYING 'THE CLASH FOUNGHT THE $ AND THE $ WON' I KNOW THESE ARE THE SAME PEOPLE WHO GOT THE KNACK JUST FINE UNTIL THEY BECAME SUCESSFUL (AND RICH). WHY DO PEOPLE THINK MONEY/SUCCESS RUINS THE BAND?

KRACK POT

YES IT WAS PHAST PHREDDIE. AND NO, THE CLASH RESENTMENT IS NO LATEST FAD, IT IS SINCERE DISILLUSIONMENT IN THE FACE OF PARTIAL TREACHERY. YES, THEY DID MEAN A LOT, OR SEEMED TO. JUST BEING THE CLASH DON'T MEAN YOUR MOTIVES NEED NOT BE QUESTIONED BY THE RABBLE. THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS THEY TAUGHT US. ANYWAY LET'S GET ON WITH THE FUTURE, ONE PUNK BAND CAN'T MAKE THAT MUCH DIFFERENCE. FEAR=CLASH I DON'T GET. YOU'RE A BIT STRANGE AREN'T YOU?

KICK

DEAR SHITHEADS,
WHY DO YOU TREAT THE GERMS LIKE GODS? JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE YOUR FU CKING FRIENDS DOESN'T MEAN THEY'RE A GOOD BAND. YOUR REVIEW IS A DISTORTED PIECE OF TRASH. YOU TURN THEIR NOT EVEN AVERAGE NOISE INTO RELIGIOUS STATEMENTS, YOU ASSHOLES AREN'T PUNKS, YOU'RE ALL TOO TRENDY AND OLD HANGING OUT AT THE ATOMIC CAFE BEING SO FUCKIN "IN". PUNK ISN'T A FASHION SHOW. GIVE BANDS LIKE FEAR AND D.O.A. A LISTEN AND MAYBE YOU'LL STOP RAVING ABOUT SHIT TY BANDS LIKE THE GERMS AND CATHOLIC DISCIPLINE!!!

I HATE YOU

HELLO THERE TURDBRAIN!
FINALLY A REAL HONEST TO GOODNESS PUNK, WHAT A BREATH OF FRESH AIR! WELL DOG DICK YOU SURE DON'T KNOW MUCH 'CEPT LAST YEAR'S CLICHES, DO YOU? WHAT EXTINCT FANZINE TIPPED YOU ON THE ATOMIC CAFE? AS TO THE GERMS OUR SUPPORT IS ACTUALLY LOW KEY COMPARED TO THE STRENGTH FOLLOWING THEY'VE EARNED. THE GERMS ARE THE GERMS. WHAT'S MORE THEY'RE NOT EVEN FRIENDS OF OURS 'CEPT FOR THE OCCASIONAL DRUNKEN ENCOUNTER IN THE NIGHT. THE "DISTORTED PIECE OF TRASH REVIEW" IS NO MORE DISTORTED THAN EVERYTHING ELSE WE SAY, IT IS THE TRUTH AS PERCEIVED FROM AN UPSIDE DOWN POSITION (ALSO KNOWN AS BEING "IN"), YOU HAVE NO SENSIBILITIES, NO HUMOR AND NO SENSE OF BEAUTY. I BET YOUR SWASTIKAS GO THE WRONG DIRECTION AND YOU POGO LIKE A QUARTERBACK DOING JUMPING JACKS. AND CATHOLIC DISCIPLINE FORGIVE YOU AS THEY HAVE FORGIVEN THOSE BEFORE WHO SINNED AGAINST THEM. YOU'RE CUTE.

KICK

HELLO,
MY WHAT FEY CHARACTERS THOSE DICKIES ARE. TO THINK I DROVE NEARLY 50 MILES ROUND TRIP TO BE AT THE HALLOWEEN PARTY AT THE STARDUST! THE WEIRDOS WERE EXCELLENT (I HAVE YET TO SEE THESE GUYS PUT ON A POOR SHOW). AND THE GOGO'S WERE VERY GOOD - BOTH MUSICALLY AND VISUALLY. BUT THOSE DICKIES WEAR NICE MASKS. WATCH THE DICKIES SWING FROM THE RAFTERS. WATCH CHUCK ROAST. WATCH THE RED LIGHTS FLASH AND THE STROBE BLINK ON AND OFF. WATCH THE BOUNCERS. BREAK SKULLS. WATCH THE BOUNCERS SWEAT AND FART LIKE THE OVER-STUFFED PIG-FACED ASSHOLES THEY ARE. THE DICKIES AREN'T CUTE OR FUNNY. ARE ALL THEIR GIMMICKS INTENDED TO HIDE SOMETHING? MAYBE THEIR OWN CREATIVE INSECURITY.
I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME THAT US FANS EXERT SOME PRESSURE ON CERTAIN FASCIST-INSPIRED CLUBS AND VENUES AROUND TOWN THAT EMPLOY FUCK-HEAD BOUNCERS AS WEAPONS AGAINST PUNKS. THREE PLACES I HAD IN MIND ARE THE CUCKOO'S NEST, MADAME WONG'S AND THE SANTA MONICA CIVIC. THEY RIP OFF YOUR MONEY WITH EXCESSIVE TICKET PRICES AND THEN PROCEED TO RIP OFF YOUR HEAD ONCE INSIDE (THAT IS IF YOU DON'T BEHAVE LIKE A GOOD YOUNG AMERICAN SHOULD).
PERHAPS A BOYCOTT OF THESE PLACES BY BOTH BANDS AND FANS ALIKE COULD SOLVE THE PROBLEM. OR MAYBE A MORE EFFECTIVE DEVICE : FIRE BOMB THEIR BUILDINGS.

YOURS TRULY FRIEDRICH

LETTER section

DEAR SLASH
IN RESPONSE TO YOUR REVIEW OF EXTREMES IN ISSUE #10 I'VE GOT TO TELL YOU THAT ALL OF THIS PHILOSOPHICAL PROSE ATTACHED TO OUR MUSIC IS, TO QUOTE YOUR 'SHABBY RONANTIC', STRICTLY YUCKY POO. IN THE COURSE OF EXTREMES MUSICAL HISTORY WHAT WE HAVE DONE IS TRIED OUR BEST TO PORTRAY THE SITUATIONS AND/OR EMOTIONS IN OUR LIVES AND/OR OTHER LIVES WITH MUSICAL SOUNDTRACKS. WE ARE SIMPLY A BAND. I SHOULD LIKE TO REMIND OUR CRITIC THAT PERHAPS WE ARE 'WIRED OUR TWIXT ESOTERICA AND EROTICA' AND OF THE PUNY IRONY OF BEING LABELED ONE OF 'LA'S SAFER MUSICAL ENTITYS' DUE TO THE FACT THAT WE DO NOT SPOUT SOCIAL ANARCHY AND PARANOIA WHILE ON STAGE, WE ALL READ SLASH AND IT IS, IN OUR EYES, IRREPLACABLE AS A CONSUMER GUIDE OF SORTS, SLASH HAS AMAZING VARIETY, BUT AS FAR AS THE CRITIC SECTION GOES, I TIME AND TIME AGAIN FIND THEM INTOLERABLY PETTY AND GOSSIPY PERSONAL. PLEASE TRY TO EXCUSE MY HYPOCRISY AS IT APPLIES TO PERSONAL PORTRAYALS AND I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL THAT A CRITICS JOB IS A LITERAL JOB AND NOT A JOB IN WHICH ONE CARRIES OUT PERSONAL VENDETTAS AND OR PLAYS THE FAVORITES, AT LEAST I BELIEVE THAT'S HOW IT SHOULD WORK, I'VE GONE ON ENOUGH, AND I SUPPOSE YOU CAN'T HAVE YOUR CAKE AND SLASH TOO...OR CAN YOU? ADJECTIVELY YOURS
SIGNED: MAICOL SINATRA FOR 'EXTREMES', EMOTIONAL ANARCHY AND THE CRITICS AS MARTYRS COMMITTEE.

DEAR COMMITTEE SECRETARY,
YOU'RE NOT SIMPLY A BAND, YOU'RE A SELF-CONTAINED CRITICAL SYSTEM AND AN ANALYTICAL AVALANCHE! OF COURSE YOU'RE WRONG, BUT YOU PUT IT VERY WELL. IN THE COURSE OF SLASH JOUR NALISTIC HISTORY WE HAVE INDEED PAID TOO LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE COURSE OF EXTREMES MUSICAL HISTORY, BEING TOO UNPROFESSIONALLY INVOLVED WITH OUR OWN PRIVATE SITUATIONS AND OR EMOTIONS TO REALIZE THE SCOPE AND THE SHEER AWESOMENESS OF YOUR COLLECTIVE ENDEAVOR. WE WERE SO BUSY FROLLICKING WITH MORTALS WE NEVER NOTICED THE BEAUTY AND HARMONY BEING CREATED IN OUR MIDST. WE SHUDDER AT THE ENORMITY OF THE SITUATION.

KICK, BARBARIAN AND PETTY CLIQUE CHARACTER

DEAR SLASH,
WHO IS CAITLIN AND WHO ARE THE PUNKS? WE SAW THE BELFAST COWBOYS AT THE DEAF CLUB THE OTHER NIGHT, WITH FAST MEMBERS OF THE AVENGERS, OFFS, NEGATIVE TREND, THEY MUST BE GOOD. WRONG!! THEY ARE AN OLD WAVE HEAVY METAL SLUDGE BAND WITH A ROD STEWART LOOKALIKE POMPOUS GIRL KICKING BEANPOLE DUMBPUCK SINGER. IT COULD HAVE BEEN A BAD DAY ON THE GREEN BUT THE CROWD LOVED THEM! THIS MINDLESS HARD ROCK CRAP IS THE ENEMY OF REAL ROCK. IF THE BELFAST COWBOYS ARE ACCEPTABLE THEN THE SO-CALLED PUNK SCENE IS BEING EATEN ALIVE FROM THE INSIDE. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO PUT UP WITH THESE BANDS IN PUNK CLUBS OR SLASH.
TWO MORE COMPLAINTS: HOW ABOUT MORE INTERVIEWS WITH CALIFORNIA BANDS AND LESS SPACE WASTED ON FOREIGN ART DAMAGE BANDS ? ALSO I'M TIRED OF READING REVIEWS THAT ARE INCOMPLETE BECAUSE THE REVIEWER ARRIVED LATE, LEFT FOR A PARTY OR WAS GETTING DRUGGED OUT IN THE PARKING LOT. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH !

PETE H
JOHN WHAT

FIRST, CAITLIN THINKS WHAT SHE PLEASES, IF SHE LIKES A BAND YOU DON'T AGREE FOR IS NOT EXACTLY BEING EATEN ALIVE FROM THE INSIDE, RELAX! AND WE DO DEVOTE MUCHO SPACE TO CALIFORNIA BANDS, BITCHING ABOUT THE "FOREIGN ART DAMAGED BANDS" IS DUMB AND REACTIONARY AND MAKES YOU SOUND LIKE A RIGHT WING BIGOT UNABLE TO FACE THE PRESENT, IF UNUSUAL MUSIC FROM OUTSIDE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD BOTHERS YOU THEN STICK TO TV AND FOOTBALL, WE'LL RAVE ABOUT GOOD BANDS WITHOUT CONSULTING INDIGNANT RULE ENFORCERS FROM WHATEVER SIDE OF THE FENCE THEY POP UP.
ARE YOU TIRED OF INCOMPLETE REVIEWS WE ARE TIRED OF READERS WHO DON'T COMPREHEND THAT OUR CONTRIBUTORS ARE FANS FIRST, CATCH WHAT THEY WANT OR WHAT THEY CAN, THEY'RE TOO BUSY LIVING IT WITH THE REST TO THINK OF THEMSELVES AS DUTY-BOUND OBSERVERS. THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE FUN, THERE ARE NO RULES TO ADHERE TO THIS TIME AROUND.

THE PROUDLY UNTOGETHER REVIEWERS, MINUS ONE OR TWO WHO PASSED OUT EARLY

DEAR SLASH,
WE HOPE YOUR FEELINGS ARE SIMILAR TO OURS REGARDING THE "CLASH CASH IN" AT THE PALLADIUM.
WE'RE ASSHOLES AS WELL AS VICTIMS FOR PAYING THE OUTRAGEOUS PRICE OF $ 9.50 FOR AN EVENING OF BOREDOM. WE SHOULD HAVE STAYED HOME AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED, BUT BEING FANS (EX), SINCE THAT FIRST IMPORT LP WE WERE CURIOUS AS TO WHAT THEY WERE LIKE. B-O-R-I-N-G!
WERE THEY THE GUYS WE REALLY BELIEVED IN ONCE? HOW DARE THEY SING ABOUT "TURNING REBELLION INTO MONEY"? IF THEY WERE HONEST THEY'S SING IT ABOUT THEMSELVES. THEN MICH JONES COMPLAINS ABOUT BEING SPAT ON ("WE WERE DOING THAT THREE YEARS AGO"). SORRY MICK, WE ADMIT IT IS DATED, BUT YOU'RE DEALING MOSTLY WITH NEW FANS. YOUR ORIGINAL FANS ARE PLAYING IT SMART AND STAYING HOME. WE ARE FED UP WITH YOUR LIES, A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO WE READ AN INTERVIEW IN WHICH THE CLASH PUT DOWN THE STONES FOR SPENDING THEIR MONEY ON DRUGS AND SAYING THEY'D NEVER BE LIKE THAT, THEY WOULD INSTEAD PUT THEIR MONEY TOWARDS A GOOD RADIO STATION. HOW'S THAT COMING BOYS?
FRIENDS OF OURS PLAYED WITH THE CLASH LAST FEB. IN S.F. AND SAID THE PAB FOUR FROM ENGLAND NEVER EVEN TALKED TO THEM BECAUSE THEY WERE TOO PREOCCUPIED WITH THAT EXPENSIVE WHITE STUFF IN THEIR DRESSING ROOM.
NOW THAT WE HAVE EXPRESSED THIS OUT WE CAN GO BACK TO MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS. THEY SHOULD CONSIDER THEMSELVES LUCKY THAT THEY WERE ONLY SPAT UPON.

DIANE & LYNORE

DEAR SLASH,
THIS LETTER CONCERNS THE HUNTINGTON BEACH PUNK SCENE. AT AN OCTOBER GIG AT U.C.I. FEATURING THE PLUGZ, THE CROWD AND AGENT ORANGE, A GROUP OF BEACH PUNKS WERE SPITTING ON AGENT ORANGE WHO WERE GOOD, CONSIDERING THEY ARE FROM FULLERTON AS I AM.
AN O.C. PUNK GOT CUT ON THE BACK OF HIS HEAD BECAUSE OF A H.B. GANG BRATING ON HIM. WHO THE HELL DO THESE KIDS THINK THEY ARE?? THEIR ULTIMATE THING IS TO SPIT ON GROUPS THEY DON'T LIKE AND GO AROUND THINKING THEY ARE THE NEXT SID VICIOUS. SURE SID WAS COOL, BUT ONE CAN ONLY CARRY THINGS SO FAR. ANOTHER TIME A H.B. SLASHER FLOWER PUNCHED OUT THE FUCKING WALL OF A THEATER HERE IN FULLERTON. IS THIS AN ATTEMPT AT TRENDSETTING? THEY SEEM TO THINK VIOLENCE IS THE ANSWER ALONG WITH VANDALISM AND SPRAY PAINTING PEOPLE'S HOUSES FOR KICKS. THAT OCTOBER GIG WAS A DISASTER, WITH A PUNK GET TING CUT UP BY FAKE PUNKS.
ONE LAST THING TO ANSWER THE BUNCH FROM H.B. THAT SAID PUNKS FROM FULLERTON WERE A BUNCH OF PUSSIES. LISTEN MISTER BIG, WHAT ARE YOU PROVING JUMPING AROUND LIKE A HEADLESS CHICKEN (IT'S OK ONCE IN A WHILE), HITTING PEOPLE IN THE FACE AND STARTING FIGHTS?
AGENT ORANGE, DUSTBIN AND THE ASSISTANCE LEAGUE ARE WORTHY BANDS THAT DESERVE RESPECT. KEEP YOUR SPITTIN FOR THE BATHROOM SINK.
HUNTINGTON BEACH IS NOT ENGLAND IN 77!

SINISTER FULLERTON CHILD

DID YOU HEAR THAT HUNTINGTON BEACH? THE AUDACITY, FUCKING AROUND WITH FULLERTON !! WHAT NEXT ?? I WANT TO SEE A UNITED BEACH FRONT, PUNKS FROM H.B., L.B., O.C., M.B., V.D., EVERYONE HOLDING HANDS, THAT WAY YOU'LL BE READY TO LICK THE VALLEY PUNK CONTINGENT WHEN THE TIME COMES

KICK

THE SLASH HIGH SOCIETY STAFF CHART

(What the elite is grooving to while driving their european sports car, soaking in their jacussi, sipping cocktails on their penthouse deck, fondling each other in their sunken bathtub or snorting cocaine in their electronic playroom. Forget it proles, you'll never get a taste of it! Be good and keep dreamin!)

BO CLIFFORD (international playboy)
1) INTENSIFIED SKA 1962/66 Compilation LP
2) ONE STEP BEYOND - MADNESS LP
3) HOW DO YOU KNOW - THE LYRES
4) DON'T GIVE IT UP NOW - THE LYRES
5) LET'S TALK ABOUT GIRLS - THE UNDERTONES

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH (Jamaican bauxite heir and slumlord)
1) SURVIVAL - MARLEY LP
2) INTENSIFIED SKA - COMPILATION LP
3) BREDDA GRAVILICIOUS - THE WAILING SOULS
4) HEADLINE NEWS - THE CAPITAL LETTERS LP

CHRIS D. (Record industry magnate)
1) FRANKIE AND JOHNNY - GENE VINCENT
2) SUGAR LIGHT - X (live)
3) I AND I AND I - THE PLUGZ (live)
4) PROLIXIN STOMP - RHINO 39
5) HORROR BUSINESS - THE MISFITS
6) MIGHTY INSTRUMENTALS - JAMES BROWN

JIMBO (retard offspring of a respected aristocratic family)
1) 154 - WIRE LP
2) THE GIRLS/JEFFREY I HEAR YOU - HEARTHEN
3) COMPLICATED GAMES - XTC
4) THE HALLOWEEN TAPES (live) - HALF JAPANESE
5) I DON'T LIKE MONDAYS - BARRY WHITE (Rats at 33 rpm)
6) TAKE YOUR BRAIN FOR A WALK - THE ART ATTACKS (tape)

KICKBOY FACE (son of French diplomat, owner of a Marseilles import expert operation)
1) DRAGNET - THE FALL LP
2) MEMORIES - PUBLIC IMAGE
3) THE SCARED PITTER PATTER OF THE SHAH'S HEART (live)
4) ENTERTAINMENT - GANF OF FOUR LP
5) olFA CE LA/RAISED EYEBROWS - THE FEELIES
6) EARCOM 2 - FAST COMPILATION

MELANIE (royal families' official photographer)
1) ENTERTAINMENT - GANG OF FOUR LP
2) DRAGNET - THE FALL LP
3) THE UNDERTONES LP
4) I'M THE MAN - JOE JACKSON

PEA (most eligible heiress/debutante in the entire British empire)
1) MIX-UP - CABARET VOLTAIRE LP
2) ONE STEP BEYOND - MADNESS LP
3) LIVE AT THE APOLLO - JAMES BROWN

RANKING JEFFREY (independently wealthy collector and world traveller)
1) WHITTIER BLVD - THEE MIDNITERS
2) BAD BOY - THE JIVE BOMBERS
3) LOUIE LOUIE - BLACK FLAG (live)
4) A BOOGER IS GONNA GET YOU - ONIE WHEELER
5) WITCHCRAFT - THE SPIDERS

STEVE (publishing magnate and vintage cars collector)
1) I TRIED - CULTURE
2) NOT GREAT MEN - GANG OF FOUR
3) SURVIVAL - MARLEY LP
4) EUROPEAN SUN - CATHOLIC DISCIPLINE (live)

V. (renown socialite and international trendsetter)
1) THINK - JAMES BROWN
2) MEMORIES - PUBLIC IMAGE
3) THE PLUGZ (live)
4) OUR WAY - THE GERMS
5) MANIC DEPRESSION - JIMI HENDRIX
6) UNHEARD MUSIC - "X" (live)

BOB BIGGS (record industry magnate, Wall Street wizard and extravangant bon vivant)
1) THE SWISS FRANC
2) PHILIPPE ROTSCHILD 72' (with Andy Warhol label)
3) THE SWISS ARMY KNIFT (DE LUXE MODEL)

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FASTER THAN YOU

THE APOCALYPSE NOW of Rock'n'Roll Journalism:
A Series of Crapulent Themes concerning Teen Life in Southern California.

THE APOCALPSE NOW of Rock'n'Roll Journalism:
A Series of Crapulent Themes concerning Teen Life in Southern California.

Real soon, the best movie ever made, APOCALYPSE NOW, will be shown at theatres and drive-ins all over the place. That's cool, but if you missed the flick at the Cinerama Dome in Hollywood you will miss out on the fabulous programs that were passed out after each show. If this is your case, fear not. Yours truly happened to purloin a couple dozen such pamphlets that I will send your way free of charge. Just send a large self-addressed, stamped envelope to me in care of this fine magazine and it's yours. Don't miss out. This offer is good for only a limited time.

POETRY APPRECIATION — "Happy People" by the Weirdos

Happy happy happy happy people
Happy happy happy happy people
All the happy people wanna mistreat us
Rip us apart to readjust
Can't they see that we don't give a damn
Happy or sad we jsut do what we can
There's two sides to the coin
When will it end?

Happy happy happy happy people
Happy happy happy happy people
Driving in their cars smiling happily
Man it looks like Mars
Is that the world for me?
I know a happy little girl
Trapped in a happy little world
Ravaged from desire

La la la la la la la la yeah
La la la la la la la la yeah
Happy happy happy happy
I know a happy little girl
Trapped in a happy little world
Ravaged from desire
La la la la la la la la yeah
La la la la la la la la yeah
Happy

Having temporarily moved out of Hollywood (evicted for having too many parties, too loud and too late at night) I am now back in Torrance from whence I came. Torrance is a boring suburb about thirty or fourty minutes drive south of Hollywood. Here in Torrance it's a real challenge trying to maintain my cool. A Hep-cat Daddy-O such as myself is not well liked down here. I'm real tired of stupid, hairy jerks following me around chanting, "We are Devo." I have to put up with all the "happy people." Someone once said, "Ignorance is bliss". I believe that is what John Denny had in mind when he wrote the fine lyrics to "Happy People." I can really understand what the kids at the church in Hermosa Beach have to go through. I know why the kids in Huntington Beach are so wild. Ya gotta do what ya can — otherwise you'll end up just as boring as all of the people around you. As far as I'm concerned, the only real sin is boredom. For these people down here it looks like there is no life before death. "Happy People" is an anthem for the hip suburban teens to rally around against ugly, long-haired farts who would rather pass out at the Jethro Tull concert. I will forever love the Weirdos for creating this song.

LOCAL ACTION REVISTED — I have been doing extensive spying on local Rock'n'Roll units and have the following to report: the Furys, the Go-Gos, the Flyboys, the Plugz, the Alley Cats, the Rubber City Rebels, the Textones, the Plimsouls, the Bags and the Rebels have all turned in excellent performances and it simply amazes me that no major label seems to care about any of them. Every one of the aforementioned bands are quite capable of making terrific records (that will sell, too). It would be a real shame to think that these groups are wasting their time — especially the Alley Cats who have been Rockin' for a good five years or so. Well, I know I'm not wasting *my* time when I attend any of their shows. Until The Industry wises up, we'll have to be satisfied with local pressings of our fave bands. The Flyboys, the Plugz and the Plimsouls (now a four-piece band) are all readying tapes for release before this decade is over. I've heard the Plimsouls' tape and it is a true fine recording, produced by Danny Holloway, who knows how. Also being prepared for released is an album worth of material by the Flesheaters, once one of my favorite bands, they now consist of Chris D. and an all-star cast.

Speaking of all-star casts, anyone who purposely misses a new band on the circuit, Top Jimmy & the All Drunk All Stars, may as well trade in his black leather jacket for a pair of double-knit slacks. Top Jimmy & The ACASs is the wildest attraction on the L.A. scene today. Usually a roadie for X, Top Jimmy is a white urban Blues singer of the contemporary variety. Backed by X (minus Exene) and aided by another guitarist, T. Jimmy sings both Blues and Rockabilly standards. Occasionally he is joined by Brendan Mullen on harmonica. Even the Ranking Mr. J. Lea adds vocals and sunglasses during "Poison Ivy." Top Jimmy is certainly one ton of fun.

STILL IN PRINT DEPT. — Not long ago I ordered, and received, a copy of the BEST OF LOUIS JORDAN (MCA 2-4079). What a great album! Throughout the Forties and early Fifties Louis Jordan & His Tympany Five played a post-Swing/pre-Rock'n'Roll urban Rhythm & Blues. With all of his 78s out of print, this two-record set is essential. He first sang hits like "Choo Choo Ch'Boogie," "Ain't Nobody Here But Us Chickens," "Saturday Night Fish Fry," "Nobody Knows You When You Are Down and Out," "Caldonia," "Run Joe" and my favorite. "What's the Use of Gettin' Sober (When You Gonna Get Drunk Again)". Nearly every major Blues singer after World War II was influenced by him. I strongly recommend the album.

THE FAST ONE READS YOUR DIRT — I'd like to thank all the kind people who have been sending all those cards and letters to me. I'll try to answer as many as space permits. If you send a self addressed, stamped envelope I will try to respond personally.

Judy Collins of Westdale sent drugs and this message: "I just heard your wonderful song on the Rodney on the ROQ Show. Is that ever going to be released or is it just a teaser? Also, a friend of mine saw you sing "Land of a Thousand Dances" with the Bleu Herpies at the Troubador and said you clearly stole the show. Do you ever plan on forming your own band and doing a whole concert?"

Thanks for the appreciation, Miss Judy. The song you heard is called "To Be Alive (Freeway Dub)" by myself and the Pinche Ras Clots. It is on an album called L.A. RADIO 1980 along with a bunch of other tunes by other people that will come out in February most likely on Epic Records. As for forming my own band, the idea has already occured to me that it may just be a gas. I've got the basis together already — guitar, bass, drums. I am looking for a wild saxophone player who can play like King Curtis, Earl Bostic or Big Jay McNeely. Also, I can use a piano player who can do a great boogie woogie, like Pete Johnson, or is a maniac like Little Richard or Jerry Lee Lewis. If you know someone who can fit those bills please have them get in touch with me through this magazine.

Kevin Sanders, a student at UCLA, wrote asking what books he should read in order to learn more about his favorite subject — Rock'n'Roll. Excellent question, Kev, try these: "Mystery Train" by Greil Marcus, "Rock: From the Beginning" by Nick Cohn, "Sound of the City" by Charlie Gillett and "The Rolling Stone History of Rock'n'Roll" are all required reading. I also find myself refering to "Rock 100" by Lenny Kaye and David Delton, "The Illustrated Rock Almanac" by Pearce Marchbank and Miles and "Honkers and Shouters" by Arnold Shaw. Also hellpful is "Rock Dreams" with illustrations by Guy Peelart and a text by Nick Cohn.

IN MEMORY OF...Here I will pause as we all say a prayer for Uncle John's burger stand. Once on Vine Street near Yucca, one of Hollywood's finest grease pits was mercilessly torn down to make room for about two or three more parking spaces for the nearby Palace Disco (formerly the Hollywood Palace) currently under construction. Pencil mustachioed Uncle John himself use to take a good twenty minutes to prepare each burger — shaping the patty just right, pulling lettuce off a fresh head, slicing each tomato and onion by hand. A lover of nature, Uncle John threw all his bread crumbs to the pigeons that gathered around him. The fact that the burger stand was just steps away from the Gene Vincent Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame certainly added to the hipness of the food. I'm sure going to miss Uncle John's fine, fine, super fine double cheeseburgers.

Thinking about the loss of such a cool hamburger stand is really upsetting me. I'm going to have to end the column now before I get too depressed. Until next time just remember, someday this war is gonna end.

(Lyrics to "Happy People" were reprinted with the kind permission of the Weirdos. This edition of FASTER THAN YOU was written while listening to John Coltrane records. Hello, Martin Life.)

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N.Y. HORROR STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

This month is return to real life experiences month. Where you end up if you go with the crowd. Speedy almost had anorexia; now eating out · of neurosis. Worse, got the B.B.Q.'s (Brooklyn Bronx & Queens), you go out there and you come back by subway baby. Did you have a bisexual experience? I had no experience at all. And finally you realize that nobody's invited you for Thanksgiving. Put me under sedation. Bring on the blizzards. But to business.

Brain Fever: Intellect rears its hoary head as fall brings new movies from local new wave cineastes, all featuring N.Y. rock talent. Big surprise is *The Long Island Four*, by *Anders Grafstrom* and starring *David McDermott, Lance Loud (Mumps), Kristian Hoffman* and *Bradly Field (Contortions)*. Much amazement expressed at good camera and editing, a rarity in the local product. Plot, concerning four Nazis who land on Long Island to establish a Fifth Column prior to WWII but who are seduced by USA high life and forget their mission, is weak, a common problem among punk-intellectual films. Good music soundtrack, though, also common, as on *Sleepless Nights*, an *India Song* remake by *Becky Johnson*, shown at the *New Cinema* on St. Marks. Place and starring *John Lurie (Lounge Lizards), Marie Paul, Eric Mitchell, Rene Ricard*. Nice work even if boring (they all are; *Moonraker* they ain't) where central woman character described by three men, all who have various sorts of affairs (not shown) with her. Incest is involved. She doesn't speak. Voice-overs tell most of the story, in '50s detective movie fashion. You can tell it's a punk audience from the high proportion of blondes in the audience. Meanwhile, *Subway Riders*, Amos Poe's newest starring *John Lurie* and *Susan Tyrel*, delayed till next year due to funding problems.

Club them to death: The *Mudd*, favorite hang-out of Speedy's good-for-nothing friends, is reportedly taken over by (a) tourists (b) the Mafia. *Bottom Line* (where Speedy doesn't go; no record-industry clout) and *Hurrahs* (which has third anniversary; happy birthday) taken over by record companies, okay, for debuts. Hurrahs also hosts *Witness New York*, fashion show promoted by local scene-stealing hennaed Parisienne going by name of *SVDT*, featuring eight small-time progressive designers. This kind of thing is quite common here. Scene very crowded, crush at the door, big event. *Boris Policeband*, very much appreciated and too little seen, scheduled to play, doesn't show. Meanwhile, at *Pravda*, triple-story rock club in SoHo art district (you can smell a mistake already?), has one-night opening for L.A.'s own *Wet* magazine sponsored by *Fiorucci*, a boutique. Place serves drinks in big fat glasses, a plus, at $3.00 a throw, record for the clubs. Next event scheduled, an art opening, cancelled. Local zoning board says nix to disco. Final outcome uncertain; stay tuned. Meanwhile, reports circulate that *Howard Stein*, owner of *Xenon* (No. 2 to *Studio 54*, also with recently revealed cocaine troubles) has bought building on West Broadway just north of *TR 3* for downtown branch. Also in SoHo, this is a better location than Pravda's, since it's only on the fringe of the multi-thousand-dollar straight middle-class artist coop loft neighborhood.

Burn the Disco Down: Rock D.J.'s are now prominent, an act in themselves; some of the energy banddom has lost has gone into record spinning. At *Squat Theater, James Chance* spins the super-sonic, super-cool disco sounds in a disco-funk dance contest called "Funky-futuristic Astro-Dash." Prime incident comes when art-grafittiist and Mohawk haircut popularizer *Samo*, after insisting on entering the contest solo, wins second and smashes to smithereens the prize, all three Contortions records. At least the young keep the faith. Meanwhile, at the Mudd, *John Savas* as guest D.J. blasts the club with the hottest funk Motown and disco this side of Mo-City itself. Death threats reported, mostly from the tunnel people. We can imagine. Also at TR 3, infamous D.J.s advertised on their flyers, add to the antics. One is *Danny Rosen* of the *Futants* who spins old 78's from a new booth (they've put in protective glass, like at the post office); we don't care how cute he is. This act was, um, uncertainly received.

Briefly on Black and White: Motown and Jazz still stronger progressive influence than much touted Mod revival (English band, *Merton Parkas*, occasions little comment, though danceable; *Quadrophenia*, the *Who* movie, does better. N.Y. Punk has been mod for years already). *James "Blood" Ulmer*, guitarist fronting pretty noisy jazz-rock black band, plays at *CBGBs*. *St. Louis Jazz Ensemble*, wild but not at all avant, plays at TR 3. Jazz and blues greats scheduled in at *Squat Theater*. Maybe an integrated rock scene is on its way; it certainly works fine when it happens (and for you Cal.'types, if you read this, there still ain't no reggae anywhere here). Questions of racism too complicated for Speedy, who drinks with anybody. Mention here the local downtown black bar, *Three Roses* on Canal St., really ace, stays open till legal 4 a.m. limit.

Under Promotion: Toyland science-fiction is in, expect commercial push for *Yellow Magic Orchestra*, happy yappy hipster yipster triple-synthesizered hopefuls with electronic mini-drums, playing disco electronic. Gets good reviews. Also anticipated, return of *Nervus Rex* from California tour, playing tomorrow uptown; both groups part of the No New York Second Wave, as are bands listed below. Understand these jittery kings have right type of promoters behind them; LP due in February.

Musicwise, spent an exciting set with *Walter Stedding and the Dragon People*, yet another artist of rock cacophony with good stage presence, famous for their single *Aint Nothing but a Hound Dog* done experimental music style. Walter, long the cutest blond sweetheart electronic violinist on the scene, playing with a synthesizer belt and red stroboscopic shades, and with a beautiful band that includes a dressed up female violinist, female bassist, male drummer and tuneful female screamer. They have fun, no poses, good music, happy like Herman's Hermits.

Bush Tetras, a new band including the non-male ex-Contortions, *Pat Place* and *Adele Bertei* (both of whom have previous roles in new wave films — see above — and now have taken over the cashier's booths at N.Y. vintage movie houses), dressed in red and black nouveau Sears outfits with pants that didn't fold around the ankles quite right. They played at the Kitchen, an art venue, where the audience, well-trained, whispered between sets.

Coming up, *Mania-D*, an all-girl band from Nazi-land, five members that also includes a mannequin lead singer from the Paris couture runways. More next month.

Best costume was for Halloween, *Lux Interior* of the *Cramps* (on the double-bill with *Iggy* at the *Palladium*) who did a French rococo teenage werewolf, with monkey-fur knickers, stockings, high-heeled buckled shoes, bare chest and ass, nylon bag crotch and fur tail.

Injuries of the month: There weren't any, except for *John Lurie*, sax man of the Lounge Lizards, who loses front tooth to overzealous should-be-castrated John Wayne jock-type the Mudd hires to protect its bathrooms. Don't worry, replacement already in, playing possible, suit pending.

Free Food: Wasn't any.

News Item, courtesy WBLS, James Browns' station: Marijuana shortage in New York City.

-Speedy

SAN FRANCISCO

Mutants whoopeeing it up with fans pic: Sue Brisk

PUNK ROCK GO BYE BYE
or, I'm Going to Stop Wasting My Time Somebody Else Would Have Broken Both of Her Arms
by Caitlin

Well, with Loma Linda a fond memory, the Deaf Club shut down for a minimum of a month and a maximum of a year, 330 Grove fairly unworkable and scheduled for imminent destruction, the Geary shows doing inexplicably poorly, the Mabuhay rotting, and the plethora of "new wave discos" (even Marin County has one) thriving, this is indeed shaping up to be the winter of our discontent. But this is San Francisco, don't forget, and we don't take things like that lying down. We sit around and talk about them and organize things. We also get really drunk and throw bottles against our friends' walls. And somehow it makes us feel better.

At one such recent gathering those who help run the scene pooled their ideas on what can be done (as well as what should have been done) about the dearth of places to play and the general lack of true excitement in the scene. It was not (as one is tempted to suggest) a last-ditch effort to "save our scene," but an attempt to understand it and to regain control of it for the fans and the bands. Represented at this conference of the non-aligned (which was not held in Havana) were all the magazines (Damage, Nart, Another Room, Creep, even the long-defunct Search and Destroy, New Youth Productions, Target, a couple of djs (from the Geary and from KPFA), a filmmaker (Mindy, whose "Louder, Faster, Shorter," featuring Dils, Avengers, Mutanys, Sleepers, and UXA, premieres this month); and several unaffiliated but influential (and in one notable instance inebriated) persons. Several conclusions were reached, among them one I've been quietly advocating for a while now, namely let the tourists *have* the Mab, it has nothing to do with the scene anymore, and, rather than fight it, let's simply ignore it. Along the same lines, it was pointed out that rather than listen to Sex Pistols records when we're forty, i.e. keep the scene alive at all costs, we should admit to the very obvious fact that punk's become merely another facet of rock, whether we like it or not, and we should concentrate instead on what's still new and rebellious. As someone said, what's happening in punk rock today is Linton Kwesi Johnston — in other words, punk is an attitude, not a music form. And it's that attitude which is missing at so many gigs these days. It takes guts to say it if the attitude means a lot of you (and it does in my case), but FUCK PUNK ROCK, that's right, fuck it. We set out to change things and to destroy, not to get the Knack and Pearl Harbor signed. The Dadaists before us had the guts to say fuck it, and in so doing redeemed any credibility they may have lost when they became a part of pop culture. It's up to us who helped create this particular art form to crush it, too, rather than deal with its eventual assimilation into the mainstream. It's bad enough already, and face it, gang, it's only a matter of time until all those people who are currently making new wave discos so successful start making local bands successful — *on their terms*, not on the bands' terms. While this will make their record companies happy, for you and I it represents failure.

So let's create something. Some people are doing it on their own (Non is but one example and one possible direction). Because what fun is it being a punk when secretaries are no longer afraid to sit next to you on the bus? Moreover, what fun is it being a punk when secretaries outnumber you at a gig?

[redacted]

All of the above notwithstanding, there is currently not enough alternative stuff going on to write this entire column on, so I shall continue to keep you informed on the various punk-related occurences of late.

The ever-lovable Mutants, whose EP is no. 1 in (where else?) Alabama and Luxembourg, may soon be featured in a Bootsy Collins (of Funkadelic fame) movie, playing (who else?) themselves...Impatient Youth searching for a drummer now that Chris has defected to the Animal Things camp...the best of the new magazines is Creep, a very gutsy and political little piece of subversion which, despite being described as "gutsy," is in no way similar to Flipside...anyone wishing to vacation in SF might wish to send an SASE to Ivy (2436 Jones SF 94133), who will send you her excellent calendar of events, and to Sadie (c/o New Youth, PO Box 6029, SF 94101), who has a reggae calendar...the Halloween shows in Berkeley bombed, thankfully, despite generating a ridiculous amount of press (if nobody's going to pay $6.50 for the Screamers they're not going to pay it for the Mutants or Crime)...the battle for prime time punk of KPFA has been won, though KSAN has canned their Heretics Hour (no loss)...deadline rapidly approaching for the next New Youth directory; to get your band listed just send us a letter with all the pertinent info, to receive a copy send a dollar (address elsewhere). A note to all you lazy fuckers: this service is provided to you absolutely free, so send us a letter or you won't be listed (we don't have enough money to call you long distance) ...Pink Section and Los Microwaves due back (separately) from New York any day now...Dils on their way up to Vancouver to open for Iggy — Dils EP on Quintessence out shortly (in a bilingual sleeve): "Red Rockers Rule," "Sound of the Rain," and "It's Not Worth It"...speaking of EPs, Subterranean Records' first release is out now, "SF UNDERGROUND," featuring "Johnny Got His Gun" by No Alternative, "Asexuality in the Eighties" by the Tools, "The Ballad of Pincushion Smith" (sic) by the VKTMS, and the notorious "Earthworm" by the even more notorious Flipper — this record's a steal at two bucks...look for future Subterranean releases such as the forthcoming Zeros/Trend EP ("They Say That (Everything's Alright)" and "Getting Nowhere Fast" b/w "Black and Red" and "Mercenaries"), as wel as the vinyl debut of Animal Things, a possible No Alternative single, etc., etc...and, last and least, Jello Biafra of the DKs garnered over 6,500 votes and came in fourth in a field of ten in his mayoral attempt. Biafra (who listed his occupation in the voter's handbook as "punk rock singer"/"cantata rock punk") was unavailable for comment on the rumors that he will next seek the presidency.

This is the end. [redacted]

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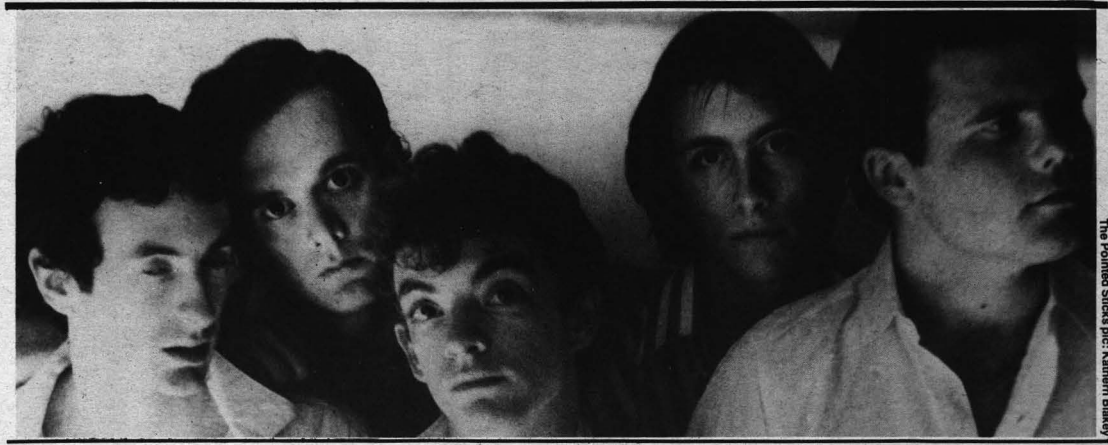
ILLEGAL RECORDS

VAN



The Pointed Sticks pic: Kathern Blakey

Phil Smith

Vancouver is a funny city, a natural paradise caught in the middle of the British American dichotomy ... the two influences are always at play, the contradictions manifesting themselves in a weird sort of humour unique to the city ... and so the new wave scene here, despite its success, has always consisted of a small intense group of prime movers, "friends entertaining friends" ... On July 31, 1977, while most of the future scene was grooving to E.L.P. at the Coliseum, the Furies, a Velvet Underground-influenced trio and the Dishrags, three 15 year old girls playing punk covers, laid their sould bare to two hundred curious people ... the media and public laughed off the event, but slightly more people showed up for the Ramones gig two weeks later ... the Skulls formed, consisting of Wimpy (Sub-Humans), Joey Shithead (D.O.A.) and Dimwit (Pointed Sticks) along with guitarist Simon Werner ... they gigged until November before splitting in and up to Toronto ... in the meantime the circle of friends grew and Victorian Pork, A.V. and D.O.A. rose from the ashes. During the course of the winter concerts consisted mainly of parties and the odd hall gig (attendance — approx 35) until the Japanese hall, site of the Furies, gig became a semi regular hangout, the groups taking turns at headlining and promoting ... as spring came so did the art school contingent ... a house/hangout, the Chez Whiz, became a new venue and the Rest (art band prototype) made their debut ... after suffering bans from virtually every hall in the city, the Japn Hall threatened to become a permanent home until April, 1978 when an Avengers — D.O.A. concert drew 500 people including the already inevitable greaser contingent who did sufficient damage to person and property as to interest police and city council in the going-ons ... a subsequent inspection revealed that the hall's doors were 2 inches short of the legal width (?) ... result: license suspended.

Then things were quiet for a while. Victorian Pork called it a day, AV's television influenced pop had already earned them a new wave tag and so they were allowed to play the odd gay bar and theater while hard-core punk D.O.A. cashed in enough of Shithead's beer cases to be able to spend six hours recording the "Disco Sucks" e.p. ... during this time a hot shot new promoter, Norman Perry, must have seen something he liked and started to bring in acts like Patti Smith and Tom Petty and putting local bands on the bill (a previously unheard-of move) ... the shows sold out the 1100 seats. Commodore ... Quintessence Records, the only store in town that imported British discs, started label with a four track A.V. e.p. as its first release. At this point the group consisted of Tim Ray on vocals, now Pointed Stick Bill Hemy on guitar and future Wasted Lives Colin Griffiths on drums ...

In June D.O.A. embarked on a 3 dates tour of the suburbs to promote the record... Snot Rag, the local Fanzine was ten issues strong and growing ... the Georgia Straight, an "underground" newspaper, sponsored a Battle of the Bands in which D.O.A. and A.V. were smuggled into the previously verboten confines of the city's major meat market rock club, the Body Shop ... A.V., oln their last concert, were given an oh s daring honorable mention while D.O.A. was absolutely robbed of a semi final victory by the city's myopic music industry community ...

A July 1 Anti Canada rally in Stanley Park (local equivalent of Central etc.) was attended by four hundred people ... police were determined to stop the unauthorized event but skillful negotiation enabled the punks to obtain the unused portion of a Christian Revivalist permit and the show went ahead ... D.O.A., Subhumans, Private School and one of the city's classic fuck bands, Sgt. Nick Penis, received national media attention ... at this time a curious split was developing in the local media ... our evergreen playground has but one rock (in the lamest sense of the term) station who ignored any demands for more advanturesome programming, "responsibility to shareholders", you know ... but the print media — the aforementioned Straight plus the two dailies — became increasingly interested in the prospect of hot copy and gave a great deal of exposure to the bands and the people ... even more intriguingly, the city's independent television stations, the cable and UHF channels saw no better way to satisfy the government's demand for Canadian Content than through the visual spectacle of punk rock right in your living room ...

August brought the birth of the Quadra Club, the city's first new wave venue, a gay/transvestite bowling alley that mixed disco records with the new bands ... more bands as well ... the Dishrags moved over from their island farm homes while the Rabid and Pointed Sticks debuted on the Quadra stage ... the two new bands were an embodiment of the increasing contradictions of the Vancouver scene ... the Sticks were, from their first count-in, a pop band making a (self) conscious effort to put fun back into the obsessively apocalyptic punk scene ... Rabid, on the other hand, were totally true to the local interpretation of the punk ethic, barely able to play their instruments, but on a good night, as hot as anyone around ... totally unconcerned with "making it" (a dream, no matter how far hidden that lay in the heart of every other band) ... the summer also began the saga of the Warehouse, a six-story building which served as rehearsal space, party room and crash pad for virtually every band in the city and the first out-of-town bands since the Avengers appeared, as the Readymades and Negative Trend hit the Quadra ... the summer ended with a small feeling of success, as well as the beginning of disillusionment ... already the laid back dictators of Vancouver chic were latching on to the in-crowd...

The Quadra vanished in mid September, claiming punk violence (an ambiguous war cry which was to become distressingly familiar) but actually in financial trouble indirectly stemming from the strictly enforced drinking age of 19 ... (there's no way around it — in Vancouver, if you're underage you're not allowed in the door) ... a month of hall gigs (with an automatic ban after every performance) ... a D.O.A./Dishrags/Sticks bill drew 500, the largest attendance ever for a local show, to the ivory towers of Simon Fraser University ... more sporadic violence and venue bans ...

Finally in October, the Windmill, a small dive on the Porno strip, gave over to local bands on Monday and Tuesdays ... formerly a biker/native Indian headbanging hangout, it had a capacity of 125 (200 on a good night) ... despite a growing audience, the scene was still small with but 10 regular bands ... the fuck band syndrome took off ... regular group members mixed and matched to form units who would perform an opening set of covers with one night or less of practice ... written rules evolved ... no one was allowed to play their rightful instrument, certain covers became the property of certain combinations and the bands repertoires grew from punk standards to '50's classics, Broadway classics and t.v. themes ... the lines between fuck and real bands blurred to the point at which Rude Norton (consisting of various Pointed Sticks and Subhumans) has recorded an ep in their own right ...

In October D.O.A. made their second journey to San Francisco ... while they were out of town, the Pointed Sticks, fast rising challengers to D.O.A.'s supremacy, won the second Georgia Straight Battle ... the judges deciding that if they couldn't stop the punk insurgents they may as well opt for the most desirable option ... the "power pop" of the Sticks who totally blew away the competition ... (look, these Battles are important — this is still a very small town at heart) ... it is difficult to overstate the legitimizing effects of the Sticks' victory ... beside the material benefits (recording time, opening slots etc.) for

COU VER

The Dishrags pic: Randy Hall

the band itself, public attention quickly focused on the little scene ... the Windmill was packed every night and the Quintessence produced Sticks and D.O.A. singles actually sold copies ...

In November, the Sticks began to invade the sacred sanctum of high schools, sometimes being pelted with apples and sandwiches, but getting through to a whole new generation of fans ... Stephen Makclam began the first moves towards the Vancouver Compilation LP as the Dishrags went into Sabre Sound, an 8 track basement studio ... Georgia Straight produced the first issue of Public Enemy, a well meaning but incompetent attempt at a punk paper and sponsored the New Wave Showcase, a multi-media event which featured every local band ... unfortunately the $5.00 ticket price resulted in a low attendance, but media coverage was still increasing ...

The year ended with a historic threenight D.O.A./Sticks battle at the Windmill, the punk/pop divisions already being drawn in the audience's mind and the money beginning to show interest in the latter ... at the end of the year the roll call was D.O.A., Pointed Sticks, Rabid, Dishrags, Subhumans, Active Dog, Wasted Lives, Private School, U-JERK5 and the unexplainable (e?) ... Tim Ray had disappeared putting together the umpteenth version of A.V. ... New Year's was spent at Randy's Rampage's (of D.O.A.) hovel ... the largest dogpile in Western history taking place at midnight.

January '79 is when it all broke open and Vancouver acquired its five minutes of fame as the "new wave capital of North America" (yawn) ... in one month Perryscope produced and sold out Commodore shows of Boondie, Ramones, Devo and Clash ... an inordinate amount of press attention was focused on this strange new music ... the Vancouver Show, a nightly TV news magazine devoted an extra-ordinary amount of time to sometimes excellent, sometimes asinine coverage of what was happening, airing videos and interviews of the visiting groups ... even more importantly, local bands opened the shows, actually convincing the audience that something could happen in their own city (the deep rooted Canadian inferiority complex is a bitch) ... "My God, there's something happening in this town."

February brought things back down to earth ... still no new bands had formed, just the odd recombination of the original personnel ... The Saint Valentines Massacre ("Hit someone you love" screamed the radio ads), featuring the Sticks and Subhumans was scheduled at O'Hara's, a cavernous extrain station on the docks which masqueraded as a club ... the promoters expected 400 and hired security accordingly ... 1100 showed up and the show turned into an orgy of violence, bikers smashing in punks' faces as the police looked the other way ("serves 'em right for wearing mascara") ... the four bands made a total of 500.00, the promoter 1500.00 ... worse was the fallout. "Punk violence stops show" screamed the Straight and indeed it did ... gigs fell through left, right and center ... the Windmill received regular visits from the liquor board who would approve the list of scheduled bands (all new wave acts were cancelled) ... the mayor ordered an investigation into the punk menace and the fire marshall suddenly decided to inspect the Warehouse, informing the building's owner that if the bands did not leave his insurance would be cancelled ... the bands were given a one day notice to vacate ... things were bad, no place to practice, no place to play and no money coming in ... Macklam and I edited one issue of Public Enemy before we were fired for "overestimating the reader's intelligence" ... it folded two issues later (ha!)...

March through May was pretty blah ... the Sticks and D.O.A. signed trial management contracts with Compo, "entertainment consultants" ... the result was usually non-existent or mismatched gigs, the Pointed Sticks playing at a Victoria supper club ... however Compo did succeed in opening up the Smilin' Buhdda, one of the city's oldest clubs, to weekly punk ... the Bhudda is the only place in the city where they throw the drunks in and it only seats 115, making the financial returns somewhat negligible but it was a place to play and go ... all was not rosy as the police, still chasing their tails as they looked for some connection between the punks and a recent wave of firebombings, saw fit to stage a brutal raid ... Shithead was beaten up and arrested and 13 others joined him in the can ... all charges were subsequently dropped and a promised internal investigation of police harassment has been quietly forgotten ... meanwhile police interest continues with files on all the bands and undercover photographers at recent Dils appearance at the Bhudda ...

Again it was the Pointed Sticks who broke things open ... in June D.O.A. was on a massive North American tour and the Sticks, now managed by Maclam, secured regular FM airplay for their second single, "The Real Thing", and broke into the straight rock clubs ... suddenly the word was out — this music was fast, furious and fun to dance to ... the unattractive punk element had been defused by time and the assimilation of fashion ... the new wave groups (Shades, Dishrags and K-Tels) dominated the third Battle and the K-Tels walked away with a victory ... meanwhile Ian Tiles had converted the Gore St. squat (see back cover of Complication album) into an alternate club, dispensing with such frivolities as rooms and walls in order to have a venue...

The July release of the Complication album put the cap on the seminal era of Vancouver's scene ... the album features 20 songs by 14 bands, all of whose members were present, either as fan or performer, since the beginning (except the studio based No Fun) ... the transition of the original bands into vinyl history was the long awaited stimulus ("if bands this shitty can get recorded so can we") to spark off a second generation of bands ... the suburbs began to make their presence felt ... the album has now sold two thousand, 7 of the bands have split up, the Sticks have signed to Sire/Stiff and the Bhudda is going full tilt with music 6 nights a week (Sunday is still a forbidden day in B.C.) ... a relic from the sixties, the Retinal Circus, is scheduled to reopen with the Sticks on Nov. 11 ... the hall holds 650 and is the missing link between the Bhudda and the Commodore.

Still there are some deficiencies: There is no real paper, Snot Rag, though excellent when it appears, is in a state of suspended animation as its producers are off in England's punk mecca ... there is a sad lack of out-of-town bands, particularly from the coast, and a general lack of new energy. The hierarchy has been established as follows (and don't let anyone tell you differently): Sticks in front, sliding into a mainstream context, the only band able to sell out the Commodore ... D.O.A. not too far back, especially after a recent Clash performance which gained them the support of many of the new wavers ... a fair distance behind are the Subhumans, Dishrags and K-Tels who can sell a decent amount of records and consistently pack the Bhudda ... Private School, U-JERK5 have a small circle of fans and Rabid play a popular monthly farewell gig ... the best of the new groups is Female Hands, a heavy metal pop combo (again the Television influence) ... others include the Critics (subliminal Sticks clones), AKA (no wave) and Devices (female punk) ... the lack of fire and originality in the new bands is disheartening ... most are highly derivative of the original local groups ... things have stabilized economically with the general audience having picked their favourites whom they'll support to the bitter end, preferring to go with known quantities to fill those new wave needs ... however there is still something happening in Vancouver.

So there's your history lesson ... enough of nostalgia ... next month will bring more current and musical news.

RANDOM

Pauline of the Selecter pic: Barry Stacey

"FUCK ART, LET'S DANCE — (MORE) RANDOM (THAN EVER) STOATS

(Our chap on the island Mark Williams was originally going to supply us with a straight (ha!) report on the newsworthy 2-tone english tour featuring The Specials, Madness and The Selector. There would be interviews, incisive commentaries and a journalistic history. Instead we finally received a soiled batch of stuttering notes in which the tour in question was vaguely mentioned amidst a barrage of paranoid reflections and guilt-ridden justifications. Admittedly there were a few relevant pictures attached but our standards being as high as the world has always expected them to be, we simply could not consider the mission accomplished and reluctantly tore up the handsome check the young man had been promised. There was then nothing to do but salvage the occasional coherent segments and apologetically publish this new low in gonzo journalism.)

by MORK WILLIAMS

I) A THEORY

Punk was fine, but not everybody in the world wants to be down there in the thick of it, flinging limbs around in wild adrenalin abandon. I mean you've got to consciously jettison certain notions about comfort and personal safety if you want to participate in the true pogo experience, which is fundamentally what the whole purpose of it was, and still is: Get crazy, and if wiping out is a necessary risk of the whole frantic release, then so be it ... who's counting the cost these days?

But from day one of the Roxy era right up until this creeping totalitarianism we are suffering three years later, there was reluctance on the part of well brought-up college kids, nervous orphans, glam-rock refugees, people with nice clothes and hang-ups about fashion, one-legged dwarves, tall chaps in low basements, policemen's off-spring, proponents of the musical form, ballet dancers, slow moving junkies with lapsed motor drive, the entire population of Chelsea and almost everyone who had a record contract prior to the summer of '76 to submit to the new order and get down and do it! Which is probably just as well. Punk wasn't made for them or a whole lot of other people, and if they chose to keep their noses out of it, then so much the better.

But people, however remote from the spiritual mainline, need to jigaboo in some sort of tribal tryst from time to time, and so the world never quite capitulated to the three chord overdrive as long as prejudice and caution retained their high standing in the human order. And the disaffected, or some of them, cast around for something shiny and new.

II) EXCUSES

This whole desperate enterprise started out as an attempt to cover the 2-Tone Tour, a massive 40-date trek by four bands up and down these sceptic isles, but suddenly degenerated into a bus ride to Bournemouth and a few hours at a rehearsal session.

2-Tone is a black-owned, multi-racial record label catering largely (but in no way exclusively) to whites and achieving huge success with every item they've put out so far; and the substance of what they've produced to date is, like punk, synthesized from past present and future ideas of what popular music should be all about. It's gotta be the next big thing. (In America too, you know how you bastards slavishly follow the leaders.)

This story did not begin as your typical single-minded pursuit of knowledge and smart repartee that *Slash*, by virtue of its very structure (or lack of it) can indulge in with almost whimsical certitude. It kicked off with a manic call from the editor of one of our pop weeklies (hah!) who knew of my proclivities for 2-Tone product, ambiguous relationship with Madness (take that as you will) and, more importantly, needed a sucker who could spew out enough verbiage between show's end at 1 a.m. on a Sunday night and the final, grim deadline sometime later that morning to convince gullible readers that his paper was on the case of Birtain's hottest post new wave experience.

III) CHEW ON THOSE ROOTS

The awful import of this style of reportage (and the term is used somewhat metaphorically), only plunged its way into my brain 24 hours ago in the long faded elegance of the Lyceum Ballroom where the newest 2-Tone act, The Beat, were in the throes of a compulsively danceable set. Like Selector and The Specials, The Beat are a tough, but happy mix of black and white kids (i.e. "two tone") who play modern dance music. An almost too perfect melange of ska/blue-beat and punk that is best articulated, ironically enough, by the label's only all ayrian signing, Madness and their slogan, "Fuck Art — Let's Dance".

The stuff of 2-Tone is more specifically the blending of anglicized Motown and Sky/Blue-beat and various apparently dispirate pop musics that had a tenacious hold on the teen world in the mid-sixties with groups like Geno Washington & The Ram Jam Band, Freddy Mac Show and (the bile rises in my throat when I consider his recent AOR glop) Georgie Flame & The Blue Flames.

Then Mods and teds fought in chinzty ballrooms in marvelous clashes of style and ideology and Saturday was the all-nighter when you copped a few blues or black-bombers and danced glazen eyed until the 6 a.m. greaseburger and the bus home. Only this curiously parochial phenomenum never died. In the Midland and Northern towns where London was an effete and unnecessary economic Babel, the erroneously named "soul movement" retained its irridescent mohair suits and bouffant hair-dos right through the ludicrous posturing of flower-power, glam rock, heavy metal and punk. Doubtless the kinship between certain elements of the new wave and reggae opened a door to "northern soul" fans startint to feel a bit lonely out on the cortex of rock n roll time warp all these years. I mean here was the speed and manic demeanor of punk, here was possibility of dance (with all the essential potential for weird interpretation and *style*), here were smart niggers strutting loud and proud, alongside skinhead icons they could absolutely identify with (and neatly vindicate with ingrained racial guilt), here was an honest multi-lateral compromise. Fan-fucking-*tastic*! And so The Specials appeared on the first U.K. Clash tour in '78.

IV) FINANCIAL REPORT

What Jerry Dammers, Special's organist and the man behind 2-Tone, has going for him is a unique deal with a major vinylmonger, in this case Chrysalis Records. (c.f. Blondie, and various other snow white artists) Chrysalis (a.k.a. The Bank) have to record 15 singles a year for 2-Tone and are obliged to release at least ten of them. The Bank are also underwriting the cost of the 2-Tone Tour, the £53.00 it costs to perambulate the Specials, Selector, and Madness or Dexy's Midnight Runners (the former start the tour, the latter replace them halfway through.)

However the nature of the deal is that Dammers/2-Tone can sign individual acts for just one single, which is what happened with Madness', a tribute to blue-beat avatar Prince Buster called "The Prince" which went top ten four weeks after release. Madness were promptly snarfed up by Stiff for a more lucrative long term deal. (In itself this is a historical repeat of Stiff's dealings with Nick Lowe, Elvis Costello, the Damned etc., authenticating the label's progress to establishment status in the process).

The Beat, who are lots tighter than the Specials, (who've also sold a lot of records with "Gangsters", "A Message To You Rudy" and their Costello-produced first album), less melodic and musically risky than Selector ("On My Radio" is still in the top thirty after 9 weeks), are undoubtedly the next 2-Tone act to make it, and no one's complaining 'cause the process will keep everybody happy; audiences, 2-Tone, Chrysalis, and the company who comes out with the fattest cheque at the end of each day.

V) THE POST-PUNK ENTERTAINMENT WORLD

So what? Yes indeed. The Lyceum gig wasn't supposed to be The Beat's anyway, they were third on the bill to Teardrop Explodes, (a Liverpool band with strong reminders of The Doors and The Shadows of Night), and The Human League. Now the League are doing what the Screamers should be doing if they weren't so fucking precious. This is a synthesiser band who appear live without a drummer — a couple of tape recorders take care of the percussion and they don't hide the fact. The sound is incredibly loud, and rich and straight to the point. They have a multi-screen slide show illuminating their piledriving, almost Wagnerian songs, and the audacity to feature the projectionist as part of the stage-show. The place was jammed with mutant night people — Fellini-updates with huge teased and lacquered bouffants heavy on the green and vermillion dye, (one with a doll's head set into coiffeur), vinyl dresses and space-cadet funeral uniforms, laced with tartan punks and sharp suited spades who'd come along for Teardrop and The Beat respectively ... wall to wall craziness rendered incontinent by watery pints of lager at $1.25 a shot and reserve your place in the queue for the bogs.

The hugely powerful, yet undistorted roar of Human League's prophecies of doom and indifference prompted queer reactions, a sort of feral listlessness that threatened to explode into some sort of violent behaviour but never did. Few danced, it wasn't that sort of music, but looking down on the sweaty melee from the balcony I noticed a strange swaying, like a tightly packed forest caught in a hurricane but filmed in slow motion. Images of '50s bathing belles, packed American freezers, automobile adverts, military equipment and the like flashed on the screen provided any light relief, until the League's mordant, eery re-work of "You've Lost That Loving Feeling" actually coaxed nervous laughter from the crowd. It's also the only track on their Virgin album which does them justice, unless you're lucky enough to own a hi-fi which reproduces subtleties without fazing at very high volume.

IV) OFF TO THE SEASIDE

We staggered out into the freezing rain, running with sweat and wrung of spirit, impressed yet depressed by it all for some incalculable reason. It'd been the same the previous Sunday after the 2-Tone gig in Bournemouth, but under rather different circumstances. Bournemouth is an unpleasant seaside town where fat tories go to die and the kids that grow up there are made to toe the

party line from an early age. Paradoxically there's a heavy drug scene in Bournemouth, acid and dope mainly, and several little, quite separate social scenes that are microcosms of larger movements in London. But the universal appeal of the 2-Tone act brought them all to a sprawling, spartan "pleasure-dome" called the Stateside Centre on a grey October Sunday. The Stateside Centre is a bit like Santa Monica pier built into an underground car park on a very low budget — which is exactly what it is. No air-conditioning + low ceiling + 4000 jigging bodies = a human oven.

Madness were on first and it hadn't reached peak discomfort yet. The band have a hard time dealing with the skinhead faction of the National Front (Britain's fascist party) who represent a minor but extremely vocal (and violent) element of their audience and who've repeatedly caused bovver at their gigs ... the NF want to repatriate all non-whites in the country of origin and send British born blacks to the gas chamber — or near enough, so the sight of multi-racial bands on the same bill as their heroes is like a red rag to a bull.

"I'm fucking sick of it," Suggsy, Madness' charismatic front man, tells me earlier. "We 'ave to warn 'em that we won't play if they're going to cause trouble. We don't want to piss-off the skins, 'cause they were our original fans, but I have to tell that other lot that if we were into politics we'd have formed a debating society not a band."

VII) CHEAP JOKES, AGGRO AND REPRESSION

Cut to the Roundhouse, a massive circular theatre in North London where the quote was made, three days prior to the Sunday gig and my only chance to try and pry an interview out of the three bands. Arriving at lunchtime with Madness propping up the bar and well into the laddish badinage, Selector already onstage doing a sound check-cum-run through and the Specials nowhere to be seen, it was clear that this last ditch effort to salvage a few thousand words of responsible reportage was going right down the toilet. So I got drunk instead and Suggsy and I mugged with each other about the vicissitudes of sudden stardom and the arrogant unimportance of rock journalism for half an hour, watched the Selector, all the boys hissed and booed when Pauline, the petit chanteuse with the pork-pie hat, dawdled onstage and began strutting her stuff in a complete transformation from the quiet little girl she appears to be offstage. Good-natured sexism, just like the jokes that liberally spatter exchanges between the various bands, whether it's Specials bassist/singer jibing with Dammers over white man's rhythms the niggers can't dance to, or Suggs talking about too many coons on the tour bus.

When it does get nasty, though, it gets nasty. At Brighton the night before the Bournemouth gig, trombonist Rico and trumpeter Dick Cuthell who come onstage toward the end of the Special's set when they play their paen to urban living, "Concrete Jungle", were pulled into a fight at stagefront and Dammers vaulted over his organ and into the dense pool of flying fists and feet. Seconds later the bouncers waded in and the real bloodletting started.

Things quieted down only after allowing half of the audience up onstage, prompting the band to leave them at it halfway through "Rudy — A Message To You" — ironically a song appealing for less aggro at gigs while skinheads bellowed antagonistically and punks responded equally virulently.

By the end of the Bournemouth gig, I and a couple of friends had to repeatedly take refuge in an obscene, cavernous disco next to the main hall where the bands were playing. Dumpy boilers in massed produced frocks, danced with junior car salesmen and bank clerks in kipper ties ... cheap psychedelic lighting ... Gloria Gaynor and God knows else what shit playing on a crappy p.a. ... but it was the only place that you could breathe for more than ten minutes at a time.

The audience weren't suffering quite so much, or if they were, they still managed to keep at it. In Bournemouth you don't get much chance for this sort of thing and when you do, be you skin, punk, greaser or vicarious middle-class bimbo, you don't waste one second of it. That's what struck me about the godawful Stateside Centre with its souvenir kiosk and tacky decor, was that it was maybe some grim model for future "entertainment centres" where people are herded to "enjoy themselves" by decree ... the only places licensed by whatever feudal state emerges in the wake of the economic and/or ecological catastrophe that's on its way. The Human League would be in their element here, the audience wouldn't understand, but they would still come.

The hammer's already falling. Two gigs I've been to recently have had the flith filth *(????...ed)* march in and pull out the plugs. At one of them, THE PRETENDERS clandestine appearance at the Nashville under the name of Martin Chambers Big Stick, I actually managed to sneak a lovely shot of some sergeant at the microphone with Chrissy Hynde shortly before the cops started beating on us and busting people with a roach in their pockets. The previous evening at the same venue, the rabble-rousing ANGELIC UPSTARTS provoked a massive fight with the cops during which one of them got stabbed. A phone call to the relevant police department elicited the response "no comment" when they were asked if there was a move to close down certain London venues the cops considered anti-social...)

The Specials pic: Barry Stacey

VIII) AWAY FROM THE SKA FRONT

Wire, who have been dubbed the new wave's answer to the Pink Floyd, make precious few appearances, so a series of four gigs in a West End theatre tagged "People In A Room" was mandatory, especially after hearing their new third and quite different album, "154". The evening began with each member of the group doing some individual performance art, which was a bit of a wank, all told. Richard Gotobed painted a large canvass with primary colours ... very slowly. Graham took us into New York via the video screen and then discussed the boring nature of the show with his manager, out in the foyer. And only Guilbert really went beyond school-ish japes, with a stage full of guitarists, all dressed in black, all playing fast chords at different volumes, proving quite conclusively that there is beauty in cacaphony. When they'd stopped all this buggering about and gt down to the real meat and potatoes, they swung hard and fast, Graham's sax and synth elevating the proceedings to the level of palatable enigma. Maybe. But why do they persist in avoiding their earlier material like the seminal, "I Am The Fly"?

Catching wire meant missing the Buzzcocks first London date for four months, but a friend said they were forced and boring, cheating their audience into rapid alienation with a short 35 minute set.

Secondhand comments don't cut it, I know, but the word on three concerts I saw the previous week is less than half-good as well. THE SKIDS played fashionably bratty Scottish punk at The Rainbow, quickly descending to their openly facist anthems about Olympian spirit and defeated national pride which roused a previously inert audience (weird watching 'em all sit there through five numbers of loud pogo music) in raucous chanting and Nazi saluting. The Skids are treading on very dangerous ground here, telling their audiences and suspicious journalists that they are not into facism, then appearing with slides from Hitler's better days as a backdrop and a blatantly Third Reichian album sleeve and lyrics. Singer Richard Jobson is only 19, perhaps fascinated by a war three generations removed from his birth, but a lot of the people taking an interest in The Skids are somewhat more sinister, suggesting an unpleasant antidote to the precarious political situation in this country. The National Front have started promoting their own gigs recently, rather than breaking up other people's, using bands like WHITE BOSS and THE DENTISTS to promote their racist ideals with a curious neanderthal charm. They're also aping the punk movement with a series of fanzines aimed at the "hippy lefties who support punk"!!! Nasty.

And so were THE STRANGLERS the previous evening. Jean-Jacques Burnel, well known for thumping rock reporters and insulting audiences, put on a perfunctory show, as did the rest of the band. Only Dave Greenfield impressed me, proving that he in fact is the sound of The Stranglers, up behind a mountain of keyboards like the Rick Wakeman of punk. The Stranglers are getting to be popstars ... old and rich and complacent and encouraging dark suspicions of their initial motives.

Something that certainly does not apply to THE UNDERTONES, who from the second they hit the first bar of their Monday night at the Rainbow, had the punters up in the ailes aisles or on their seats bopping for two hours straight. Fergal's incongruous descant vocals have more substance live and if this band developed cholera, the entire population of Britain would be dead by now. Infectious isn't in it ???

WHO'S THAT HIDING BEHIND THIS WALL OF VOODOO?
(a conversation with Stannard Q. Ridgeway, Chas Grey and the Moreland brothers Marc and Bruce)

SLASH: Going back to the race track one of these days?

BRUCE: I might go tomorrow if I can bum the money from somebody. I try to go everyday.

MARC: He loses his ass too!

BRUCE: I usually do. But that's how I bought this piece of shit car, by putting in a good double at Santa Anita. That made about 400 bucks.

SLASH: What's the band's situation as far as drummers? Is Joe Nanini a permanent one?

STAN: We just have alternating drummers, he's been our drummer for the last 3 or 4 jobs. But nothing in what we do is set. We always try for something else but we never sound that way. What we want to sound like is not what we sound like, so we just have to put up with what we have. It's all by default. But we try to forge ahead anyway, do something a little different.

SLASH: What do you want to sound like?

STAN: I don't know, it's hard to say in words, I just know when something sounds ... different, 'cos you get excited about it. You can tell when it sounds like something you haven't heard before, when it's not a cliche, not the normal way to approach it...

SLASH: Do you think this music scene is full of cliches or predictable approaches?

STAN: When I go to jobs and places, listening to bands and their music is like secondary to my reasons for going, which are to get drunk, fall in the dirt, act like a fool and babble at somebody.

BRUCE: Like now!

STAN: Right!

SLASH: Do you consider your music a suitable soundtrack for these kinds of activities?

BRUCE: I think our band builds a tension so when the next band goes on you can do that.

SLASH: This other night at the Hong Kong some girl turned to her boyfriend while you were playing and said: I like them because they are real musicians.

STAN: Where do they get that from?

BRUCE: I think it's because we use instruments that are sort of alien to them. Good old Ace is the only real musician in our band. That's our rhythm machine. It's brand name is rhythm ace.

STAN: You don't have to pay him, he's always on time! Anyway I suppose we're musicians, we play music...

MARC: We're not a punk band.

STAN: We started the band to play music that we thought was interesting, but we're more interested in ideas than music per se. For every twenty songs that we put together we'll pick three. Marc and I started this to get rid of old cliches. I mean how long can you play some of that stuff for? I mean I like the Cramps, but after 3 or 4 times you want more. Should you want more? I get confused with it.

SLASH: Do you feel part of a more general evolution that's growing away from basic punk?

BRUCE: I guess it's based on what you put in a band. Like when you get bored with your guitar you go to keyboards instead.

STAN: But it's never the instruments that make something different, it's form and content. It's because of the way it's constructed, and the way it falls out. You could play it on the floor, or on your head, or banging on the toilet seat, and it would be different. I am starting to babble. But it's true, the instruments don't make a difference. Like we put Chas on synthesizer because that was the only thing he couldn't play.

CHAS: And still don't know how.

BRUCE: In this type of music, if you came out of playing bass or guitar in a punk/rock band...

SLASH: Like you and Marc...

BRUCE: Right, well when you join a band like this, and you play the same parts you used to play now on these types of instruments it will come out too messy, you actually have to take away more parts than in your basic guitar, you got to strip it down even more. If you played a Ramones song the same way on our instruments it would come out sounding like some progressive ELP thing.

STAN: What is he talking about?

CHAS: He is making a really good point.

BRUCE: What we do is more basic than a straight four chords progression rock band.

STAN: We like to call it neo-neanderthal music. The machines are no problem, we don't even know how they work. We don't want to know. Chas has enough trouble plugging in the fucking thing!

SLASH: Do they break down a lot?

STAN: Well, they quiver a lot. The tuning goes out.

BRUCE: We're primitive cavemen running wild with modern technology.

STAN: After all we've only played less than a dozen gigs, lots of our songs are 6 months to a year old, some are from old soundtracks of mine, stuff I couldn't sell that I made into a song. And the stuff we do now ... What am I saying?

BRUCE: I don't know!

STAN: I'm saying that we are excited, and that we get bored really easily.

BRUCE: Yea, like right now.

STAN: Okay, okay. But we do get bored. I get really tired of bands that sit up on top of a mountain, like some musician philosophers, you know what I mean. It gets to be pretty heavy, doesn't it? I mean there are things that you can express thru songs, but for me it has to be from a personal standpoint, not like soapbox rhetoric.

SLASH: Is this the reason for your slightly sarcastic stage attitude?

BRUCE: That's only this individual! Well, we maybe watch the Rockford Files too much.

STAN: I don't know if it's sarcastic ... I feel like an idiot, 'cos only an idiot would get up on stage with three other dorks and sing.

SLASH: So you don't feel like a natural rock n roller?

STAN: No way. I have no skills, I have no way to make a career, make a living. I've had twenty jobs in 3 years. I've only learnt half assed skills, I've been a carpenter, a dispatcher, drove a taxi, worked at a delicatessen, they'd ask for bologna and I'd give them ham! This stage attitude you talked about comes from inexperience. See we couldn't find a singer, we went thru every fucking geek in town, but everybody we tried thought the stuff they'd have to sing with us didn't make them look too cool or didn't make them like Iggy Squiggy, so I figured I had better do it 'cos obviously Marc and I couldn't go on sitting in a little room for the next 3 years playing all jive ... But I'm bound to feel ridiculous up there, because I am not neurotic, I don't think any of us are, we don't have any frustrations to exorcise from ourselves.

SLASH: Well Marc and Bruce especially have a history of certain exhibitionism ...

MARC: Not me!

BRUCE: That's all it was, horseplay and exhibitionism, and getting real drunk. I still exhibit myself, like at the Buzzcocks gig. But when I am on stage I'm not blithering drunk like when I go out and party. Well, I may be blithering drunk but I'm concentrating on playing. I get the attention I need when I'm on stage, I don't need to do the other stuff.

STAN: As far as this stage presence, it all comes down to how far you want to go with it, how much action can you do until it becomes real phony. I remember Aretha Franklin, just moving her foot from left to right, and that was enough to make me come!

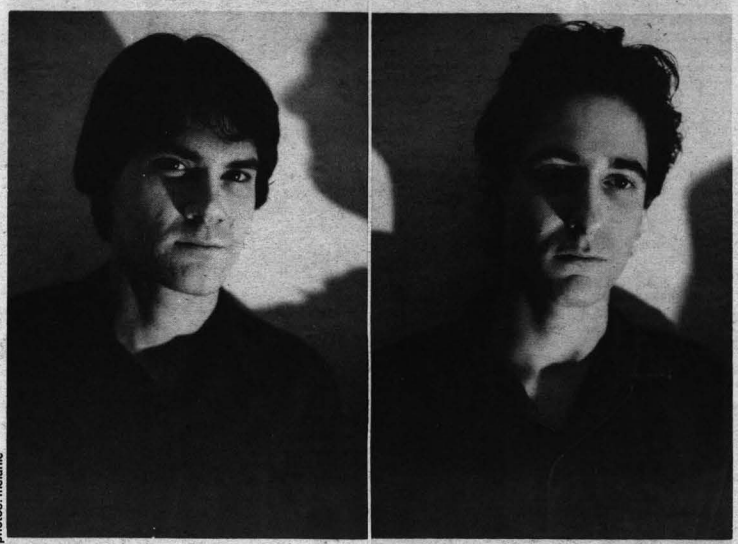
CHAS: When we were going thru that, like Marc's pants getting ripped off when we were with the Skulls, all that was part of our music, and otherwise we would have been pretty boring. The music wasn't different from anyone else's, but the whole performing bit made it worth seeing us. In this band there is no reason to do that.

STAN: And the performing angle may still be happening. We haven't played that much, we were just concerned about not feeling like we *had* to do something, like oh oh we're gonna play so we better get some props, some dogmasks, then I better jump around and it better be exciting! That's jive, because all it does is make you a caricature. So many bands do that within the first 3 times they play.

SLASH: Find their "groove" and then stick with it...

BRUCE: We're still searching for ours every time we play.

STAN: There are so many bands going around right now who have been playing for two years and it's still basically the same set they were playing at Brendan's fucking Masque! Like yeah man, this is our album, who's going to sign us up, here's the record baby, we gotta keep playing these 'cos these are the winners ... Maybe that's what makes me cynical, I've been here this long, it has become predictable. Then you see people who haven't heard it before go bonkers over something you've been familiar with for over 3 years, and they do it in a totally different way and you think "my god, it's american, and it's all being sold and packaged", and all that, and it just makes me



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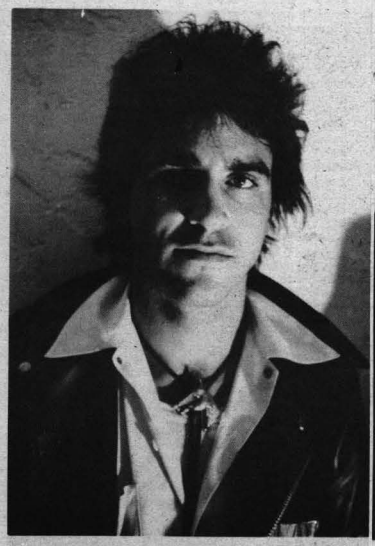

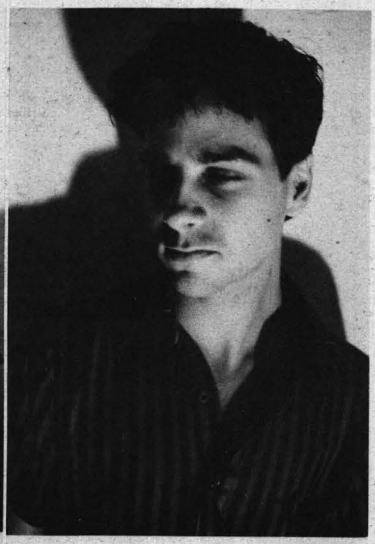

D O O

want to go to Mars and set up my own colony, just not to see all these wimpy fools pop up ...

SLASH: It takes so long for things to catch up, even though we're supposed to be in a communications oriented society...

STAN: But you see L.A. is a hick town, it's not a sophisticated place. It pretends to be where it's happening, but I've encountered more conservative backward redneck attitudes in Los Angeles than anywhere else..

CHAS: That's because there is so much money. For the simple reason that they don't want to lose that money they have to adopt the conservative attitude.

SLASH: With your attitude I don't suppose you believe that everything is gonna come your way, the perfect record deal, the....

BRUCE: We feel it won't ever come....

MARK: We KNOW it won't.

BRUCE: What we expect to do is keep on writing songs, and never holding on to the ones we've got and always thinking that the next one will be the best one. Just keep writing and writing, and if someone wants it on vinyl, I don't care who it is, jive record company or big record company, but really the big money is not for us.

STAN: All these people waiting, counting on it, it's so sad.

BRUCE: That's what happened to all the loonies down on the boulevard, the guys walking around screaming and talking to themselves, they all came here expecting to be stars and getting so little.

STAN: You always spend as much money as you have. You always make it, I have, somehow, you scrape it up somehow. I haven't sucked any dicks on Hollywood Boulevard, but somehow you get it together. But when you go chasing something like that ..... I mean I would love to cultivate some expensive habits, like my own 24 tracks recording studio and just beat off all week, I get just as much fun out of doing tapes and recordings as out of crossword puzzles. What else is there to do? You wake up, you go to bed, it's boring.

BRUCE: Go to the races!

STAN: Others are just as content sitting there watching tv. I get real nervous, I have to do something. Maybe that's why we are in a band. You can't say. Somebody was telling Robert Frost once what a poet he was and he said I'm not a poet, I'm a farmer. That's the way he thought of it, as something he did when he was sitting around being bored. But all these bands are getting geared into that .... identity, and that's when it gets boring. But we wanted to do this interview, some people don't know about us and we need jobs, and it's hard for us to get them. Also we try to get as realistic a deal as we can. I think a lot of bands ought to put the brakes on, like doing the Whisky for seventy-five dollars and shit like that, they're getting ripped off by playing those places, like Weston's Troubadour, all those old barns. And these people will play there and accept whatever amount..

SLASH: Exposure!

STAN: Fuck it, it does not matter!

BRUCE: And some jive out of town band comes in L.A. and headlines a gig and all these good decent Hollywood bands jack off 'cos they get to play with them, not stopping to think that maybe they're as good as that band, they don't respect their own abilities here.

STAN: They spread their cheeks and get fucked right up the butt! It gets really disappointing, because at times it looks as if everyone is taking steps forward, and then you go oh no, why did they do *that*!? I'm the last one to go out there and wave a pennant and tell everyone to rally and get behind it but if they just held out they wouldn't have to play for seventy-five bucks and a hundred complimentary admissions or whatever.

BRUCE: That's why you don't see us around very much. We don't like getting fucked.

STAN: I will not play unless I feel we're getting a fair shake. But let's talk about another subject.

SLASH: We could ask Marc and Bruce about their tribulations throughout the past 2 or 3 years..

BRUCE: Well I'm twenty now so all that was in my teenage years. Ever since I came here after I got kicked out of my house, dropped in at the Masque somehow and started living there, it's been to amuse myself in a cheap way. So I amused myself for a couple of years. Now I am amused.

SLASH: Marc and Chas, you come from a pretty hard core rock past...

MARC: Ever since the Skulls me and Chas always wanted to do this kind of thing.....

CHAS: We used to rehearse to this music but the other members would yell at us to stop playing it.

MARC: It was first exciting and fun with the Skulls, but it got to a point where it was really predictable, I'd get on stage and people would try to rip my pants off because they thought that's what they were supposed to do!

CHAS: I quit before Bruce joined, I was tired of the same thing happening every time we got on stage. We couldn't play the songs any more, it was pandemonium before we started, it was ridiculous.

BRUCE: In those days I was an excitement mercenary, being used by the bands and using them as a springboard to cause trouble, I was on call, I was available for any opportunity to make an ass out of myself.

SLASH: Stan where were you then?

STAN: I was writing soundtrack music. None of it ever sold. I wasn't as hot as other people doing it. What you want to do is usually not what you're most suited to do, and people that go around chasing what they want to do thru their whole lives are the people that you see in the gutter scraping for ciggie butts. I was playing guitar and started dabbling with keyboards. Then I fell in with Marc and Bruce, met them at the Masque.

SLASH: What is the hidden meaning behind the Wall of Voodoo name?

STAN: That was the name of my soundtrack company, because I was writing specifically for science fiction films, and since we couldn't think of a name for the band....

BRUCE: And somehow it coincided with our ideas on life in L.A., which is an urban junble, and the voodoo we have in mind is the urban jungle type, not the Haiti stuff, putting hexes and all that.

STAN: But we do like to stick pins in pompous dolls. We're concerned with dark things.

BRUCE: We're just paranoid people, and that's what we sing about.

SLASH: How do your songs come about?

BRUCE: Most start with just rhythm machine, the first verse might be just rhythm machine and guitar, the second verse it's piano, guitar and rhythm machine and for the 3rd verse it's synthesizers. Most songs start with one instrument, go to two and later on everybody comes in.

STAN: What we tried to do is instead of having a whole mess of chords and rhythmic changes — by that I don't mean tempo — rhythm is about how the notes fall and how it's divided, so instead of having a bunch of cliche rhythmic changes we kept a steady underlying pulse going on and put the rhythm on top of that. Anything to get rid of those drum-filled cliches, the stuff you hear all the time. When I do I turn around and go and have a beer.

SLASH: Do you go to a lot of gigs?

STAN: I used to enjoy the scene when it was just local bands and it didn't have anything else to do with the rest of the world. It was fun to go down and see the Skulls or the Controllers, you knew them, they were friends of yours, people who didn't know fuck, didn't know anything about them would come down, "Hey, this sounds like shit!" and you'd say, "Yeah! It does, doesn't it? It's great!!" Now everybody is so intent on making the thing bigger and bigger and bigger and hitting more and more and more people, but maybe that's not what it's about to begin with.

SLASH: I just realized that you can take the wall of voodoo as something defensive, something to do with protection, let's hide behind this wall of voodoo....

STAN: It *is* defensive.

BRUCE: Because we're so paranoid.

STAN: That's why I don't like having photographs taken or doing interviews. Present company excepted maybe, most reporters and all that are just vampires, they're only writing about rock n roll 'cos they can't do anything else.

BRUCE: Rock n roll is the very bottom.

SLASH: What else are you paranoid about?

MARC: When we get on stage we're scared. I know I am.

BRUCE: That's because for once we're doing something we believe in.

CHAS: And you get these new people who're just getting into punk, they come expecting to hear the other type of stuff.

STAN: But I love the hate vibes, that makes you strong. I have been disappointed because there hasn't been anyone coming up lately to grab me and tell me how much they hate it, maybe we're too palateable. In San Francisco half the crowd was yelling for us to get off, go home.

SLASH: Let's wrap this up now. One last statement please...

STAN: People who say they're living on the edge deserve to be pushed off and be put out of their misery.

CHAS: Just something from Stan's basic philosophy!

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INTERVIEW WITH JAMES CHANCE, DONE IN N.Y. BY KENT BEYDA (ANYA is Anya Phillpps, James' manager.)

The following interview took place at the Manhattan apartment of James Chance and Anya Phillips, a small second-floor place with barewood floors, rows of their shoes running along one wall, James' record collection against another next to a small portable stereo, a low table, a monopoly game. Anya sat on a mattress smoking hash — James was dressed for the occasion in coat, tie and pompadour.

KENT: I saw the Contortions at Hurrah's for the past couple of nights...
JAMES: Did you ever see the band before?
KENT: No.
JAMES: It's good you didn't because then you won't be comparing it to my old band.
ANYA: That's the worst. That's probably what most of the reviews will be about, well the old band did this, and this and this...
KENT: What was the last recording you did?
JAMES: That Contortions album — that was a long time ago...
KENT: When was the Aural Exciters thing done?
JAMES: It was the same time as the James White album, when I was just there, they asked me to do it.
KENT: David from The Girls is a big fan of yours...
ANYA: As he should be!
JAMES: Yeah, people like that just deserve to be fans of mine, that's their mission in life.
KENT: He said he thought you were one of the most important artists in the country ...
ANYA: Well, thinking like that gets him opening gigs for us.
KENT: Did you arrange that? (The Girls opened the 2nd night at Hurrahs)
JAMES: No.
ANYA: It's not like we especially requested it ...
JAMES: The other ones were totally creeps, they'll never open for us again. They stink, the Scientific Americans. They weren't the worst, though — when we had the James White gig we had these rednecks from Texas or Georgia or something ... at Hurrahs, it was really strange — I don't know what they were doing there.
ANYA: Long hair, western shirts with white trim ...
KENT: What kind of music?
JAMES: I don't know, I never listen to my opening act, *ever*.
KENT: You just saw them backstage?
JAMES: I'm usually not even there. I don't hang around the clubs when we play, it's just in and out very quick. I can't stand hanging around at a club like Hurrahs, it's so boring there.
KENT: Do you ever go to any clubs when you're not playing?
JAMES: No, very rarely.
KENT: You're on tour, aren't you?
JAMES: Maybe. Slf I feel like it.
KENT: Have you seen the poster?
ANYA: Have you?
KENT: Yes.
ANYA: Is it good?
KENT: Yea.
JAMES: Well it better be!
KENT: Would you like to tour?
JAMES: I don't know if I'd like it. I'll have to wait until I do it to see. If it's done in a really stupid way, the way every other band,then of course I won't like it. It's got to be done with style.
ANYA: We have played out of town, but we haven't really toured...
KENT: Where besides Boston?
JAMES: Chicago, Philadelphia, Toronto, Paris ... We like to just go do the one gig and then come right back. Paris was our best gig as far as the audience went, because they were just going beserk, they were total maniacs.
KENT: Pogoing?
JAMES: No, they were having big fights amongst each other and throwing bottles at the band. It was great. It was in this big circus tent, about half the people really liked the music and were dancing around and the other half were total animals.
ANYA: They were beating up on the people who were dancing.
KENT: When was that?
JAMES: In June.
ANYA: It was the best, it was so great. An amazing scene.
JAMES: And I didn't do anything to provoke them at all.
KENT: So you were playing in a circus tent, with a circus in front of you?
JAMES: No, just a big sort of tent like a circus tent, and sawdust, and benches around the edges where all the liberals were sitting.
KENT: Did you take equipment over?
JAMES: No, that was the best thing — with most of our gigs we've gotten them to have the equipment there. We like to travel really light, it's so disgusting carrying all that equipment around with you!
KENT: On this tour, will the record company pay people to carry the equipment?
JAMES: They have to, or else we won't do it.
ANYA: If they want us to tour they better cart our equipment.
KENT: Have you ever thought of playing down South somewhere?
JAMES: Florida. I'd like to play Miami and the southern part of Florida, but in that redneck territory I'm really leery of going there at all, it's just too fascist. If I played there I would do a concert for a black audience.
KENT: Like in a roadhouse?
JAMES: I'd like to get away from these crude surroundings and play at better places ...
KENT: Like Las Vegas?
JAMES: Yeah, Las Vegas is more like my dreams.
KENT: You'd have to get a whole revue.
ANYA: We're working on it, with James White and the Blacks. We have these two teenage girls who wear glamorous dresses and act glamorous and sort of sing — well, they kind of yell — but not just anything, they yell what they're supposed to. Nobody sings in this band.
KENT: A couple of times when you were playing your sax you hit a groove with the beat and pushed it beyond where it was...
JAMES: I never think about things like that when I'm playing.
KENT: Do you always play the same solos?
JAMES: No, no, no. I never play the same solos, I just lay the same licks. I just play, and when I feel like stopping, I stop them (the band). It's the same with the singing, it's so much easier that way. You have to plan things around what's going to be easiest for them to do.
KENT: Do you change the lyrics?
JAMES: Occasionally. I don't make a big deal out of it, I figure no one will be able to understand them anyway. But lately people have been understanding them a little more. That's probably because I can enunciate better now.

KENT: "Back to My Cage" was the show stopper, with the fainting (Chance does a James Brown routine where he faints and the percussionist drags him off stage)
JAMES: Well, It gets tiring up there.
KENT: What's the bongo player's name?
JAMES: Bradley Field. You've heard Teenage Jesus, haven't you? He used to play with them. Not that I want to give them any publicity ...
ANYA: I wish you wouldn't.
KENT: Where do you come from?
JAMES: The Midwest.
KENT: What was playing Chiago like?
JAMES: The audience there was the best we've had.
KENT: Did they throw things?
JAMES: No, they never throw things. They used to throw things when I used to play CBGB's, but other than that ... Anyway then they threw things because I provoked them into it.
KENT: How?
JAMES: Just by being ridiculous!
KENT: By insulting them?
JAMES: Or something. They'd throw them at me when I walked out on stage ... I usually didn't notice if they hit me, it was just part of the show.
KENT: Unless something broke ...
JAMES: Nothing ever broke unless I broke it.
KENT: Someone in LA used to break glasses on himself on stage...
JAMES: The thing is, after you've done it once, if you do it over and over again it's just repetitious, you just have to change your act. I don't see anything wrong with doing it, but when you keep doing it it becomes a routine, it becomes like a freak show, and you attract these creepy types after a while.
KENT: Do you like people to sit and listen?
JAMES: No, I hate it. That's the absolute worst thing they could do. Even if they just ignore it and talk, I don't care if they do that, but they shouldn't listen. I'd rather they were moving around. They can dance, or go up to the bar or come up to the stage, I don't see what's so great if you have to be staring like zombies ... But it's kind of cool if they do it, it just shows what utter idiots they are. They just have no minds, they've been totally programmed, and that's all they can do.
KENT: At Hurrahs, everybody dances when they have recorded music and just stand there when a band comes on ...
ANYA: They're afraid they'll miss something.
JAMES: Whenever a band came when I was younger I just wanted to dance, even if it was a big band.
ANYA: This audience, like the Soho audience, they feel they're able to control their animal emotions ...
JAMES: That's why I always used to attack people; to provoke them into showing themselves.
ANYA: They stand perfectly still so that nobody will look at them.
JAMES: Not that anyone would want to, they're so ugly.
KENT: You'd like to play to an L.A. audience, they go beserk...
ANYA: The only L.A. band I know are the Screamers.
JAMES: They're so tame though. I bet their audiences are very polite. How can you dance to something like the Screamers?
ANYA: I thought they did a theatrical show. Tomata's the only thing out of L.A. that's decent enough to talk to.
JAMES: Except for Black Randy. Well I don't know if I'd talk to him, but I really like his records. I've heard he's a reall gross person ... I never listen to new wave records at all, I just listen to disco and funk records.
KENT: Jazz?
JAMES: No, I'm totally disgusted with jazz, it's totally frozen music, it's music of the past, it has nothing to do with today's world at all. These people are trying to preserve it — it's just like a corpse. I mean you can listen to Charlie Parker or something occasionally ... Jazz has nothing to do with now, it's the music that has to be overthrown. The attitude these people have! Jazz was fine until they made it into art, and then it became totally disgusting. And the musicians have themselves to blame for it too. And the new wave totally disgusts me. That's why I like disco, because it doesn't makes pretensions to being art, it's just commercial. I like the disco lifestyle...
ANYA: It's great, do coke all the time ...
JAMES: It's the perfect lifestyle for modern times.
KENT: It's so artificial ...
JAMES: So what? The artificial is the only interesting thing. Everything is artificial, you might as well face it. The people who come out as being the most real are the most artificial, like the Clash or something.
KENT: It's hard work keeping up that lifestyle...
JAMES: It's worth it, it's all part of it. You have to have that if you want to be a success. Either you have to have an image or you have to be a total slob, just some jerk off the street they make into a star.
KENT: Does that really happen?
JAMES: Are you kidding? Look at someone like Chery Ladd, that big model. They choose someone like that just because she looks like everybody else, common and trashy. So they make her into a top model so all the common and trashy people can identify with her.
KENT: What about music?
JAMES: In disco, in rock. They might know how to play but they're still slobs. Look at all these AOR type bands, they're utter morons. The record companies get together these burned out studio musicians, they come out of nowhere and supposedly sell these platinum albums. But that sort of strategy doesn't work too much anymore. Bands like Val Halen, a bunch of no-talent jerks, they probably bring in studio musicians to play on the records. The fans are too stupid to realize anything. I have nothing against studio musicians, they can really play well. They're really good for back-ups. I could get studio musicians and make a record that is as wild as any of my other records because they play what you tell them to, and if one of them thinks it's too weird you fire him and get another one.
ANYA: Each one is different, each has a different style...
JAMES: It's like picking out a shirt.
KENT: They're not going to go crazy on the record if it's just a job...
JAMES: Yea they do! Unless he is a total asshole a musician will still play even if he really hates being in your band just to make himself look good. Even if you're in a band you can't stand you might make it later.
ANYA: There's more talent in sessions than there are playing in clubs. When we put out the new band together we sure didn't go scouting the clubs. Forget it!
KENT: The next James White album was recorded a long time ago, wasn't it?
JAMES: I'm really furious that it hasn't been released.
KENT: It just came out.
JAMES: It did? I haven't gotten a copy?
KENT: The import.
JAMES: It's out in England ... I proudly remain in ignorance of their (ZE records) business.
KENT: Aren't you afraid of getting ripped off?
JAMES: No, we just get it up front.
KENT: Are you going to do any more instrumentals like side two of the James White LP?
JAMES: No. I just did those so I'd have something to listen to at home. They were sort of a blueprint for material I was working on. I've put in lyrics for some of the new Contortions material, but you probably wouldn't recognize it, it's so different. I'm always changing the arrangements of the songs, it's the only way I can keep from getting bored. I've generally sort of slowed things down a bit, I think the super fast thing is a thing of the past, it was only interesting for a while. I don't understand why they're not dancing to it, must be because they don't know how to dance.
ANYA: You could hire big bouncers with cattle prods...
JAMES: That would be the best. I've always wanted to have a show like that, sort of a concentration camp show.
KENT: Have you ever thought of releasing hungry animals into the audience, or putting broken glass on the floor?

PHOTO: MICHAEL UFFER

JAMES: No, nothing as crude as that. It would be very modern and done with machines. It wouldn't really hurt them, it would just terrorize them. More like searchlights and things. You could pick people out and follow them around.
KENT: When you attacked the audience, did it have any effect at all?
JAMES: They would get really mad or they'd just sit there and take it. But it got kind of disgusting, every show there'd be all these masochists sitting in the front row!
KENT: Waiting for you to stomp on their face?
JAMES: They were! It was really disgusting, but it was pretty funny. Quite a spesctacle!
ANYA: It was like 42nd Street, pay your 5 dollars to come in and get abused.
JAMES: I'd rather have it in my act in more subtle ways ... but maybe I'd better not say anymore.
ANYA: He doesn't want to reveal any trade secrets!
KENT: How long does it take you to lay down the tracks for a song when you are in the studio?
JAMES: It all depends on how complicated you want to make it. I like to work as fast as possible without rushing. The Contortions album I did live except for the vocals and some added saxophones and things in the background which the band really resented.
KENT: Why?
JAMES: They were really jealous. I think people have a strong attraction to saxophones, it's sort of coming in again now, like in all the disco records, even though the saxophone players on them really such, they play these really wimpy sax solos. That's what they wanted me to do on the Aural Exciters album.
ANYA: The producer specifically asked for a "laughing" sax!
JAMES: And the way they mixed it made it sound like really crummy playing. I know how to mix my sax better than they do. To have a hit single on the pop charts you really have to soften things a lot.
KENT: Is the record company going to push the 12 inch "Contort Yourself" in that respect?
JAMES: Who knows that they're going to do! They seem more interested in AOR stations which is really stupid, I think they're going to hate it. I mean, what do I have in common with these people who blow up disco records on the radio? I think *they* should be blown up, I think when they have these anti-sico rallies they should drop bombs on them! It's only the really reactionary ones that hate disco ... like all the sort of enlightened new wave types sort of like it more. The thing they don't like about it is that it's all about sex and drugs and stuff, and they think they'd rather listen to these people making big artistic statements (sneers).
KENT: Political?
JAMES: Yeah, whatever. Or poetic, or any kind of liberal crap. They're all just a bunch of greedy liberals.
KENT: Disco is very conservative.
JAMES: It's not conservative! It advises people just to totally drop out of society and get inolved in a total life of sex and drugs and just go crazy.
KENT: It celebrates money ...
JAMES: That's part of it, you have to have money to be able to do it. We're totally for money. These people think money is evil while at the same time they are some of the grubbiest, cheapest people on earth. That's what really makes me sick about them.
ANYA: In Soho if they have money they don't flaunt it in fancy dress or having fun, they flaunt it in smaller ways ...
JAMES: They spend money on little garbage...
ANYA: Their houses are full of video equipment.
JAMES: And they buy these normal type denim jeans for 100 dollars!
ANYA: They spend 150.000 dollars renovating a loft, but then you're supposed to dress functional! What's this garbage? How can you be functional and have 15g dollars in the beginning? Disco stuff is cheap, you can go to Aiexander's and buy the most gorgeous disco outfit...
KENT: Do you like outrageous, extreme music?
JAMES: Not so much anymore. I find disco the only sort of outrageous music around now. It really has fast trends. A few months ago funk was coming in very strong, noiw they've taken this more pop kind of stuff and put it on top of the funk. They always come up with these weird noises and put them in, that's usually the best thing on the record. I like electronic things, but I don't like when they have all these violins. Anything by Georgio Moroder has a chance of being good ... I'd like to produce records with some of these people.t important thing is to project your personality. You can be the greatest musician in the world but if you don't project your image then I don't care about you. I like Miles Davis, he was always really well dressed. Now they have this totally different attitude, they get down on you if you're arrogant, they're like total hippies. They have this whole pseudo-political attitude — the Art Ensemble of Chicago are a prime example of it — They're just totally jive. I like a few of those Chicago people, but their whole philosophy just turns my stomach.
ANYA: Those outfits they wear ... those little wool things they have over their heads ...
JAMES: Yeah, and dashikis ... I've always hated dashikis.
ANYA: And sandals, so that their toenails are all real long and dirty. I mean, oooo! And they don't shave, they have this gruby growth ...
KENT: Have you always played keyboards on stage?
JAMES: No, that's just a thing with the new band. I played it on the records though. And I taught the organ player how to play. At Hurrahs I was forced to use that crummy organ.
ANYA: He had to use the Acetone which the previous organ player used to use and she used to jump on top of it and walk on it an pour beer in it so you can imagine ...
JAMES: It sounds like it has beer in it.
KENT: Did you have the organ off stage on purpose?
JAMES: Yeah, so I could have some relief from the audience.
KENT: A lot of people thought Steve was playing when you were playing.
ANYA: That shows how observant they are: Steve's standing there with his hands at his sides and the organ's playing!
JAMES: I used to do whole songs from back there, but I thought it was too obvious.
ANYA: This new band is really good. They've only been rehearsing four weeks, they've learnt everything from scratch, they're amazing. They care enough to get a good sound, they realize that they are good but that they need direction. All musicians need direction, most people need direction. The new wave doesn't think like that, it's like everybody can be smart and totally self-sufficient, like every new wave musicians should also have an interest in photography, in moviemaking, in being an actor ... being a musician should only be part of their many talents ... That's what they're like ... Take any new wave band in New York, they're all working on something else too. The dabblers don't get anywhere. Well, I guess they do serve a purpose: they can be opening bands.
KENT: Didn't you do music for a soundtrack or something?
JAMES: No.
ANYA: Yes you did.
KENT: What is it?
JAMES: I don't know, only some of it has come out. I don't think the album's been released.
ANYA: I mean, but James do we even know what's on it? What is on it?
KENT: On what's out, is it the Contortions?
JAMES: No, it's just a sort of pick up group.
ANYA: Session men. That's what you get when you use new wave session men. A practise for what not to do in the future.
KENT: What about the song? (That's When Your Heartache Begins ...Ed.)
JAMES: It's an obscure Elvis song. I don't really want to get into it. You can just buy the record if you're interested. If it had come out right at the time I did it it would have been okay, but ... I was really mad when they released it, I had all this other stuff that was so much better that they still haven't released.
ANYA: We're very careful with them. You can only give out what you won't ever ever be embarrassed about being released. For the same reason that you don't ever take totally ridiculous and embarrassing photographs, you also don't make ridiculous recordings.
JAMES: It's important to play live, but you have to do it sort of sporadically.
KENT: Selectively?
ANYA: We could make deals with travel agencies and hotel and have charter flights. How much more human to buy an outfit, go on a trip, go and see the Contortions, stay overnight in a hotel and go home.
JAMES: They could give it away for Bowling For Dollars.
KENT: That's like going back to the Thirties.
JAMES: Well it 's like the Thirties now. There's a big depression...it's sort of like the Thirties, but very modern too. In the Thirties stars were like royalty and they were expected to live these really glamorous lives, it was their duty to their fans, and that's the way I feel.

ANYA: You should get James the cover, after all. Because this is his first exclusive interview with a California paper. Before this we wouldn't talk to them. People from California have no taste.
JAMES: I talked to some guy from Search & Destroy and he was totally jive — a real jerk.

THE UNDERTONES
by Don Snowden

It seems too perfect to be true. While we're hanging out in the Sire publicist's office just after talking to the Undertones, Billy Doherty (Undertone drummer) wanders in and promptly phones his girl friend back in Derry.

In other words, everything you've read about the Undertones appears to be true — imagine five Alley Cats from northern Ireland who would probably rather be shot than admit that there's anything the least bit special about them and you've got the picture. They've got five singles and an album on Sire (the LP, with "Teenage Kicks" and "Get Over You" is supposed to be released here early next year) and you shouldn't have to be told how good they are.

The interview takes place in the cramped basement studio of Sire's blue brownstone on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Present are Feargal Sharkey (vocals), John O'Neill (rhythm guitar), Mickey Bradley (bass) and Billy Doherty (drums). (For those of you who don't have your undertones straight yet, on the album cover it's John Feargal, Billy, Mickey and Damian O'Neill (lead guitar)). All quotes are approximate — even Slash's world-renowned corps of linguistic experts were unable to successfully penetrate the thick Irish brogues all the time.

SLASH: How have you found America?

FEARGAL: The audiences that we've played for are really poor. People tell me it's the same all over America. It's just the way they are. Christ, people fork up good bloody money to go to a concert and they sit down, fold their arms and cross their legs and that's it for the night?

MICKEY: They clap at the end of the song.

FEARGAL: When you go offstage, then they'll roar and cheer but during the set they sit there. You're standing up onstage going, 'Bloody, hell, what's going on?' You start worrying about that, start thinking that "Christ, maybe we're playing the biggest load of tripe" and then we walk offstage and it's "Rock n Roll, wheee! (much laughter)

SLASH: They're starting to change but it's still got a long way to go.

MICKEY: It's just that they're different.

SLASH: Are you going to be coming back here? Will you be playing other places in the States?

FEARGAL: We have no idea. It's just something we have to sit down and talk about, work it out between ourselves. The place itself's all right. I really enjoyed America because nobody in the band's ever been here before. It's been a good experience.

BILLY: The only thing I hate about America is the places we play, the security.

FEARGAL: All the security guys seem to think they're bloody gods or something. They stick frigging little mailman hats on 'em and try to act like they're policemen.

SLASH: Most of them are like American football players.

FEARGAL: Aye, big bruisers.

SLASH: It's their offseason recreation I think. How has the reaction been apart from the fact that they're just sitting for the most part?

FEARGAL: Really good, when they finally stand up and start dancing around a bit and enjoying themselves.

BILLY: Detroit didn't like us.

SLASH: I heard that last night things were pretty sedate until you ended up jumping in the crowd.

FEARGAL: The thing that was getting me really bloody mad was that finally there was one guy came down the front and the bouncers just dived on top of him and really beat the shit out of 'im. Eventually everybody stood up and all the bouncers tore out. The thing is that there are about five or six thousand people there and there must be 100 bouncers. It seems obvious, get up and three of you take on one bouncer apiece and beat the shit out of 'em. The people are really bloody scared of them. They just sit there terrified.

SLASH: Are you surprised at the success you've had, both here, to a certain extent, and England?

FEARGAL: We have a better chance in England because of the way things are, more willing to accept something that's unusual, give it a chance, give it a hear where people here are all just really fuckin' ... if it's not big stages with flying saucers and fuckin' rocket guitars, it's no good. They just don't want to know. It really surprised me from what we've done so far. It's got a long way to go here, helluva long way.

SLASH: It's just starting, particularly because radio controls things far more so than England or Ireland and the people in radio are just waking up to the fact that something's going on.

FEARGAL: Radio is lousy. It really bites. In England and Ireland, I used to think radio and TV was really bloody boring until I came over here. And they call this the frigging country of freedom and justice and equality. They've been brainwashed, bloody well brainwashed.

MICKEY: I don't think Americans take it seriously. They couldn't take TV seriously.

SLASH: Were you planning to get a band all along or was there something that kicked the whole thing off for you?

FEARGAL: There was always the idea of wanting to form a band if you're no good at football and getting kicked out of school. We didn't form a band just to go straight ahead and become bloody stars or whatever. The town we come from the chances of that actually happening are a million to one shot. It's as simple as that. All the record companies have headquarters in London and the town we lived in is just completely and utterly removed from London, just miles and miles apart. The band was just more or less something to do and something everybody wanted to do. It's just that we were in the right place at the right time with the right thing, simple as that. Really bloody lucky.

SLASH: You're still going to stay in Derry. Have you been an inspiration to people there in the sense of showing them, "Hey, these people did it so we can get up and do it, too"?

JOHN: I suppose so.

FEARGAL: In a way.

MICKEY: It's easier to get it recorded anyway.

JOHN: It was the whole punk thing. If it hadn't been us, it would have been somebody else. It was the punk thing, it wasn't us.

FEARGAL: The whole punk thing really just made the bloody record companies sit up. Before they weren't really interested in anything, just what they had at the time. Maybe they had Rod Stewart's bloody new LP and they could sell x amount, they were happy enough and they'd make a few bob on it. Then the punk thing made them look around outside London more, look to all the towns where bands play. It's as simple as that. If it hadn't been for that, we would never have been signed up, never in a million years.

SLASH: What sort of stuff were you listening to?

MICKEY: Records (much laughter).

SLASH: Was it strictly rock because something that's always struck me about bands that come out of Ireland is that they have a heavier roots in blues.

JOHN: Because it's easier to play.

FEARGAL: Three chords, simple.

BILLY: I listened to a lot of records. I learned from everybody that played on it. I really liked the New York Dolls okay.

MICKEY: Heartbreakers.

JOHN: I don't know, just the usual stuff like everybody listens to. Nothing special. Most of it came from America.

BILLY: You remember the Nuggetts album? I thought that was good. We like the New York Dolls, MC 5 and Iggy Stooge and all.

SLASH: What qualities do you try to bring out in your music? What would you like some kid in the crowd to get out of it?

JOHN: I don't know. We just go out and play and if they like it, that's their luck.

FEARGAL: There's no big message or philosophy to save the world or anything. Just get up and play, simple as that. It's an easy job.

SLASH: What sort of things were you doing before the band came along?

FEARGAL: Well, I was working on TVs and the rest of 'em were doing anything they could get money for.

MICKEY: The group was kind of a hobby, not really a hobby but just part time. We weren't really plannin' on breaking the records. We made a record, John Peel played it and Sire signed us. If nothing had happened, if we hadn't gotten a contract, once the summer was over we would have to go back to school or get jobs. But we got the contracts and we were in really full time so we kept on.

SLASH: Do you feel more pressure on you now being part of the "rock and roll business" to tour twice a year, come over and break America and do that sort of thing?

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JOHN: We've got it dead easy.
FEARGAL: There's pressure, right, but nobody can really turn around and say you have to do it.
MICKEY: Nobody takes it that seriously.
FEARGAL: The record company wants you to do this and do that. It's just something you have to do, simple as that.
JOHN: You have to do it whether you like to or not. I didn't want to come to America at all. I don't want to come again but I'll probably have to.
SLASH: Why didn't you want to come?
JOHN: 'Cause it's a waste of time. I only want to stay in a group for a couple of years and it takes more than that to break a group now.
SLASH: What would you do instead?
JOHN: Probably start looking for a job, I don't care. I don't like it at all.
SLASH: Outside of the playing?
JOHN: I don't like playing at all. I like being in the studio and doing the songs but I don't like playing live or touring.

MICKEY: It's not great touring England but I wanted to go to America. It's the same, no? It's a free trip to America.

SLASH: What's the most interesting thing you've found about America so far or is there anything?
FEARGAL: It's a lot cheaper. Not everything but like the oil companies, the big power shortage and all that sort of thing and the energy crisis and all. Petrol oil runs at least fucking double the price as it is here, the cars are double the price. You have to pay a rock tax, insurance at triple the price.
SLASH: You think it's insane here, you should get out to California 'cause everybody has to have a car to get around. People there are just screaming all the time about the gas thing.
FEARGAL: They'll wise up. Radios and all the frigging hi-fi systems are all half the price they are over in Europe as a whole and all we read in the papers all the time is about people who moan about it, protest about it and all that sort of thing.
MB: That's only the rich people. Aren't there any per (that's Irish for poor) in America?
FEARGAL: There's per in any country. There's per in Ireland, really fucking per. The whole standard of living in America is far, far higher than it is in Europe in general and all people do is moan about it all the bloody time. Every country's got its frigging rich and per and the per are very per everywhere. Every town's got its Harlem, maybe not as bad an extent as Harlem, but there's one in every town.
At this point, the tape passes through a black hole and we come back in on a discussion of David Johannsen's new band.
SLASH: Johannsen's changed a lot since then.
BILLY: We seen him in St. Paul the first time and he was exactly the same in Detroit as he was in St. Paul.
MICKEY: It was great. Well, the band were a little pukey but it was great, very professional.
BILLY: Did you ever see the New York Dolls?

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SLASH: Yeah, a couple of times.
BILLY: What were they like, were they good?
SLASH: Yeah.
BILLY: Did you ever see the Sex Pistols?
SLASH: Yeah, I saw them, when they played up in San Francisco.
MICKEY: Were the New York Dolls slick rock?
SLASH: No.
MICKEY: Were they tight?
SLASH: It's a little hard to tell because one time I saw them the bass player had put his hand through a glass window and they had their roadie playing bass. They weren't slick tight but they got to the end of the song about the same time.
BILLY: Were the Sex Pistols good?
SLASH: I enjoyed them a lot. I know they didn't think it was that great but it sounded great when I was listening to it. But, anyway, how do you get your music together?
MICKEY: He (John) shows us the chords and teacher him (Feargal) the singing. It's usually when we record them that we change them.
BILLY: 'Cause in the studio you can hear it played back.
FEARGAL: More or less, we just play around with it until we think it sounds good in our ears, as good as we can get it. It's as simple as that.
SLASH: The album versions of "True Confessions" is obviously a lot dofferent from the EP.
BILLY: If we could have done it, we would have cut it like the one on the LP. I wanted to do it the way it was on the LP.
JOHN: I like the way it was done on the LP.
SLASH: I like it too, but it's a lot different from the sound on the rest of the album.;
BILLY: We thought "True Confessions" was the best song on the EP.
FEARGAL: See, we originally only had four rehearsals to record the EP so it was just get in and bloody do it.
MICKEY: If you had to pick a version, I think you would have picked the EP version.
FEARGAL: Yeah, but we just wanted to do it with a producer in a bloody studio and all the rest of it, more time.
JOHN: We tried to make it disco but it didn't exactly turn out that way. It's too hard to play.
MICKEY: We were looking for a crossover hit (much laughter).
JOHN: We shouldn't have really put it on the LP.
BILLY: Just confuses everybody.
MICKEY: Somebody said it proved they can really play their instruments.
JOHN: It was all just continuous.
FEARGAL: Phasers and echoes, covered it up.
SLASH: And just making the guitars a lot sparer.
JOHN: It was about the hardest song on the album to do, though. I had to tape the plectrum to my finger to do it right, it was that hard.
SLASH: Are you doing mostly songs from the LP on the tour or are you mixing in some of the new stuff?
JOHN: It's about half and half.
MICKEY: At Hurrahs, we'll have to do more of the LP because we'll have to play longer.
BILLY: What's Hurrahs like? Is it good?
SLASH: Yeah, I went there last night. I don't know how you'll like it but in LA, there's absolutely nothing like it where there's a big dance floor and people can dance and move around.
BILLY: Is there any papers in America equivalent to NME back in England?
SLASH: No, you got your three trade papers which are strictly music industry, the Billboards, and Rolling Stone which is shit now but nothing weekly.
BILLY: Creem?
SLASH: Creem's okay.
BILLY: Trouser Press is good, I think.
SLASH: Yeah, Trouser's good. It's the sort of thing where I was talking to the Gang Of Four and they said it's weird because you get the press after you leave town. Most of the American music press are monthlies and sometimes you end up with stories running two or three months after a band's bee there which is unfortunate. NME and those papers are real important and since they're weekly, they're right on top of things and there's nothing like that here.

At this point, the tape recorder succumbs to a terminal case of anemic batteries and the rest of the interview sounds like a chorus of castrated Bee Gees munchkins talking in tongues. As for the live shows, the Undertones played a great set that night opening for the Clash to an audience that must have been out on a one night pass from the New York City morgue. This is a band that isn't professional in the sense of being unaffected by audience response — Feargal got halfway through one futile effort to rouse the pods before shouting, "Fuck it" and turning away on his heel.

Hurrahs two nights later was an entirely different story. Give the Undertones an audience that shows its appreciation and it's like the difference between night and day — Feargal starts mugging, Mickey continues training for his future as a pub philosopher and even the ever morose John cracks a few smiles. They play virtually everything from the album and singles, half a dozen real good new songs and covers of The Boys' "TCP", "Get It On" and Gary Glitter's "Rock N Roll, Part 1".

A note for fashion fetishists — the Undertones are probably the most unglamorous band imaginable —Damian and Billy have a bit of flash to them but John and Mickey look like Catholic schoolkids and Feargal wears this godawful red and white checked shirt that looks like the tablecloth at every family picnic you ever suffered through. But the music is simply amazing — Just goes to show that substance counts as much as style.)

CHINAS COMIDAS

(Chinas, Rich Riggins, Mark Wheaton) Not present: Brock Wheaton and Dag Midtskog)

(Talking about the porno movie, "The Last Bath", for which Rich wrote a soundtrack)

Rich: It's my claim to fame in pornoville.
Chinas: You reaize this is going to be on tape...
Slash: Nothing to be ashamed of...
Chinas: That's what pornography directors always say: nothing to be ashamed of...just because they are not in the film!
Rich: The thing that drove me crazy is that they gave me these shorts and I had to view them for days on end to get the idea, it was driving me insane, viewing these scenes over and over again. (Rich talks about the star of that particular film who later moved to L.A. to work on "loop films" after his family in Seattle disowned him because of his acting career.)
Chinas: In Seattle there still is a kind of caste system. It's a pretty conservative town, there are levels of behavior in society, when I first got there from New York I couldn't believe it. You can go to a party and act a certain way, and afterwards you hear about it, and how it wasn't the right way to behave. I have been thrown out of more places in Seattle than anywhere else in my whole life. I was thrown out of a town nearby.
Slash: Like in the westerns, given 'til sundown?
Chinas: Yes, the police escorted me out!
Rich: You just have to look a certain way, and it's all over with.
Chinas: You just have to go out at night, basically. You're supposed to stay home, and you're immediately suspect if you're on the street.
Slash: Isn't there a big university scene there?
Chinas: No there isn't. There is a big university...
Mark: They all hide in their dorms and go out for a picture show on Friday.
Chinas: They are really conservative. They don't turn out for shows, ever.
Slash: Any other band in Seattle right now that is shocking the town?
Chinas: Red Dress...
Rich: The Black Outs, that's the ones we like to watch. There isn't much of a scene actually. There are probably 50 hard core people who follow new and original music up there.
Mark: It's the same people who've been following it for 15 years!
Chinas: There's a problem in Seattle because there are no clubs. To serve liquor you have to serve food...it's the only way you're allowed to have people come in and drink.
Slash: What do the minors do for entertainment?
Chinas: People rent halls. Then there is something called Modern Productions, which leases an old bingo hall.
Mark: And they frisk you when you come in, no passes out...Here it's paradise compared with Seattle. (the talk goes to club policies and clubs' changing attitudes towards THE music)
Mark: In Seattle they tried for a long time to treat new music as just a bunch of kids goofing around, and now just like all over the country they've co-opted it, and now in Seattle we have our versions of the Knack or The Cars, and those are the bands that are attracting the big crowds in the clubs. As a result it has helped out even the fringe element because they are now under this umbrella classification, and everybody gets at least gigs. But as far as people showing up, there isn't any support for it.
Chinas: You have to be a dance band, a boogie band for beer drinkers.
Rich: There is a new music magazine in Seattle that ran in its first issue a poll taken from tavern owners showing which bands drew the biggest drinking audience!
Chinas: And so club owners started hiring the bands that drew the most drinkers! And that's how we were rated, whether we tapped the kegs or not!
Slash: So I don't suppose you live off your music...
Rich: No, we all work.
Slash: In spite of probably being the most important new band in Seattle?
Rich: Well, we're the most serious about our music. We're the ones that leave town, make our records ourselves, promote them, we're the only band there that has taken those initiatives...
Mark: A lot of bands put out records, but they just go a few miles out to distribute it...
Slash: Did you finance everything with your work money?
Mark: Yes. I worked at a record store, he worked at a warehouse, she worked in an office, Brock the drummer worked as an all night janitor for a chain of drugstoes. He'd work from 11 at night to 7 in the morning, sleep, come to rehearsal and go back to work right after.
Rich: Coming down here was like a vacation for him. It's the first time in a while he's slept at night.
Mark: We actually made him quit his job. He didn't quit when we went to New York, just told the drugstore employers that his grandmother had died.
Rich: We're the only band in Seattle that is really intent on getting out of Seattle...
Mark: without having the local music business backing.
Rich: The only negative feeling I have about being in a band in Seattle is that no one supports you. I have this strong feeling about living in a town in which I grew up and making a living off what I like to do, and I can't do that there.
Chinas: We're being blacklisted by the press...
Slash: Why?
Chinas: I told one to get fucked, because they are outrageously pig-headed and uninformed. They wrote reviews about me that were very close to scandal, they don't have any idea of anything about the music. They dislike me personally.
Slash: How many are there?
Chinas: Two dailies, each with a rock critic. One is a coward, the other is a very stubborn provincial guy, very Seattle-oriented. When he found out I was from New York it was all over.
Mark: They're both very pop-rock oriented. Their criteria for what is good is whether it's going to make lots of money.
Slash: No press, no clubs...What other good news do you have about Seattle?
Chinas: Well there are a couple of small weekly papers that *do* cover the scene, but not very consistently.
Slash: Not unlike the L.A. Times...
Chinas: But at least their writers go to the shows. Do you know what a big deal that is? (some more talk about the press and its use of punk cliche imagery leads to a long argument with Chinas about swatiskas, irresponsible shock tactics and individual use of available symbols...)
Slash: What's one lousy symbol among others?
Chinas: It's not like that. It's rotten. You wear something and after a while you identify with it.
Rich: One thing leads to another.
Chinas: To me it's a symbol of order, not of anarchy at all. I find that aspect of the punk scene really strange.....later.....
Slash: Do you have faithful fans like other bands, people who follow every gig?
Chinas: Yes, but not in a great cosmic communal feeling, they're just people who like our music, they're individuals. But with some other bands where the audience looks the same as their idols, when people just take your exteriors, and just your performing exteriors, they'll find it very hard to support because they don't perform. They'll have to support it in their lives, and they'll get in some extreme situations trying to be Johnny Rotten on the street all the time! (the talk comes back to the Northwest)
Chinas: I'll tell you one thing that's good about the Northwest. There are individuals there that you can't find anywhere else, but they are isolated. If you are creative you'll have to work on your own, you'll get no support. And sometimes that's like a flower that's force grown, and it's really an exotic bloom when it comes out.
Slash: Is this why you're based there, because of the challenge?
Chinas: We like to stay away from the trends so that we can develop our own ideas.
Slash: But that includes staying away from audiences too. Isn't that self-defeating?
Chinas: That's why we foray out. But speaking for myself, I wouldn't want to live in a town where too many things are going on. And I did, growing up in New York, and so much was going on, you're getting all these ideas and it's hard figuring out what you want to do.
Mark: And all the negative things we say are not about the audiences that come and see us all the time, it's about an opporessive provincial scene which includes journalists, music business geeks, radio...You want to hear a story about the radio? I went around to all the radio stations with our new record, Snaps, which we felt was fairly commercial, and the program director at KISW, which is the biggest, was real nice and decided he was going to play the record. I didn't hear it being played but I got this report from people who heard it that before he played it he made an apology to the audience about us not being Supertramp or Kansas but deserving to be given a chance because we are a local band...
Chinas: Whenever they play it they have to apologize!
Mark: KROQ here is like heaven for us. You wouldn't ever hear that music in your life in Seattle. All you hear is one Heart song every 15 minutes.
Slash: There is quite a difference between your 1st and your 2nd 45.Would you say the 1st one was more experimental, more arty?
Chinas: We got a lot of flak for it, besides Slash. Al Sharp, who's featured on it, may be old wave, but I think he is a wonderful bass player. What's good is good, I don't care.
Slash: But the direction was different...
Chinas: There's always a different direction. I think our band is constantly changing.
Slash: Did you try to make the second record more commercial?
Mark: We tried for a better sound. On the first one you have to realize that the A side and the B side are a totally different thing. The B side, which is the poetry thing with Al Sharp, was done in the very beginning stages of what was called Chinas Comidas, before there was even a band. That was done in 1976. The A side was done during a transition period before this version of the band, with Rich overdubbing the bass and guitar parts and a keyboard player that we hired. I was the sound technician I didn't play anything on it. By the time the cover was done I had been picked to be the keyboard player, so I was on the picture. And the last one was the band as it is now.
Chinas: That's a lighter side of us. But not any less serious. I started as a writer, and the words on that first release existed before the music. That's why the stucture of the songs are so strange, and "arty". By the second release I was writing for music, because it was more fun than just talk my way thru the songs. It's very hard to talk thru nine songs, it takes much more energy than to sing. It's like doig a reading.
Slash: Did you used to do poetry readings and stuff?
Chinas: I still do, but I do them under my own name, which we shall keep out of this interview. I keep it separate because of a lot of things that critics mostly are very stupid about. A poet or a writer who does music as well gets a lot of comparisons to other poets or writers who've done rock n roll, and I don't want that to go back into my written work.
Slash: Do you really believe the two fields are separate?
Chinas: Now they are. It's a persona you know. I change styles of writing very frequently. When I first wrote I was writing in a way conducive to music, then I stopped writing that way, went into something else I was interested in, and it didn't adapt itself to music, especially rock n roll.
Slash: That's as far as form. But what about the contents?
Chinas: You're always saying the same thing, and how you say it is the whole difference.
Slash: What is your audience like in Seattle?
Rich: In Seattle it's visual artists mainly.
Chinas: They were our first fans, and remain our most hard core fans.
Slash: Did you do anything visually that won this audience over?
Chinas: I think they felt there was a visual plastic quality in our music that they liked. Anyway I find that visual artists are the most willing to go and see other forms of art.
Slash: Do you think it's because their own art form is somewhat limping these days?
Chinas: No, I don't think so. I think musicians, not new wave musicians, but professional musicians, and actors are the worst as far as being open to other forms of expression. I think writers and visual artists are the most willing to look at other stuff. We have a friend, Jesse Bernstein, who is a kind of big loud-mouthed drunken poet, he is pretty good, and a good friend of ours...
Rich: Is that the right way to represent him?
Chinas: No it isn't.
Slash: Yea it sounds very nice...
Chinas: No, he's wonderful. He opened for Red Dress in Seattle, and here ws this other band, a boogie band, that was playing all these boring songs about their baby leaving them and drinking vodka or whatever, the down and out life thing, all fraudulent, and then our poet friend, Jesse, got up there and got really hard core, and

pix: Melanie

told *them* about life the way it was, and THEY HATED IT! They were yelling and heckling and making fun of him, saying "Have a nice day", and "Lighten up".
Mark: Because he is real.
Rich: People don't understand words without music. Somebody can get up on stage and recite poetry that is saying exactly the same time as what one band is saying and they'll interpret it totally differently.

(the interview was resumed a few days later, this time with e entire band present. In the interval Chinas Comidas had played the Whisky and reached some important decisions)

Slash: This last gig at the Whisky was your 3rd one in this city. Has there been any noticeable difference from gig to gig as far as audience reaction and stuff?
Dag: I think our very first gig was pretty well accepted, but I think the one where we played the best was the last set of the last gig...
Chinas: I try not to pay too much attention to audience reaction.
Mark: We're aware that, because of the way we've been booked, we're playing to an audience that expects a totally different kind of music, so we can't let their non acceptance of it get us down.
Chinas: As long as it's not abusive I don't care.
Rich: Like the way 391 was received a few nights ago. People were throwing chairs at them!
Chinas: We don't have an audience here yet. They don't know us.
Brock: A lot of it has to do with getting on the right bills.
Chinas: What did a lot for us here is that the bands support us. It means a lot when you see Exene or the guys fromthe Plugz right there by the stage...It's great, because you can't be fighting everybody. You're already fighting the industry, but why fight amongst yourselves?

(a political interlude follows, mainly centered around what to do with the Shah and what other despicable creatures can be offered to the Iranian students as a valid substitute)

Slash: How much longer are you staying in California?
Mark: Well, we're going back up to Seattle next week and coming back down in January for an extended stay, now we're going to move out of our apartments and take care of whatever has to be done before moving back down here.
Slash: Quite a decision since last time we talked!
Chinas: I wouldn't say it's forever.
Mark: Put it that way: we're going to stay long enough to have an impact. Our strategy of leaving Seattle for two weeks and playing a big city isn't going to have any effect. Two weeks later they're forgotten who you are.
Slash: Let's get back to your live performance. Chinas, am I right in saying there was some kind of distance between you and the audience?
Dag: Well everyone was a bit nervous, it was a big gig for us, we really wanted to make an impression but there was no feedback to draw on.
Chinas: We're just human beings. If I get up there and I don't get any support I'm going to withdraw. And if you knew what kind of shit I've got in the past, in the last 2½ years, I don't think anybody's ever been treated like that. I was attacked in every way, that's why I'm a little bit scared on stage. Once in some club some guy came up and blew the contents of a whole ashtray in my face, right down my throat, then I got a plate of food smashed on my head, now I get scared.
Slash: What made these people do that?
Chinas: I think it was men reacting to me as a woman, upset by me being there...
Mark: it was seeeing a woman standing there, aggressively singing...I think people felt personally confronted by what she said...When she got that plate of shrimps she was doing a poem about relationships, it was very direct, and this guy must have taken offense to it...
Slash: Was it chinese shrimps?!
Chinas: (laughs)...I don't know, I've always had trouble with people, I can't help it, I'm easily hurt

.....(the conversation comes back to THE main topic of the day, the Comidas' decision to move)

Mark: We are being driven to move down here. If you are a coal miner you move to a place where there is coal...
Chinas: I went up there because I had read "Ferry Boat to Gabriola" by Malcolm Lowry. It seemed such a great place.
Slash: From paradise to Babylon!

e v e n t s

THE MEMBERS AT THE STARWOOD

One of the most exciting aspects of this demanding hobby (catching as many bands live as possible in one month) is the high level of unpredictibility it still carries. I mean we pretty much know what to expect as far as the local bands are concerned (I'm talking about the ones that have been with us for a while, from basement to basement to the occasional prestigious "showcase", but whenever a new out of town group finally reaches this desert the only thing you can be sure of is that your preconceived notions of what they are about stand a more than reasonable chance of being permanently shattered. Records, good or bad, only manage to express some of the qualities & faults of whoever recorded them. Seeing for instance Howard Devoto and Magazine playing their music before my very eyes made me understand something about it that could not be grasped thru the albums. In the case of Virgin's recording artists the Members the change of opinion I was forced in was ten times more drastic: The "Chelsea Nightclub" LP had left me totally skeptical, it seemed directionless, superficial and messy. There were interesting attempts at white reggae fusions but it never went very far. So when I did catch them on their last American night at the Starwood I was in a ho-hum mood of the first order, dreading another blah evening of rock n roll with the zombie set. After listening to one song and a half by the industry's latest discovery The Beat I hurried to the farthest corner of the club, this was undoubtedly the very type of music that makes you want to give up once and for all, it sounded and looked mindless, contrived and slick, a real nice product for the comsuming millions, just one of many outfits using the new wave's unfortunate lack of precision and integrity to force their calculating way into the limelight and the big bucks. And so I brooded with my nose in my Bud and waited and waited, having by now written the night off as a depressing waste. Eventually the Members came down for their second set, and by that time the audience had dwindled to a few dozen die-hards and some stumbling Starwood tenants who zigzagged from one bar to the other. The first number was a pretty solid instrumental, everything was in place and at least the band didn't look like rock n roll creatures of any persuasion. When lead singer Nicky Tesco joined them I briefly feared the kind of antics one normally associates with the flashy mainstream rock monstrosities, he leapt and paced around and wore a Jackson Pollock type of outfit of excruciating taste. After 3 more minutes I was totally won over and completely cheered up. They were great. The songs that didn't do anything on vinyl came to life with the three guitar players and the singer constantly stepping to the mikes and wailing together, then stepping back to add more layers of roaring riffs and notes, all the time bopping up and down, dodging each other like bumper cars, Tesco grabbing every free second of non-singing to skank in erratic circuits all over the stage, pull faces of comic intensity, run from one player to another until one's attention is constantly shifting from here to there. Their energy was truly contagious and heart-warming to behold. In spite of the less than triumphant aspects of the evening they put everything they had into their set, they didn't turn indifferent and bored as others would have but made the best of it. Eventually this admirable attitude had its rewards and the rapport with the tiny audience became another enjoyable part of the show. Their reggaein influenced material came thru with a lot of force and intensity, certainly white music still, no pretense of black cultural ties besides everyone's need for a modern beat for modern living, their tunes keep the electricity and directness of rock n roll but anchor themselves in that cool sensuous presence of reggae, it still rarely works on record for anyone but live it was completely real and addictive. The Members played on and on, enjoying themselves and their music more than just about anybody I've seen in the past few months. And this can make the most ordinary tunes memorable. It's so obvious this band is the best thing that has ever happened to them it makes you fuckin' envious. They're definitely miles from the experimental british fringe, there are no excursions into obscure paths and no aesthetic statements to help you redefine your life, it's just a great soaring of immediate music to drink to, dance to, fight to, it's The Sound of The Suburbs and it's probably more honest and truthful than the sound of the clash city rockers. At the end of the set Tesco let his enthusiasm get the best of him and mistreated some precious microphones, a guitar got shoved in an amp, the sound crew of the club expressed much consternation and confiscasted the rest of the gear, so when LTesco and his buddies came back for a well deserved encore they all had to share one mike, which they seemed to think rather hilarious. A few spectators hopped on stage and joined in for the choruses or tried to outdo Tesco with some uncoordinated skanking of their own. For a gig that went rather unnoticed by the public it left me elated and grateful, there will always be bands to put things back in perspective while others do their best to con, distort and take you for a ride. By the way, the door fee that night was one dollar 95.

Kick

TOP TACO JIMMY & THE DRUNK ALL STARS

Top Jimmy is this guy who's s most of his life working like an animal tossing tortillas and making chaos every weekend when he gets paid. By some means he's friends of Billy Zoom and other members of X, the idea came into being of forming a short-lived rhythm and blues band around Jimmy's well known talents. Between two gigs at the 88 and Honky Kong Cafe, there's been some pretty wild goings-on.

Jimmy came on at the China gig amidst an intro by Exene and the thunder of his many fans who frequent Top Taco. The whole entire crowd of mexican food loving, R&B spinning, all drunk all the time L.A. losers and hustlers were there rocking out from the minute Jimmy laid the first scream to when he stumbled off the stage. And he has such a perfect voice for that sorta thing. A closet blues singer with a dirty style you can never believe. The beat of the All Drunk Orchestra featuring John Doe, Billy, and Don Bonebrake, was consistent backing, always playing cool and letting Jimmy have the show.

Next show was the 88, and this was even wilder. The late show opened with Billy Zoom blasting through his greatest hit, "Bad Boy". The craziest I've seen him. Phast Phreddie gave rap and there he was! ... Fat Jimmy wailing through some of the greatest songs in the world, "Framed" by the Coasters, "44" by Howlin' Wolf and "Good Rocking Tonight" by the fabulous Wynonie Harris.

Somewhere in the middle of "Framed", local bums Keith B. Flag and Geza X would jump up and grab the mike away to scream the chorus. Jimmy would take it back and show them a lesson about singing rhythm and blues. Soon the 88 jokers had to turn off the lights on Jimmy and band. Alcoholic crowd. (And very special guest stars of Masque and Slash fame) Johnny teetering over and Billy quite a bit juiced. A better show than common. Especially because when Jimmy sings "Workingman's Blues" you are seeing a working man sing the blues. A real workingman and not some English pussy who heard about it second hand. Jimmy used to skip school to buy Sam Cooke albums when they came out, now how many people got that good a background? ...

RANKING JEFFREY

THE URINALS, SPITTING TEETH, RED CROSS, BLACK FLAG, MAU MAU'S AT THE HONG KONG CAFE

So I left the Firefly bar and went to the Honky Konky Cafe for the night. Nobody there. All the assholes were home nursing their Holloween hangovers. They missed L.A.'s best new shit. Fuck 'em ...

The Urinals are one of the most minimal bands ever. Stripped to the bare beat. The songs are just the right cross betwixt John Cale, Syd Barrett, and the Damned. They play with the ferocity that old Masque bands wish for. "Black Hole" and "Hologram" already being as good as anything by the Germs or Fear. In fact, better songs than Fear with much more meat to them. And not particularly funny either. Could be the real thing. I'm waiting to see ...

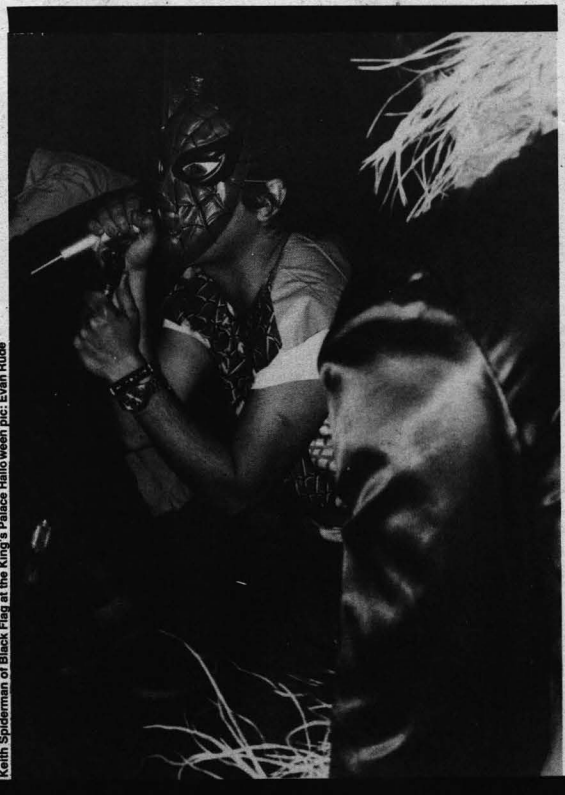
Spittin' Teeth were very psychedelic. Wearing matching uniforms and playing a weird mechanical punk-rock. The songs have the usual lyrics (Destruction,etc.) but with somehow a lot of humor. The guitar work was over excessive, but the girl bassist was cute, and the whole thing went over real well, except probably more as an amusement than anything else. Little too much Devo flavor for me, thank you ...

Red Cross are also exciting and amusing. Exciting, because they're a bunch of little kids playing at punk rock and have that genuine enthusiasm that only kids can have. Amusing, because how serious can you take a 12-year old punk singer twisting around the stage in a frenzy. Nonetheless, they make a wild show and are much better than staying home and watching Get Smart again ...

Black Flag, of course, saw no other choice than to outdo everybody, by simply blowing up the whole stage. Knocking over speakers and rolling on the floor. There must be some kind of devil in them, because the audience always looks liek spectators to an exorcism.

The Mau Mau's came on for a short set, but everybody was already drained. They did maybe six songs and were horrible, but they said they would be, and that makes them cool anyway ...

Mr. J. Ranking



Keith Spiderman of Black Flag at the King's Palace Hallo ween pic: Evan Rude

CHINAS COMIDAS, RIK L RIK AND THE CROWD AT THE WHISKY

The pull and tug game between the Whisky and the new audiences will probably go on as long as there is live music in Hollywood; which is no big emotional strain by now, our only true home was the Masque and like all true homes it took an irreversible eviction before we realised to what extent it was part of us. There are no possible substitutes on the horizon, every new club or bar carries a fair share of disadvantages along with its good points (the newest one — the El Capulin LAnti Club — combining great atmosphere and locale with substandard sound quality and hairy neighborhood) and all in all the Whisky is an okay place to visit (you wouldn't want to pass out there). It has been the best sound in town and its average door price has lately been more reasonable than Chinatown. That night there were no big time headliners, just 3 bands making their separate trails in the music jungle, none of them having anything more in common with the others than the proximity of their backstage rooms. Needless to say there would be no unifying trends in the audience and no underlying feeling of communal private party. The beach contingent came to massively support their champions The Crowd, the more cynical Hollywood ranks sent some observers to check out Rik L Rik's latest reincarnation and a few intrigued aficionados decided to check out the very low key Seattle based Chinas Comidas. Between sets spectators huddled in groups and exchanged private anecdotes and commentaries, each batch wondering where the rest of the clowns had come from.

Chinas Comidas opened both sets. At first they were hard to grasp, the music was tight and quite hard with an above average melodic feel and the girl lead singer could be effortlessly heard from the furthest corners of the room, it was okay but remained distant and slightly off target, fortunately halfway thru the poorly watched set (starting at nine o clock sharp is no holiday!) they all picked up confidence and determination, and the last 4 or 5 songs fiercely cut thru the room's indifference. By the time they started the 2nd set the ambient temperature had somewhat risen and they gave a passionate original performance which typically seemed to reach a grand total of 7 or 8 people. Singer Chinas is not the easiest stage creature ot identify with 'cept for her chain smoking, she does not condescent to the usual ice-breaking routines and she does not try to look any particular part in the rock n roll mythology, she does not move like a pogo queen and she does not look very strange, she just sings, paces the stage when there is nothing else to do, acts normal in a town where lunacy is the key. Chinas Comidas can throw some pretty tough rock n roll your way but they don't act accordingly, the other band members are no more outrageous than Chinas and unless you really care about music and honesty they will not jolt you. Perhaps they need to understand the Hollywood thrill-seeking mood better, perhaps their seriousness needs a touch of our abundant wackiness before everyone decides they're singing the right tune after all. After talking to them at length for this issue's interview it is obvious that Chinas and her Comidas are, due to geographical circumstances mainly, not exactly old pros in the public handling department. No feedback or mostly idiotic feedback has left them in the dark as far as imposing themselves on the public consciousness. Their friends and local followers swear by them because they know them and know what they are about, but in tinsel town they are strangers with no background, and talent alone with not get them further than the closest 7-11. Thank god they have chosen to stay a while, repeated exposure is their only hope short of dressing funny and breaking objects at random. I would not volunteer such priceless wisdom if I did not like or respect them a lot (I didn't lift my pinkie when Suicide was obviously heading for the garbage disposal!)

Highlight number 2 of the evening was the comeback of boy wonder Rik L Rik, complete with new band, new songs and the same bare feet. Rik is something of a semi legend in the hipper circles, he has a relatively imposing amount of material on vinyl (ranging from pretty good to ugh! — thru no fault of his really, his recordings just having a habit of ending in the wrong hands), has fronted a couple of bands here and there, has been known to sing brilliantly and to look like rock n roll latest tortured teenager saint, his pure punk credentials are faultless and his microphone stand fixation in the grand tradition. His talents and his rock n roll instinct would have propulsed any other kid onto some kind of pedestal where contract vultures would have spotted him and swooped down with their claws extended and their hearts beating, and that most likely would have been the end of one premature career, but El Rik the budding nihilist is not an easy prey, not an easy going kiddo.

Once again he occupied the stage like his very own turf, every muscle ready to fight for its possession, every glance an evaluation of the strength of the enemy. The opening song made me hope for the best, it was a devastatingly sarcastic ode to America that was perfect for Rik's sneering personality, the new band (ex-U.X.A. drummer, ex-Accelerator on guitar, ex-teenage bum about town Gary on bass) carried the weight with no strain, and it seemed that the right combination had been hit upon after all. As much as I hate to admit it, a few songs further down the evening and I wasn't so sure. The band still played good, Rik still moved like a caged animal, growling singing and brandishing the mike stand like a street weapon, all the elements were there but nothing was happening, each moment was frozen, totally separated from the others, you could watch and listen but you could not get in. Now and then something would click and the singer and the music became one, Rik would forget about the mike and just sing with his heart and everything worked. But immediately after the stage creature would take over and negate whatever credibility was surfacing. Rik needs more challenging songs than the ones he has now (not counting the couple of cult classics like Meathouse) or he will go on miming the stuff instead of feeling it, he needs to forget about rock n roll as seen from the outside, and he needs more than a backing band. This guy is too young and too good to waste his time down dead-end streets.

The Crowd sure are not wasting any time, they are already clinging to the lower rungs of the live circuit ladder and have obviously no desire to stop there. Their appearance has made everyone realize how long this scene has really been going on, as what once was the only conceivable approach now feels like a breath of fresh air. This band has decided to stick to the initial wham bam let's play as fast as we can and go bananas aesthetics and push it as far as it possibly can go. Nobody really believed anyone would try it after the Dickies, but being out of towners the Crowd never had to lose sleep wondering what were the cool directions a new band. Of course it works, they put everything into it and screech to a halt the second the initial thrust has been used up, their cartoon like singer and reflex dancer lets the electrodes attached to his motor centers take over and it's off for another brief bumpy ride. There is no telling what the songs are about, the message is in the noise, don't be boring! I don't know how long they can keep the fun going, right now they're using up more energy than a whole city block!

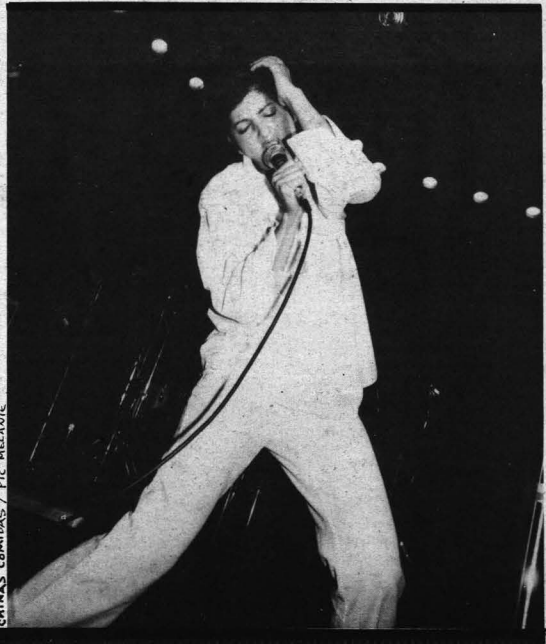
KICK

FASHION AT MADAME WONG'S

This was not one of the most active Chinatown nights. The familiar little square was near deserted 'cept for a handful of Gears members and their faithful followers who were huddling around a six pack waiting for the other anonymous combos that were opening for them at the Hong Kong to finish their lifeless sets. It's going to be a long night announced lead singer Axxel, staring at the Xmas type light decorations crisscrossing the plaza, and snatches of an awful rendition of "Day Tripper" spurting out of the Hong Kong doors immediately proved how right he was. That particular night the punk battalions had taken their travelling street show to the Starwood where X and the Plugz were playing for a very reasonable admission fee, making any other kind of paralleled action doomed from the start. Across the square the gun-carrying watch-dog on Madame Wong's payroll looked dismayed and lonely as the minuscule trickle of affluent-looking customers gave him zero opportunity to put his law and order routines into practice. Unlikely as it may seem, this often ridiculed "home of Dwight Twilley" was where we were heading that night. No, we hadn't flipped our wigs, we wanted to see an english band playing there and our names were very conveniently on the guest list, it was a duty mission and we would carry our paranoia behind the enemy lines while the rest of our friends were whoopeeing it up on the Starwood floor. We synchronized our watches and stepped in.

The first impression was that all was not well in the other camp. There was a maximum of twenty customers eyeing each other across the tables (thoughtfully decorated with little handbooks on how to speak Japanese (??) before the last bite of your dinner has fallen off the chop sticks), the famous carved bar was besieged by more waitresses than patrons and of course Mrs. Wong (mother of 20/20, the Motels etc) was screaming at someone by the entrance, although it did not seem very wise to bawl out what was probably the only paying customer of the night.

Posters of Fashion (the band we were there for) were everywhere, adding a tinge of sadness and futility to this pitifully attended premiere. Sadness soon turned to horror and panic when the opening band stepped out and started to play. They were called Willow something or other, an especially undefined, unevocative, unchallenging name for an especially unoriginal, unexciting, unaware combo. They had settled (probably after long wild years of uninspired dabbling) for cocktail lounge cabaret rock of the bland variety and explored the limitless possibilities on the genre for the next 40 minutes or so. As we were in no masochistic mood that night we left them to their struggles after 4 songs, but it was enough to seriously wonder about our collective punk chances in this contaminated soul-less entertainment world crawling with hopeful outfits such as this Willowwool Willowwashed-out Willow-whatever. The tiny high-heeled girl on vocals bellowed out (in a respectable strong voice of the Barbra/Bette type) one limp musical cliche after another and illustrated them with corresponding tired stage poses picked up on the singing star segments of the Johnny Carson show, extend-your-arms-to-the-audience-while-you-throw-your-wailing-head-back was a favorite of hers, so was the playful aim-your-hands-like-pistols-toward-the-soloist-in-your-backing-band, a proven way to accentuate the rhythmic toughness of your music and your one-of-the-boys status, there were songs about the bright nightime city life and what fun it is and slow heart grabbers about being lonely beneath her happy-go-lucky tough exteriors, (the people-who-



CHINAS COMIDAS / PIC MELANIE

need-people school of vulgar schmaltz), the band plodded on with the presense of a Sears sales manager on his lunch break and the musical abandon of a hired mariachi band at a convalescent hospital Xmas party, keeping the sound level and the looseness well in check less the frail feminine frontperson be toppled and buried, the atmosphere in the near empty club hardly rose above the comfortable-morgue level, it was like watching the interminable death throes of a rotten putrid culture from too good of a vantage point. How these not-so-old-at-all people could unashamedly embrace the corpse of mindless show biz garbage with such naturalness was beyond me, it gave me shivers long after we had sneaked off to the outside.

Fashion must have wondered about the hidden significance of having been paired with Willowwimp but didn't show it when it was their turn to sing for our pleasure. They looked like live samples from an alien culture, a weaselly leathery one with peroxide neo-punk hair sculpture, a black dye one with tangled mop and a rare specimen with endless swaying body, hennaed short hair and pirate loop in ear lobe. Together they gave an impression of careful image confusion and appealing style diversity. Fortunately their attraction soon rested on more tangible matters than (fashion) aesthetics and oddball stage presence. Their music, which on the available album and singles stops short of imposing any kind of peculiar reality but simply zigzags from modern techno punk in search of the missing link between Bowie and Tubeway Army to white laboratory reggae for jaded gimmick addicts unexpectedly put on some weight and color when performed live, and that is the last thing I expected from what I was sure was a studio-oriented band. The enervating cleverness of the vocals became stylish and effective as you watched the drummer or the gravity-troubled guitarist sing them with assurance and determination in the face of the fiasco-like reception, and the sound itself acquired a texture and a richness that was missing on vinyl. Although it's consciously modern and a bit flash it's not at all indulgent and directionless. The tunes go somewhere, and they are played with life and sincerity. The synthesizer player often switches to the bass strapped to his back and accentuates the reggae backbeat of the majority of their tunes with easy rhythmic knee-lifting skanking that clashes with the hard-jerking equivalent skank motions his guitar counterpart, it's like watching two out of sync dancers, two ways to translate a physical feeling. I've gone into these minor details and observations just to underline how worthy of interest and attention this rather unknown band proved to be and how opened to outside influences our scene should remain if we want to make a difference. The Fashion gang didn't seem especially phased out by the limbo set-up but I bet they'll think twice before sticking their noses in our wasteland. Granted the place and the time were wrong, but I hope diversity does not stop appealing to L.A.'s gig-oriented audience.

It would have been too nerve-wracking to watch Fashion try to impose the validity of their music via a 2nd set of audience invisibility and indifference (not to mention Willowwhine and their despair-inducing approach) so we took our restlessness elsewhere while Madame Wong was drawing mental diagrams centered around pop music and cash registers.

Kickboy

WALL OF VOODOO AND X AT THE HONG KONG

This is a brief review. Usually the farther away in time a concert is, the shorter the review that attempts to tackle its uniqueness. If you led our sparkling little lives you'd have memory problems also.

Top Taco Jimmy and Ranking Lea pic: Philomena

There are many concerts featuring many bands in many different locations in a one month period, there are many brews and other poisons to be sampled there and on many other occasions, there are many bright young things all eager to pop open the doors to the musical 80's and there are so very few Slash brains in working order to assimilate it all and spit it back at you all digested and UNDERSTOOD. That's the key word. We still try to UNDERSTAND what's going on instead of doing the obvious shuffle: mention it if it threatens to grow, slag it if it dwindled but always, always avoid going any deeper than the color of their ties. Unfortunately this ain't one of them comprehension pieces, see reasons above. BUT IT COULD HAVE BEEN.

This time you will have to content yourselves with a fair but hazy recollection of a truly excellent night. Wall of Voodoo appear determined to bridge many gaps, and judging by their sound that night and the audience response, they are about to succeed. Gaps that exist between two separate sections of the music scene (you know, unk vs art, music vs noize, pogo vs standing still, etc.) and more subtle gaps between the band's perception of their music and the audience's perception. Wall of Voodoo are not a wham bam hit 'em and run band, there is a lot of planning and editing in their sound, yet for the most part spectators were happily ricocheting into each other that night. They use a rhythm machine but Joe Nanini still personally tends the less obvious percussion touches, the Moreland brothers play guitar, bass and some electronic keyboard thing, Chas plays another one of those and Stan commutes from vocals on mike to yet another keyboard thing. There are a lot of layers in their tunes yet the overall impression is pretty straightforward and instantaneous. Stan is a rather strange singer, shouting his songs with an equal dose of passion and contempt throughout. Their most obvious tune, the revamped "Ring of Fire," isn't actually a good example of the band's power. There is a lot more to them than last week's cute gimmick (a first rate one, but still a gimmick), and songs like "Full Attention" are in a different league altogether. If Wall of Voodoo can go from the super dry and experimental combo they were a while back at the Other Masque to what they are now (a complex but not quite focused yet band), who kows what they'll turn out to be in a few months. What's behind those smirks anyway??

Well, X has been so faithfully covered in this paper I thought it was time to pull the old ha-ha-sorry-I-missed-them-but-I-was-getting-drunk-outside Slash routine. So I walked out as Billy's grin appeared on stage (from one extremity of the stage to the other, leaving no room for anyone else's facial expression!) and headed for that great little watering hole next door (notice: fab scenemakers and other white trash are requested to lay off, do *not* turn it into another Atomic Cafe, we go there to hide and drink, not to be seen MAKING THE SCENE! Try Canter's again.). I would spend the entire X set collecting dry martini glasses and staring at the color tv set. Groundbreaking, uh?? But I am lying, I did see X, it was madness time upfront, the exuberant weekend crowd did its darn best to prove to itself it was right on top of the punk etiquette, bones were crushed and ankles twisted, from where I was on the side of the stage it looked more like hard work than the rough-but-contained pogo of my youth, the weaker or more entranced ones were washed over the lip of the stage like debris after a storm, Top Taco Jimmy bodyguarded the microphone with more dedication than steadiness and X played the X music, which as we all know is another ball game altogether. But the Hong Kong has lately been crowded to the point where being able to see the band is not a matter of fact thing. And nobody can struggle, drink and pogo at the same time. Time to decentralize this scene again.

Kick

C.D. PRODUCTIONS 1980, Part II

Everyone knows that part 2 of any event (movie, book or rock show) rarely cuts the excitement like the first. In Culver City that night the crowd stayed home, there was still room in the auditorium for a couple of basketball games and the sound was right only when you stood in front of the stage. Basically a fucked situation, but the performances that were turned in were on the money, with or without audience support. Apologies to the Mutants and the Plimsouls (who?) as I got there late and missed them. The Last were playing the middle bill. There is no reason why this band does not play the L.A. circuit regularly. There is a definite snotty kid quality to their stance, their music and the few lyrics I could make out. A fan of theirs described them as a group of demented little brothers, the kind that play unfunny practical jokes that usually hurt! The Last build their music by layering one guitar on another, adding an organ above and finally two or three vocals to fill in the small spaces left. They push together masses of little notes into one big sound and capture one of the best qualities of the old Byrds. They're much tougher than the Byrds but the whine in the vocals is similar. Jeffrey Lea sang the encore on "The Jungle Book", which he wrote himself and is part of the regular Last set. Mr. Lea fell onto one knee and collapsed at the end. He worked it!

Then five floppy haired guys that looked like they came from Texas got up on stage. Could this be the Rebels? Maybe they left the Pomade at home but come on, man, where's the Style?!

They have many new songs, most of them originals, and most of them a definite departure from their rockabilly trademark. Some were a little too boogie beat for me, but nonetheless they rocked and it stuck, cracking the snare on the 2 and 4 and dancing on stage like they had ants in their pants. Jerry Sikorsky sang more than usual and proved that he has style and intensity as well as a great voice, not mentioning that he can play guitar trills forever and convince the audience no other riff would fit. Colin, who can growl like a frog and sing like a bird is still most effective on the screaming rockers, although he handled a couple of ballads with real finesse. On the last number, "Rock Therapy", he looked like he was about to molest every girl in the place, writhing and bumping like he invented it, later he disappeared into the crowd while Jerry kept the rock steaming and like Spiderman jumped back on stage after a couple of minutes, clearing that four foot stage with one leap! End of the set.

It's about time the Plugz get to headline a big bill. That evening they showcased some new numbers like "Americans", "Aching to Break Your Heart" and Link Wray's "Rumble". Once they solved the sound problems that plagued the beginning of their set they showed the audience the benefits of hard studio work: they were more driving than ever, putting out more sound than you would ever expect from three people, huge chords with lots of meat, a drumbeat that packs every type of syncopation and whap whap together and a fluid bass on which you can feel all the bottom. This is the Plugz sound, and that night it was more defined and had more heart than ever before. By the middle of the set the vocals finally cut through and their determination to play as hard as they could conquered whatever tension had been generated by the low attendance and the sound problems. A more perfect environment to hear their last song and encore "Rumble" could not have been found, with that monster tom tom beat and those two huge chords bouncing and echoing off the walls of the basketball/lecture hall. It may not have been the most satisfying situation for the bands that night as far as attendance and locale but the ones I saw did righteously cut thru, regardless of the circumstances.

COWBOY

HALLOWEEN SHOW AT THE HONG KONG (BLACK FLAG / CHINAS COMIDAS / FEAR / GERMS)

Catholic Discipline couldn't play, because their keyboard player read too much Albert Camus literature on his vacation to Reno, and it made him flip his wig. Anyway, the last minute replacement was the notorious Black Flag who were truly wicked in a way every punk band from the Sex Pistols to the Germs should be. They don't look

special which is why they are such a surprise onstage. Sort of like crazed teenage drunks who hang out by the 7-11 store and decide to form this band, then turn their whole neighborhood into an uproar. Their singer Keith was wearing this really stupid spiderman mask and claimed he had it on cause he was stupid. To make matters more primitive, they finished with a cover version of "Louie, Louie" which somehow is so perfect for them. As if they are too dumb to play anything else, more likely as if they decided to end rock & roll once and for all by destroying a song that every band has played since the dawn of time. When Black Flag play "Louie, Louie" it's definitely the final version ...

Next up was the debut of Chinas Comidas from Seattle who have a couple of really good singles on some label. I forget which. On came these rather tall people playing with a blaring-ear shattering mix that was too harsh to listen to. Sound man's fault, I'm sure. Then up to the stage strolls this cute little girl all decked out in white with Oriental ribbons tied around her. She's a truly nice looking girl and I couldn't get used to her contorted face expressions that go with punk singing. She's seemingly not capable of looking mean, which will be good in the long run. I'm sick of the grimace glassy-eyed expressions on every punk singer and his brother who look like they got their feet caught in a bear trap. Chinas may possibly be helped by adding some different style to this kind of singing, but it's not developed yet. She seems sincere and passionate. A lot of their songs are about love as well as politics. "Snaps" for example shows compassion as well as anger. I'd like to see love, which is the ignored, but very relevant subject, get its due.

Love causes more punk rock than you'd suspect. It causes the blues. Blues is what punk rock is. Blues caused by losing that affection or not living right or being pushed down. Bands like X, and the Germs play the Modern Blues. They show lament for themselves. They play and sing about living a bad life. But also, only part of it has to do with society. Some of it is caused by the loss of THAT ONE AFFECTION. The one fucked us up for good. Nothing can fix it. Nothing can patch the holes we have. And singing the Modern Blues is one way to help fill those caves. Sometimes even that doesn't work and you get Iggy's and Jim Morrison's who become junkies or die, because still something is missing. You can find it in the music. You can hear it when Exene wails with pain that "Our Love Passed Out On the Couch" or when Iggy moans "I was just dirt!". Even songs like "Other Newest One" by the Germs or "Bodies" by the Pistols were really just hurt songs. Bodies was about not being wanted. Love causes a level of passion in people that is the maximum our species can reach, so of course, it runs strongly in our music.

My hopes are simply this: that little Chinas will find a way to utilize this passion of hers and forget about things around her. It's a weird situation. (I don't even understand how the synthesizer jive enters into their sound. Electronics do not necessarily go hand in hand with new music. One guitar player like the cat in Gang of Four is more creative than several Enos.) So, anyway, it will all take time, but I like her, I like the girl ...

Fear played a particularly wild set. They certainly play gut rock, and their appeal to me has more to do with the fact that they're genuine shit-kickers. Their lyrics are hysterically funny, and you gotta understand that they are the kind of guys who put a dead possum on a person's car engine and laugh like hell when he goes driving in the stinking mess. They're a prison full of fun and I keep picturing food fights while they play, I don't know why.

This Halloween I set a new precedent for the Slash staff. I went to a big show and missed the headlining act. The Germs. The truth is, once again somebody offered to buy me a beer. One beer to another and a hot topic, and when we came back it was all over. I don't feel guilty though. I've seen the Germs more than 50 times and we put out a record by them, so they can be a little understanding. (Or we can fight about it.) Anyway, between Black Flag and Fear and Chinas, how much can a young drug-stricken journalist take. When we were drinking I finally realized that we're all living very weird lives. Mine getting stranger every day ...

Jeffrey Lea

THE FREE ROCK AGAINST RACISM CONCERT IN MAC ARTHUR PARK

I didn't expect this to be an earth shattering event, the little information that had filtered thru prior to the concert didn't exactly promise impact and there were far too many unknown factors (obscure line up, pathetic advertising campaign ...) to make you feel very confident as to the outcome. Good intentions and first rate organizing are miles apart, and that distance has never been bridged by generous distribution of cliches, slogans and wishful thinking ramblings. After yawning thru some three hours of vapid proceedings, I'm not even sure about the good intentions.

There were about two or three "major" radical organizations represented, each one with their little folding table overflowing with "literature", revolutionary comic books, badges, posters, stickers, the usual basic young revolutionary kit, just crap for consumers really 'cept this stuff is also supposed to help change your life and the lives of those around. Nice. Noticeably absent from all this high flying incendiary display is anything even vaguely related to what we're supposed to be here for: racism. No black fringe groups, no funk bands, no nothing with soul 'cept for two suits and tie characters quietly peddling badges demanding an end to "racial images in worship". I suppose it IS a burning issue to some ... The mexican minority was only slightly more visible, a few stone-faced chulos contemptuously observed the honky antics, some families stood there gawking while the muchachos wrestled in the dirt, it must have looked to them like just another white music outdoor nonsense, and they would have been mighty surprized if someone had told them that it was supposed to concern them as well.

Before we totally give up on the content of this "joyous" reunion one last word about the various "spokes-persons", (hey I know the jargon!) grass roots speakers and other party representatives that barked, whined and stuttered in the mike between bands. First, no one that can't talk halfway interestingly or follow a sentence to its conclusion should be allowed to practise public speech on helpless victims. Second, their various theories and masterplans to save the world and punish the wicked to not exactly condense very well: so what we're left with are empty threats, moronic explanations and soppy visions. Listening to them dream aloud made you feel cynical, depressed or angry: no matter nownoble the goal, it does not fare very well in credibility when its converts think with the scope of a Moonie or a Jehovah's Witness. Third, and last for now, all these would be martyrs to the cause have been so busy planning and theorizing they have somewhat neglected to live and feel their youth. And rock n roll being nothing to them besides a good gimmick to recruit the disaffranchised scum, they suddenly sound like old liberal farts tolerating another generation's excesses or hopelessly trying to "relate" thru liberal use of in expletivews and other "get downs". Here they were, each one obviously physically incapable of swatting a fly yet speaking tougher and meaner than a rehabilitation center barrack. One even got carried away with this wonderful outdoor freedom of speech and urged everyone to shout in unison "Sit on my face Stevie Nicks"! Bet Lenin would wonder about that one!

Of course there was more to Rock Against Racism in the Park than out of focus politics and preaching. There was Rock. Ha, yes. Weeks before it had appeared that the bulk of the volunteering bands would be of the punk persuasion. That would have been nice, punk definitely winning the cake as THE sound of dissatisfaction, anger, urban problems, you know the tune. But either the LA punk bands ignored this chance to socially redeem themselves or the focus was discreetly shifted to a more innocuous package. Let's add right away that opening band Prairie Fire is anything but innocuous. They wre the all-time ultimate "political band", they use overkill, blatancy ("We're not vacant / We're blatant" — song title) and sloganizing with the subtlety of a molotov cocktail, they pound the MESSAGE into your brain until you're raw and sore. Their sound is between medium-paced punk and trimmed heavy metal with serious folk undertones, they (democratically) trade vocals and war anthems, they're kind of awesome in a numb inevitable way, making the Dils and everyone else seem like background crooners at a tea party. And, as opposed to the bearded babblers and pamphlet peddlers mentioned earlier, this bunch so obviously MEANS it with every (party) cell in their body it's a puzzle their roadies are not actually undercover FBI agents! Just in case you don't catch their drift after 10 seconds, one of their guitars is a faithful reproduction of a heavy weight machine gun. Their goal is crystal clear: overthrow the government, put the working class in power and kill every oppressor. Of course such simple everyday philosophy does not especially make them potential fodder for the Chrysalis or Arista outfits, and the sound of the revolution isn't about to appear on the Billboard chart. Prairie Fire must by all logical deductions eventually extinguish itself, even though they almost manage the impossible synthesis of politics and music. True heirs to Woody Guthrie, but the America they sing about and for is more mythical than ever. Strange band, they should be boring and laughable but instead become vaguely admirable. And if I'm devoting too much time to an oddball protest combo with zero future tough titties! Makes a nice change from analyzing the circonvoluted obscurities of the latest existential band on the in circuit. After Prairie Fire nothing managed to grow, 'cept for the beards of the pot-bellied militants who were beaming with brotherly love at everyone. A horrible little bunch of girls took the stage, informed us they were now known as Rock Candy (barf!) and that they were here to prove once and for all that girls can indeed rock n roll. I didn't know there were still doubts on the matter, I guess they came from a very strict background. Not strict enough though, 'cos they got away, grabbed instruments and musical poses and proceeded to bore the living shit out of absolutely everyone 'cept the bearded militants who shook their lard as if it were the Grateful Dead itself. It was dreadful: muchachos started crying, the handful of token punks scattered here and there started wishing for the earth to open up and gobble this nightmare away, I frantically searched for strong coffee but almost fell asleep halfway to the refreshment booth. Yet they banged away with all the conviction and stubbornness of a pack of untalented uninteresting unaware dumb heads can muster. Long guitar solos out of time and out of luck followed other types of sloppy breaks, wrong chord changes, shrill STUPID vocals, asinine in-between-songs chatter, it was so lame I was fervently praying for a police riot. Where were they when we needed them? No wonder rock n roll is banned in Russia and other East Germanies (and by the way how do you cope with *that* little fact of life in the workers' paradise, all you fervent admirers of the red future? I know,I next time will be better; everybody makes mistakes. Suppose I forgot my historical perspective ...) After Rock Candy had rotted out the afternoon good and proper I knew Rock Against Racism would be remembered as Rock Against Excitement and that the downtown fresh air was killing me anyway. As I left a young band called Opus started their noise, it could have developed into something listenable after a few minutes but my patience gauge needle was dangerously in the red, I had to resist the urge to pass myself off as another speaker and go tell them all to stop plotting the perfect future and worry about the desperate blandness of their own little hearts.

Now that we all saw what a Rock Against Racism or Rock Against Whatever gig should not be like, we will wait until an intelligent and fun second attempt is made. Okay cell members, start rehearsing them speeches!

Kick

pix: Philomena

MOVIE REVIEWS

A NEW P.O.W. CALYPSO

Unscramble the above letters to form the title of a famous movie, and you can win a map to the homes of all SLASH staff members who don't still live with their mothers. CLUES: This movie is about the Viet Nam War and bills Marlon Brando as its, star, although that legendary mass of manimality has become merely an endless mass. He plays an army colonel gone insane, but you know how romantic madness is in Hollywood, and he reads poetry from T.S. Elliot to justify the freshly decapitated heads laying around his temple laid. Brando pulls it off, though, and anyone who can so casually splash his bald head from a water basin made out of a skull is OK by me.

The whole movie is worth the first ten minutes. A long version of the Doors' "The End" backs a collage of war images — choppers, gooks and the real "star" of the movie, Martin, Sheen, as an American soldier in a Saigon hotel room doing a ritual kung fu dance with himself and a piece of bloodied broken mirror. The eerily Oriental tones of the Doors' music, the track of ack-ack guns and Jim's fuck-fuck screams, the flames, flesh, bombs and blood all combine in a potent moment of East meets West in a cracking soldier's psyche.

There's a lot more kicks, too. In between the death and destruction we see what war was like 60's style — Soldiers surfing during a napalm attack; soldiers on acid playing with pink and purple smoke bombs and painting psychedelic camouflage on their faces; soldiers on speed shooting blindly at stray night sounds; soldiers on smack nodding in trenches who don't remember who their commanding officers are. Playgirl bunnies are flown into the jungle to do a quick version of "Susie-Q" before the men, dazed from the lights, the beat and the meat, rush the makeshift stage and even hang onto the runners of the girls' chopper as they leave the home boys behind in their eerie hell.

My only complaint is that this movie is pushing so hard for poetry, particularly in the character of the idiotic cosmic hippie photojournalist played by Dennis Hopper. A lot of the violence in the movie is so soft and blurry it makes it just too easy for the audience to detach itself. Let's remember that while we were smoking pot after school in the 60's, thousands of people watched their rice paddies and their friends being burned by hideous chemicals dumped out of U.S. planes. Thousands of Vietnamese people right now are eating worms from rotten wood while we sit around and chomp popcorn, watching a movie about the little blast the U.S. had on their territory. Not exactly a "GROOVY trip", you know, and this movie doesn't really tell it.

JB

HO HO

SNOUT FEAR

Those shrewd enough to decipher the name of another new movie by rearranging the letters of this title will win a pint of blood from the Slash writer of their choice. CLUES: The "snouts" all the Krauts in this film are afraid of are rats', but they are sniffing up the wrong tree. It's Count Dracula making the mess, just like in all the other vampire movies released this year, but with one big difference. This vamp is played by the supremely sinister Klaus Kinski, anti-hero of hundreds of D-European horror pix, and possessed by some sort of mysterious demon in real life, too ... (he's ALWAYS worth seeing if you're up at 4 AM gnawing your nails and gums

HA FILMS HA

and gazing at the TV screen.) He plays the Count in his usual quirky style ... instead of a suave, elegant murderer, he's a shriveled, rodent-like monster with long, curved Mansonesque fingernails and dead, sunken eyes. He's rude, he's vicious and he's HUNGRY. The story is told in a quaint, European style by director Werner Herzog, but is teeming with bats and black cats (here comes Jim Morrison again) especially when a ghost ship, whose crew has been Dracula's meals on the cruise, crashes into town with nothing but black coffins on board and thousands of big mice with lice scurrying down the gangplank. Clever Dracula brought along the little plague-carriers to throw out a smokescreen for him ... in a town littered with corpses, no one will notice a couple that happened to be drained of their blood, right? Well, you probably know the rest, it's really an OLD story (at least 200 years), but Kinski has really brought this version a whole new set of fangs.

JB

HEE HEE

BETTE MIDLER: THE MOVIE

"The Rose" is the quintessential rock n roll cliche. It offers us such worn-out information as: it's lonely at the top, managers are mean people, and life on the road is no fun. Other hot flashes include: too many drugs will kill you and falling in love isn't easy.

Bette Midler plays a filthy-mouthed, ballsy rock n roll queen in the late sixties. (Yes, J. Joplin has been ripped off.) Rose's big dream is to do a concert in her hometown where everybody in high school hated her guts and where she fucked the whole football team. (She showed 'em.) Now, any storyline that depends on "the big concert" at the end is in trouble from the git-go. And when the BIG STAR keels over dead on stage at that concert, you just have to shake your head and ask, "just how stupid do they think we are". (Answer on page .)

The ad slogan for the picture is "she gave and gave and gave until she could give no more". Well, the character that Midler plays took and took and took until the people around her could take no more. Time and again she missed recording sessions and concerts until the evil manager (Alan Bates) got fed up and left her. She ran so many games on her hick boyfriend (Fletcher Forrest) that he also hit the road. She picked up groupie after groupie just for some company and didn't appear to really care about anything except herself and her bottle of hootch. And at the end of the picture she stands pitifully whining: "Where's everybody go?!" Greener pastures, baby.

You'd think a movie of this monstrous multi-million dollar proportion would be able to recreate an era, namely the late sixties. Dialogue, costumes, sets, etc. are a very strange 69-79 mutant style which can make you very uncomfortable and makes the story, which you can't believe in the first place, even harder to swallow. Toni Basil did the choreography and Chip Monck did the light shows and they were the only thing "sixties" about it except for a couple of Bette's shawls.

The most unfortunate thing about this picture, besides the fact that the lines are around the block, is the music. Except for two of the dozen or so songs, this stuff is right off a Las Vegas stage and so is the stand-up monologue between the tunes. Two recognizable (but miserably out-of-place) songs are "Fire Down Below" (B. Seger) and "When A Man Loves A Woman" (P. Sledge).

The redeeming factor is Midler's performance. She's got the Clint Eastwood approach to life: kick ass now, ask questions later. When Bette tells someone to fuck off she tells 'em good and the entire audience (obviously starved for the sight of a ballsy woman in a movie) goes nuts. Bill Kerby (king of the fuck-U-and-your-momma-too type dialogue) wrote the story with Bo Goldman and gave Bette such lines as: "if your dick is as small as your brain, you're in big trouble, buddy." At every one of her filthy insults, the audience cheered relentlessly. Let's thank Bill, Bette and Bo for priming them for the real thing like a line or two from FEAR: "I just want to come in your face. I don't care if you're dead." Hopefully soon they'll be cheering to that and forget about that Las Vegas showtime shit.

PENELOPE

HA

ROCK N ROLL HIGH SCHOOL

The people who made this film either didn't realize how good it really is or they're some sorts of smarties. Rock N Roll High School grafts 50's dumbness and 70's numbness into absurdist cultural equations. The ol' "Rebellious Youth" syndrome is a functioning of both decades, like a scratched mono record with a mirrored surface. High School Confidential iconography is as incisive as then, only the innocence is at a different level of risk. Today's punks don't end up smoking in the halls, they end up firebombing them. No more legs-outa-the-car Thunderbird balling, now we have customized vans.

Does this plot sound familiar: Riff Randle is a real rebel. She doesn't do any homework. She goes home and listen to The Ramones all day, cuz she's their Biggest Fan. Riff's friend is a real square. She has a crush on the cute high school quarterback, but he doesn't like her. He has a crush on Riff Randle, but she doesn't like him. She has a crush on Joey Ramone, but he doesn't know she even exists. Riff would like to go to see the Ramones concert to give Joey a song she wrote for him. Her friend would like to go out with the QB that night, but the QB would like to go out with Riff Randle.The principal of the school doesn't have a crush on anyone and doesn't like any of it.

Corny, huh? Not corny, stupid. The 50's were stupid, so were the 70's, so is the plot, so is the movie. So are the Ramones, gawking around in dumb leather jackets and muttering dumb things in dumb Brooklyn accents. Primitive fifties throwbacks thrown back at us. Even the "live" concert sequences are totally idiotic, watching Riff Randle "pogoing" with Darby Crash. It's all dumb, and that's why it's so smart. It's also really funny, as most idiotic things are after exasperation passes. Drooling morons are charming dance partners actually, as long as they keep moving and don't talk much. And lots of saliva is this movie's secret.

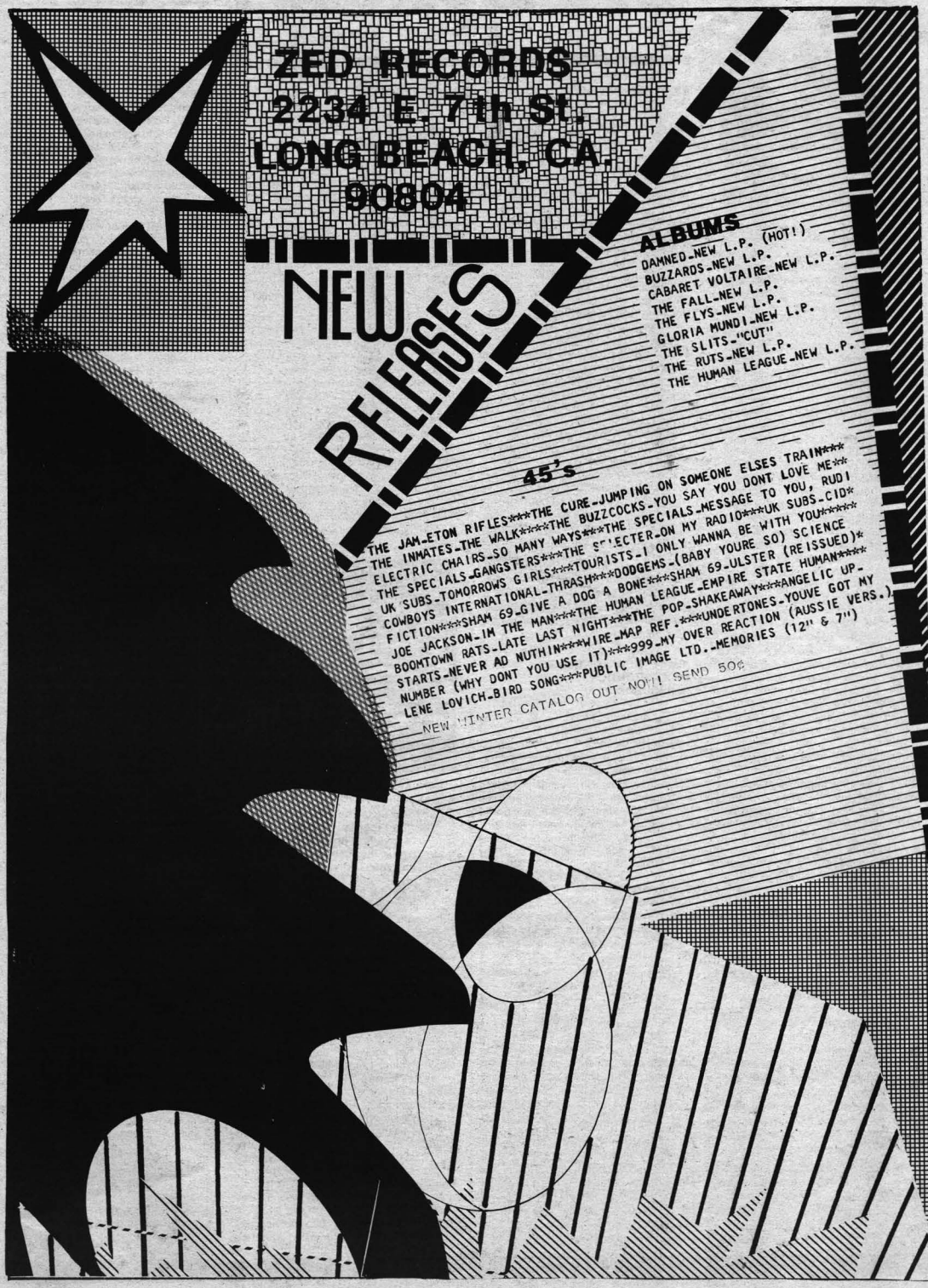
I won't tell you how it all works out, but you'll leave the theatre with a funny warm feeling in your lap.

Will "Saturday Review" L'Amato

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

And here comes the secone feature. I'm a lot drunker, but not drunk enough o get a charge out of a curly headed oaf with buck teeth trying not to get his microphone cord tangled in cowboy fringe while doing the famous Who twirl. Peter Townshend and late Keith Moon may still be able to imbue what were once TNT dynamics, now clumsy, convoluted power mishmashes with a kind of savage grace, but Daltrey once and forever makes me cringe. Black and white footage of shorthaired mods (The Who) from old TV tapes like Top of the Pops are momentarily exciting. But if that was it, the movie would be a 15 minute short, and we wouldn't have to sit through 90 minutes of self-indulgent pablum.

CHRIS D.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LP's

"EARCOM 2"
Fast records import

This is the second compilation package from Fast records, this time with 6 cuts by 3 grops, Joy Division, Thursdays, and the unpronounceable Basczax. I already know I'll wear it out faster than most "major" records released this month, and there is just enough intriguing material in there to keep you hanging on for more from each of the bands represented. Joy Division I was already familiar with thru their LP and other various cuts, I think they are among the most interesting bands in England right now, they create an atmosphere of undefined gloom without resorting to cheap cliches or histrionics, just a skeletal drum beat, and underlying metal tension with guitar and synthesizer, some occasional echo, like a brief opening to less familiar dimensions, and a singer who can evoke darkness and demons better than anyone since Morrison. I'm a bit confused as to who does what on the rest of the cuts 'cos the labelling on the record is wrong. Of the two Basczax seems to be the more "mainstream", one cut ("Celluloid love") features some great saxophone backing but it's the lengthy Karleearn photography (?) that really knocks me out, it rests on a never changing keyboard pattern while the guitar spurts some raw noises and the sax squeals and squirms around it, the singer goes on and on about psychic matters but you can't hardly notice him because the riff is racing thru your brain and you're hooked. The other band "Thursdays" (not the most evocative name) does one track that reminds me of the howling and dissonant attacks of Pere Ubu, shards of rusty metal flying off in all directions, the dissolution of rock n roll into a more aggressive industrial equivalent, no doubt the shape of some of the things to come. Their other song is a pretty twisted cover of "Sitting on top of the bay", it starts a bit like the Velvet Underground trying for soul credibility but somewhere in the middle breaks down into some indecent anguished pleading and blabbering, snap out of it before you question their sanity and finish it straight faced. They sound like a strange band with their very own offbeat opinions as to what music is about.

This is one of the rare examples of how useful and important the concept of compilation records could be if taken in the right direction. This particular one manages to bring you a variety of subversive samples of modern music that would never find its way to themore "legitimate" channels. Documenting takes precedence over marketing, an admittedly rather idealistic approach in this day and age of blind consumerism.

Kick

WIRE
154
EMI RECORDS

Dispense with the obvious Pink Floyd comparisons, that would be too easy. Kind of an odd thought — why do they want to assume those leaden shoes? Is that the inevitable fate of those who approach their sound at oblique angles? Wire seems more interested in direct communication than Pink Floyd ever did — their main topic is the lack of communication or the way it goes off in tangents. They don't approach anything head on — it's as if relations between man, numbers, emotions were all tangent points on some cryptic graph. The map references are obvious clues, but is there a mystery to solve?

And as Wire become masters of the studio with their carefully layered bleak processed pop music for demographers one wonders if this is a true progression. The virtue of the early Wire was their compression — one only has to hear all the current young bands doing one minute or less of derivative blast to realize Wire were the first masters of the complete distillation in :54 or less. 4:54 is more like it now and I don't see all the icing on the cake as being either that tasty or that necessary. The melodies, the songs, they're not that strong, not that memorable, they imitate themselves and the well worn alienation theme. So Wire can puzzle and disturb the unitiated but I was there from that first morose shock on the Roxy album and this is the first Wire album that has failed to register an immediate reaction when I first heard it. There is such a thing as being *too* subtle, *too* controlled.

Maybe we should see this album as a transition point rather than a definite statement. Let's hope they don't get swallowed up by their own spacey intentions and elaborate machinery. Maybe a change of producers? (Mike Thorne did the three so far, plays keyboards and seems to become a permanent member. But they don't need him.) I wouldn't go on and on but Wire is an important group — one of the top five on any list — and I just hate the idea of seeing them fuck a good thing up. Oh well, back to the drawing board...

Craig

"BUY THE CONTORTIONS"
THE CONTORTIONS
ZE RECORDS

People tend to miss the point of why James Brown was great. Sure the guy sang like a freshly wounded cougar and danced like an epileptic stork, but one of his greatest virtues was that he had the biggest fucking EGO you ever saw. Pre-black is beautiful, pre-'me' generation and this little darkie is strutting and boasting and proclaiming, following Little Richard's steps straight into the mirror, before Cassius Clay, James grinning those sparkling pearl whites and saying "This is ME, and I'm THE BEST". You would watch it and wish you had the nerve. It was worth more than twenty EST sessions. And James knew it — he knew he could pull and twist your emotions and throw them to pieces. He was a master of the moment — *that* moment, *that* time.

Well, it's different now. It's *these* times — James was working the sixties — happy optimism, happy segregation, a general explosion and James rode the crest of the burning tide. What we live in now is the ashes. Segregated hate is not integrated hate and all the animals are in the same cage. An era of optimism turned to a decade of pessimism. So it's only fitting that the soul release of "Cold Sweat" should become the copvulutions of "Contort Yourself" and that "I Feel Good" should become "I Don't Want To Be Happy". I'm not saying James Chance is James Brown anymore than Black Randy could pull off the TAMI show cape routine. Neither the Metro Squad or the Contortions have that one necessary component of every Brown band — disciplined tightness to the bursting point. The Contortions abound in sloppy endings and rough edges threatening to fall apart at the seams. But they definitely got the funk feelings — the white boy junkie nodding out in intellectual broth foaming at the mouth cool New York city funk. So James Chance might sing like this year's Richard Hell but he's definitely got that thing that made James Brown work so hard — the fucking EGO, the galling ME. (If you don't believe it just notice the note on the back of the album — arranged by, composed, mixed, produced, shot out the acerbic white butthole of). So what if this arrogant geeks sax playing sounds like Albert Ayler being processed through Captain Beefheart. He will make you believe he's great and you better go along with it or he'll beat the shit out of you. So we got the sound of New York City 1979, ugly, nasty, biting the hand that feeds it, but its real enough to hurt and laugh at the same time. The band's no slouch either. Pat Place, in particular, has done something totally new in that she's taking the slide guitar and used it totally as a rhythm instrument — completely non melodic but accenting the songs in just the right places, it's the virtue of originality that she has completely produced a guitar style completely unique and completely her own. Yes there are a lot of Teenage Jesus untuned slide guitars around New York but Pat Place seems to be the only one who knows how to use it the right way, bouncing off those loping, sloping Brown funk/discos riffings. God, this album's shattering! What ego! What nerve! It's right for the times — *these* times.

Craig

SURVIVAL
Bob Marley

Survival is right. The survival of Marley in a world of reggae which has denied him for sometime. Survival marks the return to roots music for this guy. Solely written and sung by the guy who's been called a sell-out by every reggae follower for the last 5 years. Rich and successful, he hasn't been allowed to shit on plastic without the reggae "In Crowd" seizing the moment to show their scorn for him. Rightly so, in some respects, for the last few Marley records have been far from rootsy. Wrong, in that Marley's sins were nothing compared to the atrocities of Peter Tosh or Third World. Wrong, because Marley has always maintained an active guilt about going lax on the cause. Wrong, in that Marley has known all along that "the word of Jah" cannot be spread by a powerless one-hit wonder from Jamaica. He knew fame and honor were good weapons ...

Survival on one listen is sweet to the ear. The arrangements are jazzy and the melodies are beautiful in a picturesque way. It bears evidence of more advanced chord structures and use of pretty chords against the pulse beat. The lyrics are another matter. Just the titles themselves, "Ambush", "Africa Unite", "Babylon System", and "Survival" sound like an index to a guerilla warfare manual. Gone is all that talk of "Easy Skankin' " etc. and arrived is the spirit of "Soul Rebel" ...

Lots of people don't understand. Bob Marley is a culture hero of gigantic proportions in Jamaica. He's the epitome of Rasta rising above the ashes into a world of success. In JA, he's looked upon with the admiration level of royalty. He's been the best songwriter on the island for years. Starting as far back as 1965 in the days of ska. In his Studio One/Lee Perry produced days, he put out some of the greatest records known to mankind. (And it was he that wrote those songs, not Lee Perry, as suggested by Chatty Big Mouth.) His songs have been covered by everyone from Johnny Nash to the Gladiators. They are considered standards...

Lots of Ja singers have flirted with disco and funk. Among them Tosh, Dillinger, Big Youth, Steel Pulse, Marcia Griffiths, Bunny Wailer, and others. However, not once did Marley stray too far from his soul. Even his "Exodus" jungle funk workout is not enough justification to dismiss him. Even jive records like "Roots Rock Reggae" all jazzed up with U.S. soul, were still reggae at the core. There's just been a lot of witch-hunting going on and Marley is most successful and therefore a likely target. Marley got confused about direction and became their victim ...

However, on this album, the fight is back on for Marley. I don't know what caused it, maybe the incredible responsibility he has on his shoulders to make an example to the Jamaicans. I don't know what caused this turn of events, but not one song, nor one line, ever escapes the ever-present evil that Bob constantly warns us of. Not a voice on this record avoids the plight of the poor suffering Rasta. And they do suffer. And they are poor. It's all true ...

I wonder who are going to be the people who will not give up their hate for him. Certainly many purists will be put off by the jazzy production of the album. These people don't understand that reggae is music made by musicians. Not any sort of free-form art that anyone can attempt. Reggae is always striving for a more polished sound and better musicianship, and this is true of *all* groups in JA. They don't find the punk-production theory attractive down there. They believe in using all the money made available to them to produce the best possible product. To give the people their money's worth, because in JA not too many can afford to buy records ...

So, all in all, for the person Marley is. For the position he's in. this is the best possible product he can deliver. It's the most sincere record that can come out of him. It's not roots like Burning Spear, but it is roots no less. Roots of the man who has risen above urban suffering and has seen the promised land. Survival is the word ...

R.J. Lea

"TRIBUTE TO THE MARTYRS"
STEEL PULSE
Mango

This leaves me just as cold as the 1st album. A thorough overkill that makes you numb and ill at ease, this tries so hard to overwhelm you under reggae walls of sound and walls of righteousness you have no option but to shrug the bloated thing off, too much of it and you might start resenting the very notions of blackness and social consciousness. These people think more is better and overdo it on every level: too many crisscrossing vocals (sometimes it's like being in the midst of a street basketball game!) too much percussion crammed in every available corner, too many loose guitars running in circles looking for the

mother riff, too many horns, and mainly too much proletyzing, preaching, historicizing and propagandazing, this is like a crash course in black revolutionary leadership, a ver worthy subject no doubt but with a rather limited lyrical appeal, especially when each sentence or even word is repeated ad infinitum by multi-choruses, underlined by drumbeats, framed by strident riffs. Winston Rodney never runs out of praises for Marcus Garvey but his style and the levels of emotion he conveys have a depth and passion that Steel Pulse misses by about the width of an ocean. Linton Johnson also does a fair amount of preaching and consciousness-raising but it is so bare, so concentrated that it goes in all the way and doesn't even make you flinch. Steel Pulse is to reggae what Chicago (Santana says Ranking Jeffrey) were to rock n roll. On the (crowded) liner notes we are even presented with each band member's philosophical pearl, lest we miss the last crumbs of spiritual vibrations. It's all very heavy and don't mean shit, which is what the LP accomplishes in a much more elaborate form. If the road to Zion has to run thru such swamps let me off the bus.

Chatty Mouth

"ENTERTAINMENT"
THE GANG OF FOUR
E.M.I. Import

Whether you like it or not, something very important in popular music has happened: a modern pop/rock band has effortlessly released an entire album in which the socio-political "message" (admittedly a dreadful cliche of a word) is as coherent, precise and full of impact as the music itself. Before you start to go into your usual cynical eyebrow-raising routine number 2 you should understand that this does not in any way mean that finally the truth has been revealed, the answers are here, all laid out amidst musical brilliance. Let Dylan or Stevie Wonder burn themselves out trying for that modest goal. Nobody is asking you to swallow a dogma or listen to one drum beat. Neither the form or the contents need be ashamed of the other, and that the two have been fused in a most unique and rigorous manner. That last achievement is what makes this album so important, not the getting-the-point-across bit (even Sham can do THAT — all you need are vocal chords and a general knowledge of life). This fusion of ideas and sounds is so cimplete there's a good chance that if you disagree with what the Gang of Four are saying you probably won't like their music, and vice versa. Don't forget that there are now thousands of people "into" the Clash who don't give a flying fuck about that quartet's "political stance" (whatever it is nowadays) and others (myself included) who feel quite close to Costello's perceptions but can't really feel very much for his music. One band that did pull it off and smoothly combined meaning and musical vehicle were the Pistols, but all they really did was express an attitude without bothering to clarify or follow up. Which was perfect for the times. Obviously the Gang of Four don't believe such a simple all-encompassing stand is sufficient anymore, and give us 12 songs that divulge and examine a few aspects of human alientation and misery in one type of modern society. If that sounds like a pretty thick brew to combine with rock n roll, you're right. Guitar solos and basic chord progressions would no doubt sound pretty ludicrous under the weight of dialectical thinking, so the old rock structures have been thoroughly overhauled, the beat, the riffs, the melodies and all the hardwre are used for efficient punctuation and support, and the eternal "need" to stick to rock's traditional format is totally ignored and bypassed. I won't even argue as to whether the results remain rock n roll or not. Let the experts squabble, what matters here is what this record does to you. If you are familiar with the two previous singles these guys have put out you have a fair idea as to their impact on your hopefully open-minded mind and heart: The album brings ho real surprises (3 of the songs off the 45's are included and blend it perfectly), all the tunes feature assorted musical strctures packed with minimal beat, straight-to-the-chest slightly dissonant riff attacks, fluid funk-influenced bass patterns, unexpected chord explosions that suddenly strip the tune to its skeleton, an amazingly PHYSICAL sound for such a thinking band, yet it never loses it thread to go experimental or flash, the greatest combinations are discarded the second they have fulfilled their need, nothing is allowed to clutter the song as a whole, economy rules from beginning to end. The same attitude of course applies to the use of the vocals, everything is said with no affectation or dramatization or even excessive concern regarding the tunefulness of the delivery, quite often they unexpectedly trade lead and support vocals, then break into simultaneous delivery of unrelated lyrics, it is simply impossible to keep on thinking of a lead singer as a separate and distinct entity the way every other record invites you to, the all important *song* has become the thing that matters and should be dealt with. This idealistic insistence on shattering the universally accepted roles and parts is by the way just as evident on the instrumental level. The emphasis is never for very long on one instrument, the bass, the drums, the guitar constantly relay each other in underlining the more highlighted phrases or verses, sometimes vocals are left bouncing around with only one of the instruments keeping the melody or the beat on its trajectory, or all the instruments join forces and the singing becomes just another sound with no special status. On a few occasions the singer's frail melodica is left to introduce or taint a particular tune, leaving you with the knowledge that this Gang know how to extract their quite unique brand of music out of the tiniest amount of raw material. This was already evident in "It's Her Factory", which their drummer sings with the faintest musical thread for support.

The strength and directness of *what* the Gang of Four are saying in such an uncomparable manner are not quite as evident. The simplicity and emotional urgency of "Damaged Goods" or "Anthrax" is sometimes replaced by a tortured poetic flak (as in "Ether") that only escaped being dismissed thanks to the punch head-on delivery it is subjected to. Here and there some metaphors run out of oxygen or collide with crammed and fuzzy imagery, and a bit of valuable time is wasted sorting out the remains. Yet thru most of these songs and ideas and emotions are audible and understandable, and quite often one verse or chorus here and there is the perfect expression of the particular feeling or thought running thru the tune. Words like "Always thought life should be so easy / It seems that I have misunderstood / Nothing I do can seem to please me / What I say don't sound so good") get about as close to life's disillusions as rock music will, and many more throughout tackle problems or mysteries not generally pondered upon on vinyl. You see, there's a lot less straight "politicking" on ENTERTAINMENT than you might think from these people's reputation and statements. No slogans, accusing fingers pointing at the first available target, no utopian babblings, they're not militants, they're observers slowly drawing the inevitable conclusions: society and its multiplying demands, its power structures, its manipulation networks and its abstract codes is going to bring misery to more and more individuals in more and more diverse ways than were ever thought possible. Most of the time the Gang of Four find quite a few diverse ways themselves to get that conclusion across. If you wonder what difference is it going to make if four idealistic kids manage to intelligently express our helplessness and alienation via one of the most extensive media channels, you've just grabbed the root of the problem by the teeth. I suspect they don't know any more than you do, but doing it is a good way of finding out. And they're doing it as well as anybody could. Let's hope the answer does not already lie in the title of this lp.

Kick

"ADVENTURES OF THE HERSHAM BOYS" SHAM 69
Polydor Records Import

If you've been reading the Brit music trades of late you might expect this to be pretty much shit, Jimmy getting pompous while trying to hold onto his cloak of humility and the rest of Sham slogging along unenthusiastically behind. One listen to the 12 inch free single included, "If the Kids Are United" performed in a funkified, insincere boogie manner and it looks like that's exactly what it is. Go on to the second record. Again there's that contradiction that was so aggravating on the "That's Life" LP. All of side 1 is *good* except for the unbearably corny, semi-saccharine "Fly Dark Angel". These corny cowboys go axe-slinging with a vengeance. Skip thuddingly dull "Hersham Boys" on side 2 and the action continues on "Lost on Highway 46", a "death of James Dean" tune that's OK in spite of itself. "Voices" is another one of those "I'm such a tortured working-class kid" songs that Jimmy should stop writing immediately. "Questions and Answers" is the best thing on the album (if you don't have the single). Then, when all is said and done, what do you end up with? An uneven record guided along by somebody who can't distinguish between his own very good and bad material.

CHRIS D.

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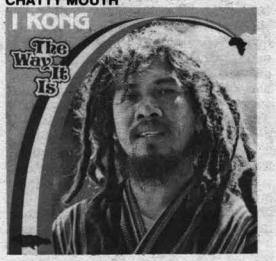
"IN LION DUB STYLE"
Prince Jammy
Jammy's records import

I've often bumped into Prince Jammy's name when reading whatever little material on reggae releases a poor fan here in Babylon manages to get his hands on (mostly in the english rock press, no matter how despicable their other contributions to culture can sometimes be!) and when I spotted this being sold by a rasta from the back of a pick-up truck on the Venice beach front walk I just had to borrow the money and get it. I am so glad I did, I will even reimburse my friend! Everything on this is first rate classy dub, it's in the same league as the "African Dub" triple monument that fans are constantly forced to refer to. Excellent melodies that are very subtly stripped of their outer layers until their nervous rhythmic system is left in the open and you're dancing to flating percussion lines that bounce from wall to wall. Before you know it, the missing elements pop back into place and everything is almost back to normal. No matter how obviously dependent on the recording technology dub and its perpetrators are, there is always an element of magic in the best of it, and the knowledge of music's inner structures and of the potential effects some subtle tinkerings and emphasizings can have on the listener is not something you learn from a night school course for would-be recording engineers. Some say it's the ganja, some say it's the spirit, me I just skank and don't hear the world crumble. And being somewhat connected to this twitching apocalyptic rag the way I am, that's a pretty hard achievement. Add Prince Jammy to your list of Medicine men.

CHATTY MOUTH



"THE WAY IT IS"
I Kong
Top Ranking records import

The back cover list of participants to this LP read like a musician's directory (twelve names for percussion, just as many for back up vocals, two battalions of horn players, enough engineers to start a soccer team, etc..) and I truly braced myself for a bloated super flash and super nowhere extravaganza the Jamaicans have a tendency to sometimes mistake for the transcending masterpiece the music world has been waiting for ever since the road to Zion disappeared under the sands of time. It's the same problem the rock stars of the sixties faced when their original line ups crumbled and they decided to join their talents in monstrous "super sessions", "super groups" and "super jams" of all kinds: If separately we're all so hot, imagine what it will be like together! Now we know. It was overwhelming, awkward and boring. And so credit must be given to this I Kong (known as Ricky Storms to his mom) character for keeping this record focused and effective. This is no roots reggae from the bamboo shack by any means, it's more slick and structured than most of the musical comedies playing in this country right now, and I Kong himself is the smoothest most versatile soul singer I've heard since Luther Ingram, he phrases, moans and wails his tunes like the black american masters of the old days, and if the eerie primeval incantations of the Burning Spear make you scared of the dark (ha!) try I Kong, his voice does not bring machetes to mind, only dramatic stage lighting. But do not think this is all tinsel and superficial stuff. The melodies are brilliant, moving and catchy, the playing is superb and displays a remarkable variety of moods while never losing its vital reggae rhythm roots, and the subject matters range from politics, oppression and the rasta's plight to joyous celebration of love and life. For that reason some tunes off this are staying with me more than others but that's just personal philosophy, not an aesthetic judgment. This is I Kong's first album, and it's no wonder he was able to gather that much musical support behind him: The man is obviously a very talented and very enterprising member of the jamaican musical community. Let's hope his future does not take him too far from the roots of the music.

CHATTY

"INTENSIFIED" —
ORIGINAL SKA 1962—1966
Island import

Well, you've heard about ska, the bopping and hopping ancestor of reggae, you've read about groups like the Specials, Madness, the Selecter who are at this very moment shaking England with their revitalized version of the music, you're even about to get the chance to see one of them (Madness) in action very soon, but until this album was released there was almost no way for you to hear the real thing. Fret no more, here it is, a priceless reissue of sixteen ska classics, a brilliant panoramic view of the only sound that could get thru to the skinheads' thick hearts, a tribute to the foundations of jamaican music and to the obscure artists that were responsible for it. A few of the musicians represented in this record, like the Maytals, Tommy McCook, Rico Rodriguez, went on making great sounds into the seventies, but others, like the legendary Don Drummond, master of the trombone, didn't fare so well and disappeared from the stage. In the mid-sixties days of ska the jamaican music had not yet

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connected with the rastafarian cult and the most common medicine was rum and beer, not ganja. This is a more rowdy sound that reggae, made for partying and dancing, not meditating (well, what the dreads call meditating — which apparently consists in inhaling mega quantities of weed and dreaming of Africa). Song titles of the cuts included in this package reflect the wacked-out, unpretentious tone of the music: "El Pussy Cat", "Duck Soup", "James Bond", "Housewifes Choice", "University Goes Ska", etc. And if this kind of thing tickles you, there is a cut or two recorded in 1962—1963 where youcan actually see the very birth of reggae music taking place: a very faithful Fats Domino type of copy tune complete with piano, except the Louisiana rhythm and blues feel is somewhat altered, the beat is different, upfront. Once ska took off its origins became less obvious, the beat became everything, the horns took the place of the piano, and jamaican music was on its own (although the influence of black american singers never really diminished — until of course the toasters appeared).

But don't let all that historical info get in the way: this is a great sound, it will brighten up your heart and move your feet. All that really matters to rude boys and girls everywhere is the FEEL of the music.

Chatty

"JOIN HANDS"
Siouxsie and the Banshees
Polydor import

This is a sequel to the same gothic evocations of "The Scream". Not a trace of a hint of a progression or change of direction. The Banshees still splatter their drum rolls, cymbal crashes, fuzzy guitar drones all about the landscape while Siouxsie wails to the moon, echoes bounce around the catacombs and everything creaks like a rotting castle. You expect Vincent Price to make a guest appearance any second. I must be fair and add that sometimes, in small quantities, their musical atmosphere is pretty unique and effective and that it's nice to see someone following Nico's footsteps into the chamber of horrors. The band has never been musically astounding but they know the most effective and direct ways to create a sound that imposes itself upon the listener, even if sometimes the limited tones they have to offer engender monotony. And Siouxsie's delivery is the best of the genre, her chopped deep voiced singing full of hiccuping and raspy wails, her constant juggling between the spoken and singing parts, it all adds texture and depth to the stories and mesmerizes the romantic part of ourselves. Unfortunately most of the stories are obscure, weighed down by unfinished images, vague allusions to untold going ons and strained word combinations. In "Playground Twist" the impressionistic lyrics are not that enlightening but they work well, creating a possibility of meaning that stays with you longer than more evident stuff. But in a song like "Icon" the obscurity of the subject matter (religion?) makes it impossible to get really involved with the song, and like in other places on this record you just drift away. There is one brilliant exception to all this frustrating collection, the delicate and disturbing little tune called "Mother": The only music is provided by something like a wind-up music box and Siouxsie sings with two overlapping voices, and while the two vocals are singing the same song almost all the time there are a few differences in lyrics and intonation, it very subtly captures the emotional ambivalence contained in the song and makes it one of the truly spookiest things you've ever heard. Like a good horror film it suggests more than it shows. It's quite brilliant and unlike anything else on the album. Right after this the rest of that side is taken over by their legendary "Lord's Prayer" and subtlety takes a lunch break. I don't know why they waited for the 2nd album to release this, it has much more to do with the early anarchistic free-for-all days of rising punk power than now, free form noise marathons don't do too well on vinyl anyway, the impact gets lost and all that stays is the irritating surface noise it partly is. Anyway now that the Banshees' line up has been seriously altered this album marks the end of a period and it's still hard to say if there will be room for Siouxsie and her Banshees in the next decade. There is now serious competition in the gloom and horror field, and this band is going to have to work full time to retain their initial stature.

KICK

HARDER THAN THE BEST
By Burning Spear

The Spear, who is Winston Rodney, is one of the few people in history who has been able to use music far beyond the bounds of art or entertainment. In Jamaica he's looked up to like some sort of high priest. Even his drummer "Horsemouth", as he says in the film "Rockers", looks to Winston "for spirtual guidance." His performances supposedly drive the women into tears and the men into sorrow. His records exist without any other influence than his faith and his lifestyle. Truly a man of vision. To the point of where on record he seems possessed by the blood of the martyrs themselves.

Recently Island had the good sense to release a sort of collection of the better songs off the five albums he did for them. Called "Harder Than the Best", the collection is good enough to almost forgive Island for cutting all the Spear records from their catalogue. It includes the likes of "Marcus Garvey", "Slavery Days", "Man In the Hills" etc. all of which well-known and loved by anyone who has even a slight reggae collection. Also on this are two cuts off the "Social Living" L.P., which Island made the sinful mistake of not releasing in this country. These two, "Social Living" and "Civilized Reggae", are the two densest, most intense, most roots-primitive songs to ever surface out of the whole reggae genre. If Jamaica, has a Jim Morrison, Winston Rodney fits the bill since he's more consistently moving than just any singer in existence today. His voice has the passion of a prophet and never have his lyrics broken away from the faith he follows. On "Social Living" Spear trends shaky ground between reggae and just plain jungle music. Vocals swirl and wail through darkened chambers and become lost in the echo. They return and sometimes moan with an almost lifeless feeling. Rhythms trudge instead of beat. His voice overlaps itself and the song ends with complete confusion. On "Civilized Reggae" Rodney does a death dance while keyboards seem to blow like the wind. The song rides upon one chord and one beat until it ends up in a complex haze of instruments as if heaven opened up and Winston got it all down on tape. On these two songs (and the rest of the Social living album for that matter), Burning Spear seems to have reached a peak not only in his own career, but also in the context of Jamaican music in general. No lie.

Since most Spear records are out of print now, it's more than necessary for everybody to own this. Spear's music is to Jamaica what the "The End" by the Doors was to our music. It's also a wise choice for those new to reggae who are yet to hear him because it's all here. The whole career. It's sadder than disaster that this man's music has gone without the attention of the whole world, but someday that may change. In any case, he won't care, being dedicated to other things which most of us will never understand. A few of us know that something is going on, but nobody knows what it is. Anyway these songs will never age for this is the breaking point for any kind of music. Where else can it go?

Righteous Ranking J.

"THE ORIGINAL SIN"
COWBOYS INTERNATIONAL
Virgin import

Tasteful pop cocktail, adequate doses of moodiness, modern architecture, emotional stress, it's all pretty craftily designed and presented but hopelessly blends together for lack of edges, angles and asperities. The singer follows the footsteps of the very early Bowie rather closely although the isntrumental support has been brought up to the latest standards. The original Clash drummer Terry Chimes is on the payroll, very far away from garageland and riots. Life is very strange.

Kick

"A DIFFERENT KIND OF TENSION"
— unresolved
THE BUZZCOCKS
UA

1) No one can deny that the tunes are catchy and well crafted but something's gone wrong again here. Will the Buzzcocks go the way of the Dave Clark Five and put out 10 or 15 increasingly disposable LPs? Will they finally drown in their own obsolescene? Maybe I'm just mad at their "We're big stars — we got your money — we don't give a fuck" attitude onstage. But I still like the Buzzcocks and I hope there's still time for them to erase the bitter taster of success-by-formula from my mouth **Biafra**

1) The Beatle insinuation becomes clearer all the time. "Meet The Buzzcocks". The Beatles, whatever you may think of them, were impeccable craftsmen and songwriters. So is Pete Shelley. What I thought was coy and silly became, when I saw him live, apparent cynicism and world weariness. He's on a search for love, but he's the first to tell you no love exists, thus making him one of the only true modern pop writers in this truly modern pop band. Also Steve Diggles writing becomes clearer and better, much more so than his limp contribution to their last album, which I found to be fairly half-baked.

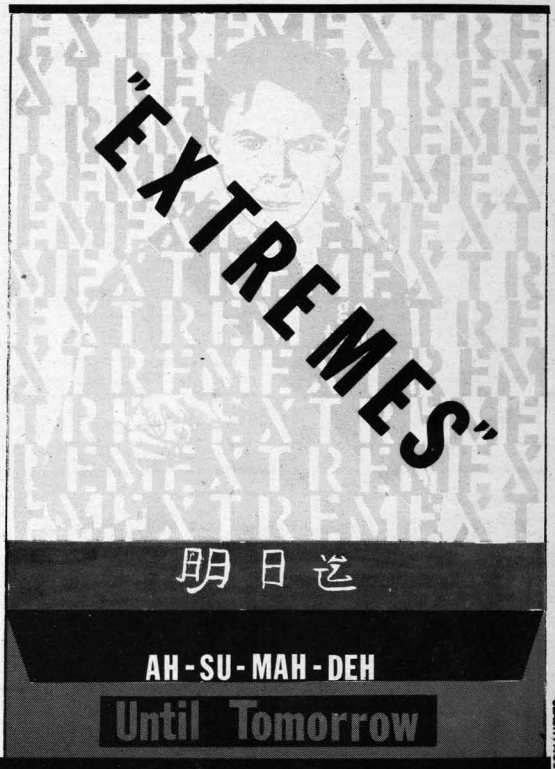
This album is anything but half baked — it's consistently on target and even if you may not care for the themes or the singing, the power cannot be denied. They may be a bland live band but the songs carry more feeling and meaning than any other band working in the same mode. Side two consistently builds to its final fatalistic resolve — "There is no love in this world anymore". The soul of the Buzzcocks — an eternally wistful sigh, orchestrated by ringing guitars and spright vocals, trapped in a contradiction of their own design. I thought they were becoming washed up, but this album proved me a liar.

Craig

"DRUMS AND WIRE"
XTC
Virgin Records import

College boy ha-ha avant-garde stuff. The kind of comic sensibility that steps on no one's toes and borders somewhere between efforts to be clever and what other so-so competent outfits like Fingerprintz do. Oh, why do I have such contempt for this stuff? Is it because I can imagine how perfectly boring and passionless minds must be that come up with this?

HALF-COCKED



Step Forward imports

ON THE NEW FALL ALBUM, "DRAGNET", or HOW TO FOREVER RENOUNCE THE DESIRE TO BE PART OF A "SCENE". **by Kick**

Everyone has the right to sadistically trample a Bo Diddley riff in the name of cultural terrorism (unknwon smart ass).

A note to the reader:

There was no way (Jose) to pin this fucking LP down, it kicked back like a brat in need of an exorcist, everything about it required explaining while making it useless. It was too good and too real for words, but approaching it from various disconnected angles helped a bit, one little point sometimes leading to another. Mark Smith and the Fall don't give a shit about recognition (that being a sign of weakness, which is known to be bad for successfully handling certain night time moments) but I don't give a shit about them not giving a shit. Basically it's the same old story, either you feel it or you don't (the record), all the rationalizing and referring will only make you dizzy in the end, the brain isn't meant to dabble with the unknown. If you are the proud owner of a heart and a soul they will know. Whether they enjoy it remains a matter of how far down the road of everpresent indifferent despair you like to jog. But do not shy way. It's loads of laughs on the way there.

...Only madmen and fanatics still bother to define and track down evil. But when young rebellious individuals with no spiritual affiliations decide to look into the matter, be ready for uncomfortable revelations. Long way from Bill Haley, aren't we?? ... Take it as just wacked out rock n roll and you will miss half of the real fun (fun with a genuine *threatening* tension ... Now you're hooked, right?!) The first track "Psykick Dancehall" relies on a normal funky rock n roll facade to insidiously throw you off balance (a balance you will not regain until the record is over). Sith yaks away until your idea of rock n roll singing is forever deflated and meaningless. Halfway thru the song the band also goes a bit mental and takes liberties with their carefully rehearsed riff. This was but a hint of things to come...

...Mark Smith unleashes the private noises in his head. Of course hundreds do that everyday and that's about as far as they go. In this particular case though the arrogant boy succeeds in effortlessly turning them into YOUR private noises. Yea, there will be deaf ears a plenty, not everyone enjoys having rusty hooks dragged along the top surface of their grey matter, and the stunning primary simplicity of the music will be perceived as simplistic barrage of confused pop hodge podge by the academic rock n roll world. But then, if you only had half a brain (the permitted half) and no heart, that's how you would perceive it too.

...Mark, (for it is undoubtedly his vision that is being exterpated again here — the line up is almost entirely differently from the 1st album yet the feel is unmistakable — different sounds, different structures, different presence, same nightmare) does not actually share this noise, he leaves it behind after he's thru with it, like a trail of rumpled artifacts you're welcome to pick thru. The often mentioned "arrogance" of the fellow must be in part due to this here-it-is-do-what-you-want-with-it attitude. There will be no role playing between artist and audience, in fact there will be no relationship. This is stated extremely clearly by the opening remark of the LP: "Is there anybody there?" inquires the singer after the introductory riff. "Yea" go a few pseudo-cheerful voices. Of course Smith is not about to become didactic and lose his distance, and the only way you can ber sure he is in fact saying "It does not matter one bit if anybody's here listening" is by the chilling sarcastic tone of voice. Yea, I know, what a big deal around one lousy throw away line. Well listen buster, I just think that thee is something amazingly strong in this music that is more easily appreciated if we all enter it thru the same door. And I like to blow my insights to obscene proportions, it's not that often I bump into greatness. Our irrationality will be tomorrow's logic, okay?

...They do not play rock n roll, they USE IT for their secret but most certainly unsavory reasons.

...The Fall are NOT musicians (they know how to play but it does not keep them awake at night with amazement or make them believe they need a new wardrobe). They are an ATTITUDE. And rejoice, it's a hell of a negative one! What the Pistold discovered by accident, what Rotten meant by being what he was is all here, just as rough, just as demanding, just as intolerant, just as negating, but now it's also fully armed, combat-trained and secure in its inability to go back to normalcy and the respected state of living death. The Fall have found the way to really turn into the perfect anarchy system by making it impossible for anyone to blindly follow in their footsteps: no slogans, look or trappings for any would'be disciple to toy with or hide behind. Just super awake noise and lucid (hence slightly deranged) words and stories to wriggle in your brain on sleepless nights. And anyone wishing to make this brew more drinkable for mass consumption by filtering it or whatever they do when they get hold of the real thing would not know where to fucking start: you could strip this sound down note by note, word by word until all that is left is one note and one word AND IT STILL WOULD REMAIN DANGEROUS-SOUNDING.

...It seems unlikely that any band would ever decide to handle a Fall cover. Not only might it kill their other tunes on contact, like a virulous poison, but it would most likely cripple their natural ability to get back in the "good time" spectrum of the entertainment world. As to making that cover song into something more sane, ever try wrapping a cactus in tissue paper???

...The Fall are quite lucky (and smart) to have found independent record company that takes what they give it, no questions asked, and release it, come what may. Any tempering with this complex trash (*not* a derogatory label) would really harm its power. The sarcasm, the underlying threat, the panting nihilism that make this the most significant statement of the REAL new music is hidden everywhere in the eleven tracks, in the recording balance, the amount of distortion, the hesitant notes that are dropped at sudden turning points, and most prominently in the flat, awkwardly paced vocals with its mumbled repetitions of undecipherable tongue lashings, its bitter passionate *talking* style that Smith reverts to every five seconds. "I don't sing I just shout" he shouts a few times in a row while examining their status of musical outsiders. Hate to think what a "big time" producer would do to this stubborn and deliberate banging and teeth grinding. Take the bonds away and it would collapse into a pile of ugly formless crap.

...The Fall's overall statement is so multi-faceted and so viciously sharp you can get cut up real deep just by trying to grasp it, whichever direction of the Noo Wave/Boo Wave your skinny snotty booty hails from ...

...Proud and sometimes delighted paranoia, sometimes expressed with the use of traditional spook paraphernalia (relentless lone jungle beat, lyrical pictures of darkness, demons, dungeons and delirium), other times secretly injected in apparently carefree ha ha ditties that turn out to be as lightweight as an official diagnosis of incurable cancer ...

...The give you just enough music (system of notes etc.) for you to trustingly offer your hand, then they yank you down into the pit. Ha ha.

...There are two types of artists: the ones that didn't ask for their visions and insights, who translate them as best as they can whether there is a demand for the stuff or not and the ones that release what they have carefully put together after careful analysis of its potential future acceptance. I'm pretty sure Mark Smith for one will never stop long enough to look for his market. Catch him now, this guy is not waiting for you.

PART II: YOU CALL THAT A PROGRESSION??!!

In the first LP "Live at the Witch Trials" the Fall tried (and pretty much succeeded) in cushioning Mark's emerging grasp of the general unpleasantness of everything with formal, minimal, "shiny" modern music. The message was obscurely distasteful but the form more affirmative, making it sound almost constructive in a healthy cynical sort of way. It also knew how to be kind of pretty and melodic although it did not indulge in it. Finally, it certainly could be appreciated and emulated. It was very intelligent and distant.

In "Dragnet" the Fall No. 2 kamikaze into the rough jagged underworld of rickety beat music and just let Mark wrestle his demons and obsessions in the midst of the chaos they have immersed themselves in. He still is the frontman but quite often the noise of the machine imposes its very own course. There is no more unity of musical purpose, no more streamlining for the same of effectiveness no more "shiny" modern music. Prettiness and keyboard wistfulness have long been forgotten, and it's hard to be constantly "intelligent" when your nerves are exposed and creatures are swooping down from every corner of the sky. *Art* has been rejected on the grounds of ineffectiveness and latent corruption and trashy crash bang musical brutality is now used as the only honest malleable platform on which your horror show can be performed. Before and in between these two poles the three singles have introduced the Fall to an unsuspecting world in a most sly and devious manner, shown their humorous and zany (?) talents, proved their ability to put out an (almost) catchy tune or two and lately have even captured them in two rare moments of social concern on one side and musical conformity and rule abiding on the other. Next single will no doubt reveal yet another aspect of this high flying musical unit, unless it consists of Mark's full moon howlings in the mental ward, in which case there should be no difficulties in recruiting another Fall line-up right there on the hospital grounds. Keep looking over your shoulder.

Epilogue:

In case you haven't guessed, this record is much too close for comfort. Which is the way things should be, I think.

Parting quote:

"They say music should be fun like reading a story of love / but I wanna read a horror story" ("Dice Man")

List of songs: Psykick Dancehall, A Figure Walks, Printhead, Dice Man, Before The Moon Falls, Your Heart Out. Muzorewi's Daughter, Flat of Angles, Chock-Stock, Spectre Vs Rector, Put Away.

"THE NOW"
Midsong International records

Totally, unbelievably bad. The definitive, brainless power pop record with every "muscle-flexing" sex stunt, sugar pill sentiment and "well-hung basket" style that you could imagine. If all this was intentional it might be pathetically funny. As it is, it's stupefyingly offensive. Not offensive as it could be though because most songs clock around two minutes and the whole album is only a bit over a quarter of an hour long.

HALF-COCKED

"FINGERPRINTZ"
Virgin Records import

This is a very well-produced integration of punk, hard rock, jazz and experimental styles that almost makes you sit up and take notice. There are interesting musical ideas abounding in nearly every song, but somehow they never quite connect. There's no focus or direction, no unifying character. Completely aimless material made up of mediocre puns (some of which may or may not be lifted from the Residents) strained through a rather anonymous sense of humour.

CHRIS D.

"ANOTHER KIND OF BLUES" UK SUBS
Gen Records import

Something of a cheat if you've got the 45's because they're all here. The A side is a non-stop barrage, smoothly grating things that'll sound familiar even if you haven't heard them before. That doesn't deaden their power. On the contrary, this is one of the few "punk" records from Britain lately that doesn't promise more than it can deliver. At its best, what it does deliver is equivalent to being hit by a grand piano dropped from the ninth floor by some butter-fingered moving man. The B side is more ordinary yet still manages to hold your attention.

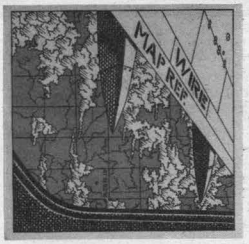
CHRIS D.

"PRODUCT PERFECT"
Fashion Music
Sound Style Records (Faulty Product)

Cover photos of cleaned up new wave types in various shaggy dog poses don't exactly make for encouragement in the area of withdrawing record from sleeve. Once the stuff's pumping out over the speakers you don't feel so ill disposed towards these European fellows. Influences range from Bowie to general punk all served up in a literate, not very exciting, "we're so cold" context. I wouldn't kick it off a turntable at a party, but I wouldn't steal it from a record store either.

V/D

45's



WIRE (Map Ref./Go Ahead)
Harvest import

The song taken from the new LP is more "vintage" (already ?) Wire than most of the material on the album. Like quite a few songs on the last 2 LPs, it features their unique majestic progressions and english pop vocal harmonies perversely implanted on the most esoteric subject matter you'll ever be able to feed your brain cells. Whatever mathematical emotions "Map Ref" is referring to, you'll probably get closer to them than you've ever thought possible, and that's where the Wire mystery remains intact: it's doing something to you but the effects remain out of analytical reach. I mean I wouldn't keep coming back to what after all appears to be pompous progressive pop sounds attached to abstract linguistic nonsense if something in me didn't know that it is not what it appears to be. It's very interesting that in this particular song the emphasis in on landscape shapes and the meanings behind, because I keep thinking of the Close Encounters theme: in which Dreyfus is inexplicably obsessed by a mountain outline which turns out to be the clue and the key to the mysteries that have invaded his life. The Wire sound works in the same manner: its annoying mixture of ordinary aspects and completely meaningless elements forever suggest something else that may or may not let itself be decoded. Even if the Wire secret pyramid aesthetics are just a sham and a con they must be admired for doing very unusual things with very average base material. I haven't even attempted to focus on the album yet, my initial impressions are similar to Craig's review, but then "Pink Flag" and "Chairs Missing" left me unaffected upon initial contact also. This is not a band to dismiss too soon.

Kick

RED CRAYOLA
(Micro Fish and Chips/The Story So Far)
Rough Trade import
I keep playing this rather regularly. It doesn't hurt one bit, convincing structure, nice sound, modern feel, all that. But I'm waiting to feel something, anything in me once it's over. There is a lot of that sax/funk bass combination that is usually so lethal, but here it is more toyed with than slung across (as with the Contortions) and all you end up is a few minutes of sophisticated hip doodlings. These people have decided that in the future the form will be the content and act accordingly. And the couple of abrupt changes in style and tempo that are scattered about don't seem to erupt from necessity but from restless impatience with their own approach. The front and back cover of the record are rather obsessed with tourism for some unclear reason: a bunch of postcards are used for the lettering on the front, and the back is a picture of typical tourists aimlessly wandering amidst some antique ruins. Does that mean Mayo Thompson feels like a tourist in today's music world? Looking for artifacts and clues that will enable him to relate to his surroundings??

Kick

MADNESS
(Madness/The Prince)
Twin Tone records import
More new look ska from overthere (we mention that country much too much) this time from Madness (see past London columns). The tribute to Prince Buster is fair, other side is quite weak and dismissible, on vinyl at least. Now that this bunch is on Sire expect lots more soon. Oh, I see a few out there mumbling "Who's Prince fuckin' Buster anyway?". When you were but a drooling brat (I know, you still are) the Prince was putting out records faster than anyone, mainly dance records for the skinhead market, some of his output was definitely on the weird side, whole albums full of songs about cocks and pussies, smoking and fucking, kinky grinders and smooth operators, black pussies vs white pussies, dirty pussies and shaved pussies, have I forgotten anything?? Quite offensive by today's "liberated" standards, quite healthy and defiant then. I guess it was what you'd call "specialty records", and Buster had the market cornered. Later he turned to producing others' stuff, but faded away when Jah business moved in on "Pum pum" business. (pum pum is is pussy in jamaican table talk). If he is still around, don't be surprized if he suddenly pops back on this ripe new bandwagon. A golden opportunity for a man of his caliber. Some Madness single review this was!

Kick

PUBLIC IMAGE
(Memories/Another)
Virgin Records import
Johnny would probably kill me for this, but it sounds like his guitar player has caught the current Doors' fever going around the globe. Don't worry, though, the ex-pistol sounds about as much like the expired Jim Morrison as Janis Joplin sounds like Lydia Lunch, but there's a real acid-tinged trip-to-a-castle-in-Spain feeling on this record. Of course, Johnny is in the dungeon, screaming his head off about every little thing, especially on the B side where he sounds more like he's in a castle of pain. Perfect for late night listening.

V.

THE TRANSMITTERS (The ugly man/ The one that won the war/Free Trade)
Step Forward import

A side is a true on the edge outburst, like a race thru night time streets with death or worse breathing down your neck. I don't know where these people come from where they are subjected to such uncomfortable emotions but I don't want to go there. The b side slows down but does not exactly lightens up. Gloom city. Guaranteed to bring uneasiness to your most lighthearted gatherings.

Kick

THE EXISTERS
(Telex Love/Spadina)
Shyanne Records (Canada)
Velvet Undergrounds meets the Monkees. Sound interesting? Yeah? But the songs, especially in the words department, are bad. If they can write some good tunes the Existers might be able to do more than just exist.

CHRIS D.

THE MOLESTERS
(End of Civilization/Girl Behind the Curtain)
Small Wonder Records Import
The pic sleeve shows that the Molesters have some really fun-loving yobs in the art direction field. But why do they get so all-fired perfect when it comes to the production? This close-to-catchy duo of songs ("Girl Behind the Curtain" comes closest) is smothered alive by a mechanical sterility that can't have been in the plans on their mental drawing boards. Or do the Molesters unwittingly represent, in their lackluster recordings, the sorry end of excitement in so much modern sound? A group that has good songs but is so worried about correct studio procedures they stifle themselves?

CHRIS D.

BIG BLACK PUPPETS/WASTED LIVES
(False Hopes/Divorce)
Spoken Records (Vancouver)
Both these are by the same singer with a different line-up in each band. Both are consistently thought out but no one gets hindered by intelligence. These move along, all the kinks ironed out and rock like a convulsive infection. No one will be able to find this record (if distribution for North American product is as poor as it has been compared to our Anglo "brothers" across the water). Wasted Lives was one of my favorite groups on the Vancouver Complication and go one step further with this single.

CHRIS D.

CRASS
(Shaved Women/Reality Asylum)
Crass Records import
Crass isn't the word. "Shaved Women" is an hysterical holy, modal chant that is just the usual boring avant staff despite the descriptive title. "Reality Asylum" is different altogether, a half-rational/half knee-jerk bullshit diatribe aimed at Jesus by one "feminist" who has really been fucked-up by this "male" Christ. Part of it is complicated misunderstanding, a paranoid misinterpretation of good deeds, good intentions as some kind of subconscious, arrogant penis thrust. Some of it hits the cliche nail-on-the-head but it's such a fucking pretentious mess for whatever anger is eloquently unleashed that it't ultimately useless to either women or men in dealing with "Christianity". A disturbing rock thrown into still waters. The result provokes only a muddy mess.

CHRIS D.

THE ROUSERS
(Magazine Girl/Mr. d.j.)
Torso records import
Netherlands pop. Slick and utterly derivative. Lack of imagination is as universal as rock n roll itself. So is the belief that a superficially competent product is a worthy product.

Kick

RHINO 39
(Prolixin Stomp/Xerox-No Compromise)
Dangerhouse Records
"Prolixin Stomp" is the most spine-crushing L.A. piece since Black Flag's EP. Only the B side doesn't stand up that well. And there could be more mid-range on the guitars but let's not split hairs. The singer argues "Let me outta here/I'm not really crazy ... everyone's doing the Prolixin Stomp" which you can sympathize with when you find out Rhino 39 is still in one of those redneck educational asylums (high schools) down Long Beach way.

CHRIS D.

THE BOLIVIANS
Spy In the House of Love/Underground Passion
(Bolivian records)

Wonderful name. Pretty funny tunes. The singer is an exaggeration of all those sexy rock and roll singers from the dawn of time. The guitar lines like somebody learning how to play right in the studio. "Underground Passion" comes complete with odd rhythm and chaos, but its in the faith of silliness. So enjoy.

THE REACTORS EP
Nuclear Waste records
The cream of the San Bernardino hard core! (Come on, how many do they have there anyway?! Ed.) A very worthy release by local standards, makes up in purity and tightness what it lacks in originality. And if you lived in San Bernardino you'd hang on to your punk roots too, what else can make you different from the surrounding mediocity that permeates daily living? Five songs, all with above average lyrics, the band throbs and pulsates like punk history taught them how to, if it was better recorded it would even give the Subs and other Shams a run for their money, and the girl singer has more punch and toughness than most male vocalists on the L.A. scene (put her together with Keith—Black Flag and you got the Donny and Marie of the suburban punk set!) If you still like your sounds to twitch, flail and machine-gun sputter buy this. As they most certainly could use the bread write to:
969 N.F. St.
Suite 16
San Bernardino CA 92410

Kick

THE MOTHMEN
(Does It Matter Irene?/Please Let Go)
Absurd records import
Sometimes awfully close to the edge of psychedelic surrender but somehow resists the pressures of having to be different no matter what the cost. Piles one derivative idea on top of the other and still comes out relatively interesting. These goons could have something original if they stopped chasing every half baked idea that flutters by.

Kick

SLASH PAGE 35

THE MISFITS
(Horror Business/Teenagers from Mars/Children in Heat)
Plan 9 Records

Except for the noise, there's no other consistent quality to the Misfits. They mutilate different subject matter and attitudes with each new release. If you can get untangled from the stupid words, which are unintelligible anyway, you get raspy, sped-up motions similar to the old slippin'-on-a-banana routine. Straightforward emotional harangues with guitars held together by pieces of tendon and cold sweat as translators. This is exciting stuff that'll make you get up out of your easy chairs.

CHRIS D.

PANKRTI;
(Lepi in Prazni/Lubiana Je Bulana)
????? import

From San Bernardino to Yugoslavia: the almost world-wide attraction that punk has for kids hidden in the most remote corners of modern society is certainly not fading as some have been mumbling it would or has since the beginning. This yugoslavian (I think) offering of yet another version of that great mythical wham bam sound of fury proves that punk knows no borders and no time limits. Its inevitability sweeps across from place to place even after some of the pioneers have shrugged the burden off. And yes, they can punk it hard and true in Yugoslavia, just as they can in Stockholm or San Bernardino. Strictly grass roots in most cases, punk will go on popping up under the most unlikely skies. Now tell me, what makes the need for it so widespread?

Kick

THE MONOCHROME SET
(The Monochrome Set/Mr. Bizarro)
Rough Trade import

Back to the present. Not the rough ragged present you and I put up with, but a parallel hazy version for mild-mannered boys who fear noise and crowds, an ill-defined present, a wimp present. The Monochrome Set can't fool you for very long, this is just revamped music hall-harmlessness with the bare minimum of 1979 techno pop punk trimmings. If you look closely you'll see them discreetly soft-shoeing with straw hat and cane. Some present!

Kick

MICK DOREY & THE SIRENS
(Paranoia Station/Jacqueline Foster)
Illegal import

Terribly clever pop stuff with zappy lyrics, mainstream british flash on instrumental padding, a dose of this, a pinch of that, shake well, serve hot, but you're already starving for substance before the bloody thing is over. And the ELO-like backing vocals act as monosodium glutonate, they kill whatever taste may have been there. Not that terribly clever after all.

Kick

THE NOTES
(Rough School Year/Love Gets Lost)
(ironically on ...) Sounds Interesting records

The Paley Brothers and their softball buddies release their musical equivalent of the personal dedications and later-fondly-remembered messages found in an old high school year book. Yea, it's that dumb and vacant. Any grown up boy that can write and sing "I'm a cheerleader again/and our team is picked for number 1" has got serious problems waiting ahead. Either a first rate junk habit or a sexual crime rap will result from such a firm grasp on reality. Until then please keep away from music and recordings, just one of your rosy debilitating fantasies is enough to make any sane person go for a gun. "Don't be mad it's just for fun" chirps the asshole. Hey, you call trying to turn today's troubled youth into drooling retards with Walt Disney souls FUN??!!

I refuse to play the other side, principles and all that. There are no limits as to how far down some slime will grovel to make it. They'll sell their soul for any formula.

Kick

THE EXTREMES EP
Test Tube records

Precocious mish mash from our junior electronic and special effects local combo. The Extremes run from one toy to another before letting anything go beyond its initial stages, it's a dizzying display of unrelated possibilities, a jazzy ad for the latest miracle "music machine". My favorite is a cut with David Byrne-like vocals riding a Liberace piano which ends with rickety reggae beat for a tin soldier parade.

KICK

THE FAKES
(Production/Look-Out)
Deep Cuts records

One more unadulterated slice of punk life. "Production" conveys the horror of daily factory work by being as unimaginative and colorless as the routine it describes, which shows either an admirable dedication to realism or a sad lack of imagination. B side is more uptempo but in no way more sophisticated. As some elements of the initial punk thrust are branching out, experimenting or simply selling out others keep appearing, more intent than ever on keeping the music as raw, uncharming and untouchable as it initially was. I feel a split coming.

Kick

BLUE ICE
(Power Play/I had too much to dream last night)
Cracked records

More from Harrisburg. Substandard heavy metal on one side, thick pedestrian remakr of sixties AM classic on the other, featuring ludicrous synthesizer doodlings. Simply awful.

Kick

THE FEELIES
(Fa Ce La/Raised Eyebrows)
Rough Trade import

"Raised Eyebrows" is a beautiful little motherfucker of a slab that keeps ahead of you with a series of unexpected and brilliant twists, it's as emotionally moving (I won't justify that — either you can tell the difference between the strings of your heart going booooiiiinnnggg and yourself cutting a fart or you can't — in which case I pity you) as it is structurally satisfying *(what's that? Ed.)*. It starts in an almost quaint manner, like some forgotten backing track to one of Eric Burdon's most exhibitionistic/romantic outbursts, keeps it all from getting gooey with a couple of brief dub detours, shifts gears into mid-seventies fluid guitar effusion a la Velvets (on "Wasted"), and gloriously explodes into early Eno hypnotic vocals-and-riff-entwined trance (when Eno got his songs from the heart, not a deck of cardboard cliches). Evidently this description makes it sound like a dubious mish mash, but it really is a great tune that needs no references or analysis, I just thought I'd flash some culture. And it's quite short (the vocals must clock at 20 seconds), it will sweep you along before you get historical or anything stupid like that.

Now that I think of it, I probably should have talked about the A side because that one is first rate competition rock n roll with as much style, power and intelligence as the Buzzcocks when they were in that other kitchen. It also re-invents the sound of the lead guitar with nothing but definitive and utter contempt for that instrument's heavy metal associations and uses the vocal parts with stunning efficiency and efficacity. This record simply jumps out, loaded with more pure pop confidence than Rough Trade has ever been supportive of before.

Kick

THE PACK
(King of Kings/Number 12)
Rough Trade import

Ex Pil drummer what's his canadian face is now running with this pack. If nothing else he must get more exercise than before. Exploding riff on top of exploding riff, machine gun breaks, the Pack uses every sound attack available in the punk artillery. I liked the other single quite a bit but here the results seem gratuitous and rather pointless. As if they set out to prove that they still know how to sound right but have forgotten why that sound mattered in the first place. A practice run with no emotions involved.

Kick

THE REALTORS
"Buy or Beware" EP
Realty records

This band used to be called JJ 180. They come from Santa Cruz but you wouldn't know it by listening to them. This is hard bleak stuff that most certainly does not bring them much of local support. The music is metal colored, knotted and oppressive. They seem to purposefully keep it on one level of monotonous tension and the singer does the same with his long evocations of doom, drug dependence and ever present violence. Unlike other despair dabblers this does not veer into melodrama or nightmare opera, it just stays there on the edge. A strange record that comes up wit all the right ingredients but doesn't blend them into the poisonous brew it could have become. Maybe the lyrics are too prominent. Maybe the music needs more flexibility. Something.....

Kick

PERE UBU
(The fabulous Sequel/Humor Me/ The book is on the table)
Chrysalis import

A taste of the coming New Picnic Time LP. On the A side the definitive rendition of Dante's Inferno translated into a funk tune. Sinners are howling, screeching while the horned devils trade their pitchforks for drums, bass and other modern torture instruments. David Thomas exorcises himself beautifully, his vocal chords are twisted, pinched, plucked and yanked by an impressive number of invisible fiends and the band swings harder and more obsessively than is good for their health. B side has one live cut that is essentially the same vision seen from a slightly different angle and a "mood" piece with feminine blabering over industrial aural support. Now the question is: why does this american group get regularly released in England first? Why is Chrysalis so intent on keeping Pere Ubu a secret? What do they fear will happen if they admit that this is on their label? The mysterious David Thomas sure has found an even more mysterious company.

Kick

OPUS
(The Atrocity/Procedures)
Catatonic records

I've never seen this band live, their set was starting when I gave up on the Rock Against Racism thing and they don't seem to follow the same club trails as others. Now the single sort of aroused my curiosity, there is something interesting hiding in there in spite of the impossible-to-understand vocals, weird recording balance and the confused messiness of the B side. "The Atrocity" is far more precise and unusual, there is a great rhythm pushing it along and the singer does some convincing (although mysterious) raving. Different enough to make you keep an eye out.

Kick

STUDENT TEACHERS
(Channel 13/Xmas Weather)
Ork records

Precise, clean, slick. Tight little bunch of youngsters Jimmy Destri got himself here. These two songs ain't exactly crackling with originality or abandon but the road to commercial success is full of minor sacrifies, isn't it?

Kick

LEMON KITTENS
"Spoonfed & Writhing" EP
Step Forward import
Actually a tiny 33 rpm LP with 7 songs on it, which is probably 7 songs too many for your average consumer: This is genuinely wacked-out-way-gone-into-the-stratosphere music and lyrics, as uncompromizing and virtually ungraspable as the most gone Beefheart stuff was in its days, except maybe more low key as far as noise impact. This lives in a little world of its own and makes no effort to communicate with the other side. Is it Art, madness, fun? There is a burnt out attempt (quite hilarious and inventive in its way) t do the old "Shakin' All Over" classic that may signify a hidden wish for some form of communication. It's certainly going to take a bit more than that to appear on the charts. Don't hold your breath, this bunch is not aiming for world wide takeover. Before we return to the jungle world of "hits," I should point out that it is something quite gratifying to listen to, what makes you cringe the 1st time around may tickle you next time you hear it. I promise that try as you may, all of you human bedsprings out there, you will never ever manage to POGO to it!

Kick

FELT (Index/Break It)
Shangai records import
On my left ... the Intellectual Challenger of The Month!
Yet another recipe: Take an extraordinarily ordinary riff (cf. garage music basics — beginners' manual) that won't put too much strain on your fingers, strum the distorted little mess on a tinny electric guitar until you run out of recording tape, and presto, you have it! No other instruments, no nothing but that endless beginning to a forgettable tune that does not exist. I think they called it "minimal" last year. Of course I'll never play it again (I know the punchline) but never mind that, A STATEMENT WAS MADE, another little stone was added to the wall that separates art from life and wankers from rebels. Who wins? Who loses? Who knows? Who cares? The supposedly advisory title of B side is the only meaningful statement I can detect. PS: I lied: I will play it again, to annoy and embarrass some artistically minded ostriches I know. With my luck, they will justify it in a jiffy.

Kick

BILLY SYNTH
"Here and There" EP
Cracked records
I just knew there would be consequences: this is the first new wave product to come out of Harrisburg, Pa. Radiations *did* leak and the first victims were some local no-goods who of course mutated into modern noise makers overnight. Unfortunately whoever recorded, mixed and produced this had a particularly bad mutation and reversed to a pre-recording studio stage of consciousness and ability, successfully preventing any possible appraisal of whatever it is they did in there. This is just one step BEFORE onedimensional. Only trace of musical life appears to be a synthesizer manned by a kid who watches too much TV. I guess it's Billy himself. O well, whatever Billy was before the meltdown, I bet it's more fun now. Right Billy? Please don't reply "Are we not men?".

Kick

THE FILM CAST
(Life in a film cast/
Stations & Answers) ???????
One day some Bom-type trash historian will rediscover all these end-of-the-seventies 45's and wonder what sort of musical climate could have given birth to such a flood of esoterico experimento releases. 45's used to mean disposable popular consumption, but they also9 mean disposable laboratory work. I'm sure it's good, even if the fuckin' red light that says "Do Not Enter, Artists At Work" keeps flashing above the entrance door. If you want references in this particular "Film Cast" thingie, you call some of it Cabaret Voltaire minus the passion. Yea, I know, not TOO passionate! It also contains some meaningful but undecipherable vocals and some Erik-Satie-In-The-Twilight-Zone moments. One day all these bubbling test tube contents will no doubt come to life.

Kick

ALAN MANN/FREE ARTS BAND
(City Lights/Can't Talk To Her)
Contender records
Graffiti rock. Big city sidewalk white strut rock. Willy De Ville without the red velvet and the show biz atmosphere. Music that erupts from the hips. But what makes it better than itself is the tasty reggae understructure on the B side. The necessity of economy when fucking around with jamaica-tinged rhythms is perfectly understood by this gang although they obviously have the technical abilities to lay it on heavy if they so wished (the tenor sax player sounds ready to tackle a whole sax instrumental LP with no fear of ever becoming boring and repetitive). Even the singer, who sounds as if it would take very little for him to go excessive and caricatural (with a voide like his I'd certainly indulge in some soulful word-bending) refrains and keeps it all edgy and ominous. No flaws, it stays there until the end, it's the sound american record companies are looking for (a yankee Police?) but cannot find since their ear canals are clogged by little wads of old Billboard charts, this stuff could be one of the noble commercial way-outs of their looming downfall but see them search instead for the next Knack and settle for pale clone offshoots (of an already pale humanoid approximation of dead and gone simple beat music).
PS: The reggae influence does not extend to the messge itself, which remains 100% youthful and romance-oriented: "If you weren't so precious, I think I'd have you cut..." We'll even overlook the Dylan paraphrasing in the last few seconds, long as they refrain from finding Christ in public.

Kick

THE LYRES
(How do you know/
Don't give it up by now) Sounds (vaguely) Interesting records
A sample of not-too-fascinating garage music from the good old days. "How do you know" does not stick to the wall, just too simplistic without being obsessed, "bad" music interpreted by nice guys. "Don't give up now" is closer to the (limited) goal, the trebly organ is as it should played by numbers, the rhythm guitar methodically sticks to four reliable chords, one stroke for each, let's not push it, and the inevitable solo is as moronic as the best bygone classics of the genre. Even the vocalist does a fair mid sixties/AM trash nasal routine. Thing is, is this sound still worthwhile because of its aesthetic superiority or simply because of its attitude and (past) meaning? And isn't all this reverential duplicating awfully similar to a final kiss of death? I say young fellas, take what you need from the past and get out of there.

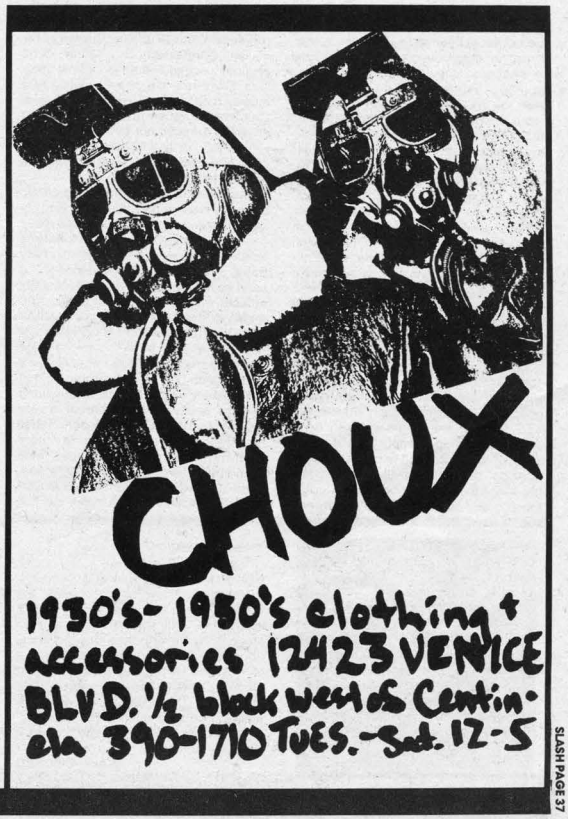
Kick

THE JOHNNYS
(Spy for your love/
Happiness is High Speed/
Stuck on Her)
???
Shit, I haven't caught this bunch live yet and there's a bloody single out! Is there a race going on? Listening to it makes me think of saturday morning cartoon programs on TV with all these badly animated clean cut kids (not forgetting the shaggy dog) who are in a pop band whenever they're not chasing jewel thieves. Pop for seven year olds who despise Ronald McDonald. A unique tinny sound, as if the instruments were made of pink and yellow plastic. Mattel rock.

KICK

THE UK SUBS
(Stranglehold/World War/Rockers)
Gem Import
The Subs: stronghold of (punk) traditions in a sea of treacherously shifting values, pogo refuge in the midst of skanking, moonstomping, jerking upstarts. It reads copyright 1979 after each song but there ain't nothing for them to worry about, this sound might as well be public material. Which brings us to this band's raison d'etre (meaning their excuse for polluting this earth in frog talk): The Subs are big deal with some of the young english public, they are the purists and the heroes the faceless bondaged ranks need to orchestrate their weekly doses of peer group activities. Pogo forever may not be the strongest justification to now put a record out, live it's still the best thing this world has to offer to kids who don't have much to their name 'cept unextinguishable energy. So the Subs will be around for a while, unless the sameness gets to them. In the meantime don't knock it for trivial aesthetic reasons, we're talking sociology here!

Kick



MONSTERS
by Ranking Mr. Lea

I went to go see a monster movie, then I went to the record swamp meet on Yucca and Vine. While me and my brethren skeeted through a righteous stack of old rhythm and blues singles, I screamed behold! Somehow a fair stack of Jamaican beat 45's had been thrown in the pile right between the Dominoes and Little Esther. Priced at 25 cents each, I naturally bought them all, and the best of these was:

"Girl A Love You" by Horace Andy (Channel One records) startled me, because I finally realized that Andy has one of the most bizarre singing styles to ever come out of Jamaica. His voice, like a little boy, is high-pitched and unusually wobbley. It quivers and shakes not unlike Bryan Ferry did at some times. This particular single is the most drum-bass oriented record I've ever heard from him, almost no other instruments entering into the production. Another single by him, "Angel Call Woman" (Kaya records) which I just scored yesterday, is a bit more soulful and although his style is there, it's a bit buried by the production, his voice being more suited to the rhythmic style. Also, pick up his record on the UA series which is very good, and almost unknown. It also includes his beautiful "Love of a Woman" (Jackpot records) which I did review a few issues back. All of it, quite a surprise...

A pair of singles from Dillinger lead to believe there must be two or three Dillingers on the island, because every thing from him is different than the one before. So drastically different that you can't tell it's him sometimes. One of these, "Obeah Bath" (Big Phil records) sounded typical of his style, but then I found "Cup of Tea" (Shaolin Temple records) which has Dillinger SINGING of all things! And not badly. His voice is something like that of young Dennis Brown or Gregory Issacs. The arresting matter is that he's such a renown toaster, and why change what he's made for himself now? My best advice is to find his "I Thirst" single which very recent and very amazing and not bother with either of these. "Obeah Bath" being O.K., but "Cup of Tea" being a horrible monster...

At the meet, I also turned up "Anywhere" by John Holt (Channel One) who is an experienced singer that I've never heard for some odd reason. On this single he could teach G. Issacs a few things about soul singing. It's very soulful and light in mood, good lounging-in-the-sun music. "Stop You Coming and Come" by Ranking Joe (Taxi records) is a long-awaited dub version of the "Soon Forward" hit by Issacs and is too much like U-Roy to warrant any real style. (Too bad, because his "Ask Me No Questions" had lots). Another one here is "Friend & Money" by Michael Campbell (Errol T. Records) which is a version of a Dennis Brown song done up in a high-pitched toasting style, very nervous. Although the backing is nothing short of perfect, Campbell's routine drives me right up the wall. Another monster...

An interesting new toaster on the scene is Ringo, whose "Frankenstein" (Would you believe Greedy Puppy records?) is another one along the lines of "Barnabas Collins" style hits. Real monsters and B-humor are becoming one of the latest JA trends. (Dillinger's version of "Barnabas" being the most extreme example of this style) Ringo sounds quite fresh and exciting, but the record is hurt by a couple of really corny lines. One of the problems good D.J.'s have to conquer is that of using cool lines. Anyway I'll still be curious to hear Ringo's other efforts...

Trustworthy Trinity has come up with "John Saw Them Coming" (Belmont records), which may be a little older. I think I may have passed it up a few months ago. Anyway, it's one of the few really righteous records I've come across this month. Plenty of good Bible lines on this one. All of this, and not to mention that its a version of:

"Hypocrites" by Bob Marley and the Wailers (Tuff Gong records) which was sent to me by a reggae lover in San Francisco. (Many thanks). It's an old track recorded in 1968 and excavated from the Wailer's vaults. Reissued by Marley's own label, it's one of the most beautiful songs to ever come from the whole fucking island. An example of the Wailers (Tosh, Marley, Bunny) during their incredible prime. Marley sings with longing and romance, but speaks of the "hypocrites" and how they "cut, cut, cut, against them one another". An interesting contradiction, like Jamaica itself, in that how can people who live in a paradise be so troubled. The Wailers sing with beauty comparable to the beauty of the island, but the subject is a serious one of lies and deception. A monstrously wonderful record. A song I wish everybody could hear at least once in their lives.

Syonara,
Ranking Jeffrey

VINYLLY

by Bo Clifford

BRIAN JAMES: Ain't That A Shame + 2
BUZZCOCKS: Everybody's Happy Nowadays + 1
MONOCHROME SET: He's Frank + 1
NECESSARIES: You Can Borrow My Car + 1
CHELSEA: Decide + 1

At best the most important and at least the most interesting thing to happen to the US record industry this year is the arrival of these first releases from the International Record Syndicate (known as IRS). That really is a lot of words to describe the simple con Miles Copeland has pulled on A&M (who distribute the stuff). He's convinced them ... get this ... to release good English singles in this country with really nice sleeves and everything. Who knows, this sorta thing could catch on! The first three listed have been out for a while and have already been covered as imports; let's start with the Necessaries. These guys are from New York (so, they're not all English) and this record was supposed to come out some time ago. What you get is a car song of the modern variety, with a lot of chrome and flash. And if you do loan him your car you get his sister in return. How could you know that he was gonna hold up a liquor store and steal your car? That's what ya get for dealing with strangers from New York. A really good guitar record. Beach Boys meet XTC The Clelsea single is taken from their recent lp (import only, but scheduled to come out here eventually). "Decide" is very Clash-like, say around the second album period; but it's got a much better sound to it. Very lean with no frills. Their album may be a bit much, however Chelsea in short doses is fine by me. IRS has also released a Fashion Music EP which I haven't seen yet.

GARY CHARLSON: Shark + 1 (Titan)
SHAKE SHAKES: You Can Run + 1 (No town)
RATTLERS: On The Beach + 1 (Ratso)
LYRES: How D You Know + 1 (Sounds Interesting)

A bunch of particularly American records. Gary Charlson is from Kansas City and he's made a very fine pop single (his second one actually). This is a cover of an unreleased D. Twilley tune originally scheduled as the follow up to "I'm On Fire". It's near-perfect radio music. The flip, "Brown Eyes", is a Charlson original that stands up to anything cranked out by Twilley, Lowe, Kihn, Petty, or any of those other more celebrated popsters. Great homemade records still exist!

The Shake Shakes have a melodic harmony sound on "You Can Run". I know that sounds real limp, but it's really a very insinuating record full of folk-rock echoes. Quite a grower. "Who's Gor My Baby" shows a very different side to the band as it's a wild late-model rockabilly number with some very hot guitar. And these guys told me that reggae was their main influence!?/// Having Joey Ramond as your brother has got to be inspiring and the Rattlers debut shows a good band that is only going to get better. Joey's bro Mitch is in this band and the family sense of humor is very much present in "On The Beach." It has teen appeal weaved thru a story involving sea monster, Three Mile Island, and the guy's missing girlfriend. More subtle than the Ramones that's for sure. They don't have it down pat just yet, but I think they'll get there. Ex-DMZ vocalist Monomann has a new band in Boston called the Lyres. "How Do You Know" has all the murky feel of "96 Tears" mixed with the drive of all four volumes of PEBBLES (Check 'em out!!)

PUBLIC IMAGE: Memories + 1 (Virgin)
MEKONS: Work All Week + 1 (Virgin)
DISTRACTIONS: Time Goes By So Slow + 1 (Factory)
MADNESS: One Step Beyond + 1 (Stiff)

If Public Image continue to make singles as good as this one and their previous "Death Disco", the second album should be as riveting as "... Bollock" was in its time. You know their sound by now: jagged guitars, thundering bass, rock steady drums. The difference this time is that I can actually understand most of what John is singing about. The flip, "Another", is not quite as interesting as the A-side. Watch for the metal box set around Christmas. The Mekons' previous singles have been favorites around my house, but "Work All Week" is a disappointment. It just doesn't affect me as much as "Where Were You" (their last 45). Kind of flat performance that never really gets going. "Unknown Wrecks", the B-side, is not much better. Still high hopes for the album that should be coming soon. The Distractions made a stab at it earlier this year with a well-received 12" on TJM Records. On this new single their sound has a fullness to it that was lacking before. The song is strong and the band knows it, giving out a subtle power that adds tension to the record. "Pillowfight" is just as good and has a nice echoed guitar and farfisa duet in the middle. More pure pop than the Undertones, but definitely in the same ballpark. "Hey, you! Don't watch that! Watch this!" That's the way Madness opens their new single and we're off on a nutty ska trip that won't let ya sit down! One of the few records this month with the sound of fun. Like Johnny & the Hurricanes in a reverb culture warp, with saxes bouncing off the walls. One of the feet!

PURPLE HEARTS: Millions Like Us + 1
BACK TO ZERO: Your Side of Heaven + 1
CULT HERO: I'm A Cult Hero + 1

The Fiction label, which gave us the wonderful "Boys Don't Cry" by the Cure, is back with several new releases. Purple Hearts is one of the much touted mod revival bands and "Millions Like Us" has a lot of that early Who feel. It's too bad that it doesn't have a crisper production. Not enough bite in the guitars, not enough pruple. What? The other side, "Beat That", is a better song and the record shows potential. "Your Side of Heaven" by Back To Zero also has a bit of modness to it. Not as obvious as the P. Hearts, it comes off as amore solid performance. More regular rock than anything else. Decent songs, good playing; nothing really inspiring about it. The Cult Hero 45 hs a nice satirical feel to it. Something like a Johnny Moped single done the Europop way. Lotsa strange textures going in and out of the mix. Some very funny lines, too. The B-side is called "I Dig You" (didn't Moped actually do something like that?) and it's more of the same vein. Good, throwaway type of record.s

That about wraps up another one of these things called Vinylly. Remember, all mail to:

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THE DAMNED
(Smash it Up/Burglar)
Chiswick Records Imports

No matter how much I think the Damned are a bunch of thick-headed, obnoxious, dull shits both on and off stage, they nevertheless put out some good records. Overproduced "Smash it Up" is one of the best since the first album. Captain Sensible plays guitar better and Dave Vanian proves once again to be their main asset. "Burglar" isn't that hot, living up to the B of its B side designation.

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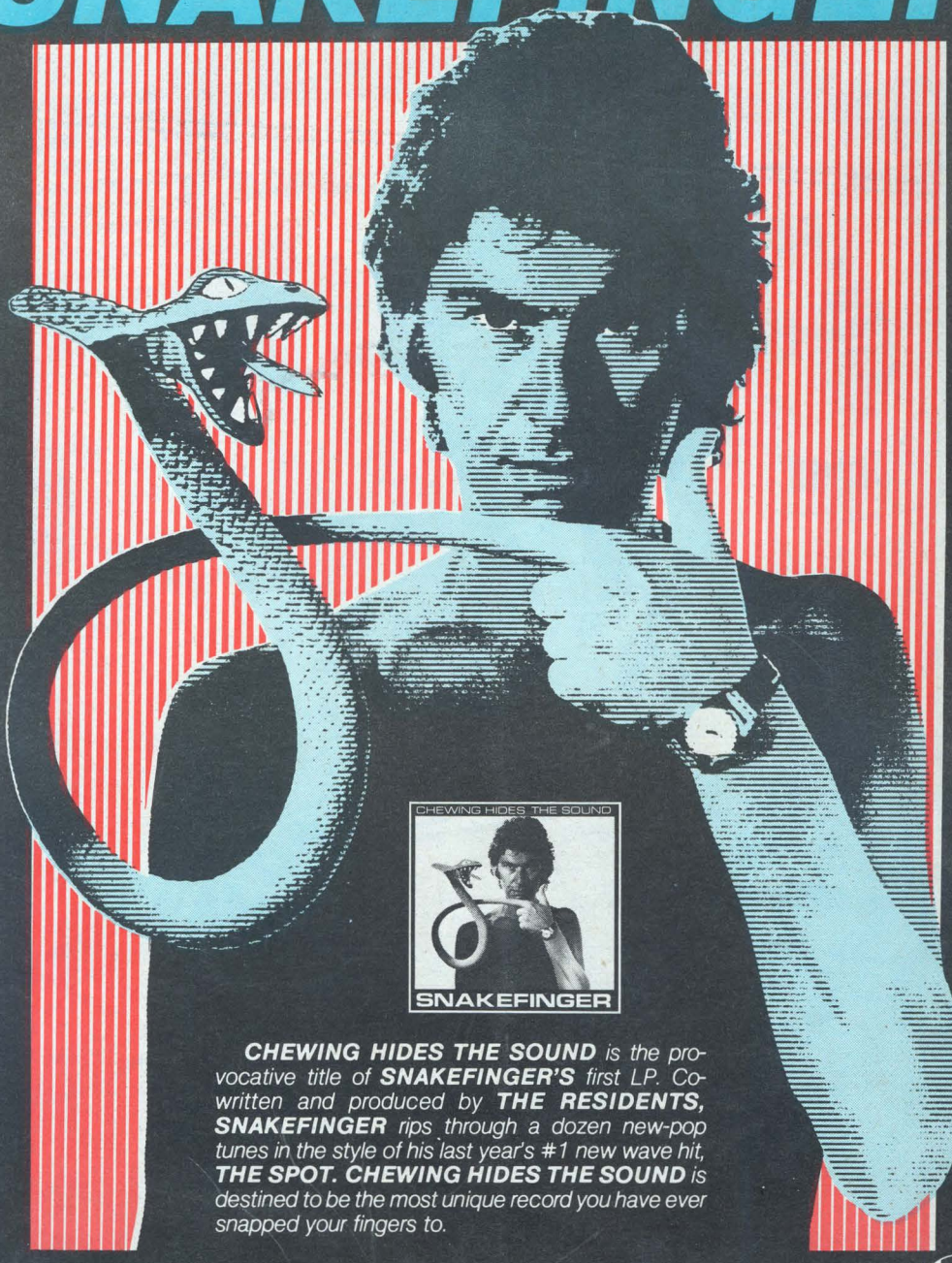
SYNOPSIS: JUDY has been kidnapped by cockroaches. Jimbo & Smoggo have gone to the office of Barely Newport, private executron in hopes of finding her. Read on...
JIMBO!
·GARY·PANTER·11-6-1979·
NOTE: I didn't draw last months Jimbo. I don't know who did. It wasn't me. I was out of town. Maybe that's why it was so Bad. I didn't do it. Really.
YA See, this Little-bitty Ratomatic Servo-mechanism will home into the distinct odor of the cockroach gang Following them to their hide out. you Follow the Rat, it Follows the roaches, simple, See??
Will it really work, Mr. Newport?!!
They don't call me the Clint Eastwood of Cubism For Nothin', kid.
MEANWHILE...
YOU GOYS BE CAREFUL She's A REAL JACK-KNIFE!!
IS That GIRL Secure?
Yeah, she's tyed up over there.
William & Percy
© G. Panter 9.13.79
HEY PERCY LOAN ME TEN BUCKS.
WAIT A MINUTE! What do YOU WANT IT FOR?
FER A While! Gimme Ten, Buddy
WELL OF ALL The...
FREEZE! MISTER!
DUH!! MISSED
Pow!!!

SNAKEFINGER



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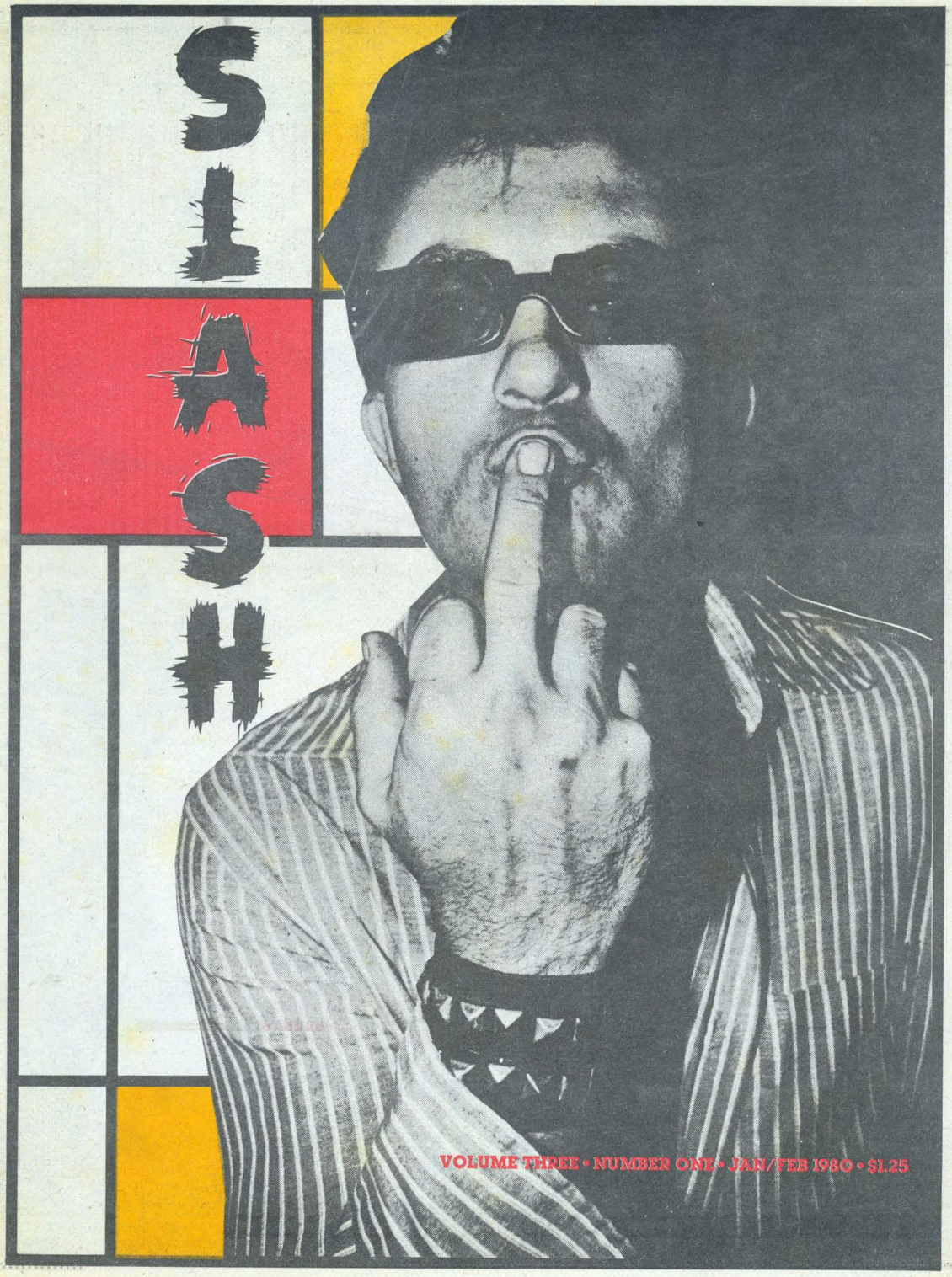

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LOCAL SHIT

It's been a while since we last stuck our noses in the various going ons of this city's so called alternative scene and frankly the thought of going back in time and trying to recall who did what to whom and why bores me something monstrous, and this writer is finding it increasingly harder to differentiate between the rats living in this particular sewer and the rats inhabiting the other sewers. Probably just a case of the after-holiday blues and a lingering disappointment due to the failure of any decent earthquake to materialize as promised by some local nutcase. Anyway, optimism, joie de vivre and mindless contentment are probably just round the corner, in the meantime bear with me as we briefly examine a few events of shattering significance and a few more slightly less so.

*Hard-core combo Black Flag loses lead singer and six pack carrier Keith and gains a new frontman in Ron, and initial fears on the part of their rabid fans were soon forgotten as Ron proved to be quite an active lad himself.

*According to a press release sheet recently received in our office the Edinburgh (that's Scotland, stupid) based label Fast records is planning a compilation album of various groups they've taken a fancy to which will include two tracks by the never mentioned but very worthy of attention Middle Class.

*The always mentioned Germs have been again, this time in the very proper L.A. Times, which finally agreed to run Richard Meltzer's review of their album (you know what label). The very understated article names G.I. the album of the year, a statement which must have made new music pundit Robert Hilburn ("I've seen the future of rock n roll and it's four years ago") drop his Costello/Springsteen platters in bewilderment.

*The last benefit of the seventies was in honor of the very loosely scheduled No magazine at the club 88, where Black Flag, Castration Squad, Top Taco Jimmy the Plugz and others packed the joint and helped the cause of struggling publications trying to get on their financial feet. The first benefit of the eighties took place at the same 88 where Go Gos, Gears, Catholic Discipline and others helped Margo collect enough greenery to cover the cost of her legal fees (see last issue for details). And speaking of struggling publications, the long awaited new issue of Flipside should be out any day, loaded to the staples with countless reasons to believe in the music and, as the rastas would say, the players of instruments, or so this writer fervently hopes.

*The Hong Kong management threw a free chinese New Year dinner in honor of all the bands that had played there during the past year. Egg rolls and noodles were enthusiastically trampled and sometimes eaten by the starving mob but the noisemakers and funny paper hats were definitely badly cooked. An unknown mean-looking punk band from out of town was scheduled to serenade the crowd but after a couple of altercations with strangers they dismantled their equipment and got the proverbial fuck out of there, announcing that there were faggots in the room and their principles forbade them to entertain such types. Such commitment warms the heart.

*Still speaking of the Hong Kong, their specially made fortune cookies that were distributed at the end of the year with the little piece of paper inside reading "When in Chinatown and not at the Hong Kong, you in the wong place says Confucious" was worth a good chuckle. Please someone make me laugh again.

*I'll trade-you-two-slightly-used-managers-for-one-brand-new-one department: Malcolm McLarens are hard to find these days, but everybody keeps trying. Go Go's are trying out more managers than new songs, their latest find being a certain John Ingham, a man once associated with the Weirdos, and, way before that, the rapidly rising Generation X (who dat?). The superb Fear have recently put their hopes in the hands of someone who used to be involved with antediluvian balladeers Three Dog Night (ask your older brother) and the Bags have taken their fate into their own hands and asked their manager to go for a long holiday in Afghanistan.

*A symbolic way to start the decade: While all the big record companies were shut for business, nursing their hangovers and trying not to think about the bleak future the entire Slash records staff was at the office, nursing their hangovers but still moderately imbibing in company of band members of "X", attorneys, managers, photographers and other necessary riff raff. The occasion: the official signing of said band to Slash records. The date: January 1st. The consequences: too heavy to get into. As I write this the group is in the studio, working on the album, and there's a leak in the office ceiling, which has nothing to do with it. Except that perhaps it qualifies as my first official disconnected stream of thoughts of the decade.

*Another big project which got its official kick off on the same occasion was the filming of a feature length documentary on the L.A. scene, tentatively titled "The Decline of Western Civilization". Directed and masterminded by Penelope Spheeris, it will focus on the live performances of many of L.A.'s favorite hard core heavyweight bands, the behind the scenes scenes and the innermost thoughts and activities of L.A.'s more colorful "punk fixtures".

A soundtrack album on Slash records (sigh, gosh, gee whizz, how do you guys do it?) is to be expected as an intrinsic part of the package. The lunchboxes and toy accessories (scaled plastic replica of the Hong Kong complete with 10 assorted punkeroo puppets with removable limbs, 5 tiny collapsible tables and chairs and one miniature P.A. system — batteries not included) are being designed right now, and should make wonderful 1980 Xmas presents.

And now, quickly, before I put myself to sleep:

*Lydia Lunch, now minus the Jerks was in town a few days ago to promote her solo album on Ze records, "Queen of Siam". Lydia is still the most contemptuous girl in the business (see interview next issue) but was grateful that at least the stupid california sun didn't shine while she was here. She and her new band will be extensively touring these parts soon, opening for the likes of Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers.

*Also in town working on an album are Eno and David Bowie, who when not in the studio are building a house in the desert. You're all invited to the house warming party, just say *Slash* sent you.

*Nervous Gender are temporarily reduced to a trio as Phranc left the band and is now a full time member of Catholic Discipline, but they may soon enlist the services of an eight year old drumming prodigy.

*The imposing rastafarian tribe of Ras Michael and the Sons of Negus are in San Francisco and may come down to L.A. for a series of yet unannounced gigs. I and I suggest you keep your ears open.

*In case you haven't noticed, the seventies are kaput, the eighties have started and so far nothing is too different. So don't just sit there, dummies, do something. We're watching you.

*A while back the Suburban Lawns were contacted by the William Morris Agency and asked to immediately stop using the name "Gidget" in their shows, recordings, etc. The Lawns' song "Gidget Goes to Hell" apparently represents some kind of defamation of character, or whatever you call taking a dumbshit mythical creature with no redeeming qualities and giving it the little bit of dimension it never had in the first place. The Agency in question represents the Gidget creator (must be a more appropriate name for such cases). Seems to us said creator should be enormously grateful to a song suggesting that Gidget is going somewhere, anywhere.

Barbara in the middle (Class) pic: Melanie

RACE WITH THE DEVIL

Letter to the Princess.....

At 5:30 in the afternoon, I'm locked up with C.B.S. news, and the red sun on my walls. Connie Chung says this and that and everybody wants to know if there's going to be a war. I don't know, Princess. The Rastas say the west will perish, and so it may. That reggae jive has a lot more truth in it than any of us would care to admit to. People come down on my every day because Rasta does not include their souls to be saved. Either that or they think it's plain stupid and silly. I don't give a shit what they think. Rasta is not for me either, but I can admire anyone who chooses a philosophy so intense, one of honor and honesty. Rasta musicians carry that with them, and I doubt any of us could carry even half the weight. They sing of black unity. We don't have the fucking slightest idea what unity is, and maybe we should perish. You can be apathetic or decadent, you can be whatever you want, princess, but in honest language, that's just failure .....

This rock & roll biz is a bad example of human life. Everybody fucks everybody. Everybody hustles everybody. Everybody clings by their teeth to the opportunity to be one up on the next person, so they can lay down their rotting guilt-complexes on the people, who struggle under them. They dominate and coldly kill weaker people's dreams. Which is not forgivable.

You know lots of enlightened, "free-thinking" people (sic.) And they want your company in both body and mind, but nobody wants your "soul". You think you have loyal "friends" and loyal "lovers" but actually you don't have anyone. You are different from them all, because you want to trade emotions as well, but your enlightened friends either crushed or lost sight of their "souls", this human thing, this emotional quality which is the base feeling of this species of ours. This quality is the sole weapon of good over evil, and so they can be over self-conscious, "artists", public actors, and fantasize themselves a character in the movie of their choice, and ignore all this. They can put this quality to sleep or death. And when they do this, their expression becomes meaningless to all but zombies like themselves. They simply exist. Their music and painting are as expressive as some old wino in the alley, yelping poetry into the night air. They have given up. They backed out and took the easy road. Everybody is born to help this species, but they found it easier to JUST NOT CARE .... They chose to be the sheep and not the shepherd.

The greatest crime I can imagine is that many of these people do often pull down the hearts of the few who aspire to greater deeds than survival, of the deep-feeling women whose sympathies are abused, of the honest men who give their trust only to be surrounded by treachery.

And so it goes on, except that an even fewer number of us are "aware". And, being "aware", we show total suspicion for all. We abide by jungle laws. We are both moral and primitive, and we cannot be hustled and we cannot be killed. The few who realize this struggle and chose to help the weaker ones are the strongest people on earth. They can race with the Devil and know that they can win. So you heard there was going to be a war, well, Princess, there's always been a war. You are at war right now.....

—Mr. Ranking Jeffrey Lea Pierce

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LETTER section

(this letter was typed on green Rock Against Racism letterhead. Ed)

Kickboy,
I HAD THE CHOICE TO WATCH THE FORTY THOUSANDTH RERUN OF GET SMART OR REPLY TO YOUR REVIEW OF THE FIRST ROCK AGAINST RACISM FREE CONCERT OCT 27TH. I FLIPPED A COIN, AND GUESS WHO WON?
IT'S NOT SO MUCH FOR YOUR POOR OBSERVATIONS, IT'S NOT SO MUCH FOR YOUR RED BAITING OVERTONES, IT'S YOUR SMUGNESS THAT GOT NEXT TO ME. IT'S SO COMFY TO BE ICONOCLASTIC, AND TO ACCUSE FLEDGLING ORGANATIONS LIKE L.A.R.A.R. OF MISANTHROPIC ENDEAVORS. PATHETIC ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN? NO FIRST RATE ORGANIZING? WHAT DO YOU THINK WE ARE, ON LET ME REPHRASE THE QUESTION, WHAT DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD BE? AVALON ATTRACTIONS? IF WE HAD THE BUCKS LIKE THAT CAPITALIST OUTFIT WE COULD PUT ON FIRST RATE SHOWS. IF YOU WANT TO HELP US, SEND YOUR UNEARNED MONEY TO R.A.R. PO BOX 242 POMONA 917 66. YOU PROBABLY WON'T, INSTEAD YOU WILL CONTINUE TO WRITE ERRONEOUS ANTI-POLITICAL ARTICLES IN YOUR TRENDY RAG (GEE.. I KNOW PUNK LINGO) OH BY THE WAY, YOU FAIL TO MENTION ANY WORD ABOUT THE SHORT JAM SESSION BETWEEN CALCOTE (REMEMBER HIM, THE BLACK DUDE?) AND ROCK CANDY (ASIAN AND WHITE WOMEN) IF THAT IS BEING TOKENISTIC, WELL YOUR HELP IS WELCOME. YOU CAN HELP VIVIFY R.A.R. BY IGNORING US. HEY, THERE'S A NEW GROUP CALLED ROCK AGAINST EXCITMENT, THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE A CONCERT, FEATURED ACTS WILL BE "THE GRATEFUL DEAD KENNEDIES" MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ORNITHOLOGIST CLUB OF BALDWIN PARK AND... GET THIS, CATHOLIC DISCIPLINE.

DISREGARDS,
JAY MORRIS
MINISTER OF POGOING
R.A.R. L.A. CHAPTER

DEAR MINISTER OF THAT INVISIBLE BUT WELL MEANING ORGANISATION,
ALL I SAID IS THAT I DID NOT LIKE THE CONCERT BECAUSE IT SUCCESFULLY MADE A JOKE OF SOMETHING THAT COULD HAVE BEEN WORTHY OF OUR RESPECT AND SUPPORT: THE MUSIC I HEARD MOSTLY SUCKED, THE NUMEROUS IDEOLOGICAL PROMO SPOTS OFFERED BY THIS OR THAT FACTION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY BROTHERHOOD WERE ROUTINE JIVE AND OUT OF PLACE (GHETTO KIDS THINK WE'RE ALL CRAZY ANYWAY, AND ALL THAT RETHORIC AIN'T GOING TO HELP THE IMAGE) AND THE WAY IT WAS PUT ON MADE IT A NON-EVENT. IT WAS A FART IN THE HURRICANE BECAUSE NO ONE HAD A NEW APPROACH TO OFFER, A NEW REASON TO BELIEVE IN THE IDEALS OR A NEW WAY TO PROVE IT. KNOWING WHAT SHOULD BE AND HAVING ABOUT IT TO OTHERS WHO ALSO KNOW WILL NEVER MAKE IT HAPPEN, EVERYBODY GETS TO FEEL RIGHTEOUS AND THE WORLD GOES ON STINKING.MUSIC DOES NOT BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER, TEAR GAZ DOES. ITS NOT MONEY YOU NEED TO GET YOUR POINT ACROSS, IT'S DETERMINATION NOT TO PLAY BY THE RULES, FIT IN YOUR SLOT AND ACT OUT YOUR PART. IT'S NOT FUCKIN' "SMUGNESS" TO SEE SOME OUT OF TOUCH LOONIES AND INSECURE INTELLECTUALS FOOLING THEMSELVES INTO THINKING THEY WILL MAKE CHANGES AND THEN POINT OUT WHY IT'S NOT SO, IT'S USING YOUR BRAIN WITH YOUR CROTCH LOADED ON WISHFUL THINKING. SAME FOR MY SO CALLED "RED BAITING OVERTONES". THINKING AMERICAN COMMUNISTS ARE MORE OUT TO LUNCH THAN HARE KRISHNA ZOMBIES DOES NOT MAKE ME A JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY MEMBER, NIT WIT! BUT I SUPOSE A R.A.R. MEMBER IS BOUND TO SEE THINGS STRICTLY IN BLACK OR WHITE. ANYWAY STICK TO THE CAUSE, FEEL SORRY FOR TRENDY NIHILISTIC BASTARDS LIKE ME WHO CAN NOT FIND A NOBLE IDEAL AND KEEP THE FAITH. SPEAKING OF WHICH, CATHOLIC DISCIPLINE STRONGLY ADVISES YOU TO KEEP YOUR LIBERAL ASS OUT OF THEIR PATH OR THEY MIGHT DISMANTLE MORE THAN JUST MELODIES.

***

SLASH,
I'M SICK TO DEATH OF FUCKING BEACH PUNKS, I'M SICK OF SEEING AND SMELLING THESE HAT-FACED ASSHOLES IN SWEATERS AND FLOODPANTS. THEY ARE THE PHONIEST BUNCH OF REBELS EVER. SOME OF MY FAVORITE ABODES HAVE BEEN OVERTAKEN BY THESE SUNBURNED RODENTS. LAST NIGHT I WENT TO SEE TWO OF L.A.'S BEST NEW GROUPS, HEY TAXI AND STEPMOTHERS AT THE HONG KONG, UNFORTUNATELY THE OPENING ACT WAS A TERRIBLE LITTLE PISTOLS RIP-OFF GROUP CALLED THE SCREWS - A HORRID BEACH GROUP. STEPMOTHERS AND HEY TAXI WERE GREAT ALTOUGH THEY HAD TO PLAY TO A RUDE BUNCH OF SHIT-STAINED BABIES WHO CARED ABOUT NOTHING MORE THAN GETTING ATTENTION. THEN THIS VERMIN TRASHED THE PLACE WHICH HAD TO CLOSE EARLY.
IN SPITE OF MY DISGUST I REALLY LIKE THE BEACH BANDS IN GENERAL, CROWD AGENT ORANGE RED CROSS ETC, IT'S JUST THEIR AUDIENCE THAT OUGHT TO FUCKING GROW UP.

CHUCK
PASADENA.

ANY BEACH PUNK INTERESTED IN CHUCK AND HIS WHEREABOUTS CONTACT ME. THIS KIND OF TALK SHOULD BE NIPPED IN THE BUD, THE SOONER THE BETTER.

KICK

***

DEAR SLASH,
PERSONALLY NAICOL SINATRA IS A GREAT GUY BUT I HASTEN TO DISAGREE WITH HIS LETTER. THE BEST THING ABOUT SLASH CRITICS IS NOT LITERAL AND IS ONLY PERSONAL VENDETTAS. I AN A LEAN AND HUNGRY WEIRDOS DYING HARD, BUT I IN NO WAY COMPLAIN WITH THE SHABBY RONANTIC (MAICOL'S EGO TURNS TO HIM DUE TO POSITIVE FEEDBACK). I MAY THINK DIX IS ELECTRIC NOT SLICK, OR WONDER IF HEART BANGING ISN'T A CHEAP COVER UP FOR PREPERRING TO GO TO BED WITH THE KIDDIES, BUT ANYWAY WHAT IMPRESSION HAS WILL GOT TO GO ON BUT HIS OWN? I WAS THERE THINKING DESTROY ALL MUSIC BUT DIDN'T COMPLAIN TO J.D. AFTERWARDS: SO THAT'S MY IMPRESSION. I DON'T CARE ABOUT SLASH BUT IT'S THE ONLY PLACE I'VE FOUND IT. FROM THE SAME ISSUE: " I GUESS MY BULLSHIT DETECTOR IS MORE RELIABLE THAN THEIRS" ANTI-CLASH. OR: "WORSHIP FOR FUCKING ROCK AND ROLL SIN GER IS ONE OF THE WORST THINGS THIS COUNTRY HAS EVER ALLOWED". WELL, IT'S YOUR FAULT WHAT WILL HAPPEN. YOU'LL HAVE THE SAME OLD BULLSHIT YOU WERE ORIGINALLY AGAINST. FUCK YOU FOR THAT." ANTI-DARBY, ETC. GREAT! SO WHAT DO YOU WANT? JOHN DENNY'S SCARF IS YELLOW AND RINGS HIS NECK TWICE? LITERALLY BULLSHIT WHY DO YOU EXIST??

IN COGNITO

DEAR IN,
YOUR THINKING PATTERNS ARE SO WIGGLY YOU'VE MADE US ALL ENVIOUS. YOU SHOULD BE THE OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN OF THE SLASH IDEOLOGY WITH A GIFT LIKE YOURS. NOW WHAT WAS THAT YOU SAID?

KICK

SLASH,
WHEN I LOOK OUT MY WINDOW I SEE FLUORESCENT SPANDEX CLAD FIORUCCI ELEMENTS GETTING DROWNED IN THE RAIN = HURRAH. WHEN I GO DOWN BOWRY I SEE JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN IN EDDIE-OF-ZACHARY-ALL SUITS BOBBING UP AND DOWN YELLING "PUNK ROCK" AND DRINKING COKE. WHEN I GO TO MAX'S I TRY TO DANCE AND SOME CHICK'S PRICK CALLS ME A MILITANT DYKE. WHEN I GO TO SQUAT TO SEE JOHN CALE I AM ASSAULTED BY ELEVEN BACKPACKS, NOT TO MENTION A LOT OF HAIR, WHEN I GO TO COLUMBIA UNIV. PUB TEN GIRLS ASK ME IF I'M INTO "PUNK ROCK", I PAY $ 5. TO SEE A DECENT SHOW AT TRY, I'M NOT HOMESICK FOR LOS ANGELES. I GOT A GOOD JOB AT A BOOKSTORE AND I'LL BE OK. I EAT RICE PUDDING. I READ DOSTOYEVSKY. I LISTEN TO BARTOK.

DESPONDENTLY YOURS,
A. KOWALSKI

SOUNDS LIKE THE GOOD LIFE TO ME. GOOD TO SEE MEANINGFUL LIVES STILL CAN BE FOUND. A LESSON TO US ALL.

KICK

***

HEY SLASH,
WELL MY PARENTS ARE ALREADY DRIVING ME NUTS, I'M BORED AND I HAVE ONLY BEEN HOME FROM SCHOOL FOR A WEEK. I WORK A CASH REGISTER IN A FUCKING K-MART STORE PART-TIME WHERE ALL THE FUCKING FULL-TIME MIDDLE AGED IDIOTS WHO MANAGE OR RUN DEPARTMENTS THINK THEIR JOB IS OF SUCH IMPORTANCE AND TAKE THEMSELVES SOOOO SERIOUSLY. WHAT COULD POSSIBLY MAKE THESE LIME BRAINS THINK THAT THEY HAVE ANY INTEGRITY IN THEIR POSITION? THEY'RE SO FULL OF SHIT.
I AM SO SICK OF ALL THE FUCKING FRATERNITY BOYS AND REDNECKS TALKING ABOUT NUKING IRAN AND HARASSING ANY NEAR OR MIDDLE EASTERN STUDENTS SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY LOOK IRANIAN. IT IS TOO TIRESOME, PEOPLE KEEP TALKING ABOUT MONEY AND GAS. I'M A FUCKING COLLEGE STUDENT AND ALL I HEAR ABOUT ARE EVERYONE'S PROBLEMS. LIFE IS ONE GREAT YAWN. HOW CAN WE GET EXCITED OR WORKED UP OVER SOMETHING WHEN EVERYTHING WE SEE IS REDUCED TO AN ABSURD EXCUSE FOR INTEGRITY? ARTISTIC CREATION?

DREAR

OH DEAR, SOUNDS LIKE AN OLD FASHIONED PERSONALITY CRISIS TO ME.
HAVE YOU TALKED TO YOUR COUNSELLOR? YOUR COACH? YOUR PRIEST OR RABBI? BUT DO NOT FRET YOU SENSITIVE THING, THE DRAFT IS BEING BROUGHT BACK, IT WILL WASH YOUR DOUBTS AWAY AND PUT LEAD IN YOUR HEAD. DON'T GO EXISTENTIAL WHEN EVERYBODY GOES NEANDERTHAL, YOU'LL MISS THE FUN. FORGET CAMUS AND SUBSCRIBE TO GUNS & AMMO. HAVE A BEER WITH FEAR. ALL THIS"INTEGRITY" NONSENSE WILL BOTHER YOU NO MORE.

RUGGED KICK

A BIT MORE ON PAGE 46....

THE SLASH STAFF CHART

MORK WILLIAMS
- I Like Electric Motors — Patrick D. Moore
- Unknowns Wrecks — The Mekons
- Dragnet LP — The Fall
- Fight For Your Country — Balls (tape)
- Made in Germany — Michael O'Brien

PEA
- Albatross — PIL
- Goodbye — Pere Ubu
- Mind Your Own Business — Delta 5
- A Figure Walks — The Fall
- Fire — Capital Letters

RANKING JEFFREY
- Mainliner — Little Esther Phillips
- Cruisin' — Smokey Robinson
- Hole Ina Bucket — Nigger Kojack & Liza
- Why Are You Smiling — The Fall
- Stand By Me — Ben E. King

SANYO
- I Said Everybody — The Bpeople (tape)
- Dogfood — The Human Hands (live)
- What Can I Do — Nervous Gender (live)
- Knife Ladder — Non
- Andrea — The Fall (live)

STEVE
- I'm Not Down — The Clash
- Take Me to the River — Talking Heads
- And I Am Waiting — Laurence Ferlinghetti

V.
- Scratch On the Wire LP — Lee Perry
- James Brown at the Apollo Vol 2 live LP
- 20 Jazz Funk Greats LP — Throbbing Gristle
- The End — Nico
- Scarface (movie)

CRAIG LEE
- 96 Tears LP — ? and the Mysterians
- Metal Box — PIL
- The Specials LP
- Mind Your Own Business — Delta 5
- He's The Pope — Snuky Tate
- 20 Jazz Funk Greats LP — Throbbing Gristle

CAITLIN
- And No Birds Do Sing — PIL
- Gloomy Sunday — Billy Holiday
- Jon Brown — Blind Boy Grunt
- Berlin LP — Lou Reed
- Earthworn — Flipper

CHATTY CHATTY MOUTH
- Give Thanks and Praise LP — Well Pleased and Satisfied
- Heart of the Congos LP — The Congos
- Heart of the Congos LP — the Congos
- Rastafari on a Pinnicle — Leroy Sibbles/Lee Perry
- Scratch on A Wire LP — Lee Perry
- Guns of Brixton — the Clash

CHRIS D.
- Slippin Round Some Universal Corner — X (live)
- Dragnet LP — The Fall
- White Minority — Black Flag (live)
- Waiting for the Gas — Fear (live)
- The Chameleon — The Saints
- 20 Jazz Funk Greats LP — Throbbing Gristle

BO CLIFFORD
- Intensified Ska 62/66 LP
- Abba's Greatest Hits Vol. 2
- Eton Rifles — The Jam
- Hindu Gods (of Love) — Lipstick Killers
- New Demos — The Crawdaddys

GARY PANTER
- Quadrophenia — (the movie)
- Looking At You — The Damned
- I Believe In — The Buzzcocks
- Small Was Fast — Pere Ubu
- Flee Past's Time Ape Elf LP — Orchid Spaniofora

KICKBOY FACE
- Poptones — PIL
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- I Believe In — The Buzzcocks (live)
- We're All Prostitutes — The Pop Group
- Sabotage — John Cale
- Earthworm — Flipper

MELANIE
- London Calling LP — The Clash
- One Step Beyond LP — Madness
- Everybody's Jumping Someone Else's Train — The Cure

FASTER THAN YOU—
Phast Phreddie, neat guy.

With a Charlie Parker record on the turntable and a dizziness in my head, the forever Fast One commences the latest installment of the already legendary FASTER THAN YOU colunm for this fine magazine. And, as always, I will column as I see 'em (no punk intended).

First on the agenda is the exclusive debut (in true Hollywood style) of Phast Freddie's AWARDS of SINGULAR SIGNIFICANCE for 1979. Yours truly, in a neverending search for Truth, has come up with thirteen (count 'em) items and/or events of truly singular significance. Dig the following:

1) The "Ten-Year-Old Album That Is Still Really Great Award" goes to Captain Beefheart & his Magic Band for TROUT MASK REPLICA. Indeed, TROUT will always be a classic — and singularly significant.

2) The "45 RPM Record Most Likely To Sink Into Obscurity Without Deserving To Do So" Award goes to Lester Bangs' tremendous recording of "Let It Blurt" and "Live". The disc is still available, too. Send your lunch money to Spy Records LTD, 250 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019 to receive this black circle of singular significance.

3) The "Can Blue Men Sing The Whites" Award goes to the Fabulous Thunderbirds of Texas for their truly fine debut album. Down home blues of singular significance.

4) The "It's Probably Been Around For Ten Years But I Just Discovered It" Award goes to Mickey's Lager in beautiful green *quart* bottles. Before this recent discovery, Mickey's Lager has been consumed exclusively from their famous "big mouth" six-pack bottles. Mickey's in a quart — insobriety of singular significance.

5) The "I Never Even Knew This Stuff Existed And Now Here It Is In One Wonderful Package" Award goes to Savoy/Arista Records for their gallant re-issue series, the Roots of Rock'n'Roll. This year's fave addition to the series is HONKERS & SCREAMERS, a collection of the wildest Rhythm & Blues instrumentals one may imagine. If you love the sound of squealing tenor saxaphones and hard hitting drums, then this is for you ... sounds of singular significance.

6) The "I Got A Really Great Record That You Probably Never Heard Of, Let Alone Find" Award goes to myself after finding a true masterpiece recording of "Walk That Mess" by Tiny Bradshaw, a 78 rpm record on the heralded King label, and probably recorded around the middle of 1950. From the nonsense lyric ("Walk that mess / Walk that mess / So blow, blow / Let's go, Daddy-o") to the unbelievable tenos sax solo that will make you feel like some jerk just scraped his fingernails on a chalk-board, "Walk That Mess" may be one of the finest records of all time. No wonder they tried to hide rhythm & blues from white kids back then, this tune is *really* nasty. Sociology of singular significance.

7) The "Let's See Who Can Get The Most Noise Out Of His Guitar" Award goes to both Randy Stodola of the Alley Cats and Dean Chamberlin of Code Blue (a tie). Randy and Dean each head three piece Rock'n'Roll ensembles. Neither band needs to add extra instrumentation due to the fine axe-wielding efforts of these two gentlemen. An unprecedented doubly singular significant item.

8) The "Hey, Thanks For the Mention" Award goes to Patti Smith for the great song about me, "Fredrick." The song is so great that I'd even like it if I found out it was about somebody else. Thanks, Patti, for being so singularly significant.

9) The "Who Would Ever Think That Those Guys Would Play That Place" Award goes to the illustrious Screamers for a job well done at the overly polished Roxy Theatre of West Hollywood. If you weren't there, you missed an event that was certainly singularly significant.

10) The "Wow, That's A Really Cool Idea But How Far Can They Get?" Award goes to San Diego's own the Crawdaddys, who have recreated live, and on vinyl, the exciting sounds of the early Sixties British rhythm & blues bands. Fond memories of old records by the Rolling Stones, Pretty Things and the Downliners Sect prevail. As my pal, Billy (who wishes the Sixties never ended) once put it, "They understand, don't they?" Surely singularly significant to somebody.

11) The "When Are Those Guys Gonna Play on the West Coast So We Can See What They Are Really Like" Award goes to the Fleshtones, whose "American Beat" single has seen many a spin on my Victrola. Perhaps it's still available from Red Star Records, 200 West 57th Street, NY, NY 10019. If the Fleshtones break up before I see them I may just kill myself. Critically as well as singularly significant.

12) The "I Don't Care What Anybody Says, He's Still Great" Award goes to Iggy Pop for his NEW VALUES album and his fine show at the horrible Stardust Ballroom. In Iggy we trust. The Ig will always be singularly significant in my eyes.

13) The "You Know I'm Gonna Mention It So I Might As Well Get Over It" Award goes to APOCALYPSE NOW for obvious reasons. At least now I know how to spell 'apocalypse'. This is the singularly significant end.

In other news, a cute young girl recently approached the Fast One, as they usually do, with a question on her pink lips:

"Phreddie, I've been reading your writings for over two years now and I just want to know one thing — what is your basic philosophy on life in general?"

Pleased that she didn't ask for my astrological sign, I looked down into her big brown eyes and said, "You go your way, and I'll go my way. And if my chance we should run into each other at the same bar, we'll get totally obliterated and go to your house."

The girl turned out to be more of a dope smoker than an alcoholic and so the point was dropped.

Meanwhile, back at the vinyl ranch, the Fastest Pen in the West (me, dummy) has heard the new Clash album which is due for U.S. release real early next year. An ambitious two-record set, the LP features a lot of reggae rhythms and Stax/Volt-type horn arrangements. I suspect many die-hard punk-a-roos will dismiss the album as the TUSK of the New Wave. However, more astute Rock'n'Roll observers (me, again) will hail the recording as the EXILE ON MAIL STREET of the Eighties.

Speaking of the Eighties, a fellow writer was telling me that he thinks the world will end during this coming decade. That would be fine with me. I am quite ready to receive my next assignment from the Editor in the Sky, I just hope he uses a better typesetter than the guy who works for *Slash*. As for the rest of you — Apocalypse Now, baby.

HOLIDAY CHEER AND PULP FICTIONS FOR SCORPIO RISING

BUBBLETOWN—Champagne rock hostage notes the news: Street syncophants give rabid raves to LA punk band **Catholic Discipline**, five boys less one, a girl, includes renowned **Kickbundle of Joyface**, slightly geriatric but playing music and songs too; arrival here awaited anxiously. Other wonder is famed epistolarian **Speedy**, name opens all doors, word accepted as gospel, even by **Savonarola**, dazed at Mudd sporting button says "Keep Smiling." What's this month's attitude? "Might as well get used to each other because nothing else is happening." Not to mention New York winter ravages on pretty New York faces. We are so genius we surprise ourselves.

Questions, questions: Why doesn't Iran take the boat people? What little country will the Shah buy? When will Jimmy become a born-again Muslim? Veiled irate Iranian **Lydia Lunch** hits downtown media venues with new band, **8-Eyed Spy**; more arabesque than previous **Teenage Jesus**, but the only one carrying on in the NY cruel-rock tradition. Rages about disco-retardo Western Civilization, floating in oil of decadence, pushing popular infantilism. Give them candy. Pull up your skirt and still no pussy. "Okay," she says, "you can shake your booty now."

Vacant Halls: Expanding horizons, we provide most of the late-night audience at: **Snarfu**, semi-new-wave 6th Ave. dive with lighting by Warhol Wunderkind **Robert Mapplethorpe; Atlantis**, N.J. Italian-owned uptown club with potential only because they don't know what they're doing (three strikes: nothing happening in the girls room, bartenders in jogging outfits, oil-and-water lightshow); and at **Ice Palace**, established disco with no one there after closing but nice technology. Had more success at **G.G. Barnum** on Monday amateur night, watching the transvestite boys and girls lip sync to a home crowd; they get our vote.

Zillions of Outlets, No Electricity: The town is overflowing with clubs but there's nothing to see; the workers have gone on vacation. You go to clubs from lust for music, drink and life. You go to clubs to catch social diseases. You go to clubs to talk to the doorman. You have to be a rubber stamp collector at heart. Sweetheart of the **Mudd** is Richie, first to wear baggy '50s overcoats, and such a diplomat he needs squint-eyed heavies for hard line backup keeping the crowds at bay. Guardian there of the upper echelon is **Chi-Chi**, historyless blonde Venus of the **demi-monde. TR 3**'s pinko policeman gave this tip; Best song is "Ready for War" by **John Cale**, about mercenaries in Angola. The little **57 Club** taken over by movie monster madness, showing Russ Meyer's **Faster Pussycat Kill Kill Kill** and the entire four-hour repertoire of Kenneth Anger, who talks about his grandmother.

At the Risk of Going Over Familiar Ground: The street liked **Sham 69** at Hurrah, who came on for three encores and had the crowd going wild. Even though they're English they have a good attitude, everybody agrees. Super-popular also was **Madness**, zany fish-and-chips invaders playing reggae pols and-chips invaders playing reggae polka a-go-go, knocking their skinheads together, going into the crowd, etc. **Iggy** played at Hurrahs but Speedy wasn't enough on the ball to try to get in. **Johnny Thunders**, the rock and roll legend, played a great remake of a song I forget and wore a Chinese jacket and had a feather in his hair. **Nervus Rex** is a pop music band with two of them singing in harmony. **Polyrock** is a bippy boppy dance band with two twin-like guitars; I think maybe they broke up. The **Futants** did, and so did **Ludacer**, as did untold others. It's radioactive decay; short half-lives.

Roll Over Mary Quant: Do you realize that NY fashion never made real Spandex, only phony Danskin-alumni material? Ex-conceptual artist and part-time horse jockey **Neke Carson** opens New Wave model agency **La Rocka**, testing the tribal ties again — no money but everybody's portfolios are bulging. **Eating habits:** Bad enough to scare the peanuts out of your M&M's. **Do's:** New hair-do's. **Don'ts:** Letting your roots show.

Nuisance Dept.: Cite here the **SoHo News**, where no matter what you do, anything, they put your name in.

Quote of the month, about Boys: "He's not beautiful, he's 17."

Hang-out of the month: Beth-Israel Hospital emergency room.

ATLANTA REPORT

Scarlet: 'But Rhett, what will mama think of your new peroxide hairdo?'
Rhett: 'Frankly my dear, I don't give a shit!'

Ah! The South, land of magnolias, plantations, fried chicken, good old Southern Hospitality, (Yes, we spit politely!) and some great new wave music.

Just look at The Brains, everybody's favorite — They have one single out, 'Money Changes Everything' b/w 'Quick With Your Lip' and another one will be out any time now.

The Fans — a highly original and mysterious band are old pros by now, been together over 3 years. Their infectious keyboard oriented music has added new dimensions to new wave. Their first record, a 3-track ep is very obscure, only 1,000 copies were pressed. Their 2nd single, 'Cars and Explosions' b/w 'Dangerous Goodbyes" is a killer. Kevin Dunn the lead guitarist has just released his version of 'Nadine' b/w 'Oktyabrina'. Tom Gray, keyboardist of The Brains joins in on 'Nadine' with some hell synthesizer work. Their new single set for Dec. 1st release is 'Death Wish' b/w 'True'.

The Restraints, probably one of the obnoxious punk bands in history, have started many riots and chaotic parties. One night they whipped a girl on stage during their SM song 'Wacka, Wacka'. Their outrageousness extends from lead singer Chris, sticking a hypodermic into his band head and letting it stand up there through the entire song, to always being in fights on stage and off. No singles yet, but WRAS-FM plays 'Wacka Wacka' sometimes.

For an evening of theatre, opera, burlesque and drinking and drugging you can't beat The Basics, no singles yet but they plan to release 'Slow Motion' (a song about suicide) and 'Beggin' for Beer'.

You haven't really gotten tacky until you've seen The Swimming Pool Ques. Their upcoming single is 'Rat Bait' which is often played like with the help of a marching band b/w 'A-Bomb Woke Me Up'.

Poison is a highly innovative 'Sophisto-Chord' keyboard-oriented band. They're very new and haven't gotten around much yet. Other brand new bands include X-Connect, The Downtown Executives New Blood (they have a new single out, 'Heathen Girls' b/w 'Dark vs. Light') and Pylon who is supposed to be very good. They are from Athens (B-52 land) and haven't played much in Atlanta. There's also Propoganda and 2 who have broken up: XYZ a.k.a. Razor Boys and the Para Band both have singles out.

Anyone interested in obtaining Atlanta singles should contact: Wax 'n' Fax, 432 Moreland Ave., Atlanta GAL, 30307. Atlanta is hungry for more punk. We wouldn't mind having some of your best come out here.

—Ryk-Ochet

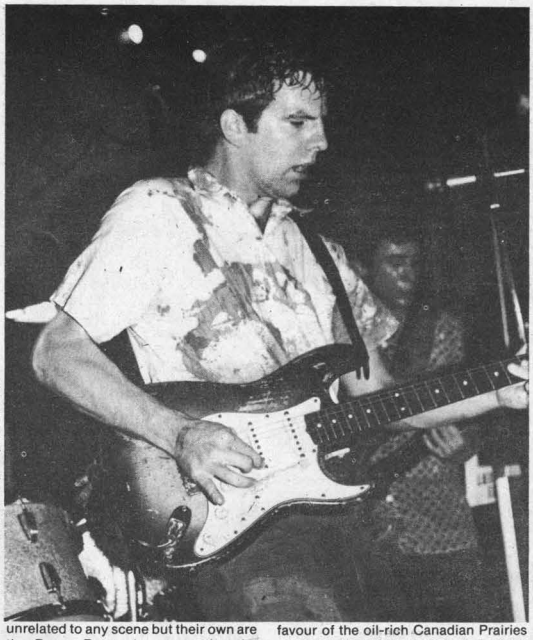
VANCOUVER

by Phil Smith

All's quieter on the western front ... partly the Christmas blahs, but also a genuine feeling of frustration ... the first victims are D.O.A., who called it quits following a disastrous gig at the local university ... the concert began with the hired campus bully boys getting heavy with the punks and ended when drummer Biscuits cut the set short, pulled down the stage curtains and urged the punks to stand up for themselves ... of course the no-mind segment of the crowd needed no further excuse for some good destruction and the total hall damages exceeded $7000 ... charges are still being considered against the band members ... D.O.A. were for almost two years the leaders of the Vancouver punk scene, one of the hottest live bands in the world and one which never forgot the humour and vitality of punk ... internal dissension and a growing feeling of futility led to the break-up ... Biscuits is heading down to L.A., then to England, Rampage to join the Brad Kent - Carla Maddog band and Shithead reportedly going back to driving cabs (though you can never count Joe out) ...

After last month's rosy report on the state of Vancouver, things have cooled down rather rapidly (see Catilin's December S.F. column) ... venue problems again ... the Smilin' Bhudda, "a club where punk rock patrons call visiting police officers pigs and urge that they be killed" according to the Vancouver Sun, is almost certain to close in January because of liquor violations ... meanwhile the club is languishing in a netherland, the former manager has left due to increasing hassles with both the club owners and the bands ... groups are still booking themselves, though, which is more than can be said for the Retinal circus ... the 650 seat club was due to open with a Pointed Sticks show when the fire marshall stepped in 5 days before showtime ruling it unsafe for even punks (only 3 ground level double doors, y'know) ... the Sticks were moved onto a Wreckless Eric Commodore show, but even their drawing power could not prevent a half filled house ... continued problems with can-throwing cretins (our beer cans are like bricks) and an increasingly disinterested audience...

However, lack of an audience has not stopped the emergence of new bands though we've entered a quantity over quality phase ... the Modernettes were somehow omitted from last month's definitive guide (my fault) ... led by exActive Dog John Armstrong, they have rapidly become one of the more popular and exciting bands in the city, a trio with a unique brand of demented bubble gum punk ... a 12" single due on Quintessence which is reported to be superb ... the K-Tels are now the Young Canadians following a $50,000 lawsuit launched by K-Tel International, a Winnipeg Conglomerate of Slice 'em, Dice 'em, Miracle Brush and "24 Electrifying Hits" fame ... the company claimed that innocent consumers would be confused between legitimate K-Tel product and that of the punk band's bastard releases ... two much-hyped groups made their premiers in recent months: the Payolas released a fine single, "China Boys", before debuting live in November, their two concerts revealed why they waited so long, the potential is there once the nerves are overcome ... another band totally unrelated to any scene but their own are the Bonus Boys who are getting the Readymade hype in the straight press ... lots of weighty lyrics and Dire Straits rippling chords, probably will do great here ... I haven't seen them perform in concert but a recent television appearance was sufficient to convince me that "new wave" should be laid to rest. Yes, the first clone bands are turning up to everyone's dismay except of course the local industry who are just bristling with delight at "the return of rock 'n roll".



Young Canadians (ex K-Tels) plc: Bev. Davis

Meanwhile, most bands have reconciled themselves to cult status and thankfully just keep putting out good records ... the Dishrags' "Past is Past" is finally been released by Seattle' Modern records and is well worth your time as is the surprisingly strong Private School E.P. ... due in the next month are 12" from Young Canadians, Female Hands and Sub-Humans ... the last D.O.A. studio single "W.W.3"/"Watcha Gonna Do" has been released posthumously ... it is a go for broke attempt that falls short ... far more satisfying is the live 12" "Triumph of the Ignoroids", the first vinyl to catch the band properly since the "Disco Sucks E.P."

Live highlight of the fall was the return to the stage of U-JERK5 ... along with Pink Section the band did two nights at the Bhudda that made it all seem worthwhile ... Electrifying from start to finish, complex, unique and rocking, the band displayed a power only hinted at by their Complication tracks ... "Hands of Orlac", "Eisenhower and the Hippies", "Reason Sleeps Tonight" and the soon to be released "Anglican" were sensational ... Pink Section were also good, but a recent Dead Kennedys' concert was very disappointing, the band having difficulties with the hostile audience ... of course it was very difficult to top the Sub-Humans performance that same night ... pulling lead singer Wimpy into the crowd has become one of the city's favourite pastimes and this concert set a new record, with Wimpy managing to stay on stage for a total of 9 seconds.

Many of the local bands are bypassing starvation tours of the West Coast in favour of the oil-rich Canadian Prairies ... the Pointed Sticks are off to England in January to record their first Stiff album with Nigel Gray ... the Brinsley Schwartz E.P. has been released but the songs are definitely inferior to the original versions ... "Lies", their third Quintessence single is much better, possibly their best release to date...

Non event of the month (and there were many competitors) was the free Sticks/Dishrags gig at Viking Hall ... both bands were needed to provide concert footage for the latest Dennis Hopper epic "CeBe", the story of a 17 yr. old runaway who ends up in Vancouver, drums one song with the Sticks and gets run over by a truck (or something like that) ... the show was scheduled to start at 6:00 p.m. and the radio spots instructed the audience to "dress up punk" ... Hopper & crew showed up 4 hours later after most of the crowd had split and were supremely hassled throughout the evening ... our first taste of Hollywood! (surprisingly the rushes were supposed to be good) ... What wasn't good was the usual violence ... beer-can throwing jocks at the Commodore, imbecilic greasers at the Dead Kennedys' ... the dance floor has become a male warrior battle ground ... it would be great to be able to jump around without some asshole wading in with his fists flying, but it looks to be too much to hope for ... in fact the gigs here seem to be an exercise in futility rather than freedom ... punk was something incredibly special, an explosion of coincidences, a temporary manifestation of undefinables that people think and feel ... in the beginning it had a super charged aura ... the music was merely an expression of something greater. Now things have imploded, the music has become a lonely and insufficient raison d'etre. There still is a punk scene, just like there still is a folk scene or a jazz scene or even an antique car scene, and yes, there are still many positive and worthwhile things about the music and the people ... but to tell yourself that it's something different, to tell yourself that it's something extraordinary and revolutionary, is to tell yourself a lie ... See you in the fucking eighties.

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SAN FRANCISCO

'79/80

Yes Virginia, there are fun and exciting things going on in San Francisco. For starters we have two bona fide new clubs. The Roosevelt, a bar off Market St., has weekend gigs which are unfortunately (and temporarily) off limits to minors. It is still very much in an embryonic state, but looks to be picking up where the Deaf Club left off, if they can keep the cops out of their hair. Across town, the Savoy Tivoli in North Beach has come out of the closet with regular Sunday afternoon punk shows. Evening gigs are at this point impossible because of inadequate soundproofing, although they are continuing their Friday night reggae shows.

Future prospects include Target, who've been having a great success with their Saturday after-hours parties (a mixture of video presentations and dance music d.j.'d by Johnny Walker), and who may or may not venture into live performances; and the newly opened and rather mysterious Club Foot, an artistic environment conducive to "happenings". They are planning at least occasional live shows in the near future.

The established rock clubs are not exactly jumping onto the band wagons, but nearly all are at least dabbling in new wave, and the Palms, having had a modicum of success with previous shows by Times Five, the Mondellos, the Corvairs, etc., will next month try a real honest-to-god punk gig with the Mutants.

As for the not-so-old standbys, the Geary is still doing Friday and/or Saturday night shows, though recent bills have included such peripheral acts as the Flaming Groovies, SVT, the Beat, ad nauseum. The Buzzcocks their second show there this year (again under the auspices of Superb productions), co-starring the ever-popular Dead Kennedys and Vancouver's Pointed Sticks. The show drew only a few hundred less than last time, and their live performance has improved so drastically that they are now almost good. The Mab is currently for the 21-and-over crowd only following a bust the first night Madness played there, which meant the subsequent Madness gigs and the Fall's shows a week later were off limits to many of us. Madness were by all accounts phenomenally well received, and may spark a resurgence of interest in ska beat music all by themselves. (The Fall on the other hand apparently did not live up to anyone's expectations.) Two potentially great reggae shows (Steel Pulse with the Police and Linton Kwesi Johnson at the Geary) never happened as their record company (Mango) failed to secure the necessary work permits in time. Both are expected to try again before Spring ... in the meantime Ras Michael and the Sons of Negrus will grace the Geary stage.

Despite comparatively plentiful places to play, it's been a rather quiet month as far as local shows, what with the Dils and the Dead Kennedys both up north for much of it, and the Mutants, Zeros, Crime, and Offs keeping fairly low profiles. One show that did very well was Snakefinger, Tuxedomoon, and MX 80 Sound at the Boardinghouse (well enough so that the latter two groups were signed to Ralph Records) ... Damage threw a free party at the Mabuhay, KPFA had a benefit, and the original Sleepers (minus Tim on drums) have been playing here and there (mostly there), with vocalist Ricky reportedly sworn off drugs ... Upcoming releases include "Everyone's a Bigot" by the Offs (no longer managed by Robert Hanrahan), a second Los Microwaves single, and the Urge's first. The Urge are currently sans drums following a surprise walkout by Jean Caffeine ... There's a new photo book out on the SF scene, "X'Capees", not bad but not great, with pics by F. Stop Fitzgerald, Rae Santos, and Richard McCaffree. Parties in its honor at the miniscule Postcard Palace (and later at the Mab) were crammed with photo subjects, onlookers, and the elite (all perhaps drawn more by the free beer and champagne than the book itself) ... The truly gory film "They Eat Scum" from truly gory New York, starring the Blessed, will play seven times in three days, which may be a bit much to stomach ... Michael's Fillmore Struts have changed their name to the Soul Rebels in order to avoid confusion with the other Fillmore Struts, who have since disbanded ... The Crime will always be Crime dept: Hank Rank and Joey D'Kaye have left Crime, while former alumni Ron the Ripper and Brittley Black have rejoined. The second NYP directory is out, rivalled in size only by the phone book (and in scope, unrivalled), and is available for a paltry buck from New Youth (address at end of column) ... Apologies and Explanations: the Belfast Cowboys have not broken up, which is good news as this writer finds their parody (repeat, parody) of what one Slash reader terms "Old wave heavy metal sludge ... mindless hard rock crap" highly amusing (I take issue with that description for another reason, aside from the fact that he doesn't have a sense of humor: How many heavy metal bands do you know who do a cover of "The Kids" (more commonly known as "They're Taking Her Children Away")?? — I also attach no inherent musical greatness to the band solely on the basis of the members' previous bands, though it's sociologically noteworthy. In any case the Cowboys are at this moment in the studio recording a Christmas single, as vacationing Cowboys Danny and Denny have just returned from the White Gland tour with Jorma Kaukonen, so bah humbug to you. They are probably at least the spiritual precursors of "the next big thing" — from the people who (literally) brought you punk, pet rock. Don't laugh — "pet rock is not a joke, and if it were it wouldn't be funny," says the recent press release (unsigned). I think a little explanation is required here (what is this shit?). Basically it's what happens when you hear the Clash in '77 and then you hear them in '79, namely outrage, disillusionment, and a desire to finally, once and for all, destroy the medium of rock. Pet rock is the dreams of '77 seen through the cynicism of '79 coupled with the (potential) boredom of the rest of your life. Pet rock is vaguely analogous to the Vancouver fuck bands, except that the rules have changed. If you happen to exhibit any particular prowess on your instrument, forget it. Which is not to say that all this is just a harkening back to the "good old days" — far from it. It's only one of the new things that are emerging rapidly from the ruins of punk-as-musical-style, one result of feeling like rebellion has indeed been turned into money. There are three pet rock bands in this city so far: Animal Things, Flipper, and the Flying Fucks ("Music for the fuck of it"). The only available recording, "Earthworm" by Flipper (on the SF Underground EP), is interestingly boring, rather like life itself, which I guess is the point. There may be a live pet rock album on Subterranean, a record company not interested in turning over a profit. Is this a concept whose time has come? Or has it already passed? (Answers when there are some.)

Animal Things pic: Mark

One last note: the easiest way to contact nearly anyone involved in punk etc. in San Francisco is through either Target/Damage (678 S. Van Ness, SF, CA) or New York Productions (P.O. Box 6029, SF, CA 94101).

STOP PRESS: As we go to press we have learned that the Savoy Tivoli is discontinuing its live shows for the present time, which leaves us with the Roosevelt, the Mab, and the Geary. Stay Tuned.

Caitlin

SLASH PAGE 9

Captain Sensible displays amphetamine atrophy pic: George Bodnar

RANDOM STOATS MORK WILLIAMS

Britain is slowly and grudgingly catching up with the West Coast's malevolent new wave. Little eddies of torn chords and fashionable So. Cal. lyrical excess are seeping into the cortex of our still bouyant music, er, scene.

(Pause for thought. A recent long and expensive phone call with the terminally resentful and in one case, literally wounded moguls of *Slash*, elicited the intelligence that America's vinyl empires are continuing to crumble. A&M is now being run by the cleaning staff (which might be their saving grace), Elektra/Asylum are desperately searching for the right vehicle to turn NICOLETTE LARSON into a disco-rapper and the current recession of course means zilch advertising revenue for what the accountants clearly regard as "whacky fringe" media like *Slash*. Now it seems to me, sitting up here in my ivory tower, that the redeeming factor in *this* country's fiscal-musical equation is the gradual disappearance of parochial barriers that three years ago split the mob into those who dyed their hair pink and stuck pins through their nose, defiantly rejecting everything that went before, and those who didn't and thus became polarised to another and equally blind extreme. Now that the dust has metaphorically settled and the burnt fingers of A&R departments have been licked better by the hack press who found something to like in even the most vacuous piss-pot aural thrashings (as long as the review copies and reception invites kept on a'rolling in), the record companies have learnt to spread their nets wide enough to reflect major, minor and even mini trends, pare down production and promotion costs and not mortgage themselves to the hilt for the honour of signing this week's STOOGES. The bands themselves are being marginally more sensible about advances, too, accepting one or two-off singles deals as a trial marriage for Bigger Things later on, but the stumbling block remains the cost of going on the road and no one with an axe to grind wants to revert to the bad old days of 500-watt p.a. systems and travelling with the gear in the back of a Transit. If there is a lesson for a fat yank music industry forced to go on a Cambodian diet, it is this: Apply catholic taste in A&R and catholic discipline — pun most certainly *not* intended — in the accounts department. When I recall all those million dollar hypes like BLACKJACK, R.E.O., SPEEDWAY and other snake-hipped drongos pouring through the letterbox with the fat arrogance of record company myopia firmly behind them, it's impossible to shed a tear, but if you lot can't get your own Stiffs or Faulty Products or 2-Tones together, then you'd better believe that you still need those fuckers and expecting them to capitulate wholesale to punk and rockabilly overnight reflects your own dumb partisan ethic. End of sermon).

Where were we? Ah yes. My heartening introduction was perhaps only a neat contrivance to announce that HOLLY & THE ITALIANS are starting to Make It here and that home-produced plastic abstracts are actually available for the discerning dilletante. HOLLY and her original Italians came over here earlier this year at the behest of one MARK KNOPPFLER the surprisingly pleasant leader of the utterly rat-shit DIRE STRAITS who was, how you say?, knocking her off. There had been some promise of management and a record deal, you know, the usual sort of Holiday Inn pillow talk rock stars are prone to when on tour in the Americas, and poor Holly fell for it. When the band got over here, KNOPPFLER quickly rejected the lady in favour of his One True Love and it was breadline time for the hapless refugees.

Holly and drummer STEVE YOUNG got together with MARK HENRY, bass player with once-hot power-pop bigheads, THE BOYFRIENDS (another nice bloke seduced by fashion) and decided to stick it out. They've recently started gigging on what's left of the club circuit after the police clamped down on under-age drinking and drugging, and the result is high on the fab-ometer. Holly has to do a lot of work to fill out the sound, but her guitaring has improved 300% since I saw her a year ago in L.A., (pissed near senseless anyway, so what do I know?). Henry and Holly's vocal assaults are equally impressive, especially when they fire-up old '60s stuff like "Chapel of Love" and the original material is sharp-edged but surprisingly melodic. Holly confided that she'd like another instrument to add contrast to their instrumental approach but, as a perceptive A&R man of my acquaintance opined, if they got an organist in now, they'd sound like ELVIS COSTELLO & THE ATTRACTIONS

It's not entirely irrelevant that KOSMO VINYL is stepping out with Holly these days, at least occasionally. Vinyl is the glorified "gofer-cum-compere" who did for THE BLOCKHEADS and now fulfills the same indefinable role for THE CLASH. Recently back from an American tour that saw fiscally fraught CBS pulling the rug from under them and leaving them without a credit card to their name in more than one hotel-panic, Kosmo is now handling the promotion of their latest album, a double, "London Calling". (How sweet of them to name it after my second column for *Slash*). The tenuous link between this and Holly & The Italians is that both groups have considerably widened their musical appeal over the past year and "London Calling" is quite extraordinarily commercial. Produced by Guy Stevens, who despite being a desperate old alcoholic speed freak, has a worthy track record going back to the early '60s when he was the hottest Ska/Bluebeat/Rn'B dee-jay on the club scene, worked with the STONES in their early days, discovered MOTT THE HOOPLE, THE WINKIES and all manner of other people who you and I might not piss on if they were on fire but were nevertheless seminal in one way or t'other. Anyway, Stevens remained together enough to record The Clash far more attractively than SANDY "This is the greatest rock n'roll band in the world" PEARLMAN, adding horns and keyboards where appropriate and even getting STRUMMER's voice to sound a little less jarring. Now you may consider it heresy, but unfettered from the strict amphetemine two-step of their punk past, The Clash have started to write *real* songs, some of them, like "Lost In The Supermarket" and the title track, almost unbearably chart inclined. Moreover, MICK JONES has realised the threat that constantly lurked beneath his onstage 6-string cacophony and reveals himself as an imposing and often witty rock n'roll guitarist. Stevens has eschewed the brick shithouse wall-of-sound approach of both of the Clash's previous producers (and most of the other original punk hierarchy, for that matter) and stitched it all together so you can hear what everyone's up to. I'm trying hard not to be cynical about "London Calling" because I'm hooked to it like a junkie at the moment, but the band's imperious idealistic rantings suddenly seem like so much empty posturing alongside it, (although as I never fell for that in the first place, I don't feel any pain). Indeed I guess they actually deserve admiration for having the nerve to stretch themselves this far in an effort to reach a bigger audience, or do I mean 'make a lot more money'? Either way, there's a (great) track on this called "Brand New Cadillac", so draw your own conclusions.

THE JAM also have a new album out but I figure that may've already been reviewed in *Slash* by the time this mawkish epistle gets in print. *(No — We're waiting for the domestic release. Ed.)* My only superfluous comment about their "Setting Sons" must be that it's ironic that the band who single-handedly plodded on with a Mod personna despite the new wave enthusiasm that made 'em stars in the first place, should have moved away from that genre just when there's a wall-to-wall Mod revival underway.

Which brings us to the skinhead and smart suit brigade who are swelling in ranks (and ranking) with each new moon. Latest signings are U.B. 40, who are primarily instrumental and lope along at a slightly slower gait than THE BEAT or THE SELECTER (The former band's re-work of SMOKEY ROBINSON's "Tears of a Clown" is, as they say, poised to shoot up the UK charts). There were 14, count 'em, 14 A&R men at the last U.B. 40 gig I saw, and with one record company boss predicting that Coventry "will be the most important musical city of the 'eighties", it seems fairly certain that *every* record company will have its own multi-racial sky/rock steady band within six months; shades of the punk revolution. (Coventry, is where THE SPECIALS, SELECTER,

The Body Snatchers (jailbait rock steady) pic: Mark Williams

DEXY's MIDNIGHT RUNNERS and the 2-TONE LABEL all come from).

Unfortunately the other side of the Mod coin is an unpleasantly sexist attempt to promote dumb broads in mini-skirts and lacquered bouffants. This wouldn't be so irksome if they had the intelligence and musical competence of the B-52s (who I personally dislike, incidently), but in the case of THE MODETTES and (especially) THE DOLLY MIXTURES it's rather a case of all tits and no talent. Actually, I must be fair to The Modettes, although I can't think why, who have mustered a grasp of their instruments, but they can't seem to decide whether to be THE SLITS or a ska band and the results betray that uncertainty with annoying repetition. (I still can't agree with Craig's review of the Slits album, incidently, and it would seem my own comments about nursery antics have been echoed by public and record company alike; Island have just dumped them after a massive promo campaign failed to produce the goods sales-wise). *(Who's fishing for an A&R job now?! Ed.)*

The Dolly Mixtures are a trio who come on like 16-year-old sweeties (geddit?) but obviously aren't. They do '60s rehashes too, but stand their version of "Chapel of Love" alongside Holly & The Italian's and it's like comparing Carlton to Camels. They seem to think sucking their fingers a lot and making fey remarks about sugary romance is a substitute for instrumental ability — which they lack almost totally. The Dolly Mixtures are a (perhaps) naive item of calculated cynicism, attracting the fleeting interest of trendmongers without having anything more substantial to back it up and it's not without significance that theyri manager was previously in a band called THE USERS.

Lest you suspect the first sprouting of incipient misoginy, I must end this round up of female bands with mention of THE BODY SNATCHERS who I saw for the first time last night, which can be forgiven for it was only their fourth gig. The Body Snatchers are a 7-piece all-girl ska band fronted by a remarkable 18 year old Jamaican girl called RHODA. If there can be a feminine equivalent of MADNESS, then this is it ... a comment underlined by the presence of SUGGSY and MIKE BARSON at the gig. Rhoda shouts the score with a commanding wit and sings bloody well too. The rest of the band differ between laconic clout of MIRANDA on alto sax and NICKY on bass, to the teetering confidence of "S.J." on lead guitar and PENNIE on a battered old Vox organ (just like GEORGIE FAME used to have in the early days of THE BLUE FLAMES). However sometimes S.J. pulls out some masterful chord work as on the instrumental "Time Is Tight" and with a bit more practice The Body Snatchers are obviously going to be HOT.

U.B. 40 - Dreadlocks & Smart suits pic: Geraise Scenrouge

Oh yeah, and the other element of the Californiasation of Britain stems from the release of the unrepresentative "Beach Blvd." album compilation album here and the appearance of the "Surf Punks" album here which I reviewed for *Slash* awhile back and unashadely like) in the import shops. Plus, there are singles from THE UNITS (from S.F.) and THE RESIDENTS (ditto) which are getting attention. Isn't life funny? *(Hilarious. Ed.)*

(did he mean that, or):

Slash awhile back and unabashedly like) in the import shops. Plus, there are singles from THE UNITS (from S.F.) and THE RESIDENTS (ditto) which are getting attention. Isn't life funny? *(Hilarious. Ed.)*

GET TEENAGE KICKS RIGHT THROUGH THE NIGHT!

GET THE UNDERTONES

Teenage Kicks
Here Comes The Summer
Family Entertainment
Jimmy Jimmy
Girls Don't Like It
Wrong Way
Billy's Third
Male Model
Get Over You
(She's A) Runaround
I Know A Girl
Listenin' In
True Confessions
Casbah Rock
Jump Boys
I Gotta Getta

Produced and engineered by Roger Bechirian.
On Sire Records and Tapes.
Marketed by Warner Bros. Records Inc. SIRE

TOKYO ROCKERS

(Information supplied by Bruce Conner, written by Kick, photos by Bruce Conner)

新聞

Ex contributor to Search & Destroy Bruce Conner spent one month in Tokyo where he showed his film at IMAGE FORUM. There he saw a film by Tadashi Hirose entitled "FRICTION", in which a band also called FRICTION performs one song. Later he met the band through Hirose and Emiko Mogi, the guitar player of a band called BOYS/BOYS. He asked Friction's drummer what other punk rock bands there were in Japan, and Chiko replied: *"We* are punk rock in Japan!" Bruce thinks it's probably true. Apparently there are about 6 or 7 clubs in Tokyo that occasionally feature new wave, Japanstyle, but Bruce only visited one, a place called (hold on to your seat!) ROCK MELLOW HOUSE! It's located in Kijochi, and as many of the Tokyo streets do not have names the ads and fliers for the shows always have a small map showing either the nearest subway stop and the way from there or what landmarks to look for at the intersections. If you follow the map you're supposed to eventually reach the building in question, then the floor. As Bruce got lost too many times on the subway he asked Emi to meet him at the station and guide him. If anyone is planning to look the place up while in Tokyo Bruce suggests you call Emi at: Area code 03 - 3137109. You're also advised to speak slowly in very simple english. Admission at the Rock Mellow House is 600 yen, which is about $2.75 in US money, and it includes one free drink. The room is about twenty feet by twenty five feet and that night 6 bands played. Since there is no room to move the equipment in and out the bands share the same drum set and amps. Some of the bands have no drummer and use a rhythm master or a synthesized drum machine. If not playing the musicians hang out on the stairs or on the roof above. There were about 60 or 70 people sitting or standing around, but hardly any dancing. Bruce thinks this is because Japan is really hurting for space and the rough punk action we're used to would be highly hazardous under such crowded conditions.

Of all the bands Friction got the biggest response from the audience. Bruce suggested some of the bands leave the house lights on and remove the chairs for their future sets, which they did the next time he went to take the photos. The bands he liked most are FRICTION, BOYS/BOYS and the NON BAND. He also mentioned a band called BANANRIANZ which does a more reggae and pop oriented music, and who seem to have a lot of satirical material.

The Non Band (Keiko Takeda on drums, Noriko Hosaka (Non) on bass and vocals and Kenji Nomoto on guitar) have only been playing for two months. One song is entitled Babylon, but all the words are in Japanese (which after two years of not understanding the lyrics sung at the Deaf Club or the Mabuhay does not make any difference anyway says Bruce!)

BOYS/BOYS is a new band, with an all female line up. (Saki on drums, Yayoi on bass, Emi on guitar and Kumi on guitar and vocals.) In spite of an impressive number of women in the bands playing this particular club it appears that women in rock bands is not a very common thing in Japan. There is no Women's Lib there, and the aggressive playing and singing taking place in the Rock Mellow House is not considered good Japanese behavior!

FRICTION (Tsunematsu Masatoshi on guitar and vocals, Reck on bass and vocals and Hige Chiko on drums) have one EP out on Pass records. The A side is "Crazy Dream", and the B side is Kagayaki (?) and Big-S. Other titles by Friction are "I Can Tell", "Dog", "Go Out", "Pistol".

(According to Chiko and Reck, they both were in New York two years ago and respectively played with The Contortions and Teenage Jesus and the Jerks.)

There is also a cassette out in Japan (CBS-Sony) called Tokyo Rockers Live. It was recorded (live, of course) in March 1979 and features two songs by Friction. Other bands on that cassette are: MR. KITE, LIZARD (recently discovered by Jean Jacques Burnel), MIRRORS and S-KEN.

We now end our first introductory report from the land of the (slowly) rising punk.

Note: FRICTION can be reached at c/o Mr. Mitsuhashi
1-12-35-343, Umesato
Suginami-ku, Tokyo Japan.

S.D.

YOU POGO, YOU GO-GO.

M. RUDE

Seeing that there is usually not much to do in Slow Death (San Diego), some of us like to run away for a day or two. Feeling like the outlaws we are, Shawn and me stole away to L.A. and the Sham show, something we've been waiting for for two years.

Feeling extra hyper and good about being with some of your "own kind"; the first fucking incident that shatters what you know is gonna be your best fix in weeks: The Frisk! Some asshole with the cop show syndrome and no fucking right, shakes you down, looking for elixer and artillery. Don't they know that 500 punks on loud 1-2-3-4's are the bombs anyway? Okay, Dead Kennedys doing what they do and the engines rev and we move. The worm, the squirm, pogo, don't matter, move! Push, bounce, bend, spindle and multilate. The Whisky bouncers must have great paternal instincts to want to pull apart a dog pile so us kiddies don't hurt ourselves, thanks, but if we didn't want it we would work at the Whisky as bouncers, stay home, be safety patrol monitors.

When Jello invited some of the beach punks to worm on stage the bouncers' paternal instincts came pouring out their every pore, first, knuckle, and end of flashlight. They were grabbing the dancers by any available limb and pulling them off the stage to the floor at a good forty-five degree angle, hard and fast.

Next thing I know, a heavy hand on my shoulder and the end of a flashlight in my face cutting my lip, then they throw me, Shawn, and a good fifteen or more people out.

That is a lot of cash we lost out on, not to mention the needed fix. To top it all off, the dozens of patrol cars with the L.A. SS in riot helmets added insult to injury. Just waiting for friends still inside was risky because if you stay in one place too long, a squad car pulls up and the officers try and find something to arrest you for.

One thing that pisses me off is that 100 or more punks won't think twice about pushing, shoving, pogoing and kicking each others' ass for fun. But when four bouncers go ape shit and start beating their heads in, everyone just looks at them and takes it, no retaliation. This is war, isn't it? We go to the hospital or jail *anyway,* so why not take a piece of the gorilla with you!

Now, to news from just barely north of the border.

Try to imagine an entire city as boringly suburban as all of Orange County, with more surfers than all of L.A. beaches combined. Add the U.S. Pacific Fleet, and you have San Diego.

Here, you are more alienated from the general public, because like L.A., the average slob on the street doesn't even realize that your whole appearance and attitude has a name. Occasionally one can hear a hearty "Punk Sucks!" from a passing car, but most people do not have a frame of reference that includes 'your type'.

Unfortunately this seems to also be true of one local promoter, Laura Frazier of Rash Productions, the group who runs the Skeleton Club.

Many consistant complaints about her unprofessional ways of dealing with people have been heard from bands, other promoters, and her ex-partners.

The original Skeleton had a short life with three shows that included the Dils, Alleycats and Dead Kennedys, as well as some good local talent. But then closed within two weeks ... the club was in a huge basement in a downtown building, and simply needed too many renovations to please the fire marshals.

The club has now re-opened a few blocks away in an abandoned disco, which was shut down because of prostitution and heroin busts. Good start, eh?

We missed the opening night show (spend the evening godging cops on Sunset Blvd. instead — the same night as the disastrous Sham Show) but reliable sources say that the turnout was a bit too good.

When the fire marshals showed up, they decided the place was filled to over capacity, so Rash had to ask for volunteers from the audience to split. People assuming their stamped little paws meant they could go back inside after wandering out were surprised that they not only couldn't get back in, but when demanding a refund, most were just handed tickets for the next show.

Nobody is saying *don't* play the Skeleton Club. Because the place does have a lot of potential, just proceed with caution. We're concerned that a few uncool people can give a whole town a bad name. For further info, Laura's number is (213) 282-6675.

A good promotion team in town is Shark Productions, they are Renee Edgington (213) 282-7735 and Steven Schnieder (213) 226-1115. Despite a lot of obstacles and outright bullshit, they have managed to put on some good shows. This month we'll see The Bags, Eddie and the Subtitles and Suburban Lawns. Tentative bands to play here include X, Germs, Middle Class, and Monitor.

The Shark People seem to hate the struggle to find something to do on weekends here as much as the fans, and are working hard to change things. They do not have a steady club yet, but they are looking. Currently the only alternative is the Lions Club Hall, which is rented out on a show-by-show basis.

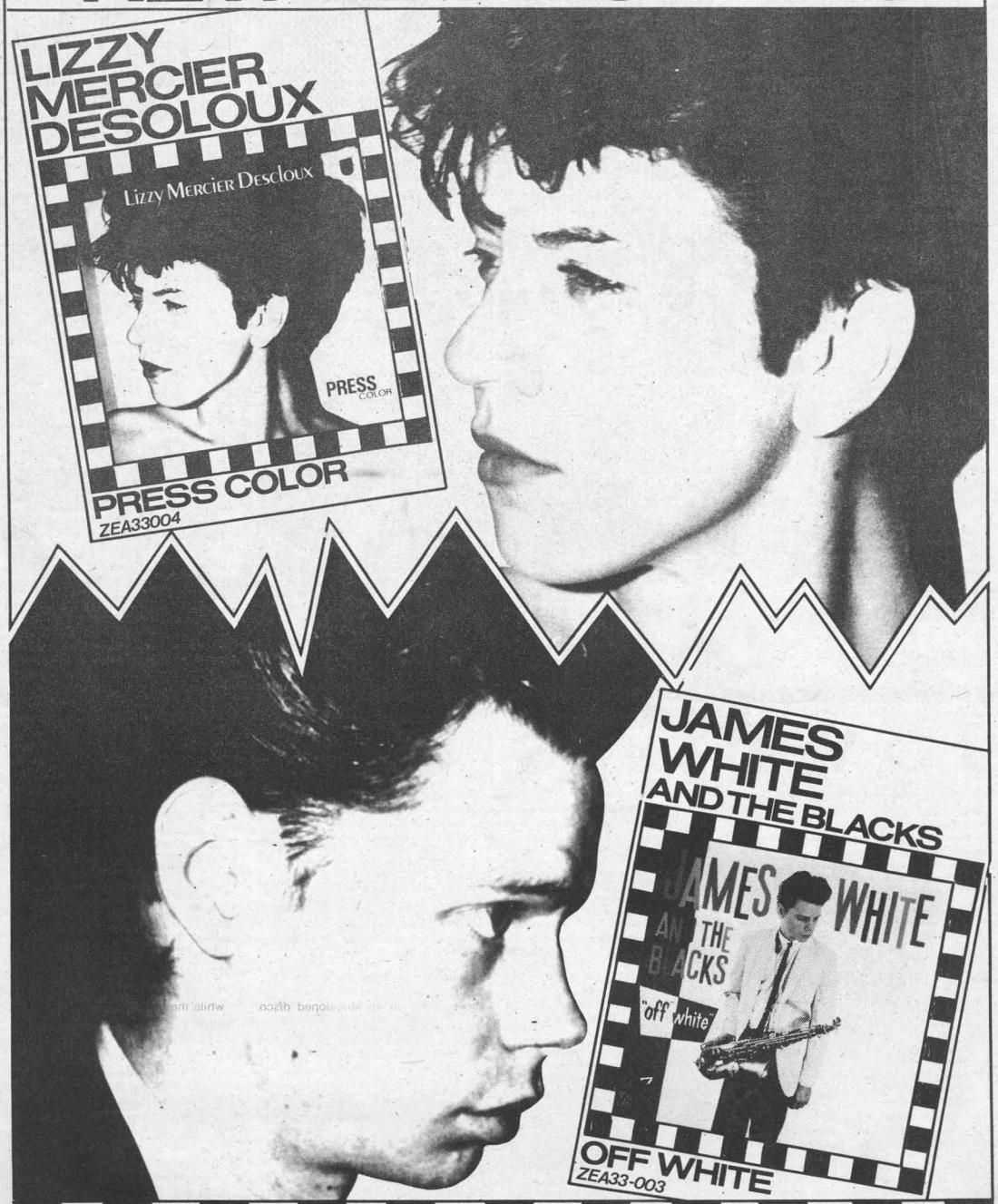
A lot of new bands are turning up here while the older ones are changing and progressing constantly. The Upbeats are going thru massive personel changes, and once re-organized will have a new name and a possible single on the Chiswick label.

The Penetrators, DFX2, Cardiac Kids and Standbys have all released singles. The Standbys also have a twelve song cassette out called "Buy Now or Die Dumb" (if interested write them at 2477 Fletcher Parkway, El Cajon, CA 92020), and rockabilly band The Crawdaddys have just released an album. Not bad considering most of these bands have never played outside of the S.D. city limits yet.

—F.O.N.O.

· O U T · N O W ! ·

NEW-ZE RECORDS



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pic: Kevin Cummins

JOY DIVISION

Interviewed by Jane Garcia.

Joy Division are:
Ian Curtis: vocals; occasional guitar.
Bernard Dicken (used to be known as Bernard Albrecht).
Peter Hook: bass.
Stephen Morris: drums.
(Managed by Rob Gretton, former d.j. in Manchester and exroadie for the awful Slaughter and the Dogs.)

Joy Division started life as Warsaw in mid-'77 before changing their name later that year. The first few months of 1978 saw the release of an EP 'An Ideal for Living' on the Enigma label, plus a one-track contribution ('At A Later Date') to Virgin's 'Last Night at the Electric Circus' 'live' compilation album of Manchester bands. Both efforts attracted little attention, which wasn't surprising as neither had anything to distinguish them from the run-of-the-mill punk thrash that just about everyone else was churning out at the time.

Little was heard of the band until the start of 1978 when Manchester's Factory Records issued their 'Factory Sampler' double single which featured two Joy Division tracks: 'Digital' and 'Glass'. The difference in their sound wasn't so much aas a transformation to 'sheet metal music'. This was confirmed by the subsequent release of their Factory album 'Unknown Pleasures', a collection of, I think, disturbing songs. Since the album they have appeared on yet another compilation — this time, Fast's Earcom 2 12" — and released a single, 'Transmission'. Suddenly, the music press and everyone else has gone ga-ga over them. Joy Division's sound is stark but atmospheric, dominated by hollow drums and a heavy bass. Curtis' funeral vocals add to the chilling effect of the songs which seem to reflect the unhappy, unsettled side of human emotions. At least, that's the feeling I get but for reasons which will later become apparent, I don't suppose I'll ever find out if I'm right ...

Onstage, their sound is a little fuller but loses none of its creepiness. This effect is heightened by the fact that Joy Division always seem to appear backlit, with Curtis' poker face staring out from the gloom. They never say anything between songs, and the singer moves about the stage very strangely, stepping sideways across the boards as he frenziedly kneads the air in front of him with clenched fists. It's all pretty impressive stuff and, for once, I think the British music papers might be right when they label Joy Division's sound as 'New Musick' because it just isn't like anything else that has preceded it. If you listen carefully, the influences are there — The Fall, maybe a bit of Banshees, with vocal similarities between Curtis and Jim Morrison — but they seem to owe less to one specific group than most other bands around at the moment.

Having been warned that Joy Division are "a group of very serious young men", I wasn't really surprised to be told that they only did 'informal' interviews, i.e., no tape recorders.

Personally, I find this insistence on 'informal interviews' tiresome — not just because it's a drag (which it is!) to have to write everything down, but because 'informal' interviews, conducted without tape recorders, are usually anything but informal. If you can imagine trying to write down, verbatim, everything someone is saying whilst you're meant to be listening to what is going on, it builds a sort of tension. Well, it does in me anyway cos I don't want to miss anything that's said. Also, if a group agrees to be interviewed, I can't see what difference it makes if there's a tape recorder present. People usually forget it's there after a few minutes, and there's less chance of being misquoted or misunderstood if everything is down on tape as opposed to having it frantically scribbled down in some grotty old notebook. (Perhaps that's just me being a miserable old git, though.)

There seem to have been very few interviews with the group in the music press here — I haven't seen any fanzines, and even 'Zigzag', who get to everyone first, haven't gotten around to talking to them. I can only assume that it's because they genuinely don't like being interviewed. I believe that 'Melody Maker' may have done a short feature on them, but I haven't seen it. Neither have I seen Dave McCullough's effort in 'Sounds', though it must be quite amusing as the band hated him and told him to fuck off after a few minutes, refusing to talk to him. I don't know how he managed to turn this into a double page spread. I'm told that it is now 'Sounds' policy to slag off Joy Division whenever possible. As far as I could see, Paul Rambali from the N.M.E. got similar treatment to me, though it seems that he was allowed to turn on his tape recorder. (Either that, or he writes very fast shorthand...) His article, which I did see, was 7/8 about his impressions and 1/8 quotes which gave nothing away, which was the group's intention. It was a good article, though.

So — courtesy of my mother, who always told me that doing a secretarial course "would always come in handy" — this is what happened when I went to talk to Joy Division at the Rainbow Theatre, where they were appearing as support band to The Buzzcocks ...

I've actually read very little about you in the music papers — don't you like doing interviews?

PETER: It's not that. We always get asked the same questions.

Well, surely that happens with everyone — they seem to put up with it.

PETER: Maybe — that's up to them ...

I wondered why I wasn't allowed to bring my tape recorder along?

IAN: Well, your opinions change every day so it seems pointless putting them down on tape ... we'll answer any questions you ask us, you'll just have to write fast, won't you?

(SICKLY SMILE FROM ME...) Okay, what brought about the sudden change in your music from the early 'punk thrash' to the stuff you're doing now?

IAN: We learnt to play.

Is that all? Is that the only reason?

IAN: Yeah. We couldn't play at all before. We just learnt how to play the instruments.

It was a bit of a dramatic change though, wasn't it?

IAN: Not really. Have you heard any of the early stuff?

Yeah — I've heard the EP and the track on the 'Electric Circus' album. The stuff you're doing now seems so different...

IAN: We just experimented more when we learnt how to play.

Don't you think that because you're so popular now that people will want to buy your earlier records? You can't buy the EP anymore and you seem to be making it difficult for them to hear what you were like before ...

ROB: (MANAGER) There were only 1200 copies of the EP pressed, and they were all sold.

So why isn't it pressed again — don't you want people to hear what you sounded like before?

IAN: We still do some of the old songs occasionally. Our sets are completely different every night. We do what we feel like.

Your music seems to have changed — a lot — the songs are very sinister and unsettling now ...

IAN: I don't think they are.

I do. Don't you think they're creepy?

ROB: It's easy to write creepy music when you're creeps yourselves. (THIS WAS THE NEAREST WE GOT TO A JOKE THE WHOLE EVENING...)

What inspires you to write the songs then? Is there anything particular?

IAN: You can't say what inspires you to write. It could be something you've seen, something sub-conscious ... It's up to people to decide what the songs are about. They have to form their own impressions.

I wondered if you've been influenced by existentialism at all — have you read anything by Jean-Paul Sartre?

IAN: I started reading one of his books once but I didn't like it.

(THERE GOES THAT THEORY DOWN THE DRAIN ... GOOD IDEA THOUGH, CRAIG ...)

I remember at one time that you were linked with having a Nazi image cos you used to do a song that people latched on to as having Nazi overtones ...

IAN: I don't really know about that. We were labelled with it, but it's just the music papers trying to categorise people and put labels on them.

Have you thought about signing to one of the major companies?

IAN: We've had offers but we don't see the point of it really.

You'd get a lot more push behind you, though, with publicity and all that sort of thing ...

ROB: I went to see one of the big companies and talked it over and in the end the bloke said he reckoned we'd be better off staying with Factory cos we've got freedom with them. We can do what we want. We're allowed to do things for different labels — we did that thing on Fast, and there's something coming out soon on Sordide Sentimentale, the French label that Throbbing Gristle recorded for. (I THINK THIS IS A FRENCH MAGAZINE THAT ISSUES RECORDS AS PART OF THE MAGAZINE'S CONTENTS.) We wouldn't be able to do that if we signed with a big company. As it is, we've sold 25,000 copies of the album — that's more than the Human League have sold and they're on a major label. (VIRGIN)

Why didn't you get in the charts, then, cos 25,000 should be enough to get it into the Top 50?

ROB: It didn't get in cos it wasn't sold in chart return shops and Factory didn't buy it in. (THE BRITISH CHARTS ARE COMPILED FROM LISTS SUBMITTED BY SPECIFIC SHOPS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY — ONLY THESE SHOPS' SALES ARE REFLECTED IN THE CHARTS. IF THE COMPANIES CAN FIND OUT WHICH SHOPS ARE THE 'CHART RETURN' SHOPS, THEY CAN 'BUY' ALBUMS INTO THE CHART BY SUPPLYING COPIES, AND GETTING THEM BOUGHT FROM THESE SHOPS. THIS EXPLAINS WHY ALBUMS SUDDENLY JUMP INTO THE BRITISH CHARTS AND THEN SINK WITHOUT A TRACK AFTER A COUPLE OF WEEKS WHEN SALES ARE NOT MAINTAINED.) I don't think it makes any difference to us that we're with Factory — if the music is good, it sells itself. Anyway, we may eventually start our own label.

(A WHILE AFTER MY MEETING WITH JOY DIVISION, I WAS TOLD THAT CBS TRIED TO BUY OUT THE WHOLE OF FACTORY RECORDS JUST TO GET THEIR HANDS ON JOY DIVISION — I DON'T KNOW IF THIS WAS TRUE, BUT THEY FAILED ANYWAY.)

ROB: (con't) If you sign with a big label they just want to keep on putting out hit records all the time — look at The Buzzcocks. They have to keep writing hit records now.

(THIS, TO ME, IS BESIDES THE POINT. JOY DIVISION AREN'T THE KIND OF GROUP THAT THE COMPANIES WOULD INSIST ON HAVING HITS WITH ... I'D IMAGINE THAT THEIR ABILITY TO COME UP WITH NEW IDEAS AND SOLID SELLING ALBUMS WOULD MORE THAN SUFFICE. ANYWAY, THE BUZZCOCKS SEEM TO MANAGE QUITE WELL ...)

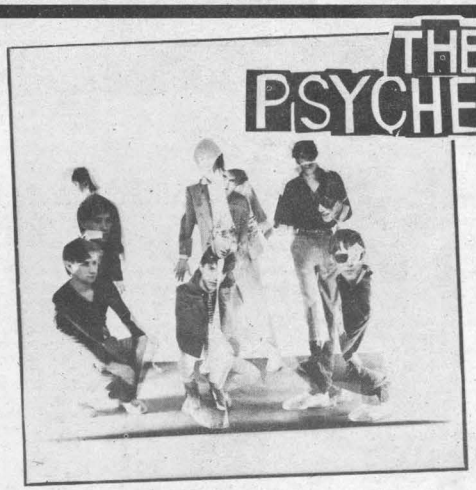
Have you had any interest from the States at all?

ROB: The Buzzcocks wanted us to go back with them to America, cos they were there in the summer and they're going back soon, but we couldn't afford to go, cos we wouldn't get any support or backing like they do. We would've gone if we could have gone in a bus, but they wanted us to fly everywhere and we just didn't have enough money. The Gang of 4 travelled in a bus when they went, but The Buzzcocks' schedule for the next tour would have meant that we'd have to have flown too, so we didn't go.

ATTEMPTS AT TRYING TO FIND OUT A BIT MORE INFORMAUT WHAT WAS "BEHIND THE GROUP", AS THEY SAY IN ALL THE BEST PAPERS, DID NOT SEEM TO BE WHOLLY SUCCESSFUL. THEY JUST SIMPLY REFUSED TO BE DRAWN INTO CHATTING ABOUT THEMSELVES, THEIR MUSIC, THEIR INFLUENCES, WHAT TOOTHPASTE THEY USED, ETC. MAYBE THEY'RE RIGHT — MAYBE IT ISN'T IMPORTANT, AND PEOPLE SHOULD DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES. EVENTUALLY WE ALL JUST SAT AROUND, SOME OF THE BAND DISAPPEARED TO GET TAKEAWAY FOOD AND THEY LEFT ME AND A GUY WHO WRITES FOR AN IRISH MUSIC PAPER IN THE DRESSING-ROOM WITH ONE OF THEIR ROADIES AND THE DRUMMER'S GIRLFRIEND WHO TOLD ME THAT THEY ALL WORKED IN OFFICES BEFORE THEY WERE IN THE BAND.

When they came back from getting their Doner Kebabs, someone from the Rainbow came up and told them to do 35 minutes onstage. None of them knew what songs they'd be doing until Rob made out a list, which he handed to each one of the group as they went onstage. It was very odd. They went on at 8:15 p.m. At 8:50 p.m. Ian looked at his watch, they finished what they were singing and that was it — I found the whole thing peculiar — they seemed totally unconcerned about performing, they performed exactly to time, and afterwards looked as though they couldn't care less. Maybe it was because it was the end of the tour and they were fed up, but their apparent lack of enthusiasm about anything is, I think, extremely boring. Things on the friendliness front improved after the gig — Ian did, admittedly, talk a bit more, so perhaps his reluctance was something to do with nerves. None of the band were happy with the sound — they played well but the vocals were a bit fuzzy, whilst the sound for the Buzzcocks was uncharacteristically clear. (Someone in the following week's music papers hinted that The Buzzcocks deliberately fixed it so that they sounded better than Joy Division cos they were fed up of getting blown offstage by their support band every night ...)

THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS



THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS: Interviewed at the offices of Epic/CBS Records, London)
(Interviewed by Jane Garcia with Richard and Tim Butler. Most of the others were around the building somewhere but my tape recorder could only cope with two at a time, so they didn't take part)...

An Introduction
The Psychedelic Furs were formed almost 3 years ago by Butler (Richard Butler) with his brother Tim (bassist) and guitarist Roger 'Dog' Morris. They were joined after a few months by saxophonist Duncan Kilburn. John Ashton became the second guitarist in November 1978 and the band struggled to find a permanent drummer, working their way through several unsuitables until a message broadcast on the radio by John Peel (yeah, him again...) was answered by Vince Ely, ex-Photons and The Unwanted. John was also in The Unwanted but not at the same time as Vince. None of the others have been in other bands.

Their music sounds like a fight between The Velvet Underground and The Stooges against Roxy music and X-Ray Spex, with heavy bass lines, thumping drums, dual lead guitars and this wonderful banshee-wail of a sax.

It's only in the last seven or eight months that the band started to attract any attention, but as more and more people become disillusioned with punk and pissed off with the artificially-created 'mod' revival, they started to look for something different and The Furs seem to be 'it'. They recorded a highly successful session for John Peel's show and then the contract chase was on. Epic/CBS were the lucky ones, and the group's first single, "We Love You"/"Pulse" was released at the beginning of November.

Slash: A highly original question to start — why is the band called the Psychedelic Furs?

Tim: Zzzzzzzzzzz.....

Richard: Well, the name was really a reaction against punk rock, cos the ides of punk rock are so fucking stupid really, aren't they? (Blank look from me at this point...) What I mean is, you used to get "smash up everything", "be anarchist", and like Johnny Rotten wrote a line saying, 'I wanna destroy passers-by' and that immediately doesn't make sense because anarchy really means trying to find a way that people can live without government, and finding an agreeable way of living together. So if you can imagine people who are trying to do that saying: 'Oh, yeah, we're all anarchists. Let's punch each other out' all the time, it just doesn't follow. All that punk rock was a lot of shit, because anarchy is about being incredibly responsible. I'd say this band is probably more anarchist than any of those other punk bands, in that we're trying to find ways to live together with other people.

Slash: Is that where the 'psychedelic' bit comes in?

Richard: We're influenced by the psychedelic scene as it was in that our attitudes are the attitudes of the '60s but we're not putting them across as wimpishly as they were then. I think we're virtually ignoring what happened with punk, although punk has had an effect in our music cos our music's got all the energy of punk rock and I suppose we wouldn't have been signed if it hadn't been for punk ... but we'd be playing virtually the same sort of stuff whether punk had happened or not. I mean, we're mainly influenced by The Doors, Velvet Underground, The Seeds ...

Slash: What do you think when peole compare you with Velvet Underground — are you flattered?

Tim: Bored.

Richard: Yeah, bored. I couldn't give a fuck.

Tim: But you've got to categorize us somehow.

Richard: You see, I don't think we are very much like the Velvet Underground. We did a radio interview recently and I said the Velvet Underground would've been as good as us if they'd been a dance been. (sniggers)

Tim: I think people compare us with them cos they were a heavy band and that's what we are. They were the heaviest band I've heard — except for us. We sort of go —1, 2, 3, 4 — blah. (Makes long, loud psychedelic furs–assaulting–your–ear'oles type of noise) It really gets to you. Well, it gets to me, anyway.

Richard: Iggy Pop and the Stooges were a really heavy band — heavier than anything that's been done in punk. These fast punk thrashes aren't heavy. I think the only good punk band was The Sex Pistols while they were with Johnny Rotten — he's just fucking brilliant.

Slash: How would you describe yourselves, then, cos most people in the States will have only heard the single?

Richard: Well, we're not new wave and we're not punk. I mean, we do three really slow songs — 'Sister Europe' (Author's Note 1: This is really atmospheric, brooding song — written about Richard's girlfriend who lived in Italy), 'Imitation of Christ' (Author's Note 2: A jangly sort of riff — about being in an 'ongoing Christ–on–the–cross situation' when you're having sex or being beaten up. Or both, if you're lucky or unlucky, depending on your preferences.), and 'Sex' (Author's Note 3: Ask your mummy and daddy to tell you about this. And thank you, Kris Needs, for the explanations...) We also do 'Mac the Knife' — that Bertold Brecht and Kurt Weill song — that was written years ago. I don't think we can be classes as 'new wave.'

Tim: When we appeared at the Electric Ballroom the other week that prag VEC and The Monochrome Set, it said in "Time Out" (that's the weekly guide to what's going on in London) — 'If you want to go down to the Electric Ballroom you can see 3 'mod' bands.' It's ridiculous.

Slash: Okay, so what would you call the Monochrome Set?

Tim: Rubbish. (laughs. I'm still not sure if he was joking. I like them anyway.) I'd say that we're psychedelicskiffbabillyrock.

Slash: A lot of people seem to think that the natural progression, or regression, when you think about it, from the current 'mod' revival will be towards psychedelic ...

Tim: We're not into it for a revival ...

Richard: We won't be there if it does come back. We're not interested. We've been doing basically what we've been doing for years — we were called the Psychedelic Furs and playing down The Roxy ages ago, when there was a big punk scene down there, and we used to get things thrown at us and people walking out — I mean, just being called the Psychedelic Furs was a social blunder in itself at the time. But that's all we need, a couple years later, just when we've been signed, for people to say: 'Oh, it's the psychedelic revival band, isn't it? Just like the mods' cos we've been working and doing the same sort of thing for a long time, so no way are we interested in a revival.

Slash: Was there a particular reason why we chose "We Love You" as the first single, cos it's got the same title as that Stones' song from their psychedelic era?

Richard: It was really to establish the difference between us and the old psychedelic bands, cos they used to go round saying: "Oh yeah, we love you. We love everything, nan", and like putting flowers down rifles at Yale University — things like that. If you say "We love everything" it just sounds so stupid really. The song is just being very sarcastic. It's not a very positive statement for us — not as much as the other songs, but we brought it out as a single first to show how distant we are from the original psychedelic way. We wanted it to be apparent from the beginning.

Slash: Some of your songs could be deemed controversial, don't you think, cos of the titles?

Richard: Yeah, well we've had all that. We played at Portsmouth Polytechnic — they think they're very clever students down there and they're all into this leftist scene. Anyway, they thought: "Well, this is a song called 'Blacks' ", and immediately they start4ed throwing fucking bottles and glasses cos they thought it was racist. They thought "Sex" was sexist and all the women's libbers started throwing things. It was a load of bollocks.

Tim: One of the guys who was throwing glasses actually walked up to the social secretary of the college and said: "Those guys — I just heard them saying in that song that black people have got smaller brains than white people". He swore he heard it, which is rubbish, cos it's about a quote that Andy Warhol made about white people getting rich off the fruits of black people's labour.

Richard: "We Love You" doesn't get played much on the radio here cos the lyrics are a little bit inflammatory, I think. Things like 'I'm in love with catholics' and 'I'm in love with Althia and Donna / All that shit that goes uptown ranking'. You know, if you're thinking about it, that could be construed as a racist statement, which it absolutely isn't. It's just taking the piss out of other records all the way along cos it says: 'I'm in love with Frank Sinatra / Fly Me to the Moon' and 'I'm in love with The Supremes / Oh, 'Baby Love', so the Althia and Donna / 'Uptown Top ranking' thing is just a continuation of that — saying what a lot of shit records get put on, really.

Slash: What's that song 'India' about? (This is my ave Furs' song: It's got all the ingredients of their best stuff: Howling sax, constant repetition of a riff building into a crashing climax with Richard wailing away merrily.)

Tim: Well, it's about 'India'.

Slash: Oh.

Richard: It actually started off being about the country India, but I change the lyrics all the time until I arrive at something final. So, it started off being about the country, cos we're called the Psychedelic Furs and all that business, and then Mountbatten got killed (he was the queen's uncle, history fans and monarchists. He got blown into tiny pieces by an IRA bomb last August) and he had a daughter called India, so that came into it as well. Now, it's sort of half about the country and half about a girl — not Mountbatten's daughter — but the fact that India's a girl's name. I'll have to have a big re–think about the lyrics before it's actually recorded for the album cos the album will sort of freeze it. It doesn't mean I can't change the lyrics in the future cos the lyrics to a lot of songs change from day to day, but recording it will be a very important time so we'll have to think about the lyrics in terms of that.

Slash: Who writes the music?

Richard: We all do. I write the lyrics — I write the lyrics all the time.

Tim: We write a tune and he sort of looks through wads of lyrics and he sees which one goes best with the tune.

Richard: The tune comes first, really, I think ... Obviously when you write lyrics they've got a certain metre to them, l.ike morse code, and the morse code has to sort of fit with the music. What normally happens is that we go into a rehearsal studio, they make up the tune, and then I go home and rifle through the old lyrics and find some things that I think will fit, but the music comes first really. I dunno, though, they come together, seeing as I've already written half the lyrics before the tune was made up. It just sort of both happens and you have to make them gel. I can't say, 'Right, I've got these lyrics, you guys — make up a tune to fit them', that's impossible. The music comes first.

Slash: I know it's a long way ahead, but does the "second album syndrome" bother you cos so many bands have problems with second albums?...

Richard: Right — we're admitting it ourselves. The first album will be songs we've been playing for about 2 years, so we've had two years to make up songs and throw them away, if we wanted to, cos we've made up better ones, or something like that. I mean, for every song we play at the moment, we've thrown out at least 3 others — it's that sort of distillation of songs. We find it very easy to make songs up but nowadays we're getting much more fussy. We've made up 5 songs in the last month and they've all been thrown away — one because someone said it sounded a bit like Joy Division, so we said: 'Right — out'. But after we've recorded the first album we go into 2 months just rehearsing to make up a new set and that 2 months is going to be fucking chaos really, cos we're going to have to cram it all into that time, whereas before we had 2 years. So we've got a twelfth of the time to come up with a whole new set.

Slash: I read that you wanted a "Banshee type control" over your record contract — have you got that?

Richard: Yes.

Slash: Do CBS let you do what you want?

Richard: It's difficult to tell. They signed us because of what we were doing, so for them to change it at this stage would be stupid. We went in and said that we wanted "We Love You" as the first single cos, as I said, we weren't worried so much about separating ourselves from the punk scene as from the original psychedelic scene, and we thought we'd do it straightaway; and then we said we wanted Steve Lillywhite to produce the album, cos he'd seen us a few times and is really into the band, and we got exactly that. And I designed the singles bag and all the promotion material, and I'll do the album cover, hopefully in conjunction with this poster company called "Times Ten" (they did those great Cramps posters) so, you know, we've done everything we wanted to really ... I can only say that we got a good deal. CBS immediately assigned us to an A&R man — Howard Thompson — to work closely with us. Apparently they're trying to get back to the small company type of thing, and we're the band they're trying it out with.

Slash: Didn't you think about putting out a record on your own label, or signing with a small company to start with?

Tim: I think that's a waste of time.

Richard: I think that if you've got something good to say, you want it to reach as.many people as possible. That small label thing doesn't often work very well. I mean, the way we thought about it was: We've fucked around long enough ...

Tim: ... We'll wait for the big 'un...

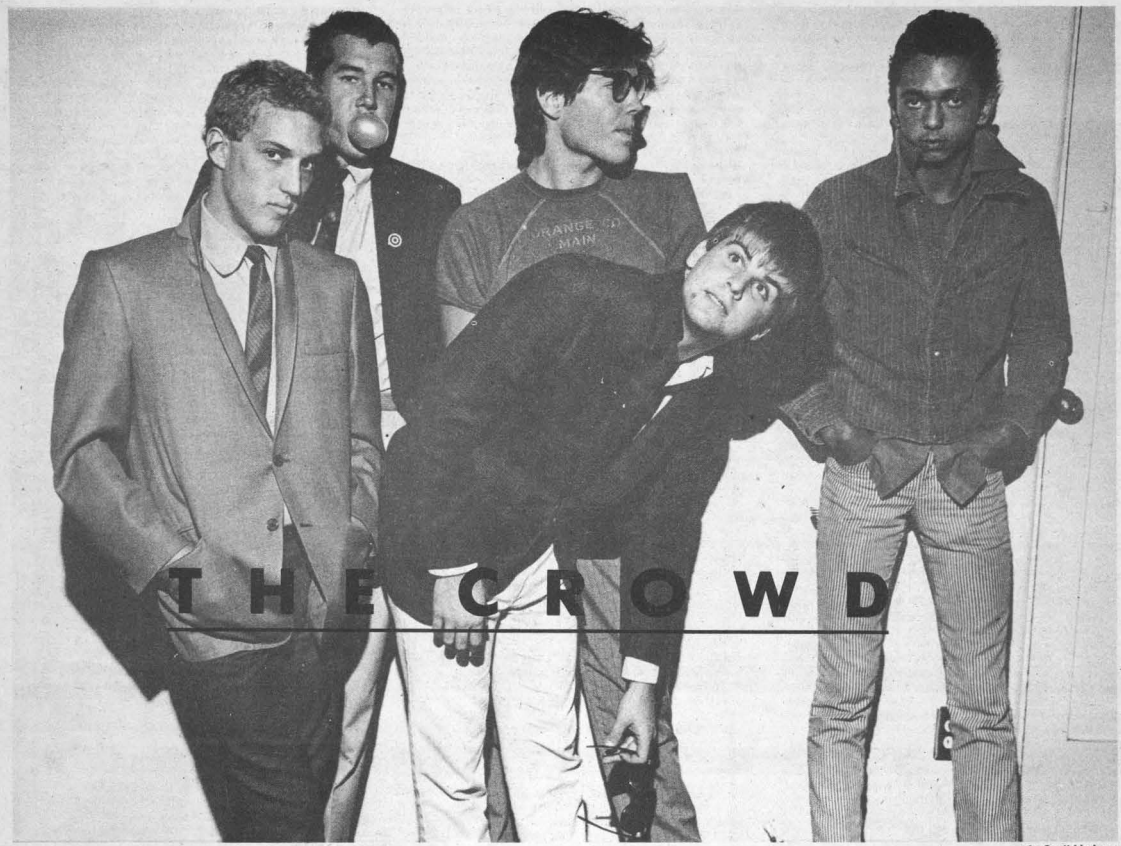
Richard: We were all working up until about July (Richard was at art college and Tim was 'a brain surgeon' — maybe he said 'drain surgeon', I'm not sure ...) — working during the day and saving up all our money cos we had to rehearse at weekends. It got so that we weren't eating anything cos we were working and going straight to rehearse, and we'd had enough of it. So we thought, "What's the best way to do it? We can either take one of these offers from a small company, or we can go with one of the big companies that offered us a deal." We took all the relevant contracts to a solicitor and decided that CBS was the best one. Then we re–negotiated it a bit ...

Tim: ... And here we are.

Richard: Howard Thompson was the first one to see us from CBS and he really liked us, so he brought down Muff Winwood, who's the head of A&R. In the end they played a tape to Maurice Oberstein, who's the head of CBS here and Maurice Oberstein said: 'I want you to sign the Psychedelic Furs. I want a band that'll come in and throw up all over my desk," ...

Slash: Have you done that yet?

Richard: No, not yet ... But very nearly.



THE CROWD

pic: Scott Lindgren

THE CROWD ARE JIM TRASH, JIM McKAY, TRACY, JAY AND BARRY. THEY HAVE BEEN TOGETHER A YEAR AND A HALF, LIVE IN HUNTINGTON BEACH AND HAVE OFTEN BEEN LINKED TO THE EMERGING "SURF PUNK" SCENE.

S: Were you always called the Crowd?

C: Under this name with these people, we've always been the Crowd. Jim Trash used to be in a band called the New.

S: How do you know the Flyboys?

C: Because he used to play in the Flyboys, too, a long time ago ... They kicked me out because I was too clumsy and uncoordinated.

S: What about that other guy who used to be in the Flyboys? Pete, who's in the Hurt now?

C: We played with them once a while ago ... a night at the Woodsound. They label themselves powerpop.

S: Do you label yourselves at all?

C: We try to be ourselves ... Barry's pissed at us because Tracy and I started wearing ties. We saw Quadrophenia. We're a punk band, I guess; although we don't pretend that that's all there is ...

S: Are you guys still affiliated with Poshboy?

C: Not anymore ... he kind of did us a favor and pus us on some vinyl, the Beach Boulevard record. We paid for the recording and mixing. We have our own publishing company. Other than that he's lined us up with some jobs to help sell the record.

S: How do you like the Beach Boulevard album? Do you think it's a good representation of how you sound?

C: Sort of, but not really. It's more the way we used to sound. It's definitely not our live sound, too poppish. That was the first time we'd done any recording. So I think maybe it sounded great then but the second time around will be much better. Posh tried to make us sound like an all-guitar vocal band ... more vocals even than guitar, no balls. That twinky early Beach Boys tone. I went and borrowed fifty dollars from my friends and remixed the whole thing. I'd never been at a mixing board before but it came out sounding better. We took it down to RCA for mastering and Posh goes, "Wait! This isn't what I had!" That's right, this is us.

S: How do you like the rest of the record?

C: I wish they'd play. Rik L. Rik's played once and the Simpletones broke up ... so we're the only band playing to sell the record. If Rik got a permanent band together he'd be really good. It's hard to push an album with a bunch of groups that no longer exist ... Hey if any of the readers of SLASH are smart enough or have enough money, they should open up a club down in Huntington Beach. They'd make a fortune.

S: Are you all from Huntington Beach?

C: Yeah ... graduated from the same high school. Oh, wait I didn't graduate. I took that test to get out.

S: What about the scene down there you hear so much about?

C: A lot of people trying to make things happen and getting nowhere. All the young kids are really into it. They like to see bands. There's a lot of skinheads. They're all little kids. They're our biggest fans. And then you've got all the older people who cruise around with their black coats on.

S: How little are the kids?

C: High school, junior high. I was talking to some kids the other day ... first through fifth grades. Junior high's about the norm.

S: What about the other bands like the Screws?

C: The Screws are good. No comment on the Slasher. We're not very good friends with any of those bands. They used to spray paint stuff on walls about us. Huntington Beach was anti-Crowd for a while. There were no other bands really when we started. We were on an album and everyone else thought they could make it fast. You can't do that. The Screws are a lot better than they used to be, they're more themselves now. Then there's the Klan ... listen to the Iggy Pop album or Deep Purple's Machine Head ... no, not really, they're just themselves too.

S: Did you read the stuff in the Times and the other papers? Was that just hysteria?

C: That was all police propaganda. Parents wouldn't let their little fifteen year old kids dress and cut their hair the way they want. We talked to one of the local papers and they put what we said on their front page. It's just a few assholes screwing everything up. Everyone was trying to make that every punk kid was an asshole. Some of those papers would put that there were 30 punks beating on old ladies. It's just not like that. 1 or 2 blow it for everyone. The punks were scapegoats for the newspapers for a couple of weeks, for anything that happened. The police made a lot of it up. You know, a little kid carves a swaztika in his arm, his mother sees it, and he tells her, "Some big guys held me down and did it!" That's what I don't like about Huntington, there's too many Nazis still around. They think it's cool to fight all the time. It takes everyone a while to progress. Some of them are our fans. A lot of different kinds of people like us.

C: I hear a lot of bands putting us down and then they'll be there in the audience. There's a lot of bands not like that. Whenever X plays we bring our army in force. They're great. We like them a lot. Any time anyone good plays down there we let everyone know because it's a big drag to have to drive a long way to where you don't know anyone and have hardly anybody turn up to see you.

S: What about another record?

C: We want to record our album on January 1st and be the first band to have a record out in the 80's ... There's a lot of ifs in there depending on money ... c'mon let's get serious. What do you think about the future, Iran? OK, next question.

S: What kind of bands to you like?

C: Weirdos, X, the Go-Gos ... Magazine, the Specials ... we're going to try to get that gig with them at the Whisky in February ... Secret affair ...

S: So what bands did you listen to before?

C: Roxy Music, Be-Bop Deluxe, Who, Monkees ... Mott the Hoople, Herman's Hermits ... What else do you want to know about the beach? The waves have been flat for the last week, the water's freezing.

S: Do you know any of the bands that live over in Fullerton and Orange County?

C: Middle Class, they're good. But it's like West Side Story over there, man. I saw that stupid letter to *Slash*. I thought it was about us at first...

S: I think it was more about people like the Slashers.

C: There's people who go to gigs with no other objective in mind except to beat people up. The stupidest thing I've ever seen is punks beating up other punks. There's people who think that's cool.

C: Muscleheads. And it's always the big guys trying to beat on the little guys. We've got a song about this guy who thinks he's the coolest in town and he beats *everyone* up. It's called "Tough Like You". Someone'll get him though.

S: Anything else you want to say?

C: We want to be accepted ... we're not a "beach band". We're a band. Just like everyone else. We don't want to be "surf punks". It's not our fault we live down there. Our parents are the ones who decided that's where they wanted to live so we grew up there. Look at half of the people in L.A. Half of them used to live at the beach. Hermosa, Venice, Torrance ... Hopefully there'll be a club in Orange County soon, a *good* club that L.A. bands can come and play at. There's just no money to start it. Even though it would definitely end up making money.

GEARS

EVALUATING THE STATE OF PUNK WITH THE GEARS, CHAMPIONS OF ROCK N ROLL FUN

(Axxel G. Reese, Kis Spike, Redz and David)

SPIKE: Hey, what's happening? Where are all these lame questions?

SLASH: Ha ha. Nice of you to drop by unexpectedly. Are you guys doing a tape? One of you told me about it the other night.

SPIKE: We're doing a single on our own, and it might be on the Rodney Bingenheimer compilation album.

SLASH: What other bands will be on it?

SPIKE: We don't really know. Red Cross....

AXXEL: I think we're the only ones who've submitted a tape yet.

SLASH: How's the new guitar player *(Spike — Ed.)* working out?

DAVID: Nothing better could have happened to us. He's probably the best guitar player I've ever played with, and I've been in hundreds of bands. My dad came to see us on Saturday, and all he said was "goddam that guy can play guitar!"

SLASH: Spike, are you relieved to be rid of your singing duties?

SPIKE: Yea, it's more fun now. That's why we were shopping for a singer with the Controllers.

SLASH: Is that first single selling?

REDZ: That's a weird story. There were about 800 left and Rubin *(ex band member — Ed.)* broke them all in half.

DAVID: He took pictures of all these broken records and took them to his lawyer, claiming that now we could never use them or something totally absurd.

AXXEL: That record sucked anyway. And I want to make it perfectly clear that we are not a beach surf punk band.

DAVID: We're a surfabilly band.

AXXEL: Whatever. But we are *not* from the beach.

SPIKE: Our songs are just about having fun, taking dope, chasing girls, going crazy.

SLASH: Have you played out of town yet?

AXXEL: Yes, if Bel Air is out of L.A. We played at this part last week end for all these rich people who would never dream of going to a club so they import the music to their home. All we got paid was a case of beer. It was a cool house, with telephones in every toilet. I suppose it's to make business deals while you are taking a shit! We haven't played L.A. enough yet, we'll tour later. When we play here it's always these weird monday night gigs, with other bands like Virginia and the Slims! Or it's a night when there is a really good gig someplace else. And our last four gigs got cancelled, one because we're banned from the Troubadour..

SLASH: Why are you banned?

AXXEL: 'Cos Pat Smear lit a table on fire last time we played there and they held us responsible. We played once with the Plugz and the Brainiacs at the Club 88, and the room in the back got all torn up so this guy who runs 88 told Doug Weston that we drew a rowdy crowd and all that, and Doug Weston told us he'd give us one last chance which he did. Then the table got lit.

SPIKE: They all say the people we attract are too rowdy, but it's the same people that go and see everybody else.

AXXEL: The people that start fires at our gigs are the people who would do the same at a X gig, but when it's with X it's okay, 'cos they have a big draw.

SLASH: Such a bad reputation for such a sweet band!

DAVID: It's just we keep stepping into the shit.

SLASH: Where are the other L.A. Shakers now?

DAVID: Hector went back with the Zeros, Eddie is working around town and getting drunk.

SLASH: One of your recent gigs that got cancelled was that Rock Against Racism thing, wasn't it?

SPIKE: Yea, we never got to play. It was a combination of bands going overtime, police pressure...

REDZ: The permit was until 3 o'clock, and that band Zilch played from 2 to 3.

AXXEL: The guy who organized it called us, he is going to have some more. This time we want to make sure he's got it together.

SPIKE: It could have been fun with some better bands, better organization ... I was surprised to see how many punks showed up.

SLASH: Redz, where do you come from?

AXXEL: Wala Wala Washington.

REDZ: Shut up. I come from Spokane. Two years ago I moved down to Glendale where I met Spike working in a budget-rent-a-car.

SLASH: Are you making a decent living being in the Gears?

SPIKE: Fuck no!

DAVID: We play for sheer pleasure.

AXXEL: That's all we know how to do. I think the clubs should have a "Feed the Bands" policy.

SPIKE: Yea, beer and egg rolls. That would help.

REDZ: I want to know why there is all this lack of enthusiasm at gigs now.

AXXEL: Yea, I want to see people go crazy again. Everybody is really into watching now. It's got so refined!

SPIKE: There are two types of audience now, there is a new one that sits down and claps, they're the ones that pack it in for the art bands. I hear conversations about how this band or that band is "interesting". They're so busy thinking about what's happening. It used to be just a gut level feeling, now it's all this ... Too many people are trying to diagnose everything.

DAVID: We want to revive that rock n roll feeling. The body is there, but you have to pump it up full of life.

SPIKE: People keep getting led astray. Now they are ready to write off punk rock, but it shouldn't be over yet. And I think all the regulars that have been with it since the beginning, the main stays, they have all missed the point, and the point was fun. But everybody got real serious about it. And also everybody forgot the kids, how to relate to them. I thought punk rock was rock n roll without the bullshit, something the kids could understand. When we all used to go down to the Masque it was the gut feeling that made us all jump and go crazy. I didn't like the Skulls' songs but when they played live they drove me nuts ... Everyone goes nostalgic for a while, and David reminisces about the first time he saw Trudie *(well known local scene-make — Ed.)* and her "raspberry lipstick"...

SLASH: Wasn't the secret aspect of those days the main appeal?

SPIKE: I think the real part of it is still secret. What you read in the L.A. Weekly about the stuff getting signed is everything that had nothing to do with that early scene. But maybe they're opening the doors for the harder music. There's no way the public is going to go for the harder music. There's no way the public is going to go from Led Zeppelin to Black Flag like that. But the Knack and 20/20 and shit like that will make it easier. I think they suck, but they are necessary.

REDZ: Another thing is that when I first came to the scene everybody stuck together. Now there is all this competition about not going on first, nobody wants to lend their equipment, it's so different.

DAVID: I want to clear something up right now: we've been called the sluts of Hollywood lately. We are not sluts.

REDZ: And we are not sex maniacs.

SPIKE: Just because we're not gay. America is not gay, starting from East L.A. and going east it's not. And what they've called us is because of Axxel, who is a tramp. He would drink anybody's bath water. Quick, ask us some provocative questions before the tape runs out.

SLASH: What's your beef with the art bands?

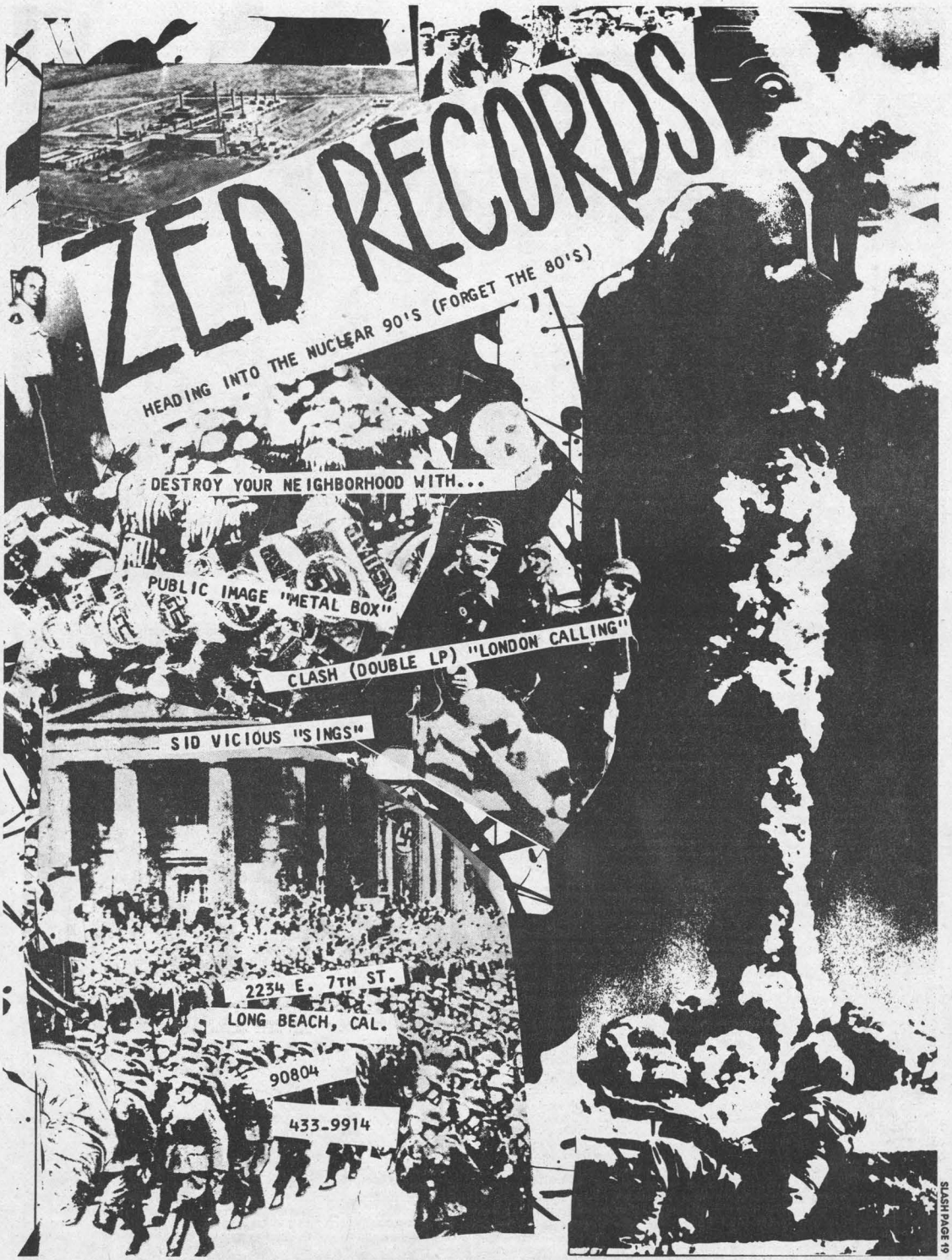
SPIKE: They hate rock n roll.

AXXEL: They are in their own space, and I can take it or leave it. I consider Nervous Gender, Human Hands and Bpeople to be the best, they're really good at what they do. There's no way I could play the stuff they play.

SPIKE: I just can't understand that stuff, it alienates me. But punk rock is mine, and I ain't giving up on it.

SLASH: Time's up. Quick, one last statement!

DAVID: I don't think Robert Hillburn can dance.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WHAT'S ALL THIS MADNESS ABOUT ANYWAY?!

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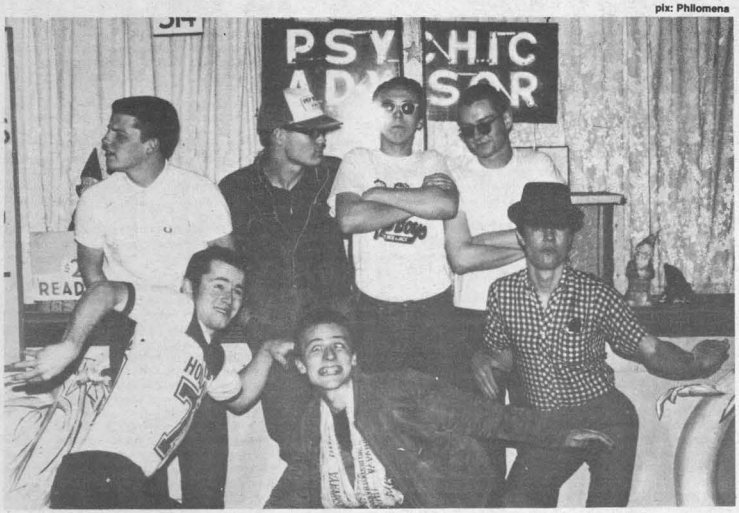


(Slash talked to the group after their brief series of triumphant gigs in Southern California. They may be exuberant and boisterous on stage but in conversation they were actually somewhat reserved and shy 'cept when they all started talking at once and the resulting cockney mess irreperably damaged the tape recorder's delicate circuits. Their official line up (take a deep breath) is: Suggs on vocals, Lee on sax, Woods on drums, Bedders on bass, Chrissy Boy on guitar, Mike on keyboards, Chas on steps, Toks on rodie duties and art direction! ("He's the one who makes sure we don't end up with triangles and other art stuff on our covers!"), Chalky, other roadie and hardhead dancing partner to Chas, and Ton, equipment manager.

Slash: It's been a pretty short tour hasn't it? What was it, some kind of dress rehearsal for the big one?

Suggs: Well Sire didn't want us to sell records here at the moment, they didn't want us out here but we wanted to come just to see what it was like.

Mike: When we signed the record deal they said one of the things would be we'd have a tour of America really soon but it'd be better to leave it 'til April or something and we said no we want to do it now.

Slash: So Sire's just for American distribution?

Woods: America and Canada I think.

Nose: The rest of the world is Stiff.

Slash: What d'you think Sire Records expect from you?

Chrissy Boy: The impossible.

Baby: I don't think they really know our moods as well as Stiff do. LStiff are a bit nutty.

Slash: So are you satisfied with the first album?

Madness: Yeah ... Definitely.

Woods: We put it together in 2 weeks and it was out on the streets straight away.

Slash: D'you think there's going to be any pressure to make the 2nd album a bit more mainstream?

Woods: If we want to get a sound we'll get it, we don't take any pressure from anyone you know. Our single One Step Beyond was put through a harmoniser and equaliser... it wasn't meant to really, it was like a really rough mix, they didn't even finally mix it down but it sounded so rough and good that we kept it.

Slash: D'you consider yourselves a ska band or is it mainly an influence?

Woods: That's it, you said it.

Slash: So your music is going to keep that kind of edge?

Woods: No-one can say.

Mike: The next one's going to be aimed at the american market.

Slash: You know america has never at all been into reggae, never mind ska! Did you have any fears about coming here?

Suggs: Well we just don't know anything at all about america...

Mike: It goes down well in england so we thought it'd go down well over here.

Suggs: Only thing we were worried about was people not knowing we were playing and not coming.

Slash: Tell us what kind of audience you get at your gigs ... d'you get Jamaicans?

Madness: Some ... The only black kids who come to our gigs are sort of punks ... We don't get a big Rastafari audience.

Slash: And then you get skins and you get mods, right?

Suggs: Depends which part of the country we play in.

Slash: D'you find yourselves with a younger audience than most bands?

Madness: Yeah ... No ... You get them up to 30 years old, you really do! ... The average age must be around our age. *(18—20. Ed.)*

Slash: D'you consider yourselves skins any of you?

Suggs: We used to a bit, not now.

Chas: We dress that way but ...

Chrissy Boy: I don't consider myself anything ...

Slash: What're your backgrounds — working class, middle class?

Everybody except Mike: Yeah ... working.

Mike: I'm middle class.

Chrissy Boy: I'm lower.

Slash: How did you meet?

Madness: We all lived in the same area ... We bumped into each other.

Slash: Who thought of the name Madness? 'Cos it's really perfect for you.

Madness: Chrissy ... He didn't like it when he said it.

Chrissy Boy: Can I explain it to this dude? It's one of the songs in our set you know and I said why don't we call ourselves after one of the songs in our set ... but it suits us now.

Slash: What are these recent accusations in the english press as to your followers' politics? Shut up Chas! (obscure but significant allusion to a recent N.M.E. article in which that superior snot Deanne Pearson probes into the band's relationship to their working class audience, a fraction of which appears to have National Front fascist/racist tendencies. Ms. Pearson is the author of a brilliant analysis of the L.A. scene which appeared a while back in the same N.M.E. in which she ruthlessly*dismissed everything and everyone around with a yet-unmatched lack of insight. And so Madness were briskly quizzed by that same spot-faced self made sociologist and in the resulting inquiry most of the blame was put on Chas, hence the "shut up" admonition on our part. Before we terminate our longest editorial aside we must point out that, ideologies and cliches notwithstanding, our encounters with both persons left no doubt as to whose heart was in the right place (take a bow Chas) and who had no heart, soul or anything likeable to begin with. This will do for now. Ed.)

Suggs: She misled a few points that we were trying to make and she was only after one thing really, she was only after our political side.

Mike: She just exaggerated a bit, that's all.

Chrissy Boy: A bit? Ooh yes!

Woods: Apart from London, the rest of the country you get such a mixed sort of audience, it's (the National Front supporters) such a tiny minority of the audience and she's blown it right out of proportion.

Mike: We're not into politics and she is and that was it.

Slash: It must be pretty strange for you to get here and not play to your usual type of audience.

Chas: It's better really ... it's harder you know.

Chrissy Boy: It reminds me of how it was when we first started you know.

Mike: ...Bit better than when we first started!

Baby face: I think they come with more of an open mind over here, it's not like 'We're mods, we're not gonna dance to this band ...'.

Chas: LThere's a lot of cliqueyness in England, there isn't so much here, if they like it they like it.

Slash: (to Chas) What about this head banging? *(Chas and the roadie dance together for one number where they bang each other's heads pretty hard ...Ed.)*

Suggs: Every day they say, 'Oh, we're gonna stop now'.

Woods: We took them to hospital last week and put metal plates in their foreheads.

Chas: Some people think it's not for real but it is, we try to slow down a bit sometimes you know, because after doing this 2 shows a night crap...

Slash: Last night for the encore you did the old Maytals number, "Monkey Man"...

Madness: Ooh! ... Oh! ... Did you know what was one off?... That was the first time we played it ... It was jammed ... The Specials do it.

Mike: The reason we done it is The Specials used to do "Madness" which is our song you know...

Woods: They do a number called "Blank Expression" where they all stand there perfectly still so it was an ideal time for us all to just storm on the stage with our bags in our hands and wave to the audience *(this was when Madness was leaving for America ...Ed.)* It was really good, they all just stood there with their mouths wide open.

Suggs: And when we did our last number on our last day all the rest of the 2-Tone bands came on.

Slash: From what I heard from that tour it looked like there was a real feeling of closeness between the bands.

Woods: The last day of the tour there was sort of uh lump in the old throat.

Slash: D'you think your success and the success of the 2-Tone tour might start another movement the same way ... you've had punk and you've had mod ...

Suggs: There *is* some sort of '60s thing going on.

Chas: Some of the covers that we've done you know the bluebeat ... you know this mod thing came up — it was obvious that was going to happen from the punk thing, you know tone it down and it just sounded like mod. People suddenly discovered that in the old days people not only listened to The Who and Kinks, LSmall Faces, they also listened to bluebeat ...

When we first did gigs, people didn't wanna know you know.

Woods: A lot of top bands are beginning to realise that something's happening in that field of music — like The Clash's new film is called Rude Boys, I've got nothing against The Class you know.

Chas: Clash Cash.

Bedders: The Rutts have got something called "Jah Wars."

Slash: Somebody was asking me the other day, 'How could these guys be so aware of the ska stuff and all that since they're so young?'

Suggs: We've been listening to it 3 years, 4 years, 5 years.

Bedders: We started doing Lola again, a reggae version of Lola.

Slash: Prince Buster is still alive isn't he? Has he got in touch with you?

Mike: His lawyers are sueing Chrysalis or something. *(because of credits on the Specials' record. Ed.)*

Slash: What d'you think of the direction reggae has taken, all the Rastafarians and all that?

Suggs: I love it ... well I like some of it, Linton Kwesi Johnson I really like.

Woods: Dub is like an extension, like dub has all the new technical side to it ... In the old days it didn't have the reverb and the sort of echo. The ols snare drum sound of the old days is really amazing, it's like an old tin can. I've tried to get a really terrible brilliant sound in me snare drum, sort of dooiing! and they couldn't do it because the equipment was too good so I had to tune my snare drum in so badly.

Lee: There's no cymbals in bluebeat, is there?

Woods: Rarely. We were very sort of scared of having a very clean sound on the album but in the end I think it was alright, it wasn't too clean.

Slash: So Chas what is your position in the band? *Chas was dancing but not officially in the band ...Ed.)*

Chas: I'm in the band now.

Chrissy Boy: 'E's a good boy.

Woods: He pulls his weight.

Chas: They let me get on with it as long as I keep me mouth shut.

Slash: D'you think from the moment you started the band it's gone pretty fast?

Madness: Yeah ... Gone very fast ... I hardly put me feet on the ground.

Slash: How d'your various families feel?

Chrissy Boy: (funny voice) My mum is very proud of me.

Slash: Anything else you want to say?

Bedders: I think the Gogos should be picked for Stardom. They're really good.

Chas: Shuddup, listen and dance.

Suggs: That's about it, basically.

SITTING ON A SIDEWALK OF THE A&M LOT WITH PETE SHELLEY OF THE BUZZCOCKS WHILE A CHUCK MANGIONE RECORD PLAYS IN A NEARBY ROOM.

Slash: I saw the show you did at the Santa Monica Civic and this last show at The Stardust and there was an incredible difference on almost every level. Why d'you think that is?
Pete: I've no idea at all because I never saw either of the gigs, I was up on the stage working, I wasn't seeing what was happening.
Slash: Did you feel you were working harder at one or the other?
Pete: Well the Santa Monica one I can't remember and last night I can't remember all that well at all ... I mean everything you do is different ...
Slash: You seemed kind of frozen the 1st show and yesterday you were pretty much all over the place and you were sweating — you didn't seem to sweat at the first show.
Pete: Well it was a bit cooler, the lights weren't so direct then.
Slash: Last night you really seemed to be singing your songs to the audience and the first time you seemed to be going through a set.
Pete: Nah, nah — well, I mean if it was your opinion of what was happening, it's just as valid — it may've been a focal point of what was happening ... I was satisfied with the results of both shows. You got to take things as they happen ... if everything was under your control it'd be fine — things'd happen when you wanted them to happen, but like I had no control over who came to see the show last night and no control at the bad reputation which the place had ... I had a telegram from somebody called Michael Sinatra ...
Slash: Oh my god!
Pete: It's really a nice telegram, it starts off, "Dearest Peter. It is of course none of my business and as a concerned romantic I'd like to say how awful we all feel about Buzzcocks working for Avalon attractions and playing the dreaded Stardust Ballroom. You must be in the dark, get well soon. By Michael Sinatra and hundreds more in Los Angeles" and it says 'PS: I wish our consciences would allow us to be there!"
Slash: So are you kind if fatalistic ...
Pete: No, not fatalistic. I'm optimistic, 'cos optimism means thinkin' about the future ... I always hope that the future'll be better ... I enjoy living ...
Slash: On the new album it seems to keep building and building and the resolve is 'There's No Love In This World Anymore'.
Pete: Yeah, that's it. It's very optimistic because, what's so important about love? About the word and the mass appreciation of that word? Everybody sees different boundaries and ideals in love, but if I say there *is* no love, then everything you get is a bonus ... but if you start thinking about love, then you've got your own ideas about what love should be and if a relationship doesn't match up to those ideals then you start freaking out.
Slash: Setting yourself up for a fall ... Speaking of which, is it kind of strange to be in town with another Manchester band?
Pete: It seems perfectly natural, actually.
Kay (manager of The Fall, calls to Pete in the distance) Poison dwarf!
Pete: Oh you beautiful creature!
Slash: The new album seems to be built more like a concept, the 2nd side especially, more than your other albums.
Pete: Yeah, well the reason that came about was, well when we did 'Everybody's Happy Nowadays', people thought I was being cynical ...
Slash: You're not?!
Pete: No! I mean it! ... So all of side 2 is me trying to explain the differences which happened from the last album, in the sense that it was like a retrograde step to actually do those songs about the frame of mind I'd got myself into to do 'Everybody's Happy Nowadays' and not be cynical about it.
Slash: Is that where the 'tension' comes from?
Pete: Oh no, that was from a record review by John Savage in Sounds, it said our previous album was a 'different kind of tension' — that was the working title of the album, there were 2 working titles, one 'It's a Different Kind of Tension' and one 'It's Only a 3rd Album' and if you notice on the front it says 'Different Kind Of Tension' but on the spine it says 'It's Only a Third Album'.
Slash: Oh I didn't notice that ... So you don't see yourself as inevitably pessimistic? ... I was thinking of songs like 'Hollow Inside'...
Pete: 'Hollow Inside' I wrote in Hamburg in March this year. It just like, seemed to mean something to me 'cos that's what an artist or anybody who manifests something in themselves in another medium outside is actually doing, but they just put down something and if they can see in that something the thing that shows them something about themselves and they say 'That is right' ... so 'Hollow Inside' is like that.
Slash: What I like about that song is that the music seems to reflect that feeling, the hollow feeling of the music ... When you're writing your songs what d'you do first? D'you think of a nice melody or what?
Pete: No it's ... it's what I live with, 'cos I live with the songs.
Slash: It's spontaneous? ... (pause) ... I wonder how it gets performing them night after night, d'you ever reach the point where you're just running through it?
Pete: Oh yes, loads of times. The times when we most feel that, we get back into the dressing room and they'd say 'Oh that was a shit-hole of a gig' and people'd come in and say 'Oh it's the best we've seen you'. So I mean there's no comparison. The way that other people see us; well even the ways that each of us in the band see each other and each of us sees the band, is totally different ... it's just as valid.
Slash: Does the music press in England ever affect you? D'you still read your reviews or d'you try to avoid them?
Pete: Well sometimes I try and avoid them because the reason I'm doing it can never be appreciated by a review — all the things which I see in the work we do is different to the way a reviewer who's been asked to review a record could ever see it, therefore it tells you more about the reviewer than it does about the record.
Slash: D'you find it useless after a while?
Pete: Oh, no, it keeps people informed ... it creates its own myth in that the thing that a music paper does is to actually publicise itself. It's such a small thing that if I don't mind doing it, then they can't take that away from me.
Slash: How about when they leave the music field and they start doing an in-depth study of your very private life as I read recently. Did you get any strange feedback off that?
Pete: Well people wondered 'Who is this person I've known for so long' and all the people who knew me thought it was very offending. Mind you they write such things like that, they had no qualifications, just their own preconceptions of how it should be and all they came to see was 'Are those preconceptions right or wrong?' and if their preconceptions were right they wrote about it and if they were wrong then they admitted that from the article. If I was to try to get an understanding review I'd have to spend an awful lot of time with you and the end result of it would be that even if you understood, if you try to describe your closest friends, you're lost for words you know, there are so many interactions going on, therefore the object is defeated before being started ... Like the biography of some people, their lives, are extremely large and even then it's not going into the actual person themselves, so it's just something to entertain people.
Slash: I heard you did some films or something, it was on Granada TV. What was that about?
Pete: Well there's a guy who works at Granada who used to be a newscaster on the local news program, he's called Tony Wilson, and he had this kind of rock magazine program called "So It Goes" and a year or so ago we got to know each other and become friends. He had a chance to do whatever he wanted on the program, so he decided to do one on Buzzcocks and Magazine ...
Slash: Is there still any relationship between you and Devoto?
Pete: Well I saw him a month ago. But he's living in London, and I'm still in Manchester. There was never any antagonism between us, as people believed there was for the split to happen. They wanted to see some personality conflict, inner depth reasons to it besides just an amicable split. The reason he wanted to split was to finish college. We'd played twelve gigs in 6 months, and he had his finals coming up, and he thought I've got to do some work for my finals or I've wasted the last 3 years.
Slash: Do you have other projects besides the Buzzcocks?
Pete: I've got two solo albums coming out ...
Slash: Two? Have you already recorded them?
Pete: Yea. (seeing our questioning look) Okay, let's start at the beginning. I've been doing experiments in music for a long time before the Buzzcocks. In 1974 I did a recording with a tape recorder at home and this oscillator which I had built, and I had a whole album. I called that "Skying" (?) and that was it, I just put it on a shelf along with the other tapes. In December '76, while the punk thing was really happening I did another recording. It was on an electronic organ with an alter rhythm complement so I can press a note and it plays to the rhythm of the machine, and I played with that and enjoyed the stuff I got. So that's another album's worth. And both of those will be out around New Year.
Slash: Are you putting this out on your own, on New Hormones?
Pete: The one that I did 3 years ago, which is called 'Cinema Music and Wallpaper Sounds' is coming out on New Hormones. But I've also formed a record company in England with my best friend Francis, and so Skying will be out of Groovy Records.
Slash: Groovy records??!!
Pete: Nobody's ever used that name before.
Slash: Is New Hormones still going?
Pete: Yes. Me and Francis and another guy called Eric have a group called the Tiller Boys, and we've got an E.P. coming out on New Hormones. The 1st Groovy release is by Free Agents. Free Agent is Francis, who plays drums with the Tiller Bos and co director of Groovy Records with me, and me, and Eric and the guitarist of the Worst, and it's available from 50 Newton Street Manchester 1. The album is called 'Three Pounds Thirty Three' cause that's how much we're selling it for in England, in America it will be called 'six dollars sixtysix'.
Slash: Postage included?
Pete: I don't know yet, but we can always bill people afterwards ... uh, yea, parcel included.
Slash: Have you found any difference between audiences here and the ones in England?
Pete: No. I don't see any difference between german and french audiences. Everybody's the same.
Slash: What about the ones that don't understand your words? Do you think most audiences do?
Pete: Even if you play Germany or France there are people who understand, who have actually transcended all the barriers. I get letters from all over the world asking me questions that mean they have an understanding of what I've said before. It's very cosmopolitan, anybody who likes you have made up their mind, and that makes them the same. American audiences are fine.
Slash: You still live in Manchester .. Is it where you go back to "renew" yourself after a big tour, to forget the pressure?
Pete: Yea, it's the best place. Well, this is the last tour ...
Slash: Forever?
Pete: Well, until we change our minds, forever. If we don't change our minds, it's forever. We've been touring for twelve weeks, and before that we spent 4 weeks doing the album, and it's not something that interests us. I know people want to see us, but if we want to satisfy everybody then we'll be cutting out on ourselves.
Slash: How does the band feel?
Pete: The same way. People ask us: have you got plans to record songs when going back to England, and they talk about going back to England as being a vacation! I've got to the point where I believe it's a vocation of mine to go off and do nothing for a while and just wait until I become inspired to do something.
Slash: Is there any pressure to keep coming out with more and more little musical masterpieces of pop music, which is how your songs are described by critics?
Pete: The thing is, none of us write music. There's only John who's got an O level in music (an examination you take in british schools at 16 — Ed.), he's the only one who can read music or write it down but he hasn't done it for years ... there is no musical interchange. We sing each other bits of songs and work it out from there as it happens. There's actually no music going on. All of the changes in our music is because we're always finding new avenues opening up for us since our expertise is always growing, the music expands and our expertise follows but it's a symbiotic relationship, and when we do something new it means we found something new inside ourselves. (staring at the beer he's holding) It's like drinking beer, you used to drink four or five cans and you felt a little bit ... Then one day you find you can drink 6 or 7 and it brings on a whole new experience.
Slash: You must be the ideal band for your company, one successful single after another ...
Pete: No, no, no, NO! We've got to be completely honest, therefore they're a bit freaked out by us all because we're not conforming to the normal image, we're not bothered about records, we're not bothered about getting large followings, all those are just like nice extra icing on the cake. But the record company has no idea at all, they just see it as sales and market, a nice tune they'll like selling to other people, it's just a job. But the reason I write is not to make money. That might seem like a new angle for publicity, like the right thing to say to make it sound like I'm really honest and different ... Sometimes I feel like I'm the goose that lays the golden eggs. I'll lay golden eggs when I lay golden eggs, in my own way and my own time.
Slash: So are you happy with the way it's going?
Pete: Yea, I'm happy nowadays. If everybody else adopted the attitude ..
Slash: I keep thinking of the Buzzcocks in contradictory terms. Do you think of yourselves as an illusionist?
Pete: Well, life's an illusion, love's a dream! (cracks up)
Slash: O god!
Pete: It's easier in a song to start a discussion. I hate making statements, it has to be like a discussion, where things contradict themselves. Songs on the album contradict each other, it creates juxtapositions that are exciting to hear. People that make definite statements are definite liars. And if you make definite statements and you're wrong you may get shot to hell. I just want an easy life.
Slash: So if you stop touring what next?
Pete: Our life! If we stop touring it will be like well, let's see where the action is. It's like an experiment: What would happen if a band like us, a reasonably successful band, stops touring! We don't know, nobody else knows.
Slash: Provoke a few fits to some company businessmen?
Pete: We do anyway.
Slash: When the punk thing started you seemed to be somewhat outsiders to it, slightly detached from it ...
Pete: We still are detached, people never really sussed us out 'cos we never actually stated what we are. We're just as puzzled and bemused by the whole situation as everybody else.
Slash: Any far-reaching conclusions we could end this conversation with?
Pete: I don't know, make it up! Just don't give people what they want. Write lies, they're just as good. Opinions don't matter anyway.
(At that time Chuck Mangione walks by. After being explained who that is Pete Shelley talks for a few minutes about stars, and bus tours of the stars' homes, wondering if Manchester is ready for its equivalent: "and now people this is where Howard Devoto used to live, and this is where Mark Smith lives, and this is where Pete Shelley is going to live ...")

pic: Kickboy

SLASH: Can you tell us something about the apparent different emphasis on this tour as opposed to the previous one?

BOB: Yes, this tour is really different from the previous one. This tour is really significant for I and I ... the struggle ...

SLASH: Any particular people you're trying to reach this time around?

BOB: Yes, we're trying to reach the people who deal with life, who deal with the fulfillment of the prophecy, who respect life. So, within those people are our people.

SLASH: And you think music can change people's attitude toward life?

BOB: You see the same source that the music comes from, and that source cannot change. There is a power that the music comes from, and that is the force really. There is a greater force than music, and that is the place that music comes from. But music will be there, as well as the players of instruments.

OTHER JOURNALIST: What do you think black people should do to reorient their thinking?

BOB: The first thing that I and I must know is who you are, is Jacob's children, children of astrology, seen? When you are a child of astrology, they give you a sign, and it is a trick, everyone is conscious that something is happening: it is not a sign, it's a tribe. Astrology plays a great part on earth. Everyone knows dem signs, everyone knows dem tribes. So if you find yourselves as Jacob's children, then you find roots.

SAME JOURNALIST: What would you say is your biggest accomplishment today?

BOB: My biggest accomplishment is keeping coming to the people and the people hear the message and the message is good to all people.

EBONY: Can you see your audience growing, especially your black audience? Why do you think it took so long?

BOB: Well, you know, it could be the people you're working with, sometimes, because, this music was always what it is for ever since. Cause, you know, you have a black store and a white store. Now, if the record company who I deal with don't know about people, then they won't go to white store, good time music kinda reaches them still, then black people kind of lose interest in the new music coming. You know, it's a competition. What them don't know, this music is for all people, not me, it's for all people. If the record company interested not in people, then, you find the black shop, you find the white shop, you find the China shop, find the indian shop, find where the music circulates, instead.

SLASH: Do you think poor people in this country are less conscious of a struggle, or of a cause?

BOB: Poor people are conscious all the while ... but, it's like, in America, I wanna record how much liquor stores in America, I wanna check how much liquor stores in America. See? And then, they will call the president and tell him "drink", and when him drink, you tell him go out and represent you. You hear me? So, him, them drink and are drunk, he can't represent you, because him drunk. So, I find no use for alcohol, because like man get, smoke it, and can get good vibration, good meditation. So, (waving his spliff) them ban this. Man can no get "up there" so the most immediate thing is to use alcohol. People use alcohol for escape. Say "Oh man, fuck it, I can't take it" and then drink. With drink, can forget it. Because frustration.

SLASH: There's lots of that here. People have nothing to get behind?

BOB: Aah, yes, but, it's not say "the people" because the people have this forced upon them. The people know that there's something they can use. To get this meditation. Like there is something like a problem, and you can't get the thing straight, well you take a drug and you go right into meditation. If you drink, then, you leave it, the most immediate thing, them think, is get the mind off that problem, is to drink. So, them ban the herb. So, I listen to the people, I know what is happening to the people. The liqour store is unlimited, alchohol, unlimited.

EBONY: Do you think now that disco is dying off? Do you think that reggae will become more popular in this country, among both blacks and whites?

BOBSKI: Well, I would really like reggae music to become really popular. It's not that case of which music is dying out and which music is becoming popular, but that reggae music is with the people.

SLASH: In your songs you keep hinting at the judgement day. What do you think are the signs?

BOB: We are living in the judgement times, you know. Everyone know. Check what is happening from, what do you call it, Iran. The Ayatollah. It's judgement, that, you know. Judgement, and must understand that, if it were original, really the reeeeaaaallllll thing! Which, the real thing, when come, earthquake, lightning and thunder mixed with it, ya know. Do you hear me? The earth shall take back its place. Everything that what was in the beginning shall come back again. That means, if a river used to run here, and them use concrete and block it up, then the river is coming back. That means them dig up graves or a hole in the earth, and hide lots of nuclear thing, five minutes of the earthquake and all of that gone. So that is the judgement that I call, because God's judgement is sure enough! We are living in the judgement times, mon, it sounds strange, but we are living in the judgement times...

SLASH: Can you tell me about your trip to Africa?

BOB: Well, actually my trip to Africa, was a very short one, all I wanted to do, go down there to Ethiopia and see what was happening there. It was nice, ya know. In a sense of experience.

SLASH: Is it the way you had imagined it?

BOB: Yeah, it is a bible land. If ya ever stay, them draw some nice lions, make a seal, a lamb's coat.

EBONY: What did ya think of performing at the Apollo? (Famous Harlem black showcase club in New York)

BOB: It was nice. Really good time. Ah, Apollo, is about mostly James Brown ...

SLASH: And the Impressions?

BOB: The Impressions, yeah, everyone you know...

SLASH: I want to know about repatriation. Do you see it as something symbolic? Or as a real possibility?

BOB: First you have to separate yourself from the ways of Babylon. Then repatriation is a must. I mean, them a say "The west will perish". It is right. The prophecy say so.

SLASH: So you think there is any teaching in Rastafarianism for the white race?

BOB: Well, in the beginning, after the flood you have the three sons, Ham, Shem, and Japheth. Ham, the black man, Sham, the Asian, Japheth, the white man. All of them come from one father named Noah. So, if the white man find 'em roots, because you have to find own roots, you can come from Noah, just like Ham, just like Shem. So what the Bible teaching say, is that in the last years, when the trilogy of Israel is here, 12,000 from each tribe, you have a multitude, of which no man can number, of all nation, people, and town. That mean, what they read upon, say, is everyone, was there who have that root. It never said the white man can't do it, every man the truth.

OTHER JOURNALIST: Who are some of your favorite groups?

BOB: To tell you the truth, I love so many people. I listen to jazz first, then rhythm and blues, I listen to everything.

JOURNALIST: Who are some of your favorite reggae musicians?

BOB: Heptones, Skatalites, Roland Alphonso ...

JOURNALIST: Did something happen between Kaya and your new album to reinforce your political feelings?

BOB: My feelings are my feelings. You can't know why I do it, but there is a war going on that the people don't know about, that only I know about, and that isn't a political war, it is an international war between Rasta and Pope, ever since Mussolini attacked Ethiopia and His Majesty. If there was no Rome there would be no sin.

JOURNALIST: How has your stage act changed? *(Where was he during the concert? —Ed.)*

BOB: I think I stand at the mike a little more.

SLASH: Is the stuff you release on Tuff Gong and that which never comes out on Island aimed at a different market?

BOB: The music we keep on Tuff Gong is more

SLASH: Rootsy?

BOB: Yea ... well, not more rootsy, because we write and record the music, man, and we are roots, so you should never say anything like that, but sometimes we keep some music there, because .....

JOURNALIST: Is there a Rita Marley album out?

BOB: Not yet, it's not finished yet.

SLASH: Who's missing from the I-Threes on this tour?

BOB: Marcia *(Griffiths — Ed.)*

JOURNALIST: This next question is on a lighter note because it's for *Right On* magazine: Where were you when you first determined you were in love? *(Who are these people?? —Ed.)*

BOB: In love?

JOURNALIST: We know about your love of your country, your religion, LEthiopia, now we want to know about your love for a woman?...

BOB: I don't know if this is the right question. To I love is God. To love? I don't know about "to love". I can't tell you a lie...

SLASH: I have a very old album called the Wailing Wailers on which you do What's New Pussycat, The Ten Commandments of Love ... (Marley cracks up and chokes on his joint) How old is this record? Was it your first album?

BOB: Mmmmmm, yea.

SLASH: When was it recorded?

BOB: 62, 63, 64, 65 ... around there.

JOURNALIST: What is going on in Zimbawe?

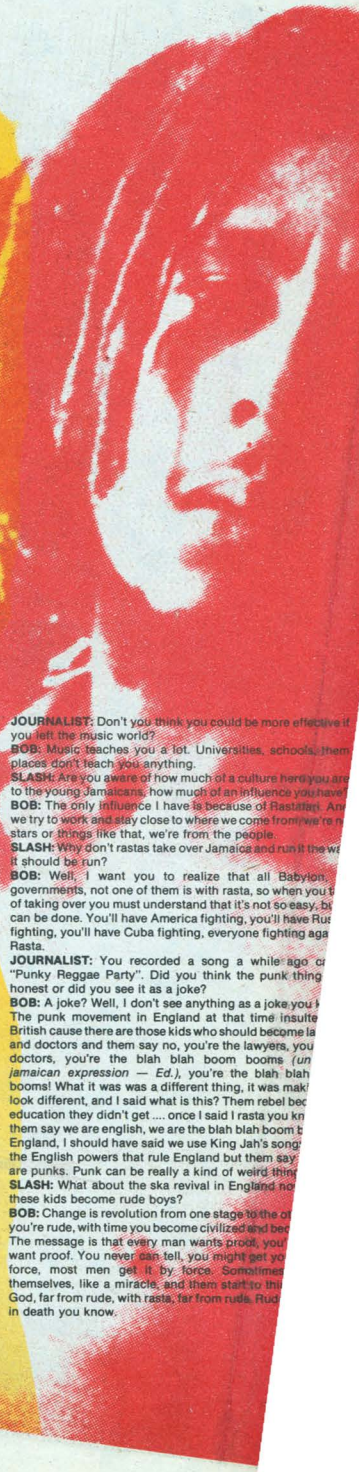
BOB: It's a struggle for freedom, man. It's a struggle of direction for Africa. The only direction they can take now in Africa is rasta. Ethiopia is the only place that was never colonialized, therefore Ethiopia is the leader. what is going on there is a struggle for Rastafari. Them must fight like King David. My people must be free, so they fight. They have the right thing to fight for, they have a cause to fight for. That is the real thing about this struggle, and obviously it must go on.

JOURNALIST: How long do you think the struggle will go on?

BOB: Well, by 1983 Africa must be free.

JOURNALIST: Is there anything we can do from here to help?

BOB: The only thing I and I can do is follow Rastafari and its culture. Other than that, what is needed is Unity. If you have two hundred thousand people who say "Hey, we don't want that" then you don't get that. That's what His Majesty said, Unity. And the only way you can unite is with Rastafari, because check it, there's nothing else going on as far as unity is concerned.



JOURNALIST: Don't you think you could be more effective if you left the music world?

BOB: Music teaches you a lot. Universities, schools, them places don't teach you anything.

SLASH: Are you aware of how much of a culture hero you are to the young Jamaicans, how much of an influence you have?

BOB: The only influence I have is because of Rastafari. And we try to work and stay close to where we come from, we're n stars or things like that, we're from the people.

SLASH: Why don't rastas take over Jamaica and run it the w it should be run?

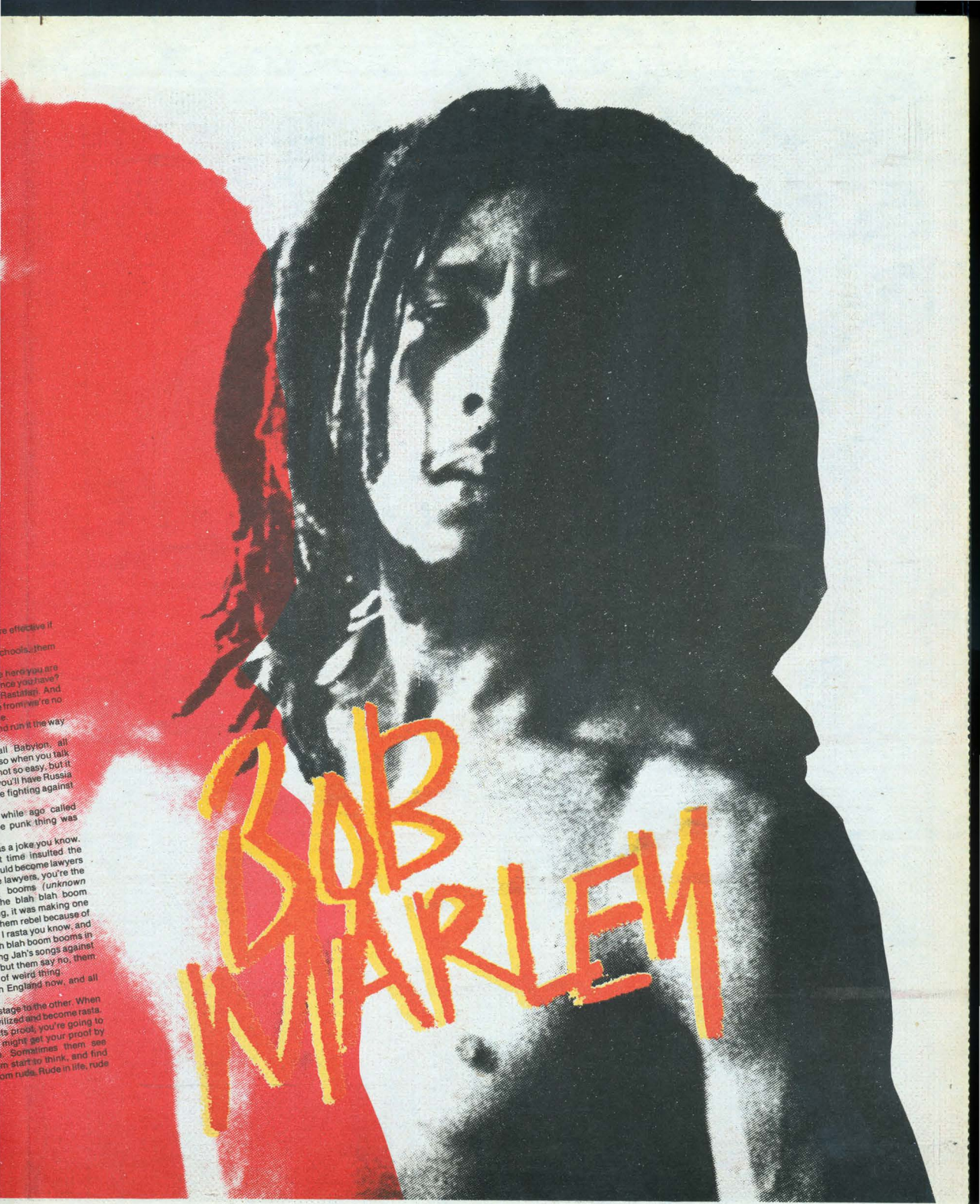
BOB: Well, I want you to realize that all Babylon governments, not one of them is with rasta, so when you t of taking over you must understand that it's not so easy, b can be done. You'll have America fighting, you'll have Rus fighting, you'll have Cuba fighting, everyone fighting aga Rasta.

JOURNALIST: You recorded a song a while ago c "Punky Reggae Party". Did you think the punk thing honest or did you see it as a joke?

BOB: A joke? Well, I don't see anything as a joke you The punk movement in England at that time insulte British cause there are those kids who should become la and doctors and them say no, you're the lawyers, you doctors, you're the blah blah boom booms *(un jamaican expression — Ed.)*, you're the blah blah booms! What it was was a different thing, it was mak look different, and I said what is this? Them rebel bec education they didn't get .... once I said I rasta you kn them say we are english, we are the blah blah boom b England, I should have said we use King Jah's song the English powers that rule England but them say are punks. Punk can be really a kind of weird thing

SLASH: What about the ska revival in England no these kids become rude boys?

BOB: Change is revolution from one stage to the ot you're rude, with time you become civilized and bec The message is that every man wants proof, you want proof. You never can tell, you might get yo force, most men get it by force. Sometimes themselves, like a miracle, and them start to thi God, far from rude, with rasta, far from rude. Rud in death you know.



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pic: Philomena

The BAGS: An Update

SLASH: Welcome to an update conversation with the Bags, who have just returned from a triumphant tour of the Northwest. Before this machine was turned on we were talking about what to do with the Shah ...
CRAIG: Plan one was to send him to Ireland and say oops, we made a mistake. Ha ha ha. Plan two was inject him with rabies before sending him back ...
SLASH: Plan 3 was a time bomb up his ass that would be detonated when the Ayotollah is within distance. Plan 4 was mailing him back organ by organ, starting with his tumor...
CRAIG: Plan 5 was to hold a bunch of Iranian students as hostages ...
SLASH: Okay, enough. Let's talk about your successful tour, yawn.
CRAIG: It wasn't a yawn for us.
TERRY: Loads of fun. Portland was the best.
ALICE: But who cares?
CRAIG: When we got to Seattle we stayed with a band called the Look, who seem to be one of the better bands up there. They're more interested in being very musical up there, it's more of a watching situation.
TERRY: Yes professor!
SLASH: Did any band wipe you off the stage?
CRAIG: Some soundmen tried!
TERRY: We didn't see the BlackOuts, who are supposed to be the big favorites.
ALICE: In Portland you hear bad things about Seattle bands.
TERRY: Just like we hate San Francisco.
CRAIG: San Francisco sucks a big wank.
TERRY: The Neo Boys in Portland are special. They're not boys either.
CRAIG: It's an all-girl band we played with in Portland. In Portland there's a real effort to keep the scene going, so they have a committee with somebody from every band, they have meetings and organize everything, they're taking total control over their scene.
TERRY: Communal punks.
ALICE: The night we were playing the Neo Boys were at the door, stamping hands and watching everything, then they went on and played, I didn't even know they were one of the bands.
CRAIG: And the promoter of the gig was also in one of the bands, a rockabilly band called the Bop Zombies. They're really good.
ALICE: We have it really easy down here compared to people in Portland.
SLASH: Probably why we're all a bunch of bitches here. You played with Iggy Pop in Seattle. How was that?
CRAIG: Iggy was very nice to us and that was a big shock. He went out of his way to talk to us and be supportive and friendly.
ALICE: They'd taken very long to do their soundcheck and we just had a few minutes to do ours, which you expect when you pay with a big group, but you also expect for them to treat you like inferiors, which he didn't.
TERRY: He gave us all fatherly advice.
SLASH: Did he bless you?
TERRY: Yes, with a bottle of Black Label. He was a nice guy.
SLASH: Why didn't you play Vancouver?
CRAIG: sWe had heard about border hassles.
ALICE: Not to mention the blizzard.
CRAIG: And people warned us about a bunch of 77 punks up there gobbing and stuff.
SLASH: Afraid of being gobbed on?
CRAIG: We've been gobbed on! At Mars studio somebody threw a pig's pickled foot at us!
TERRY: Our next shows we're going to have a whole artillery, sticky things and stuff...
SLASH: Getting belligerent again? The Bags have been going thru a mellow phase lately, haven't they?
CRAIG: It wasn't a mellow phase, we just wanted to try something different, we didn't want to stagnate.
TERRY: We wanted to bore people.
PATRICIA: And see if they were true fans.
TERRY: We wanted to please everybody because we love everybody.
CRAIG: We wanted to try something different, and everybody had such a foul reaction to it, I kind of liked that. When we added keyboards they said oh you are weaker now, you're not as energetic ...
TERRY: We wanted to keep throwing people off balance every single time.
CRAIG: That's why we were doing all that sixties stuff for a while.
ALICE: We like doing cover songs, we just trade them in and out.

CRAIG: When you introduce a song by Love and people go Love??, what's this shit?, they don't realize that Love was the original L.A. punk band.

SLASH: Anything before Bowie they don't know. No culture! Anyway how do you feel about a certain dickhead of a writer linking you recently with the Germs-X-Slash-gay crowd in his New York Rocker column?
CRAIG: What a laugh riot!
ALICE: Who's the dick head? Let's beat the shit out of him.
SLASH: Then it links you with the glitter rock movement ...
ALICE: Who cares? He is nobody.
CRAIG: I don't understand this glitter stuf. When it was around I hated that shit.
TERRY: I was in Texas listening to country music.
CRAIG: And connecting us with art schools ... I'm the only one who went to art school, and I hate that pretentious art shit... (rest of the band giggles) ... Don't laugh, there's a difference.
SLASH: You like good art shit.
CRAIG: Right, I like good art shit. Anyway what's music? Isn't it considered an art form?
TERRY: It's fucking art man.
ALICE: The word art is pretentious.
TERRY: Let's call it fart. Then we're all fartists.
CRAIG: In Seattle they had my spastic guitar all the way up, and Patricia's bass wasn't even on. We're not paranoid but somehow it seems like we were sabotaged. And somebody pulled the plug. A hippie did. They had a lot of hippies in there. They are our biggest fans.
SLASH: Hippies are?
TERRY: They stand in front of Rob's amp and shake their head like they are on L.S.D.
CRAIG: In San Francisco they were there in Grateful Dead t-shirts dancing it up while the punks were standing on the side looking jaded.
SLASH: Are there traces of psychedelic music in your stuff?
CRAIG: Definitely. It wasn't intentional.
SLASH: Are you on acid right now?
TERRY: Yes.
CRAIG: It's not L.S.D. influence, it's just more freedom.
TERRY: We're not psychedelic, we just give ourselves artistic license.
ALICE: We all come from such diverse musical backgrounds I don't think you can classify us as psychedelic.
SLASH: What's the reason for not coming up with any more records?
CRAIG: Poverty ...
TERRY: None of our songs are any good!
ALICE: Waiting to be recorded correctly. No more shit singles.
SLASH: Do you think it's realistic to wait for something bigger?
TERRY: Maybe six months ago it wasn't, but now it is.
ALICE: Is anything in this punk thing realistic?
TERRY: Some record companies seem to think we have enough of a gimmick ...
SLASH: Which is?
CRAIG: As Dirk Dirksen put it, the Adams family of the new wave. Anyway now we're so cautious as far as new projects, we've seen so many of those fly-by-night operators, all these managers ...
SLASH: Don't you think you really *can* tell right away who's what?
PATRICIA: No.
CRAIG: I don't think so. After we got back from the tour we really felt self-contained as a unit, we didn't need any help. And up there was a music scene, not a fashion scene. Going back to the Hong Kong was a culture shock, seeing all the make up, the fashion accessories.
TERRY: I'd like to tour nine months out of the year and have that paid for. We don't want to sit around waiting for the dollars. Just some new equipment so we don't have to worry about it all.
SLASH: Did you make money touring?
CRAIG: Well, we had been saving money from gigs here and putting it in a fund for travelling, so we did okay. Of course we couldn't have done it without Mr. Eddie, of the Subtitles, who gave us his van. There is some support in the LA scene but it really seems crazy that everybody should bitch against each other when you think of what you have to overcome, everybody's waiting for this thing to fail and it's really crazy for the bands to turn against themselves when they have other obstacles to go over.
SLASH: Are you still having fun after 2 years?
BAGS: Yeah ... We've having *more* fun ...
SLASH: What's tne next little surprise?
TERRY: Big flowers that open up and we come out of them.
ALICE: Don't tell them about ...
SLASH: What?
ALICE: The bubble machine.
TERRY: We're trying to think out a good live show, not anything stupid ... fluorescent lights ...
SLASH: You've played at universities haven't you?
PAT: On Halloween we played at a university, it was really good ...
CRAIG: Cal Arts ... We played at Irvine in some cafeteria where we were right on the floor right next to the people, that was one of the best.
SLASH: What about the audience? Are they a bit stiff?
PAT: No!
CRAIG: At Irvine it was probably one of the best audiences we ever had 'cos it's right next to Huntington Beach so we had all those wonderful wormers ... We played at my mother's house once ... My mum had a party, she knows a lot of Hollywood people and she thought they should see us because it might be good exposure or something and we played in this tent outside, we were turned down low, we were so considerate and they left anyway, it was *still* too loud, but we have a song called "Gluttony" which is about people overfeeding themselves til they blow up ...
SLASH: While people were going to the buffet?
CRAIG: Yes — it worked perfectly.
TERRY: 'Course we stuffed ourselves after they were gone.
PAT: They donated our salary to the Cambodia Relief fund.
SLASH: They did! My god and a committed band too! Weren't you supposed to be in Castration Squad *(new local band ...Ed.)* Pat?
PAT: I wrote the songs for it ... I didn't have time to be in it.
SLASH: Did you write Pigfucker?
PAT: Yes, not the words, just the music.
SLASH: But you still might join the band?
PAT: Yeah — I'm supposed to bed the drummer.
SLASH: When I saw them they did 2 songs, they do a song called Dolly in which they kick the shit out of me *(Kickboy ... Ed.)* ... (pause talking about Alice living in East LA) ... Somebody told me there is an East LA band playing nothing but Sex Pistols covers.
CRAIG: There is another band that came out of East LA ... The Stains.
SLASH: This band is called Los Toros ... Good name! Anyway, how are your newest songs called?
ALICE: Pirate's Church ...
CRAIG: It's about Pirate Jenny, from Three Penny Opera, and Captain Hook.
TERRY: Something all Americans can relate to.
CRAIG: All the way to Seattle we were listening to all this new ska blue beat stuff coming out so we added some to it. Sorry folks if it sounds trendy, but we just like the music. Then we have another song called "Bugs", "The New Order", it's about people thinking they are the new regime but who are the same as the old one, then "Nothing is Going On In Here", which is about beyond boredom, beyond apathy.
SLASH: Do you have any political stand as a band?
ALICE: We care about things but we aren't about to tell people how to think.
CRAIG: You don't pay four dollars for a lecture.
TERRY: Look at the sixties, and all these political eople. If nothing happened then, nothing will now. Communism, capitalism, it's exactly the same old thing.
SLASH: Do you still mean your song "We don't need the English"?
CRAIG: I like some english bands but we don't need them to build this scene.
TERRY: I don't like their accents. But they are cool, they're cooler than we are. As far as politics go I am an anarchist, not a violent one, the two words have nothing to do with each other but people mix that up. Can I saw something about organized crime? It's the biggest threat to America right now besides communism.
***NOTE:** Shortly after this conversation The Bags decided to take a short leave of absence from the live circuit. Of course you will be the first ones to know when the band reappears in public.*

English white crap. Not on a route to the loot or here for the food like those other U.K. fools. Why are you smiling?" (flyer for L.A. gigs)

When the Fall was in Los Angeles a while back there wasn't what you would call a heavy demand for interviews, picture posing and guest book signing on the part of the local media. They have two incredible albums out in Britain (the first one about to be released here after some slight changes) but music itself isn't exactly newsworthy, you gotta have an angle, a hook, a trick, something to make even the narcissistic living dead at *Wet* magazine want to talk to you. 'Cept of course it was very dumb of everybody not to notice and pay attention because the Fall do have a hell of an angle (actually they have two, counting the "Flat of Angles" song) and it's an unusual one: honesty. Why are you smiling again? There is such a thing. It don't fill the Palladium and it don't fill your wallet but it keeps you one or two notches above the herd. As they were in town considerably longer than most visiting bands it became the most striking aspect of their attitude and made their music seem almost secondary. Having met him a year ago (along with an earlier formation of the group) I already knew Mark Smith to be a very opinionated individual and was not surprised to find him now even more at odds with the rest of the music world than he was then. The new band members (only Marc Riley has remained) are Mike Leigh on drums, Steve Hanley on bass and Craig Scanlan on guitar. They let Mark do most of the talking and explaining.

Mark's girlfriend Kay Carroll manages the Fall, and probably is a more integral part of the band than any manager I can think of. "I'd die for this band' she told me once, and I'm sure anyone who has found himself at the wrong end of the stick on some business matter with her would confirm her frightening dedication. Kay was a nurse in a nuthouse once, which is probably a better training background to rock management than most other professions. Also on the american tour were Grant Showbiz (referred to by Kay as "our hippie"), a good natured pub type of guy who helped produce the Dragnet album, is involved with obscure alternative music schemes (he worked with the Here and Now non-profit hippie band) and was the sound engineer for the tour and Duncan, who did all the driving.

Now all you little punks who sang along with Jimmy Pursey "Tell us the truth" and who screamed "Liars" to the rest of the world with Johnny Rotten (more on the fellow later), better read on. These Manchester characters have seen the bullshit and are not having any of it, which is more than you can say of most of your fave leathered rebels. The fact that the Fall are also one of the prime representatives of something in music that is just emerging and will define itself in the coming years, something that the initial punk spearhead and a few of the post punk explorers have only hinted at should also be of some interest. (yes, we did try to get a Sham 69 interview, but Pursey was unavailable 3 afternoons in a row, in bed and not at all his usual yackety old self. Some spokesman!)

The Fall are, like the Buzzcocks, a Manchester band. That's where they live, shop, socialize, they even recorded the last album there. Occasionally Kay goes to London to settle some business with their record label Step Forward (home of Mark Perry and his Missionaries, vermilion, Chelsea, Fashion), and occasionally the band tours the country, or tries to ("This is the first tour we've managed to fuckin' complete" says Mark of the american trip). And even though mark is not too enamoured of the Manchester scene he prefers it to the big city where all he can see are poseurs, liars and crooks. Like who? Well, the established music press (all London based) is one city institution they could do without. Although the Fall have so far less reasons to complain about the way the music rags have treated them than most groups (a Fall backlash must be on its way) there were a few recent incidents that angered them: Just before leaving for America N.M.E. was supposed to do an article on them, but there was disagreement as to which photographer should take the pictures (the band wanted one of their choice) and the project was dropped. Mark: "They thought they'd call our bluff you see, that we'd say okay, we're only joking, we're only being a bit new wave. They really think they can make us or break us, that's what Britain is like. But we just thought their guy was lousy, and that we should have a choice." N.M.E. told them to either take it or leave it. "So we said all right, stuff the article, we don't need it. I don't wanna see my fuckin picture in the N.M.E., it don't bother me, for God's sake!" Except it did bother him, later. Not the lack of exposure, but what he saw as the injustice of the situation: "I thought god, they never are going to write about us again, and that's wrong. It's wrong. I mean if we were crap fair enough ..." What's significant about all this is the importance Mark and Kay put on the delicate matter of control, in business as well as artistic matters. They are not tied to their label like donkeys to a manger, have total control of their product, from recording to packaging, letting their friends draw their record covers, scribbling press release sheets themselves (sometimes with a perverse emphasis on the most unprofessional look they can come up) and fighting for their independence with every move they make. Of course such a policy works both ways, and in L.A. the Fall ran out of funds and Kay had to outdo herself convincing I.R.S. (Miles Copeland's distribution company, and Step Forward outpost in the States) to come up with some bread for the return trip. And they might have the last word as far as what singles are released, what they look like, but no control on when, or how they are distributed. When I asked Mark when he thought the next LP (most of which has been already worked out) would be out he shrugged: "I fuckin' don't know. This is the price we pay for not being packaged. Even if we recorded it next week who knows how long?" But in spite of their complaints it is unlikely that the Fall will switch labels. Their refusal to play games expected from upcoming bands does not exactly make them the ideal fresh vinyl fodder most labels are constantly looking for. Even the more liberal outfits are eyed suspiciously by the Fall. Two of these, Rough Trade and Virgin, are literally within footsteps of Step Forward, and both are definitely interested in the band. Rough Trade has released an increasing quantity of "experimental" music, brave pop music and hard core punk and has become a home for quite a few fringe musicians, but Mark has no patience with the Rock Against Racism liberal outlook and the neo-socialist philosophy that seems to pervade the label and its activities. As to Virgin, he once described it to me as "the home of the AntiChrist", a sort of artistic cemetery that gave everything to its artists and sent them all down the drain. Tension with your record company is necessary, it keeps you at your best.

But the main reason for the Fall's dislike of the London scene is the music itself, and what comes along with it. After one initial phase in which all the rebel elements seemed more or less united, the scene there has now settled into many parallel pockets of alternative sub cults, clans and cliques of similar outlooks and prejudices, the press randomly distributes Ultimate Hipness to this or that faction only to yank it back with a snicker, them being of course THE top clique of trendsetters, pub philosophers and anal retentive wimps no other clique can ever hope to kick off its throne, the most literal examples of paper tigers in existence. In this jungle of self contained mini societies there is no room for a band like the Fall unless they play footsie with fashionable cliches and overlook the intrinsic silliness of this cultural rat race. For example the anti rock n roll pose of certain elements really irritates Smith, who in "Trial" announced "I still believe in the r & r dream" and still has an undying respect for the early pioneers: "When you think of Presley, well, he was the only fuckin' guy, do you get me? Not like now. He was totally on his own, he was REBELLION, and there was nothing around like it. Now bands have all thes gauging points..." And what bothers him is this overall safety and lack of danger in the rock field. Even so-called radical outfits he does not see as taking any real chances, simply preaching to the converted and feeling smug about their stand. His favorite example of this situation is the Gang of Four, a band whose attitude and commitments he vehemently criticizes every chance he gets. I personally always did like the Gang of Four and even admire them a bit in spite of an underlying naivete and predictibility to their statements. At least their sound is a zillion times more exciting then Tom Robinson, and they're not (yet?) fishing for the perfect rock n roll image to sweep the 80's, a concern which the Clash have apparently become obsessed with. But Smith wants none of it, bands, fans, causes, it's all one big game to him: "The Gang of Four? It stinks, it IS entertainment. Like Rock Against Racism. There's something in rock music that I don't like, it's people liking stuff that is them. People like stuff because the guys putting it out are like them, have the same backgrund. I like stuff with a different background. But look at all the heavy metal bands. Why do you think bands and audiences look so alike? It's mutual gratification, it's safety. All the Gang of Four followers are middle class socialists who have gone along with the system. That's why rock stinks." Later Mark remembers something Lou Reed said about audiences: "..He said .. people who are into me don't come to my gigs because they can't stand the people who go. He's fucking dead right, that's why I never go and see the guy."

Pop-stock mix my pop-stock / We like pop-stick stickers / we like weak tv / we like chocolate animals / we eat pork piggies / pop stock mix my pop stock / pop stock try my pop stock / pop stock buy my pop stock..." this strange gursery rhyme stuff is out of Choc-Stock, a tune on Dragnet. The song was written in defense of straight pop music. Why did Mark, whose personal tastes go more towards the Beefheart and Residents type of sound (although much of the experimental fringe he dismisses, calling Henry Cow and their likes "a load of fuckin' wankers") feel commercial pop must be defended? "Chock Stock started as a propo-song, to get all the people into the Fall, the Pop Group, Gang of Four, Throbbing Gristle and who fuckin laugh at pop fans are patronizing, that's all. At least the kids into pop are being honest." I remained dubious. Honest perhaps but still dumb. But I do agree with the need to demistify the glory of elitism in musical allegiance, all customers are the same in the eye of the industry. Later in the song comes a variable tirade that drives his point home: "Now all the bourgeoisie / they hate our crazy scene / cos we like pop stock stickers / but they're the product of the same system beyond their control / THEY stayed on at school and tolerate bad manners ... Come on kids why don't you get this thing together and make it bad / you don't need ...." At which point Mark improvises on what the particular kids he is singing to that night don't need, here at Hope Street he listed a few problems he has spotted with the night's festivities but the bad acoustics and his Manchester accent scrambled the message and most of the open-mouthed spectators remained unenlightened. Which brings us to America and the Fall's presence here. The extremely low-key tour (by the time they reached L.A. the record company support had dwindled down to nothing and the last two gigs had to be worked out with sympathetic local bands and promoters (with the exception of the true underground Anticlub and the less said about the sense of solidarity and adventure of the local booking vermin the better, with the top award of a shit-coated dollar sign going to the Starwood for not opening their doors to the Fall in spite of the two playing bands' (Plugz/Weirdos) agreement to make room for the visitors) the low-key tour I was saying left the Fall feeling all and all pretty satisfied, they had no great expectations and felt no great disappointment. A few things particularly annoyed Mark, like the price of beer in clubs and some door admission prices, but even there his anger was partly directed at England: at the Starwood he bumped into Richard Boone, Buzzcocks' manager and old acquaintance of his, and proceeded to lambast him for the Buzzcocks' financial attitude here: "...I said to Richard the fuckin' kids are going to run you off the fuckin' block man, the people here are going to hate you bastards, all these kids who can't fuckin' get into these places are going to hate you, it's fuckin' true you know." He later conceded that it probably wasn't the Buzzcocks' personal fault, but still saw it as very wrong and typical. Mark liked much of what he saw of the scene in this country, its solidarity and still kicking idealism, especially in Los Angeles (they all seemed quite impressed by Monitor and other fringe combos), but Kay disagreed and admitted to some disappointment with american "new wave": "In America new wave is a sound, rather than an attitude. They think it's like Tamla, the right combination of ingredients and you got new wave. But you can be new wave and do soul music, it's the attitude that counts. I was a bit disappointed.." Mark heatedly interrupts: "I don't know what this fuckin' shit is about you know, new wave is supposed to be a fuckin' underground music, but people turn around and think we're fuckin' weirdos. EVERYBODY ELSE IS MAD. All these new wave bands in England are just another music, they're just rock speeded up. And if that's the case I'd rather listen to Black Sabbath or disco. Disco is well-produced, a lot of fuckin' work has gone into it, it's better than three cockney idiots going cccrrrkkkxxx (screechy metal sounds)!" I don't know if U.K. Subs are cockney or not, but Mark and the Fall ran into them while in New York and he wasn't impressed by their attempts at transplanting their London hard-core punk stance over here: "The Subs are just fucked in America, they got nothing to say to Americans, they're total aliens, and their music is defunct. They have localized and trivialized their attitude, and they're fucked up. Here they're a joke. And the people that relate to them in Britain couldn't even get in those N.Y. clubs where they played!" So much for the universality of punk rock, kiddies! Of course he's right, and the much touted "attitude" that everybody raves about as the rallying banner don't mean trading one set of values for another, new cliches we don't need. By now you've probably drawn your own conclusions as far as Mark Smith's affinity for new music: less than zilch! But you're wrong: besides an occasional local british band that strikes him as going in the right direction (like Echo and the Bunnymen) he has nothing but praise for the more than ever controversial Public Image gang. Parts of the conversation quoted throughout this article were regularly interrupted by healthy doses from the new Metal Box masterpiece, which Mark kept coming back to with unashamed admiration. To him PiL is the rare exception to the rule, the proof that the impossible can be done: They haven't relinquished one fleck of their control and independence, not bowed down to the pressures of marketing, not shown any trace of respect for their patrons, they are handling it the way the Fall want to handle it ('cept Mark wouldn't pick Virgin — and anyway Virgin does not need TWO bastions of snotty individualism in their midst). John Lydon, ne Rotten, is showing everyone that the fucking system can be beaten

pic: Philomena

PSYKICK DANCEHALL

My garden is made of stone.
There's a computer centre over the road
I saw a MONSTER on the roof
Its colours glowed on the roof.
Round the corner is: Quester psychic dancehall
Step forward for ESP medium dischord.
Here they have no records
They know your questions about no words
Just mumble bumble to the waves
Twitching out to the waves.
RACKET racket! It's Quester Psykick Dancehall
Get aboard for ESP médium dischord.
When I'm dead and gone! My VVVibrations'll live on!
Thru vibes no vinyl thru the years!
People'll dancé to my waves!
Clock it clock it! It's Quester Psychic Dancehall
Never bored with ESP medium dischord.

c/right Mark E. Smith
1979.

again and again, in his case even after the initial game got out of hand and everyone else that went along for the ride (including the instigator) suffered great losses in cash and dignity. Now Lydon is making the music he wants (great stuff it is too, but that's almost besides the point) while sneering at the hypocrisy that surrounds him. As I said, Mark Smith has nothing but praise for the fellow.

As I said before the rest of the Fall isn't what you'd call an attention-grabbing bunch, you actually hardly hear anything out of them until everybody gets up on stage and the songs come out. One of the reasons for this lies in the past history of the band; from the early days only Mark Smith and guitarist and backing vocalist Mark Riley are left, the others are relatively new members to the Fall world and to the Fall way of doing things and don't seem too eager to probe Mark's underlying philosophy. Or maybe they've sussed it out and decided that if he was crazy enough to pull such a number they'd be stupid not to stick by to at least find out how it will turn out. And although there is no doubt that he is the major aspect of the Fall, Mark insists that the band's creative process is a general effort: "They play the way I tell them to, but they got loads of fucking room. It's not constricted." What's more, their various qualities don't cease to astonish him and cheer him up. A while back he tried to describe the new line up to me in a letter: "This band is incredible, they just blow me. Their attitude is what I've been looking for for two years. NO EGO, NO MUSICIAN CRAP, THEY ARE FALL. I FEEL THREATENED IN THE BAND FOR THE FIRST TIME!" I had seen one of the earlier line ups in action a year ago, and enjoyed the album (Live at the Witch Trials) that had come out from their two days recording spree in London more than just about anything else that had come out around that period, and I asked Mark what had happened between him and the band as it was then that led to such a sudden parting of the ways. (It must be pointed out that since the very birth of the band the line up has never been what you'd call stable, with members stepping in and out faster than the resigned folks at Step Forward could xerox update sheets for the press. Mark seems to think that phase is over, but only time will tell). He told me how, when the first album came out and received a few favorable reviews in the press, he had been surprised and annoyed at how easily the media stuff went to the band's head. "I'm glad they've gone" he says now. He does not deny that even in a relatively short time their contribution to the Fall's growth was considerable: Karl Burns' drumming on Witch's Trial's was incredible, at times almost eclipsing whatever else was taking place behind. But it seems Karl was restless and wanted the Fall to play live much more regularly than they did. Shortly after he left the band he spent a month drumming for PIL, but conflicts with that bunch forced him to move on one more time. Politely I hinted that maybe Mark E. Smith was a difficult bastard to work with: "I'm not a musician, and the way musicians look at life is totally beyond me, it's so ridiculous. But I can also understand their point of view. I couldn't go to an audition, get into a band, I can't do anything else but what I do." Kay adds that the previous members' personalities was also what made them hard to work with, that they took every little fight personally and kept building up their resentment. She does not think they could have put up with the american tour and its overall insecurity and lack of rewards the way the new band did. But Mark dismisses the past and what took place then, all he cares about is this band and how great he thinks they are: "Their potential is amazing, you know, they've not even started. I've got a strong feeling they gonna leave me a long way behind them. Craig is a very talented person, Chock-Stock is his music, I just made it verbal." Karl Burns was replaced by Mike, a twenty-four-year-old rockabilly drummer who has been thru a lot and sees nothing strange in his musical progression. Mark says his influence is needed on other levels as well, he is "a bit of a rock, the one that tells the others off when they act like pop stars". Well, it's hard to imagine this unglamorous unassuming bunch acting like pop stars, but who knows? Marc Riley pointed out that "a lot of people think.we're humorless", "just because we don't drop our trousers!" added Mike.

In the Fall world no one is immune to criticism, faithful fans included. Even they can be wrong, and listening to them can hurt the band's overall concept in more subtle ways than one: talking about their last L.A. show at the Anticlub, Mark kept regretting that they had got carried away with the general enthusiasm and come back for an encore: "It was a mistake doing that encore, we had said what we wanted to say, and we didn't even know which one to do, which is disgraceful. You gotta sort this kind of thing out by yourselves, because this is how bands end up, believing the customers-are-always-right line. That's a fuckin' load of shit, they are not." When Dragnet came out Mark received confirmation of how wrong even Fall customers can be. Everybody had raved and drooled over the technical aspects of "Trial", which he thought was damn silly and missing the point in the first place: "I couldn't take all the people coming up to us after Trial and saying how great it was because you could hear the drums, hear the guitars, all that stuff ... I thought the problem with that album was too much separation," so when all these qualities could not be found on the second LP and some earlier fans bitterly complained (Mark even received letters from what he calls "Hurt jerks up their own arses in Eno-orientated pretension" demanding the old Fall sound back), he got really mad. "These kids were coming up and saying this could have sounded better, so I said to them what the fuck are you talking about? You want a fucking alternative but you want it perfect, brought to you in your own home, all nice!" ...Kay agrees: "What happened with Dragnet is that everyone said, oh, it's so badly produced, when actually they should really be questioning all that other stuff coming out. Sounds great to me." Mark: "But everybody is helping that technical scene to self-perpetuate it's like the old thing about Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon which tye say sold so well because it tested people's hi-fi systems! Any recording sounding like Dragnet I'll go and buy, cos that's the sort of records I fuckin' want!"

Time too. Since he had earlier insisted that he was no musician, I asked Mark if he considers himself a writer then? Not really, he shrugged, adding that writing lines for songs wasn't real writing. He does want to write more prose-orientated stuff, but "my writing range is limited, and I have a very short concentration span." Well, what do you do at home then? "Kay is working all the time while I try to keep out of the way, like an idiot child!" "That's not true. He writes, he goes shopping.." interrupts Kay. Mark laughs, "Yes, shopping. In Britain that's a good scene. I do it two or three hours a day. She goes to the pub and I go shopping .... I also write lots of letters, I read." Later Mark came back to the question: "I do fuck all, really. But I think work is important. I come from a well-to-do working class background you know." I asked him if he had been one of those strange children always going off by themselves, playing strange games of their own invention? "I'm a bit of an odd person, I was always attracted to odd kids, not hip kids, I didn't get on with those. When I was a kid I used to go tripping and be with kids that didn't even know what it meant. The kids into acid were fuckin' bores. My best friend was an Irish guy called Thomas, he was a big influence on my life. The Irish attitude is great, it has a lot of contempt for commerciality, and a good sense of humor, and simplicity. I hung around with him for ten years.."

Well, I hadn't expected a psychedelic past from this guy, although come to think of it .... One thing is sure, and that's the rather high level of unpredictability the Fall music and attitude will keep offering to their fearless fans. Mark has already hinted that the new album will once again jolt a few preconceptions: "I've written about half of it now. All the lyrics are undecipherable, all mumbled. Not really like Spector, but it's going to be like a rhythm of the voice sort of thing."

Before this album there is also an E.P. in the works, with 2 songs ("Fiery Jack" and "Second Dark Age") and a new version of "Psykick Dancehall", which they think is a much better production than the LP's version. Besides these few material certainties any prediction or extrapolation would be risky. The Fall will go its own way, follow its own rules whether the public finds them worthy of success or not. They live what most people only pretend to believe in or represent, which is why this paper will always keep a close watch on their activities. It's not every day you get to see what you preach in real action. "I have no landmarks" says Mark of his direction. Well, neither do we, so let's keep in touch and see where it's taking us.....

to be eventually continued

THE MARRIAGE OF MARIA BRAUN

Rainer Werner Fassbinder is a German director who, by virtue of the German system of government grants for filmmakers, has directed over 30 feature length films in his 32 years. This is an almost inconceivable luxury to film directors in the American industry of monolithic, megadollar movies. (The 30-year-old Hollywood hotshot directors of movies like "Jaws" and "Star Wars" have at most 3 or 4 other features under their belts.)

In Fassbinder's movies we can see the work of a guy still young enough to have some cool tales to tell, but with enough experience and prestige to be able to say what he wants in his own style without some priggish studio boss telling him what he can't do. The reason I've gone into all this is such freedom of movie making *does not exist* in the big film industries in America or almost any other country. That's why movies are so dull these days. And that is what makes Fassbinder's films so unique, eccentric and worth missing your fave TV show.

His latest movie, *The Marriage of Maria Braun*, is an analogy of postwar Germany; the nation as a young woman, etc. (If you care for a detailed analysis read one of those weekly throwaway rags.) The story is of a luscious young German, Maria Braun, whose husband of 8 hours disappears for several years during WWII then reappears while she is having sex with a fat black American soldier. There's a murder, and Herr Braun takes the rap. While he's imprisoned, Maria becomes very wealthy by getting chummy with a rich industrialist she meets on a train. The plot slows, speeds up and bursts into flames at the end, always with that sweet/cruel irony that is Fassbinder's specialty. The movie takes you in and out of the crumbling buildings in the war zone, dark bars and train cars, and deco splendor in Berlin. When the dialogue gets slow, you can always look around the room the camera's crushed you into.

Ahl Weiderzein and all that, but in the meantime, here are some other Fassbinder movies that are occasionally shown here:

Ali-Fear Eats the Soul — A May-December interracial love story between an Arab laborer and a middle-aged German janitress.

Fox and His Friends — A good look at the male gay life, from the piss-elegant to hustlers to leather queens. (Fassbinder plays Fox.)

Jailbait — Trouble brews in the form of a pregnant 14-year-old. Her boyfriend turns punk in prison, and when he gets out it's "the big payback".

Bitter Tears of Petra Van Kan — a lesbian love trianble between a fashion designer, a model and a maid.

In the Year of the Thirteen Moons — A tragi-comedy of the last days of a trans-sexual with misgivings.

—JB

AGUIRRE, THE WRATH OF GOD

This amazing movie is about 16th century German explorers in a jungle in South America looking for El Dorado, the City of Gold. Directed by Werner Herzog (Nosferatu) in Peru in the mid-70's, the perils to cast and crew in the photogenic jungle were almost as bad as they were in Cortez's time ... Since most of the film takes place on rafts, there was constant fear of piranha.

Getting back to the explorers, their prime motivation is greed, and they do some insane things to try to get their mitts on that gold (things never change, do they?) A huge entourage starts out on this trek complete with soldiers, chefs and (praise God!) a priest. The noblemen even bring along a couple of young damsels in velvet and lace who have Indian slaves to carry them around on chairs while the others are chopping thru labyrinthine foliage and wading thru knee-deep, leech-filled mud. Imagine dragging a cannon through that goo! They progress about 10 yards a day, and the group has dwindled to about 25 souls, so it is decided to give up and turn back. Aguirre, a power-hungry Renaissance soldier of fortune, rebels and insists they continue, viciously killing anyone who turns chicken. Klaus Kinski, one of the most popular actors in the world (except in the U.S.) is unforgettable in the lead role. Seductively menacing and totally Teutonic in his rusty armor helmet and studded leather jumper, he waves his sword and screams, (I am AGUIRRE, the WRATH OF GOD!" while his glacial blue eyes bulge with sweet megalomania.

Rafts are built and the whole gang goes spinning down the Amazon, riding the rapids, fending off tropical diseases, poison darts and arrows, coked out Indians who think they are jaguars, cannibals and head shrinkers. It's a comedy of the absurd with the Europeans signing formal territorial documents, electing a "Kaiser" and trying to act civilized while riding a wooden raft down a raging river to nowhere with madman Aguirre hounding them on.

The final scene is one of the best sequences in any movie — Klaus Kinski on a raft full of corpses raving his plans for conquering the world to hundreds of monkeys who are diving off and swimming for shore as fast as their simian paws can paddle. This movie is shown regularly at the revival houses (Nuart, Fox Venice, Beverly Cinema).

—JB—

SCARFACE

The title of this movie is superimposed over a big "X", just like the scar on actor Paul Muni's face. God knows how he got it, but I'm sure he deserved it since he's the most murderous mother you'll ever see in a 1932 black-and-white gangster movie. This reel was produced by Howard Hughes (who liked plenty of action) and directed by Howard Hawks (The Big Sleep) which in itself would make history, but this film is mythical because hardly anyone has seen it since 1940 due to some problems with the eccentric billionaire producer.

The story is all about beer and who controls it in the town. Scarface starts out as sergeant at arms, but eventually kills the boss and takes over the gang. George Raft, who's great as a smooth, coin-flipping second banana, makes the fatal mistake of having a fling with Scarface's kid sister (one of the world's worst actresses). Boris Karloff plays a svelte gangster with a shitload of machine guns, but unfortunately, he's in the wrong gang and ends up with more holes in him than a lace tablecloth.

Besides the great cast, you should see Scarface's hideout. It looks like an expensive, gaudy apartment, but behind the curtains are foldout bulletproof steel barricades with peepholes and gun racks. If you like tough talkers in silk shirts and gangland executioners in pinstripe suits, you'll love this one. This was before the anti-violence clauses for movies were invented, and everyone of those hoods gets plugged before it's all over.

JB

STAR TREK, THE MOTION PICTURE

You can imagine what this movie might look like with scads of computer graphics and psychedelic gas blobs, but you can't imagine how silly it is. There are platoons of faggy guys in pajamas with booties attached and giantbrained, antennaed aliens who seem to have bought their masks on Hollywood Blvd. The story unfolds as a kind of high school reunion. Captain Kirk is as pleased as punch to be returning to the helm of the movie-size Enterprise. And just imagine how giddy the whole crew gets when Spock hitches a ride. Bones and Scottie look like they've spun a few barstools between the time of the TV series and this $40 million fit of nostalgia. But no one seems to have held a grudge. The one rotten apple, a character named Decker (played by Stephen Collins) turns all huffy when Kirk resumes command and he is kicked downstairs. Compared to the rest of the troupe, Collins' range as an actor is limited to three basic emotions: Mad, Sad, and Lovesick Goon (whenever he's in the presence of an old flame, beautiful crazy baldhead, Persis Khambatta).

The film's basic premise is that a filmy blue cloud the size of a couple of solar systems is whisking its way towards Earth destroying everything in its path. "Ergo", everyone has been brought out of mothballs to fight the mysterious menace. Kirk himself hasn't "logged an hour of Startime in over two years", but he assures the dubious Decker that he has had (dig this!) "plenty of experience with the Unknown." To outline much more of the plot would spoil an imaginative storyline which, besides a few laughs and some spectacular effects, is about all the movie has to offer. Despite its aim for lofty cosmic meaning, the dialogue does a pratfall in Zero-gravity. The Enterprise may hurtle along in space at Warp 2, but the pacing is strictly snailsville.

—JB/CD

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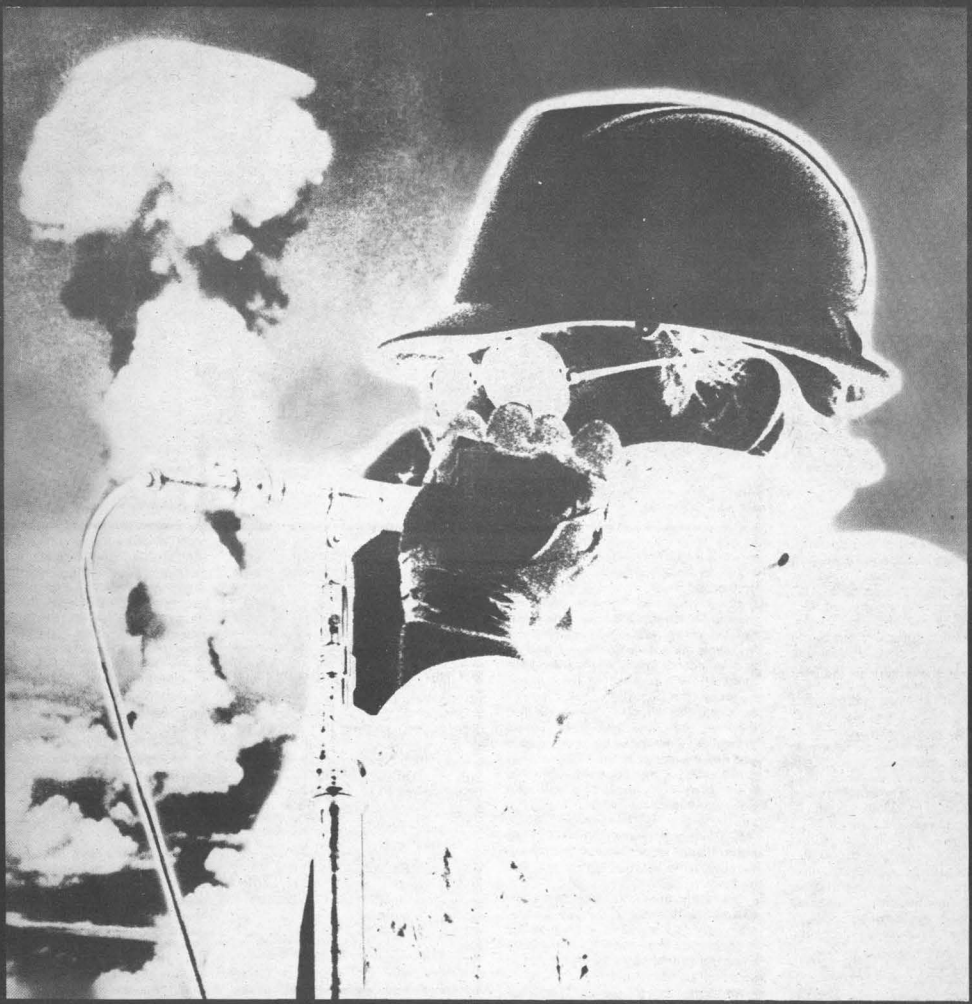
READY FOR WAR !



JOHN CALE / SABOTAGE / LIVE

ALL NEW MATERIAL RECORDED LIVE AT CBGB's

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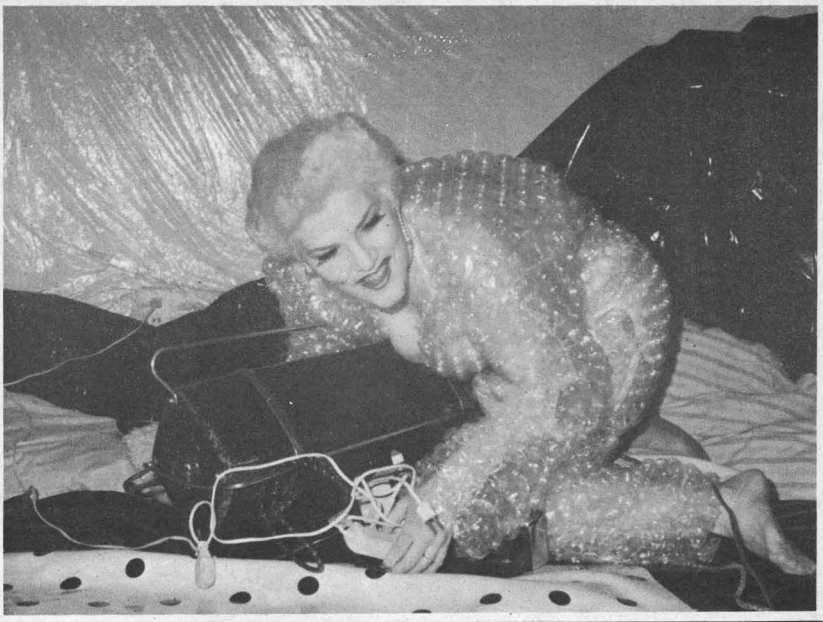
LIVE

TWO PERFORMERS

Vinyl Fetish: Soon to be a record store, now simply a small, empty, white store-front space, across the street from Blackies. One Saturday night Priscilla B. and Johanna Went did a performance there.

Priscilla comes out in red evening gowl, chi-chi earrings, glamour girl makeup and hair, except this glamour girl has hairy legs and armpits. Then she stoops over a piss-pot. So much for the star treatment. After relieving herself (of all moral obligations I'm sure) Miss P. does a version of "I Enjoy Being A Girl". She's a bit stiff, sometimes her voice cracks, sometimes she vamps to an appreciative audience, many of whom look like refugees from a martian gay bar. After this touching rendition of this female anthem she strips down to torn underpants and some strap thing binding her tits. She puts on this suit made out of that plastic packing material with air bubbles all over it: She looks like an industrial version of the abominable snowman. She fools around with a vibrator and pops some of the plastic bubbles in sexual ecstacy. The performance ends with this classy lassie smashing t.v.s, blenders and other day-to-day objects of affection. It's not up to me to relay what the 'message' is all about, that's up to the observer. Priscilla is an interesting performer, that's for sure. Controlled, sometimes a bit self-conscious, her actions are well thought-out and never boring. Johanna Went on the other hand, is totally gonzo. Her approach performing is that of a frenzied, screeching madwoman making her way through a million constraining objects and wreaking havoc and ruin in the process. Talk about cathartic! covering herself with blood, wrapping herself in sheaths of material, babbling about Christmas and other rituals, eating slabs of Velveeta, transforming herself with home made 'folk art' masks, assuming the virgin mary pose with fish head and gangster baby doll jesus. The crowd screams in delight or revulsion, every outburst of the Went creature provoking a new wave of hysterical reaction. Then while wearing a kitty kat mask and going "meow" in that psycho howl of hers, she slowly pulls back a white curtain to reveal a dead siamese cat, strangled by a rope. The crowd suddenly freezes, and you can hear a few mutters of "oh no". Miss Went picks up knives, hurls them at the unfortunate pussy, screams, cavorts, suddenly the crowd tenseness is released, more howling, yelling, laughing, Went is possessed beyond control, she cries about how she'll "never kill animals again", slices her fake stomach, out oozes spaghetti-o intestines, and drops to the floor in death and final curtain. Tumultuous roar of approval. Her bizarre rituals constantly threaten to go over the edge, stay there, perched on the edge of the loony abyss. Her crazy looking glass mirror is the horrible 80s to come, the schizophrenica-go-go. But we can still afford to laugh? What other choice do we have? After all, it's only a performance, isn't it?

—Z.



Priscilla B.

X, THE GERMS, SUBURBAN LAWNS, THE FALL AT HOPE STREET HALL

The Fall ease into a show as they might slip unseen into your parlor, sneaking up behind you while you nap before the fire, whispering baroque modern nightmares into your dozing brain. Suddenly, you hear clanking chains and sense a menacing presence that is your own private ghost of insecurity. When it's all over, they waft quietly away, leaving you with the insatiable appetite to go home and listen to their records until your ears bleed. No matter how sophisticated their music might be, the Suburban Lawns did not duplicate this effect. A few songs into their set, the plane was revving up so dramatically, so rockingly, you knew it was going to take off. But it didn't. Even Su Tissue in her Balinese dancing troupe attire couldn't break the downward trend when she finally did appear to sing the Lawns' masterpieces, "My Boyfriend" and "Gidget Goes to Hell". These kids are talented. Hopefully they will learn to weed out the ho-hum material.

During the break, we were treated (?) to a giant slide show on the wall: Artaud, his protege Tommy Gear and numerous other punks circa late '77. Remember when rockabilly fan, Pleasant, used to sport full bondage drag?

And here come the Germs! The crowd had been instigated by some bacteria we all know to pull out the supplementary stage that slides from beneath the main proscenium. At least 100 maniacs obscured the chaos combo from view. You couldn't see anything except tufts of hair and Darby when he would leap up, clawing into the folds of the stage curtains. Three songs went by before an over-enthusiastic youngster disemboweled Pat's held-together-with-Scotch-tape guitar. After an hour of chirping feedback and desperate pleas over the PA for a spare axe, one of the Lawns got brave and made the noblest gesture. The Germs finished their part of the show, treating their self-destructive urges as casually as going to the market for a loaf of bread.

And then the stage was pushed back. Here comes X! People approach me on the street and ask, "How do you review a band like X? They're always so good." Yes, I say, they are always good. But sometimes they're merely great and other times they're the best rock 'n roll band in the world. The latter was tonight's case. All tonal problems with vocal deliveries had been solved and you could hear Billy's guitar *very* loud in every song! Exene and John whispered, sang and shouted, building vocal bridges that they burnt behind them. The new "Unheard Music" received its definitive treatment, joining the ranks of other X monsters like "Back to the Base", "Sugar Light" and "The World's a Mess, It's in my Kiss".

Darby, singing back-up vocals on "Our Love Passed Out on the Couch" and "We're Desperate", got so carried away at one point he ran up to Exene and gave her a great big kiss.

An evening of so-so thrills had been changed into the ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME.

—Chris D.

BLACK FLAG, URINALS, THE LAST, FEAR at the Hong Kong

The Last are always pissing about not getting any press in Slash, well here's something — enjoy it while it lasts. But let's do this chronologically.

The Urinals were first, starting out well with a doom and post-disaster kinda sound, but got dull as the set progressed. A bit too slow and arty. Nervousness or whatever caused the singer/guitarist (I think his name's John) to overact the psychotic bit — turning around fast and the like — but he toned down after banging into his amp. A few boring songs made what would have been a good, varied set mediocre. A couple of their better songs were "Why Are We Sleeping?" and "California's Falling into the Ocean" which was introduced as a true story that hasn't happened yet. Stan Lee of the Dickies made a shitface of himself by stepping on to the stage in front of the Urinals and shouting "Rock and Roll will never die." The Urinals are well worth seeing if you can catch them on a cheap bill.

Next on were the Last, who did their usual '60s pop-based songs with a mixture of fast (almost Middle Class speed) stuff. While they're capable of doing either well, they make the mistake of trying to combine the two to contrast the 60's sound with that of the late 70's. It doesn't work. As far as the pop-Beatles sound, though, it pleased the many admirers of whimp rock who were there that night.

The evening took a total change in feeling when Fear came on, almost like a whole different show. After a great opener, "I Love Livin' in the City," Singer Lee Ving asked, "How many people here with beards that look like cunts?" followed by the bass player adding, "I smell fish." The LA Weekly calls it quirky humor — got quite a way with a phrase, don't they? The guitar player informed us there's no difference between the star ship Enterprise and a roll of toilet paper. Both go to Uranus to search out Klingons. Great Quirk.

At points Fear would starting into something discordant and arty, then say "just kiddin' ". But when they accidently fucked up the beginning of "Read your Caption — You're my Main Attraction" Lee Ving stopped it and said, "Well that was a flop, but we're gonna do it anyway. It's all youse deserve."

When Black Flag came on the audience was still in an abuse Fear

whoops

When Black Flag came on the audience was still in an abusive Fear

mood, pointing Fear fingers at the band and shouting "fuck you". It ain't easy to re-train monkeys. Black Flag were doing their best to put on a good show, but the dancers were too busy colliding and diving at the floor to notice Flag's effort. Some people are sooo selfish. What a shame, awww. Things were getting so physical, nobody really noticed that Black Flag had left the stage. They did come back for a couple encores even though there were a few shouting fuck you like it was still funny. Oh well.

—Evan Rude

BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS at U.C.L.A.

A pretty important tour for Marley. In the aftermath of what may be his greatest record since "Catch A Fire", I really was worked up for his best stuff. The last one, at the Starlite Amphitheater last year was nothing short of petrifying. There, Marley was tossing himself about the stage in a frenzy and doing lots of playful "chase the girls" routines. An outdoor concert, it was possibly Marley's best show (in LA) of his career. (Later on, the same night, I saw the Screamer s best set ever. Making it a memorable day indeed.) Even the show at Santa Monica before that was a reggae/dance spectacular in every sense.

However, this one was not. The reason can only be guessed at, but for some reason, things just did not jell with either Marley or the audience. Although things may have been real different up front, the feeling I generally got from where I was, is that nobody was up for the gig. There was that horrible Devilwind outside that gets people in strange moods. The Pauley Pavilion itself resembled some kind of giant clinic and is certainly no place for a dance-party. Bad lighting. Bad sound. And visibility pretty limited to the first thirty rows. The rhythm section sounded better than ever, and I'm beginning to think that Carly Barrett may be the finest drummer in reggae today. His rhythm being played with much more energy than "Horsey" Wallace and more soul than Sly Dunbar. He rarely strays from working with Marley and as a result he's not renowned for flashiness.

Marley is a traditional soul artist in the way he keeps his band subdued and behind him. The musicians are always understanding of this, for with a man with Marley's charisma, nothing can detract from the singer's even slightest expression.

Anyway, somehow the show never got wild. Marley seemed to be more after concentration than after fun. If I had been up front, I suspect that he may have been somewhat hypnotic. It appears to be more along the lines of his recording efforts. On "Survival" many songs simply "lull" away in echo chambers, float into different territory than ever explored by Marley before. This show seemed confused, but I think it's because the man is at a changing point in his career that he has yet to translate into a stage show. Marley's concerns lately have been the "soul" and so his show may be developing into something more personal than another dance rave-up (which is not a lot of fun, if you don't understand it). Most will not at first. This isn't rock & roll, this is reggae and the subject and the sauce are not as influenced by money. Marley will get across his message whether you enjoy it or not. He will voice his feelings whether you think it's worth the money or not. It's your choice. I could never tear myself away from somebody so interesting ...

—Ranking Jeffrey Lea

I WAS A TEENAGE CONVICT
(For a night)
Punk rockers meet Chino men prisoners
by Leslie Earl

It all started on a Monday. I got a call from Steve Jones (AKA The Stepmother) who said: "Les, you wanna go to jail?" 'NO," I said. But after a few more calls I consented to go to the CHINO MENS INSTITUTION on Thanksgiving Day! (disappointing thousands of friends and relatives) to write my impressions of ...PRISON PUNK 79.

Thursday, Nov. 22 was a cold day. We arrived at C.I.M. in little groups of 4 or 5, spikey-haired, pointed-toed, and most of us going through some form of withdrawal (we were not allowed to bring in ANY DRUGS, ALCOHOL, OR NUCLEAR WEAPONS). We were then searched, interrogated, and finally approved ("Alright, I guess we'll let you in to our lovely Prison"). I was in the first Bus group to go into eh prison, along with The Stepmothers (who conceived this evil plot), some of the Textones, and a dozen other worried-looking civilians. On the way over I sat with Steve and Larry (Stepmothers) and asked how they thought the night's activities would be received by the inmates: "I think they'll love the chicks, and hate the guys, some of these guys have been in here since they started shaving," said Larry.

After those encouraging words I decided to stay close to anyone in a uniform.

The 'Concert' was to be held in the prison Gym/Auditorium. The bands on the bill, in order of appearance, were: The Reactors (fronted by the fiery female singer Cheyenne), The Stepmothers (the L.A. Trio, infamous for their lack of compassion in dealing with unruly Crowds), The Textones (a mainstream pop/rock group, not really new wave, fronted by two guitar-playing females) & The Plimsouls (a 4 piece Elvis Costello type new wave group fronted by ex-nerve Peter Case). The only group I'd seen were The Stepmothers, and I was anxious to see how their brand of Punk/Pop rambunctiousness was going to go over in the rigid prison environment.

I didn't have long to wait. The sound system was put up in no time, as the groups, roadies, sound people, and priviledged Inmates were working a breakneck pace to get the whole show on the road (so to speak). I immediately latched myself on to Sgt. "STRIKER", a monstrous guard who seemed to repel prisoners like Skunk. Short, Munchkin-type people wandered around wondering where the head was, what time they went on, and just generally looking misplaced.

Finally at 7:03 p.m. six or seven hundred very mean looking fellas filed into the Gym shouting cute little slogans like: "Where are the Chicks", "I want head", "Fuck Punks!". I started feeling very lucky that I was with "My Guard" and that I didn't have to get out on that stage.

The Reactors hit it with a pleasant little ditty called **Cheap Shot** and ended their set with the soothing **World War IV.** Cheyenne, the lead singer, made the most out of the little she had to work with. By jumping, bumping, and growling to give the inmates a show I doubt they'll soon forget. This set was the only Punk act of the night, but the Inmates loved Cheyenne.

Around 7:30 The Stepmothers took the stage. As I said before they do sort of a strange blend of Pop melodies and Punk speed and energy, and the rhythm section of Larry Lerma and Dusty Watson on drums were the most impressive thing I saw all night but alas, there are no girls in the group, and the prison populace wanted nothing but girls. The Stepmothers finished off quickly with Stills' tune **For what it's Worth** and got off the stage. (At about this time I felt very resentful of the inmates, since it was The Stepmothers who put this whole thing on for them.)

8:00 — The Textones were almost ready to begin and the remaining inmates started crowding the stage in anticipation, at which time "MY" guard Striker stepped up to the edge of the stage and calmly yelled, "Behind the white line!" Obviously I had picked the right guard, as they scampered behind the white line in front of the stage like scared-tattoed children. Finally the Textones came on. Understandably they were very frightened (the two front girls — Karla and Cathy) and didn't seem able to move freely without fear of provoking a full-fledged riot. Their set consisted of amusing, but honestly boring western influenced pop/rock. But they both had cute red pants, which pleased the prisoners no end.

At approximately 8:30 the Plimsouls came on. I usually go for a harder-edged sound but I thought they were really good. By then the inmates were no longer mildly discourteous, but really obnoxious and rude, and by the end of the set there were only a handful of Die-hard inmates left in the huge Gym. Around this time a rumor started flowing that Buddy Miles (imprisoned at Chino for Cocaine possession) would come on stage with the Stepmothers for a blues jam.

BLUES MASTER MEETS PUNKS — a few minutes later the whole place was silent as Buddy Miles (who has played with everyone from Hendrix to Hooker) took the stage with the Stepmothers and Karla from the Textones. There was this incredible feeling that we were all witnessing a small piece of Musical History. There were broad grins as young bass player Larry Lerma traded riffs with one of the true Blues Greats.

When it was over I located Steve Jones in a corner with Buddy Miles, who was saying, "what are ya thanking me for? I had a great time." He smiled and went back to his cell. I told Steve how amazed I was that he pulled it off, and he said: "Wait till you see what we do at the womens Prison!"

As the Stepmothers and their crew started dismantling the PA system and the last few prisoners had gone to their "Dorms" for the 10:00 count the first bus load of survivors was driven out to the gate. We were checked out and released in to the free world. But everyone involved, myself included, came away with a lot more than we bargained for.

Have a nice life.

PLUGZ, BLACK FLAG at the Masque Xmas Party

Is this how the world ends? Or at least L.A.? With two of the best bands in the country opening up for the top-billed Hal Negro, the Mommy Men, and the wonderfully daring and oh so chi-chi Spazz Attack wearing his new fall line-up. Guys whose entire world revolves around butt, enema and doo-doo jokes.

Black Flag came on amidst a shower of confetti. Keith is still sorely missed as lead crooner but newcomer Ron Reyes seems headed for equal footing. That is of he can keep his balance. To the tune of the usual Black Flag onslaught Ron jumped, somersaulted and foamed at the mouth like any good rattlesnake victim should. Greg, Gary and Robo gave Ron the deafening poison for his wound and we all got cured in the process. Next up were the Plugz. Now the Plugz have always occupied a hot little cave in my heart, but 'not till recently did they become one of my favorite bands. Their shows are tight and dynamic without being either forced or pretentious. Listen to "Waiting for Nothing", "I, I, & I" or any of the rest of an album's worth of new stuff they're doing. They put the ire back in inspire.

MR. OK

Bob Dead (Metro Squad) In a rare moment of un-american flippancy pic: Scott Lindgren

IGGY POP at the Stardust

Iggy at the Stardust, back from Berlin to his good old junky home. This is the place that his varior might condescend to describe as "the worst city on earth". Yea, everybody, including at least two or three versions of "Bowie", hates L.A. There's something about it that seems to shock or disgust all the visiting warhorses. This Fall's "big" concerts have been as predictable as expensive boxing matches, a boring combination of caution and blood. If you know what I'm writing about then you know who I'm writing about, but Iggy's not exactly like them. Iggy has been, and still is, at his vicious best while despising the audience. I mean you can't expect someone self-named "Pop" to accept the posture of rock-god very earnestly.

Please enjoy the smooth logic of reflection, reproduction. In the city of mirrors the audience imitates, providing Iggy with pictures of his former lacerations, cuts and bruises that were once confined to the stage.

When Iggy was attacked he was direct, he caught thrown bottles and obliged his torreters by using them to cut himself. Iggy exceeded and mocked their violence with a smirking ritual, his theatre of cruelty. But now the crowd which once drew his blood is more concerned with its own. The audience that once attacked Iggy now attacks itself, and the reflection is reversed, perfectly. They have learned well, but there's no more search and destroy, no more target. Iggy, after all, is just a modern guy, and what's more it pays so much better than the old approach, which is also nice. I guess that's what they call "new values".

Also, he was very good, so was the band. Brian James stood out on guitar with hissing spitting riffs, short and to the point. Iggy needs a reptilian music and James was clearly the center of it.

Iggy was frightening. Do not presume that this requires broken bottles. Blood is now little more than a color, as an effect it pales compared to the travesty of lost power, Iggy's new show. He was snapping between uncontained disgust and post-Bowie ambivalence, late seventies survival. The terror was in the transformation, the terror was in the fact that there was no middle ground. Have no fear Iggy is still cutting himself on stage.

After the bottles and after the hangings, from the Stooges to the Dead Boys, there is only this; a genius of hatred who has learned that hatred consumes. This is the new Iggy Pop show.

The audience is climbing on itself, choking, squashing itself against the stage, and Iggy curses them, spits on them and suddenly smiles/magic, puppy dog eyes — instantly perfect cover of "Lust for Life". "Thank you, thank you very much, thank you my friends."

The combination of irony and rock is at best difficult. Live it is almost impossible, the joke just doesn't carry past the first five rows. But with Iggy it's different. Iggy is the instrument, Iggy is the captive. Iggy was ahead of the times, and he still is. He was carried there, and like other intrepid explorers he was offered salvation. It's only fair that way, it's only proper, but Iggy doesn't seem very relaxed in the moonage daydream.

—Marc Penka

(P.S. (with love to the Stardust)

I am sick to death of what club owners get away with in his horrible city. Of course you've heard it all before and the reflex reaction is a shrug, something like sticking your finger down your throat, you simply throw up and it's over. Until I got to LA I thought that getting arrested for jaywalking was a joke like "Why did the chicken cross the road?"

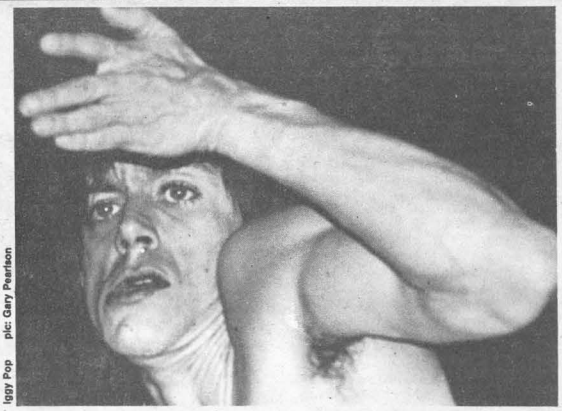
Like diseases, clubs have their symptoms, seemingly inescapable characteristics. Please bear with me. I would like to confuse the issues.

1. It is absolutely inexcusable to forbid ticket holders the right to leave a theatre temporarily.

2. The word "inexcusable" can't even begin to describe the practice of confiscating a ticket holder's property for the sole purpose of selling that same substance to the now captive audience, at entirely unfair prices. So some pig at the door takes your half-pint of J. Walker, then they sell you bad scotch at the bar, for $2.50 a shot. Remember, you can't leave. I wonder why?

What's next? Will they begin stealing our cigarettes so that they can sell us packs for $5.00? It's degrading, it's like waking up in the middle of an operation and being forced to barter for more gas.

Countless other indignities are blurred at the edges of the remnants of my memory, and of course I realize that nothing will change. I mean, *I'm* certainly not going to sit home some Friday night to prove a point, but I just wanted to say how much we all love those wonderful folks who bring us rock & roll.



Iggy Pop plc: Gary Pearlson

VOXPOP, at King's Palace, 11/18/79

In this, their first performance, Voxpop managed to amuse, excite, and blast the ears off of the small, but appreciative audience. Heavy metal meets psychedelipunk. Featuring personnel from bands current (Nervous Gender, LGerms) and past (Consumers, Yvonnes), tonight was the first time all the members of the band have played together. Guitarist/singer Jeff Dahl has a whole repertoire of heavy metal poses that are too funny to be faked, and Don Bolles offers ear-wrenching guitar leads and feedback, with his surprisingly powerful vocals. Paul Cutler is simply amazing, prowling around the stage, eyes bugged, looking like an over-active satyr. He plays his bass in more ways and positions than I thought humanly possible. In her stage debut, Mary Sims looks fetchingly post-morten with her too-white skin and hair, and wanders around the stage, singing, talking, laughing, adding her most effective presence to the proceedings.

Add to all this Michael Ochoa's slippery synthesizer, which saves several numbers from complete overkill and provides a frantic, humorous backdrop to the wall of heavy metal.

The songs ranged from the Consumers' original "Punk Church", to the classic "Heroin", with a particular standout the medley of Faust with "We're an American Band", featuring rousing vocals by Don, Mary and Paul. Completely unprofessional, fun to watch, and hard to listen to, Voxpop is for the hard-core with a sense of humor.

—Laurie O'Connell

LIVE DAMAGE IN SAN FRANCISCO

Damage magazine decides to throw a free party in the Mabuhay and I go to check out the local talent. All the regulars are sloshing their way around in the usual haze. The difference between L.A. and S.F. is that no matter how desperate people get in L.A., they always manage to look as if they had three showers that day. San Francisco, no matter how cheery, always seems to have this dark current of dilapitated grimness running through it. Mabuhay is inevitably seedy, though improvements have been made for the bands' comfort. Dirksen, as usual, remains his charming self. Say what you will about this goat, he's managed to keep his club (and many bands) going through strikes, apathy, police harrassment, low attendance. Obviously the man feels some sort of commitment which is more than I can say for a lot of us.

First up is No Alternative. No imagination is more like it. A competent trio, they are not doing anything that you didn't see two years ago. Mr. Johny Genocide might be Mr. Street Punk personified, but it always seems as if he's thinking about his next two moves ahead. What's the alternative to no inspiration?

Next up the Bags do a quickie to satisfy their friends in the press and enjoy their party in a post tour burned-out haze. They leave the stage after five new songs, before the trendies can form any impression of L.A. talent.

Next the Offs, who have become, of all things, a red-hot blue eyed soul band. With a big black Soul Mama shaking it up on the side, drummer Bob Steeler and new bassist Fast Floyd exchange smoking rhythmic chunks of urban noise while Billy Hawk strums clumsy splatter chords like random sniper shots on Market Street. A much-improved Don Vinyl rides the current in hoarse, bug-eyed wonder. A great dance band, they have the pogo monkeys doing the shot-gun and twine time in all directions. I don't really go for that jam consciousness of trading riffs, but so many ideas are being passed around at such a compulsive rate you can't help but be caught up in the momentum of it all.

Old Offs fans might miss their true-to-punk junkie form but I'd say there is a whole new market for these slick, urban soulsters.

The evening ends with Bob. Bob is not one, but three guys with coordinated sweaters and one girl who moves like a biker's girlfriend. One guy plays the vibes (of all things) and sings in an angry snarl. The girl plunks the guitar with uncanny timing, the drummer occasionally trades spots with the vibes man to sing in *his* angry snarl and play an out-of-control sax. The music is full of stops and starts, odd timings, avant-jazz phrasing, but the anger and intensity behind it all makes it familiar to all you angry young creatures out there. In San Francisco bands always seem to have more stylistic leeway and they're not bound and gagged by rule on what's appropriate for the anarchy set. Bob was irritating, funny and fascinating. I wanna see more.

Also shown that night was stuff from Target Video. Even though there were clips of the Ramones, Mutants, Avengers, Sex Pistols, the most interesting one was a Negative Trend performance with audience all over the stage, grabbing Will's bass, making pandemonium, while the drummer kept a solid 4/4 through the noise. Fucking hell I thought, those S.F. kids sure know how to shake it up — but wait a minute... I know that fat long haired Indian — those are L.A. people! It was at the Whisky a year and a half ago! How quickly we forget! Negative Trend, rest in peace. San Francisco/L.A., carry on....

THE FALL, LIVE IN L.A.
Falling in two places

1.

Hope(less) Hall. Long straight space with elevated stage at one end, ideal for this kind of medium big concert. But something is not right, you can feel it in the air. Maybe it's the no smoking signs on the wall, maybe it's those ridiculous slides of L.A. punks two years ago, fashion absurdists dressing up for the camera and their fifteen famous minutes. Maybe it's the way a place like this can make a big crowd seem sparse, or maybe it's the admission price (a bit steep), or the security guards (a bit over-concerned). The neighborhood is mugging land, and people seem bored to distraction even before the show begins.

All the Fall want to do is play for some people that would enjoy seeing them. Certainly not the kind who go to Madame Wongs West where an out of touch record company stuck them a few days earlier, playing for a tiny, but appreciative crowd who realized from the minute sunday ad that this was the Fall from England, not another power pop band playing in the Dragon Ladies lounge, hoping to follow the Knacks greenback snail trail.

After the Suburban Lawns show up too late to open, the Fall reluctantly take the stage, just another screw-up in a long series of L.A. mishaps. This rumpled group of visual non-entities is definitely not what a hardcore Germs/X audience expects out of an english band — no leather, no cock rings around the wrists, no image to imitate and duplicate. And when they start to play it's medium slow, repetitive, something you might have heard bands do at the beginning of rock and roll time, but for the middle class teens playing at freaky naughty, it doesn't really quite connect, it isn't the hard core slam slam excuse to

punch your neighbor. The changes are too subtle, it compels you to interact and this audience's button is stuck on sheer reaction, anything that requires listening as well as moving is an alien concept. Mark Smith's manchester accent is alien, they don't have time to decipher and realize he's blasting as mean a truth at them as their cult heros Crash and Doe. But the Fall don't compromise, they don't lay everything out on a cafeteria tray. For the few that can feel there are great versions of "No Xmas for John Quays", "Rebellious Jukebox", songs from the new album. One guy next to me is really amazed: "They sound like Beefheart's band did in the beginning. I can't believe it." Another guy is shouting, "Fuck you, go home". I want to argue, but it would be like discussing philosophy with a slug. Finally he spits out the reason for his hatred, "they're not punk". What this fucking moron and his kindred don't realize is that whatever 'punk' was, it meant being brutally honest, not compromising, not selling out to the best offer, not accommodating any but your own standards. It was a right, not a self-righteous attitude. And the Fall has it in spades, the truest 'punk' attitude you could see that night, an attitude that had nothing to do with badges or hair color. But these sheep have become as stilted in their concepts as the hippies they ridicule. Yet the Fall did a great set, no time to press the issue, on to the next gig, hope some people can figure it out through Mark's ugly language, all spoken with an air of benign sarcasm. Get the hell of Hope Hall, there is no hope. leave the dinosaurs wallowing in their mire.

2.

The minute you walk into the Anti-Club you know — this is it! The place is packed, the lights are flashing on and off, Human Hands are playing loud, tight kinetic punch pop, people are dancing laughing sharing come-ons and Tecates with lemon. It feels friendly, exciting, no social boundaries, an anti-image group for an anti-club. Punk was great but its time to move on, you don't have to wear bondage pants to know where the real action is. This was the new, real L.A. underground, the first time since the early days of the Masque that something genuinely *new* and exciting was going on. Human Hands end their set in sweat

They are in the right place at the right time.

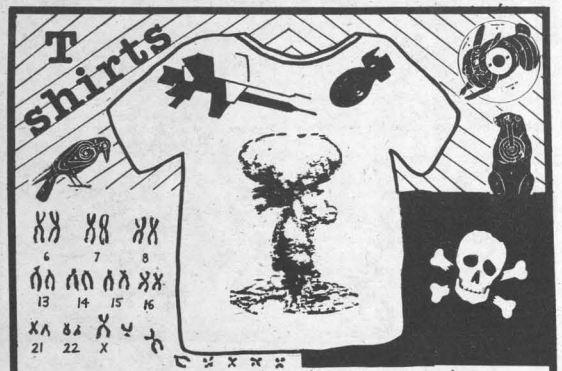
Next are Monitor. I am biased about Monitor, I think they're bitchen, I can't understand why a lot of my friends hate them. One guy said they made him feel uneasy, like he was watching victims of the body snatchers. Hell, there's nothing that scary about these boys and girl. They like to have fun, make things — they'll do some collage book and call it World Imitation. It's just pictures of things they find interesting, no profound significance, you don't need a degree to understand. Their music is like one of those collages — they take everyday objects, household appliances, pets, tikis, movie and t.v. themes, they jiggle and cut and re-apply, rearrange, make a jagged but complete picture. They also keep the excesses down to a minimum, there might be a synthesizer but no self-indulgent spacey freak-out sounds, the guitar, keyboard and bass are balanced together as one instrument, the boy and girl play ping pong with the vocals and the drummer plays staccato slicing beats, it sounds like producing insects creating a better anthill, a soundtrack for the best sci-fi—gladiator—Gidget-track home training movie. This is the result of being bored in Northridge. As scary as suburbia, and they could have only come from L.A. That's why I like them so much.

The anti-club crowd was not making snap value judgements about art rock. They were not opinionated about what's right or wrong, if it was good they would react: They danced to Monitor, as they would have danced to Fear. No trendy labels, no insecurities manifesting themselves as fashion etiquette for the avent garde. If the band believed what they were doing, the audience believed them too. They were ready for the Fall.

They were not disappointed. The Fall's set was the most uncompromising, difficult one I had seen them do. It was the loosest, it was also by far the best.

At Hope Hall, where he was facing indifference, Mark Smith had stared the audience straight on. Here, where people were in rapt attention, moving in time with the rhythms, he turned his back, convoluted, as if he were singing to himself in his room, a sign he was enjoying himself. The band was stepping out. Almost all songs from "Dragnet" including "Spectre Vs. Rector", an obscure slab of atonal concrete, the kind of thing that would have most audiences climbing the walls. Here it was witnessed, digested and absorbed. An honest band with an honest reception, no star bullshit, no record company hype, no games to tease and please the fans. There were no fans, no separation between stage and dance floor. It could have been anywhere, it could have been Hope Street but the people there had an image to protect, couldn't make themselves vulnerable. They couldn't take the chance of forgetting themselves. The anti-club people wanted chances, they were gamblers, the stakes were minimal, the pay-off sometimes to be had, and they had it, in spades. Excuse the stupid metaphors, but everyone won for once, and it felt good.

—Craig Lee



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ALLEYCATS, PLIMSOULS, MADNESS AT THE WHISKY

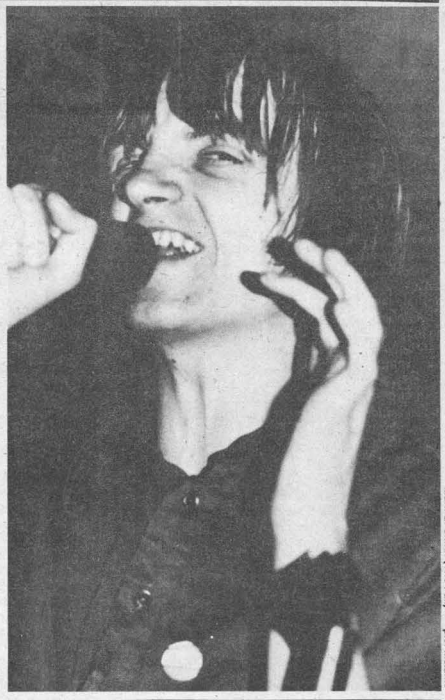
How you gonna keep 'em down on the farm once they seen the English ska crazies? I would've been hard up to answer that the night I saw Madness. They opened up a local show with minimal publicity. 9 PM on the dot and when was the last time you saw the Whisky packed that early on a Thursday night? Chas Smash snatched everybody up with his command, "Don't watch that! Watch this!" Face-front you jump-on-the-bandwagon motherfuckers and be quick about it! Not just one group of people followed this jive fun combo ... pre-pubescent power pop kids, serious '60's shakers, hardcore punks, debonair new wavers and those absent-minded experimentalist types with the faraway look in their eyes. There were even a few poker-faced Rastas on the brink of this tiny human swimming pool. A few minutes later when it came time for theproof-is-in-the-pudding test these cats got straight A's, their things-that-go-bump-in-the-night music erupting into a wall of echo that left no pair of ears uncharmed. At first, Madness had pangs of uncertainty about their reception as evidenced in the shy, mumbling delivery by the lead singer. This didn't last for long, and their set became rawer and more jumpy than their slick debut album. We listened to the exotic tones from a rock 'n roll dance kingdom bordering the equator. Which just goes to show you all you need is a good record collection, a sense of humour, and a powerful imagination to transform the dreariest European climate, turning undernourished, mischievous brats into something else again. At least for half an hour.

What the Plimsouls do is another matter. They have inexhaustible energy which is unfortunately translated by a squeaky clean image into harmless youthful "exuberance". Oldies and originals get a devastatingly faithful-to-the-spirit-of-the-60s rendition. A couple of tunes are exciting but most of the time everything runs together, no highs and lows and no understanding of how to build dramatic tension.

In between sets I was lucky enough to overhear the knowledgeable banter of two bearded record execs/talent scouts in the adjoining booth. An enlightening experience to find such nuggets of insight amidst the slurping of Dom Perignon. Oh yes, and knowledgeable as they were, they left before the Alleycats could let go with a single song. It'd been quite a while since I caught an Alleycats set and I'm ashamed to say I don't know why that is. One thing that they had to suffer through on that night was a rapidly disintegrating sound situation in the PA booth. The problem had surfaced sometime during the Plimsoul's show and by the time I finally realized why I couldn't hear Randy's guitar most of *their* set was gone. Up close to the stage the excitement level picked up noticeably. One thing, though, is that most of their songs should be trimmed to a more economical length for maximum effect. Randy and Diane write good stuff, but occasionally the direction gets diffused along the way.

—Half-Cocked

Chas Smash (Madness) pic: Melanie



Mark E. Smith (The Fall) pic: Melanie

NERVOUS GENDER, FEAR, BRAINIACS AT THE ANTICLUB

Nervous Gender, cockroaches, Fear, cockroaches, the Brainiacs, and more cockroaches. It was sometime after the second round that I noticed that the spots on the bar were moving. Not only that, they had antennae! I slid over to the pool table where John Doe of X, Top Jimmy, and Derf of Fear toasted sportsmanship and racked-up for some eight ball.

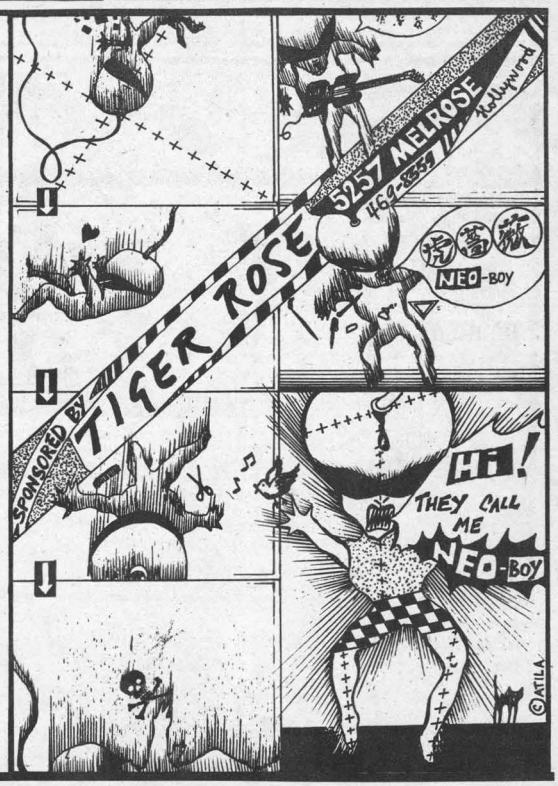
The Brainiacs worked hard proving to be a lot more rowdy than their 45. They need to work up their stage presence, though, and I soon drifted back to the pool sharks.

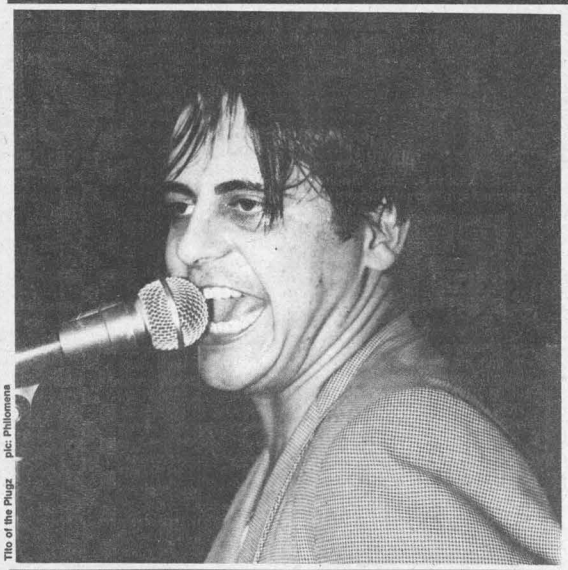
Fear didn't crack too many jokes tonight because the fuses at the Anticlub could not withstand the onslaught of their artillery. Equipment kept breaking down. The band held onto their cool and spat in the face of electronic adversity. While everyone waited, the bar again exercised its magical spell, an uncanny magnetism that could've had something to do with the price of beer, a mere dollar a bottle. Soon pennies were wedged tightly in the fuse box and Fear, with Lee Ving, the vial of nitro-glycerin in combat boots, muscled their way through to the end of the set.

By the time Nervous Gender came on, the competency of those in the billiards area had degenerated in direct proportion to the number of beer bottles on the floor. On stage, Phranc looks like a 14 year old runaway from a boys' reform school. And when she wacks her head repeatedly in time to the synthesizers in "Gestalt", you wonder if she'll ever be fit to function in "normal society". But a place in genteel civilization is not exactly what Nervous Gender is aiming for.

The Anticlub is one of the best fun-dives in town ... despite the racial conflict generated by the insect population.

—V/D





Tito of the Plugz pic: Philomena

DEVO, X, DOVE at the Long Beach Arena, New Year's Eve

Let's not even go into all the naive shit about headliners Devo getting an exorbitant five-figure sum, even paying themselves a $1000 to open as Dove, then giving their middle, non-affiliated act, X, a pittance in comparison. What do you expect anyway? Dove started the night as "the band of love". They looked like Devo and their unfunny, ha-ha Jesus freak joke songs sounded like Devo. In a word, BAD. In another word, LAME. L-A-M-E. What better way to sell out an auditorium or a few gold records? X was good. This was their first time in a place this size and they acquitted themselves admirably. Where once were limp-wristed robots doing the herky-jerk were now *real people!* You know, passion, rock 'n roll and all that jazz. People made out of flesh and blood, not nuts and bolts. And these people had guts! Not that there were any stray bodies ricocheting out of a Hong Kong Cafe audience, just a vast wind tunnel of repressed high school kids, dusted surfers and spaced-out collegiates. Not many in the crowd moved an inch in response, although the applause was more enthusiastic than usual for this type of congregation. The sound mix for X ranged from adequate to awful, care of the Devo crew, of course. Why X even received a full nine minutes (exactly) for sound check! Talk about extravagance! So, either you like X or you like Devo. Why? For the same twisted logic that made Captain Beefheart one of the champion absurdist anti-geniuses of all time and Frank Zappa a 3rd rate vaudevillan with a tiny bit of scientific know-how. The same twisted logic that made Marilyn Monroe and Brigitte Bardot real cool kittens when the glamour pusses of today ala Farrah Fawcett equal Doris Day with high-speed gloss. And on top of that have ice cubes for hearts! It's the difference between rock 'n roll and sugar frosted flakes. It's the difference between Exene or Lydia Lunch and girls like Debbie Harry and Martha Davis. No matter what anyone says you can't have your cake and eat it, too.

—MR. OK

DEAD KENNEDYS, SHAM 69 at the Whisky

Two years too late for Sham 69. Of course not for the surf punks and street kids who had waited a long time to hear "Borstal Breakout" on the Whisky stage. Can't begrudge their hard edged fun, they knew every lyric and every chord. And Sham didn't disappoint them. They played loud, hard, straightforward English punk rock and there's still a lot of people who still like that stuff and it's fine for them. So I'm a jaded old fart, I've been around two years and while I can look at Jimmy Pursey and say, "Yeah, he's a really great performer", the back of my mind says, "He's also a fucking politician, he's just stringing those kids along on a self righteous line of street level dogma (woof woof) designed to appease the working class slobs in hopeless situations like the one he worked hard to finance his way out of." Somehow Pursey's 'honesty' seems about as real as Carter kissing baby fat with a fucking peanut head smile. But then you get fully cynical after a few years so I'm glad that there are still kids out there who believe in what Pursey says and believe in hard punk rock music and thrashing themselves around seeking that energy explosion-cum-comb release — in other words I may look at things with a large dose of scepticism in my eye but if those kids are having a fucking great time, let 'em! They wouldn't believe me anyway.

Let's agree, however, that Dead Kennedys have songs with more interesting music, that they play their actual instruments as well as, in fact, better than Sham, that they are more demanding, more urgent, take more chances, that on a good nite Biafra is a match for any "front person" anywhere and that they did the same show I saw them do one month ago, two months ago, three months ago. The Kennedys say they are taking a break for a while — a good decision. A unique band with a strong sense of purpose, I'd hate to see them embalm themselves in their own image like the other band I saw that night.

—Z.

THE SPECIALS

What will the 80's sound like? Very Special indeed.

The Specials kicked off the current rage in England. It's a ska/bluebeat revival that's headed for America. Ska is more uptempo, more overtly rhythm & blues than its Jamaican offshoot, reggae.

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Look for the very visual Specials on tour with The Police beginning late January.

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PERE UBU
"NEW PICNIC TIME"
Chrysalis

Pere Ubu product has a way of catching up with you after you've forgotten it — they make the kind of albums that grow with time, simply because there is so much information going on with each piece it's kind of hard to digest. What at first seems abstract becomes concrete. What seems concrete is actually an illusion. A quality which makes them very frustrating to get a handle on, and once you do you wonder if it's really worth the effort. David Thomas put it quite clearly in the recent *Slash* interview when he mentioned that they will provide information if asked, but they never willingly volunteer any. This puts them outside the normal scope of rock and roll behaviour, though I would hesitate to call Pere Ubu rock and roll. Dance music, maybe, but this modern dance is developing into a version St. Vitus dance in the thorazine ward.

The problem with this album seems to be an admirable concept producing little substance. You see Ubu put their songs together differently than most. They don't write a 'song' per se and then embellish it with appropriate tasty guitar licks and groovy big drum beats. No, they all walk in and start playing their instruments at the same time and figure it out from there. They call that a blend of "intuition" and "discipline", in other words improvisation formed into a structure. It's a real swell idea, but if this album bears the fruits of this theory, then it's kind of like a guy putting up a music graph paper on a wall, shooting it, and if the holes are on the lines you got the notes. One of the strengths of the previous Ubu work was that they had fairly stable song structures against which the synthesizer could make its 'random' noises and Thomas could burble and squeak and moan. The song was the walls and they were the inmates that were bouncing off, except this time around they have all the vocabulary but no dictionary. In other words no true center to the vortex. Ubu may have eliminated gravity, and we would all like to have our picnic in the clouds, but that guy Thomas is singing like some sort of prisoner, saying 'It's here, no, it's there, no it's up, there's a fly in the ointment.' If he's so mixed up about his purpose then how on earth can we respond to it? Confusion breeding confusion is not my idea of a picnic. Even the ants have some order to their ranks.

And, possibly without realizing this, the Ubu characters leave the most cohsive song for the end. I guess it is supposed to be the salvation from the void, or something like that. Not to say the rest of the album is totally uncohesive and abstract but every time they start to get somewhere it crumbles in another free-for-all. (Though bear in mind they play this exact free for all the same way every time.) So the forty-nine guitars and one girl song builds to nice climaxes and dips and swirls but never gels. And during one particularly haunting song Mr. Thomas intones "this does not seem to be a very happy person". Shit, I an imagine, with all that garbage swirling around him!

So what is the salvation they save for the end? "Jehovah's Kingdom Comes!" You think it's a parody? Guess again. You think that clever intelligent people like Ubu would never get involved with some nutzo religion that foretells impending world disaster from which only a few thousand Jehovah followers survive? Well, "Jehovah's Kingdom Comes" is a beautiful throbbing vibrant piece of music, the one that really stands out on the album. And yes, Thomas does believe. And so, for all of you new music followers who are so convinced that we are a brand new order of avant-garde creatures, Pere Ubu, that daring experimental group, basically delivers a fire and brimstone sermon cloaked in sine waves and jazz guitar parts. From innovators of the Modern Dance to perpetrators of the great American gothic religious standard. I guess it was too much of the Chinese Radiation in that industrial wasteland. As if anyone can even care anymore.

—Craig

"METAL BOX"
PiL
Virgin import

The film can with the logo on it is too much money.

The records inside are hard to get outside, due to the construction of the can. Since they are large 45's, the three records have increased fidelity. Essential to have great sound when you're putting out the first major record of the eighties.

1) The beginning is an exorcism ritual, no less. The style of the music is set — simple, sonorous bass, drums heavy on the disco high-hat/snare action, forming a solid rhythmic background against which Keith Levene scratches out choppy, dissonant, sometimes atonal, frequently arhthmic patterns. All that's needed is the vocals. On "Albatross" they are dour, glum, a man drowning himself, getting rid of the proverbial dead weight of some media personality tied around his neck like a garroting crucifix. But he ain't Jesus son, he's a dead bird, a little bit more mystical, a lot more obscure, unless we have a lot of dye heads out there familiar with "Rime of the Ancient Mariner". At the end of the song, Lydon suddenly gets silly. After ten minutes of introversion he goofs and says only the lonely in a sarcastic high voice. One ritual completed.

2) "Memories", remixed, alternating between the single version and what sounds like a 'live' studio version. Spanish/arabian guitars. The folly of being used by nostalgia, thinking it was so wonderful in the past. It isn't a love of the past, it's a hate of the present, it robs you of any personality. Lydon sees the pretense and he can't shut up, it's too bitter, too real. "Swanlake", or "Disco Death". Seen it in your eyes. His eyes sear through you, two burning hot poker irons ready to put nasty little holes in your soul. Forget about surface physical self-abuse shows, these songs show a psychic deterioration that cuts far deeper than smashing glass on your chest. "Words cannot explain", though he gets awfully close at times. Too close for comfort, all you fearful types can console yourself and feel self-righteous with the new Clash, but John Lydon and Mark Smith are right around the corner, and they are not about to let you forget.

3) "Poptones". "Poptones" is probably the hardest to take, and the most brilliant in a collection of pieces glowing like a flashlight on sewer walls. The first time the drums abandon the disco pace, a bit slower, with circular guitar and bass patterns bouncing off each other. Pretty. Pretty monotonous, going on and on like the nice cassette-playing poptones in a japanese car in the british country-side, all is lovely and well and nice, and meanwhile he's losing his body heat. For a minute you thought he'd get lyrical. Yeah, lyrical as a bottle of arsenic.

"Careering" is one of the few of the new music songs that has ever used a synthesizer properly. Synthesizers obviously make artificial sounds, they are not souped-up organs, but either they are used for wacky sound effects that have little depth or else they're used, like in Pere Ubu, to throw up a sonic wall, a smoke screen you have to work through to find the real information. Here it's all for atmosphere. There has not been a collection of recordings released in recent times that uses atmosphere as well as this Metal Box. You hear a lot of bogus talk about 'defining spaces' but this record effortlessly mesmerizes you, defining its feelings not only through sound, but the atmosphere the sounds are being created in. If that sounds heavy, or pretentious, forget it, just listen and find out yourself. "Careering" spins through borders and definition like a burning car out of control.

4) "No Birds". "Graveyard". At times you feel like this record is a seance, that Lydon is walking through a hall of ghosts, hitchiking with Rimbaud, taking a crap in the stall next to Celine. There are some fools out there who will think this music was just some improvisations doctored in the studio. Lydon couldn't care less, he's put out the pain, the emotion, the hatred, the humour, he's once again not only created a style, but defined it as well. This is the narcotic of the future, unfortunately it might inspire a whole new wash of stupid psychedelia idiots thinking that any weird sound is groovy and that will be unfortunate. Let's not have a rash of PiL imitators this time. The point is to be the one and only, and any other group attempting this stuff would sound silly and forced. Music to be absorbed, but not followed. You'd be following one man's flight of fancy, not your own, and he prefers 'the illusion of privacy'. You can't compete with his phantoms, you have too many of your own, or have you looked recently?

5) There are those who will hear "The Suit" and think what a witty satire it is — *on someone else.* Against probably the most minimal backing on the record, simple bass/drum with some piano tinkling in the subliminal background, a funny-voiced Lydon comments "Everyone loves you till they know you", "perfume aerosols may champion the strangers", "society boy on social security" and you laugh because you think he's merely ridiculing the upper affluent class. But it's not just them. "It is your nature." Any fucking ritual, you know. Like reading reviews in *Slash* and dying your hair and living on the floor of abandoned office buildings. It's all the same thing. "It is your nature."

"Bad Baby" — a disco lullaby for the disturbed brats of tomorrow. Haunted high voice repeated in a different key by some melodica-sounding instrument — raise your children to 'ignore it and it will go away' but we are hearing one person incapable of doing that. How many of you can meet that test? "Don't interfere" and we're all grownups in the same playpen ...

6) "Socialist Chant" is an instrumental of all the happy little ants scrambling around to build a nice little society. "Chant" is the rawest, most intense, most distorted piece of what the society creates, a stream of nonsense syllables, designed to lull you in submission. And "Radio 4" is the music of the submission, the elevator muzak in the office with chemically-controlled water coolers. The music is so pretty and liitng on Radio 4, the exact opposite of the grating "Chant" but equally as subversive. For after all the record has shown you, the lovely synthesizer and slightly lopsided bass are just the final lie that hides behind the fraud of a Public Image.

The point in all this is that it doesn't matter how great or significant all this music and wordage are. In the final run, it's basically an illusion anyway, an opium dream. There is not some half-assed comic truth about all things passing, it's the darkest edge of a nihilistic vision. It's also beyond simple slogans like "No Future". This is why this record may never be fully appreciated — even those lulled by the hypnotic musical textures, those controlled by the steady basic rhythmic pulse of most of this album, even those will fail to get the message. It goes beyond hopelessness, it goes beyond silly gimmick groups talking of "One Step Beyond", it goes beyond hippies seeking to escape with the same drugs most of their punk enemies readily ingest, it goes beyond all the surface bullshit and artifice and pretense, and tells you that when you get the core, you find out there's nothing there anyway. It doesn't say kill yourself, that's as useless as no suicide at all. Just question everything. Don't accept blindly. Forget every word I said, but don't shut up. Get it? It's nothing at all, only a Metal Box.

—Craig Lee

Boy oh boy, what wealth of records in the past few weeks! They came from all over, arrogant sounds, humble sounds, groovy sounds, silly sounds, the sounds of tomorrow right next to the sounds of yesterday. Obviously it was impossible to review everything and cram it in one issue, especially when jokers like Craig or Kick insist on writing reviews the size of a small novel! So hang in there everyone, next month the rest of the batch will be analyzed, dissected, praised and laughed at. You will know everything you ever wanted to know about all these albums: The Raincoats, Sugar Minnott, Doll by Doll, John Cale, Penetration, Spherical Objects, Grow Up, Capital Letters, Barrington Levy, the Ruts, the Skids, the Pretenders, Lydia Lunch, not counting a myriad of singles, EPs and giant 45's. So save that bread, there just might be something in there you'll just have to have.

"BEAT RHYTHM NEWS"
Essential Logic
Rough Trade Import

Scary one-liners that rock when they're supposed to rock and jazz (in the '30's colloquial meaning "to fuck") when they're supposed to jazz. Lora Logic's

voice is a spooky tunnel of oscillating waves that suck you up no matter what your prejudices are against this kind of mishmash. And mishmash this is not. Integration of musical ideas is a nasty but always successful business here. Occasionally the lyrics go the cute route. But you can forgive a few miscalculations can't you? Or can you? Oh, what a band this would be if Lora and Poly Styrene had stuck together. No use crying over spilt milk.

"FIRE FROM HEAVEN"
The Good Missionaries
Deptford Fun City records import

Mark Perry and his ever-fluctuating gang flip their wig for good and turn their back on everything. This collection of rantings backed by extremely loosely structured noise goes further than the last Alternative TV album in alienating just about everyone who thinks they like music. Most of it is repetitive, irritating and impossible to relate to (although there is some hesitant clapping after the live tracks), you keep expecting a more familiar direction to appear, but no, this bizarre musical land is Mark's new home and he is not moving back to his old digs, although I suppose you're welcome to join him there. If you're overamped on all the new music, its factions, its predictability, its struggle for attention, but you still wish to keep your turntable in working condition, this stuff might be your way out. It has zero commercial value, its aesthetic worth is debatable and its message is up to you. How purer can you get?

KICK

SCRATCH — "ON A WIRE"
Island ILPS 9583
Featuring: Lee Perry, Augustus Pablo, Jah Lion, George Faith, Errol Walker, Meditations, Max Romeo
Produced by Lee Perry

The tie that binds this album together is Scratch, the Upsetter — Lee Perry. Not only is he the mightiest of Jamaican producers, he wrote a lot of the songs on this set. Whenever I hear him sing "Soul Fire" I go into a fevered trance and find myself with finger in the phone dial trying to book a flight to the jungle. Most of the other cuts on this album are also pure voodoo. "Vibrate On" (Augustus Pablo) has a light melody, some weird sounds like echoing electronic cow mooing mixed in over a deep, dark beat. "Soldier and Polie War" (Jah Lion) has parts of Jr. Murvin's "Police and Thieves" spliced directly into it, but it's a political and musical update. "Diane" is the Paul Anka song (who?) done very slowly with high-pitched echo by George Faith. Also included is "War ina Babylon" from the Max Romeo/Lee Perry album of the same name (which is one of the best records I've ever heard of any type of music).

One or two of the cuts here almost verge into corniness like "In These Times" by Errol Walker, a reworking of the old standard "Summertime". But if I let those gris-gris piano chords and those sweet voices wash over me ... Scratch shakes Walker down on the other side with a trenchtown rocker "John Public" which features some of the album's best vocals. Perry does another vocal turn himself with an Arabic sounding quasi-religious chant on "Bird in Hand". This album is a sampler of what made Lee Perry a legend. Blessed be the Upsetter.

—V.—

"ISRAEL BE WISE"
The Royales
Ballistic Records/U.A. Import

You're in Tony Gee's, right? (when that record store was still a solvent operation) and you're about ready to leave with a few singles when the guy with the groovy patois running the joint spins a disc that rivets you to the floor. A test-pressing of the Royales' new album. Even though you've only time to hear the first song, you think "Wow! this'll be one to lose a few bucks on when it finally does hit the street." Well, now that I've nursed the tale, which is essentially a sob story, this far along, I'll change to the first person. That's right, that was me in that humble shop being hit over the head by something pretty magical. And that's me six months hence just a few days ago who experienced a slimy uneasiness when I realized the monumental mistake I had made. This isn't only one of the most boring reggae albums ever, it goes a good distance towards being one of the most boring records, period. Simple singalongs like "Happy Time" and "Everything So Nice" aren't beautiful simplicity, they're simple idiocy, pieces of fluff as monotonous and soulful as the disco on AM radio. The one exception is "I Cried", a mournful little thing that makes you thankful to be alive even if you're barefoot and penniless. That aside, stay away from this one.

—Chris D.

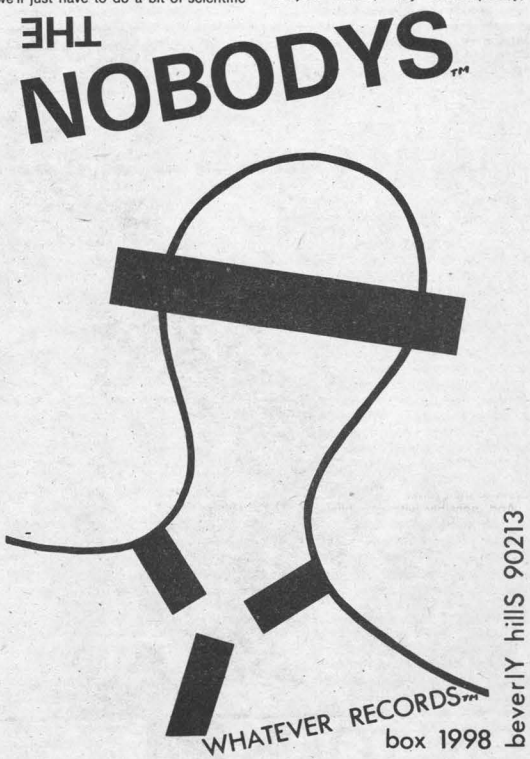
"LONDON CALLING"
THE CLASH
CBS Import

Well who's a big rock band now? And fuckin' generous too? And who's a bitch so early in the morning, sipping on his wine when it's not even nine ayhem and Strummer and company are barking about Spanish Bombs and I'd just like to know what they're REALLY saying or are they making the proper noises to keep everybody suspecting that it's got to be revolutionary, enough words pointing to it after all? ME OF COURSE (the bitch that is). I've got a heart and I've got a brain and they're pulling different ways, something says they're okay something says they're jive shit, on and on so I drink cos sometimes it clarifies things before muddling them up. And muddling things up proper this double elpee sure does, which is good or is it? I play this thing constantly until the urge for the somber landscapes or bleakness and death and the absence of hope strikes again and it's time for Dragnet or Metal Box, where at least you don't have to worry about someone playing to you, nobody's working for the clampdown in that world, nobody's trying to liberate you and entertain you at the same time, Lydon and Smith don't give a shit about the troops. Strummer and co do. Things to say about drug addiction ("Hateful") alienation ("Lost in the supermarket"), oppression ("Guns of Brixton"), exploitation ("Koka Kola") and depression ("I'm not down"). And occassionally they say it beautifully, movingly, touchingly. This here album is a breakthru I tell you. Progressive critics gonna love it, suddenly the old punk thing gonna make sense to many people with refined tastes, even students are gonna get behind this rock n roll band. The new darlings. I remember when the expensive liberal set decided the Rolling Stones were it, and I naively thought it meant a better future since important people (what an ass of an ignorant kid!) were understanding things right. Later I found out about games. Also soul, and the absence of it.

Food for thought:' when the Clash were angrily banging away in the very very beginning (the truth and guttersnipe days) some New Musical Express clerk suggested they go back to the garage, be locked in there with the motor running. The same clerk (now approaching retirement and the gold watch for his faithful services) just went goo goo and wet his knickers in print over the "London Calling" package. An exhilerating masterpiece of musical maturity, all that tripe. Either the old fart has become suddenly very hip (very rare occurrence among professional hacks) or the Clash have indeed become a very different cup of tea altogether. Guess we'll just have to do a bit of scientific observation, put the intuition kit away for a while. Let's do this together since everybody must have the album by now. Ready? Lower the stylus (gently) and here comes.....

"London Calling". Yep, it's the Clash all right. Nice thumping. Good lyrics with just enough mystery left in them (what's the imitation zone?), great screams halfway thru. A real crowd rouser, and this time around you don't have to mouth all sentences you're not sure of, it's all handwritten for you. The obvious single. "Brand new Cadillac" is superfluous but mercifully short. Old cult classic by European mad rocker Vince Taylor, a good way to show some roots without being too obvious. Bores the shit out of me. Further downhill with Jimmy Jazz, a laid-back rockin' piece of americana not salvaged at all by very artificial reggae allusions. So far the closest the Clash has ever come to obnoxious irrelevance. Not cute at all. "Hateful" is their concerned look at the problem of drugs. Drugs fuck up your social life, scramble your brain and cost loads of money. They also make you write shitty songs and believe they are statements. I think in the first Clash LP there was something about drug abuse that rang very true. Now it's cliched. Great vocal delivery though. "Rudie can't fail" is more roots flashing, a Bo Diddley train thru the fashionable world of ska revival. I fell for the "drinking brew for breakfast" line. A good lively unpretentious tune. Nothing wrong with fun when it sounds like that. End of first side of first platter. So far 2 songs with any meat. Not too good. It used to be EVERY FUCKIN SECOND, EVERY BLEEDING NOTE AND SHOUT! Stop shouting. Sorry.

Back to ... "Spanish bombs". Definitely grows on you. Civil war subject matter, very contemporary,



music drags along a bit, there are holes in the wall of sound, must have been caused by pieces of shrapnel. Song runs out of breath, lays down and quietly dies. "The right profile" has great shouted chorus by Strummer, it's real sloppy carousing Clash chaos except for the subject matter which is about as un-Clash as they come. Monty Clift? Who's next, Marilyn? Real oddity. "Lost in the supermarket" is sung by Mick Jones. I don't care for Jones (image wise) but this is a fuckin good song and his voice is a nice change from Strummer's barking orders from the top of the barricades. Excellent lyrics, don't say too much or too little. 100% believable. The weather continues to improve with "Working for the Clampdown". Real marching stuff, music for underground brothers and sisters. There's rebellion in them boys still. A true chant. Side two ends with "Guns of Brixton," Simonon's first venture into singing. So far the first song to immediately get me in the guts, the music is as physical as it gets, and Simonon does fine. When they really immerse themselves in the reggae world the Clash are the only white boys who can not only get away with it but actually make it special. Bravo. A masterpiece.

Second platter: "Wrong'em Boyo". A cover song, Stagger Lee or John Wesley Harding, the only westerns that I like are all made in Italy so I leave the americana stuff to others. When they were singing about London burning and the Westway they probably would have ridiculed anybody going on about cowboys.. Album 2 had one on the cover. I guess we were progressively warned. "Death or Glory". The message song, where the Clash are trying to tell us something about their position in the rock n roll world, their philosophy of life, their refusal to apologize for their alleged sins. To sell out or not to sell out. The answer is murky. "He who fucks nuns will later join the church". I take it that means that it's always the righteous who eventually sell out. Except what were they doing in the old days, if not fuckin nuns? Just fondling them? I say he who makes a show of spitting on the cross is fighting a deep religious belief. And he who has to write countless tunes about selling out is trying to convince himself. It's not me that went on about "No Elvis.." blah blah blah then used the departed fucker for the latest album's advertising campaign (full pages of Elvis holding the album sleeve) now is it? Only thing worse than having skeletons in the closet is to pull the horrid things out, string them up and make them dance on a stage to irrevocably confuse matters. That's devious calculated crap. Onward.

"Koka Kola". Same as above. Guilt can be the source of great works of art, agreed. Who says working class heroes should keep away from cocaine? Only disgusting thing about the stuff is its price, for god's sake. IT'S ALL RIGHT. Allusion upon allusion to the mothership, C.B.S., the Clash nibbles the hand that feeds it. Not necessary. Next tune is ambitious. "Card Cheat" is romantic wall of sound, a Bruce Springsteen orgy of crescendos, trumpet blasts, an El Topo odyssey. Quite moving but musically a bit formal. Not punk rock. Last side is an easy slide down the end, with "Lovers Rock" and its vague formless format, no comment on the vapid lyrics (Clash never been too good at writing about girls and stuff). "Four Horsemen" is standard Clash music-making, obscure subject matter. "I'm not down", Jones' second vocal contribution is almost as good as the first. Good snappy playing from everyone, the tune hops along with real nervous energy. Last, at last, is another cover song, "Revolution rock". Reggaeish rock steady bop bop with cool sharp lyrics, it's okay but the Specials do it better. Must be fun live. That's it. We've reached the bottom of this bulky Xmas care package. Somewhere along we forgot to keep count, but by now it's evident that it's not all rosy rosy, perfection, truth and beauty isn't it? Ooops, almost forgot the "unknown" song that comes after "Revolution rock" but is unlisted. A pretty unoriginal soul copy tune, strictly for dedicated fans. I wouldn't have listed it either. Good time stuff, roots, rock n roll, get down. And what have we got? Well, loads of music, enough for a de luxe song book with chords, piano charts and string arrangements (I exaggerate). Loads of words too, heavy words, light words, contradictory words. Contradictions are fine (only Kraftwerk don't contradict themselves), we're all humans after all. The Clash want everything, they want to be the best rock n roll band for the rock n roll people and they want to be more for the rest of us, they want it all, love, respect, fame, fun. They'll most certainly get it all, too. In a few days I'll come back to these two records, I'll play London Calling, Guns of Brixton, Lost in the Supermarket, I'll probably feel good for a little bit. Right now I just want to curl up in a little ball, light one cigarette up after the other and listen to "Albatross" or "Bad Baby" forever, with nobody shouting at me about pseudo moral dilemmas or failed rebellions. Not now. London's calling but I'm off the hook.

Kick Face

PS: In Afghanistan there are men with veils on their faces wondering how the fuck you blow up a tank. Think about that for a while and leave me alone.

"ORCHID SPANGIOFORA"
Flee Past's Time Ape Elf
Twintone Records

Well, you can't dance to it. Though much of this material creates its own resonance and rhythm through altered repetition, you probably wouldn't classify it as music. Orchid Spangiofora uses tapes of recorded voices to produce astounding audio-collages.

Somehow, the loops are spliced and altered, segments weaving in and out with other voices, adding up to one of the funniest, and most disturbing records I've encountered in a long time.

The laughter recorded here is particularly creepy — aspirated groans, giggles, and wheezing isolated and repeated again and again take on an almost too organic sound that becomes, after the initial amusement, very difficult to listen to.

Though many of the tracks cover the same territory with minor variations, several stand out as particularly effective. "Dime Operation" is one of these, with segments from tv shows and commercials all hacked up and reassembled without an ounce of respect, including Monty Hall saying, "I had *so* much fun playing with those — I had *so* much fun playing with those dolphins — *so* much fun — *so* much fun with those — much fun with those dolphins — dolphins — dolphins — I had *so* much fun with those — "

This album is frustrating — the instant you hear something you want to concentrate on, it is altered or distorted in some way. It makes *everything* ridiculous by ignoring the original meaning and creating an entirely new context — or rather, lack of context. This type of irreverence, when it crystallizes into something as masterful and unique as this album, is very necessary to all of

us who tend to take things too seriously.
—Laurie O'Connell

THE SPECIALS
Chrysalis

Now we all know what the first fad of the eighties will be, yet this band has little use for fashion. True, they initiated the ska/bluebeat element of the mod revival, and due to its obviously infectious rhythms this is gonna go over in America a lot better than a few dozen early Who clones. The Jam never really caught on over here, so I have no hope for bands like Secret Affair. I have a lot of hope for the Specials.

For one thing they are more than a novelty item, unlike some other groups in the same vein. There's none of the cutesy skinhead Madness mugging with these guys. Songs like "Do the Dog", "Concrete Jungle", "New Era", "Too Much, Too Young", all have the feelings of AM radio hits from ten years ago, but the lyrics are strictly up to date and they have no time for fashionable idiots. "We can't force you to enjoy this music, take it or leave it, we'll carry on regardless." So there! The musicianship is pretty incredible. The white bass player has one of the darkest funk feels around, the drummer is as good as he better be playing this stuff, the guitarist snakes in his smart fills, a party band with a message for the brain.

Elvis Costello, someone I've not much use for, has done a perfect production job. Not perfect in terms of the latest up to date dolby separated sound perfection wash out job. That would have been wrong — Costello understands the band and many of the tracks have a live in the studio/nightclub feel. He doesn't attempt to blast their sound with clever mixing tricks. They sound direct, a bit crude, and totally honest. Of course it wasn't as easy as it sounds, there are little tricks and turns like the salsa sounding horns. (Time for a digression: when do we have to stop looking to England for new musican directions? Turn your radio dial and you can find some urgent, complex, rhythmic, emotional salsa music pouring out at the right time. Oh, I forget, they're Spanish. You need an English accent to make it hip? Hypocritical idiots...) Not to berate the Specials, though. They've done an admirable job, they came out right without being self righteous. An excellent album of distinctive songs dealing with the social problem immediately at hand, something that moves your feet and doesn't insult your mind. Truly special, I know that's an obvious pun, but it's as inevitable as the fad this band will create, and for once I won't mind catching the infection.

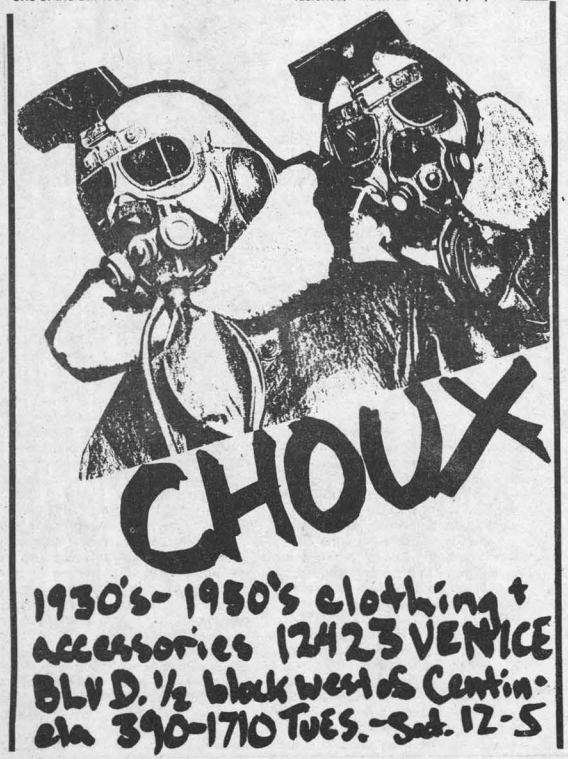
"THE COMMANDOES COMMIT SUICIDE DANCE CONCERT"
The (Suicide) Commandos
Twin Tone records

I really liked that Suicide Commandos LP when it came out but apparently not enough people did, the band got disillusioned, muttered the appropriate "fuck it" announcements and headed for the exit. But not before this final live performance was recorded for posterity. Here it is, songs from the album plus others, the recording is kind of flat, the music a bit blurry, if you were there and had a good time buy the souvenir, if you were not I'm sure you got other plans for your spare bucks, one good band bites the dust ten more pop up, life goes on. Still, I love a good live concert, and this sounds as if it was a REALLY good one. No one told me the action was in Minnesota that night!

KICK

"ONE STEP BEYOND"
MADNESS
Stiff import

Madness' live success while touring the States was to be expected: their image is sharp and their good natured lunacy caught everybody's imagination. What's more their reputation as a new kind of dance band attracted all the party-til-you-die elements although in the end hardly anyone really knew what the fuck to do with their feet when the gang was rocking its nuts off in front of them. Now that Madness has provided some sort of step by step dance chart on the back sleeve of this LP showing Chas Smith (the Fred Astaire of his field) going thru the motions you can be sure that next time Madness is in town you'll see lots of people assuming them positions and at least looking like they know what they are doing in between two actual dance steps! But all this talk of dancing and looking right is taking us away from the music itself, which is one of the dangers of new crazes: nobody eventually gave a damn about Chubby Checker's music, being too busy wiggling their kneecaps in the approved manner. In Chubby's case it was just as well, but the same fate would be a shame with Madness. Their debut album is lovely (fuck you) and has enough variety to please the whole family. There's a lot less emphasis on the oommpah-pah rock steady thumping beat than I expected, but when it's there it's a guaranteed killer, it can give a second life to the most moribund tune: Listen to their version of Swan Lake, with the cliche piano melody being trailed by a farting saxophone and think of all the possibilities. The whole goddam repertoire of lame light classical music given a second chance at the charts: Johann Strauss goes ska, Volume three, etc etc. When they are not cranking out THE beat Madness can be very romantic in a populist sort of way and very untough. They also can be pretty funny, although their spoken asides and very british-working class humor and attitude will be appreciated here as much as warm beer or cucumber sandwiches. But some of my pals here at *Slash*, the well known organ of political dissension and social change, think Madness are reactionary, counter-revolutionary. Well, the band's underlying escapism does not escape me, and



MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO FRANK GARGANI

I know that very soon they'll either have to say something about the shit swamp they're skipping across (like their older brothers the Specials seem intent on doing) or join the legions of unaffected dummies dancing their way to the slaughterhouse. But I think Madness is honest and that they'll soon know which side of the fence they're on. And on that side too we sure could use a good dance band. You can have visions in your head as well as ants in your feet now can't you??

—Kick

"SUBTERRANEAN MODERN"
various Artistes
Ralph Records

Actually, Gary Panter's cover art makes a rather good critiqual metafloor of itself. After evening falls, cars roar over the bridge with their headlights on. The eclectic beatnick, wired in and rolling in risks, darts on ahead.

This is subterranean modern. Four "underground" attempts at a "modernist" sensibility. Certainly, altering magnetic tape in such novel ways entails a whole gob of risks, so your record store will file this under experimental, along with Cage and The Velvets and Meco's Wizard of Oz. Please Mr. Record Dealer, don't do that! This album's a lot more enjoyable than the new Dave Mason album, and more interesting than Supertramp!

Lots of data in the disc, lots of electronic tinkering. The bands all have a personality to them, a different approach to "what my future was like". MX-80 thinks it'll basically be along jazzrock lines. Chrome goes for a more Clockwork Orange/Synthetic Danger attitude. Tuxedo Moon approaches the free aesthetic and social statement area, doing whatever seems interesting or important. The Residents are probing the elemental strategies in the struggle between sanity and life.

I really like this album. This isn't a group of desperators trying to shock you, or fiberglass intellectuals doing crap that's "never been done before". It's valid statements about possible approaches to the rock and roll form, that's all. No Mr. Record dealer ... nobody's dancing to this record, but they may hang out to listen to it.

WLA

"20 Jazz Funk Greats"
THROBBING GRISTLE
Industrial Records

So the cryto-fascist baby eaters are at it again? How would you like that for an image? Too many foreign gentle people of the press (as in Op-press) have delighted in misinterpreting TG's scientific research and romantic motivation. Now here's a nice knife in the back for them, everyone smiling on the cover, dressed in their Sunday best, casually posed amidst yellow flowers on the brink of a foggy precipice. The cliff is a "real" recognizable place to thousands of Brits. It's the renowned Beachy Head, a lover's leap that claims numerous self-destructive creatures every year. Cut "20 Jazz Funk Greats" is a cheery up-tempo sendup of jazz cliches that slowly dissolves into the despairingly peaceful chill of "Beachy Head". "Still Walking", "Tanith", "Walkabout", "Exotica", and "Hot on the Heels of Love" have a little something for everyone, a kind of family disco filtered through Pink Floyd and Eastern instrumentation. "Convincing People" and "Persuasion" are jokes about what makes the world go round, the ups and downs of getting people to do what you want. "Six Six Sixties" is the clenched-teeth climax, keeping the attitude of everything else here but different in its stark matter-of-fact declaration of an inescapable world riddled with personal pain. Genesis makes pogo-velocity bass lines played like Tabla drums/sitar the solo accompaniment to his voice. A whole album of this would make nuclear weapons obsolete. This record has already fooled a lot of people into thinking that TG has gone the way of all flesh. For all its melodic serenity, TG not only proves this idea false, they rub their detractors' noses in it. They do and say what they want, no matter how mellow, but still have the scalpel ready for the savage, healing operation.

—Mr. ok

"REPRODUCTION"
The Human League
Virgin Import

Maybe it just puts me on edge to hear these guys using metronomes to make the transformation into something "Electronically Yours", but thie L.P. really got on y tits after a while. I mean to say that Marsh, Oakey, and Ware have talent, but it has been poorly applied. In their worst moments, they converse as unevenly as Stiff Little Fingers on "Inflammable Material." In that respect, my advice is to stay away from "Blind Youth" and other instructive tracks on the album unless you *really* are blind.

If this band's point of departure was from a more challenging level, such as the story of "Empire State Human" or "A Word Before Last," they would be on much more solid ground. Their lyrics and music occasionally resemble those of David Byrne or possibly Brian Eno. The sound is not unlike a slick, post-Eno synthetic style which has lost its impact sometime, somewhere.

"Zero as a Limit" is my best-liked vote for the album. Its dark collision between an infant and mother/father looking at the baby through a glass, shattering the glass, confirms that this *is* an important, literate band. The repeated theme "Q.E.D.," (L. quod erat demonstradum: that which has to be demonstrated), may actually be taken as an assurance from this group of a future leap into a more intangible or experimental landscape, a direction they are only hinting at here.

L.L.A.

COOL ROOTS
by Earth & Stone
(Cha Cha records)

Long ago when I was testing switchblades in Kingston, Jamaica, a sorry looking fucker with a scar from eye to chin told me that he was sick of singing groups that sound like the Wailers or the Mighty Diamonds. He said why listen to the leaves when you can hear the tree. I think he meant to ignore copies of U-Roy or the Diamonds etc. who had set certain styles that (I must admit) are often copied note for note. I, who is still uneducated in the genre of reggae, have that boyish excitement over anything that's new and looks good. Unfortunately, lots of it is bad and lots of it is unspecial. There are too many U-Roys and Diamonds in this business, so standards must be set.

Earth & Stone, at first, seem to suffer from the very fate of sounding like just another group. The lead vocalist adopts an almost identical sound as the others before him. The songs are melodic, but do not carry any identifiable style or hook by which we can call them unique. Only on "Jailhouse", "Set Me Free" and two others do the duo of Earth & Stone sound like a group possessed of vision. On "Jailhouse" in particular, the pair strike up a wonderfully different roots feel that hangs on its vocals rather than its rhythm. This is the sort of thing I'd expected from then since I heard their first single "Jah, Will Cut You Down" (Randy records) which was an even more primitive version of the same song. This is the level that Earth & Stone must reach on every song. They have to become immune to the other popular styles on the island in order to develop theirs and become a fresh kind of talent...

—O'Ranking J.

FROM THE VAULTS OF MOTOWN
by Various Artists
(Motown Records)

I was born of the city. My influence being the Spanish east side of L.A. where I ran around with my brainless body either ducking trouble or causing it. Only when I'm away from the city do I realize that everything I do stems from its influence. The best example being music.

Whether it be John Coltrane, James Brown, Smokey Robinson or Black Flag, I know that my taste can be lumped into one category: City Music. Jazz, Soul, Rock, or Punk Rock. It's all city music. It's the soundtrack for the life I'm living. Loud headbanging guitars with the rush-hour driving and slow whining saxophones while looking up buildings downtown at midnight. To me, white or black, it will always be city music. So you can understand the importance of Motown in our lives: This company provided just about every important soul hit through the years when we were fighting after school or burning down the warehouse. Its influence on anybody who's still young is undeniable, as it was the first music we really heard back then...

This album which was released this year was an experiment at Motown. It's a collection of unreleased hit-potential tracks from the golden age of sixties soul at Motown. All of these tunes are completely new and waiting to be included somewhere on your current living soundtrack.

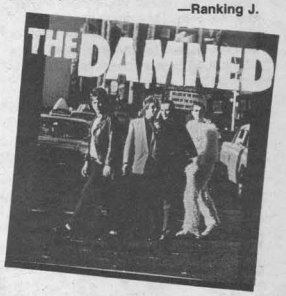
The opening tune here is by the Temptations. The favorite band in east L.A. Called "Nobody But You" it's the most disappointing cut on the album, being neither written nor produced by the usual Motown people. It's off the style a bit which is not cool for this album. The next cut is "Take Me Where You Go" by the Supremes and is perfection. Written by the fabulous "Smokey", it's a soul-pop classic much in the tradition of the best Supremes' hits like "Come See About Me" or "Where Did Our Love Go". It bounces along with Diana's voice so perfectly cute and clear that it makes you realize what made her such a big star in the world. It also has classic Smokey lines, "In the desert where it is hot, or in the North Pole where it's not." Too bad Motown doesn't push this for its next single.

Next up is "Cry" by The Monitors, a little-known Motown group that sounds a lot like the Miracles in their early part of recording. It also sounds like the Larks or something. This is much better than any of The Monitors' real releases and is worth the price of the record alone. "Sweeter As The Days Go By" is an unissued Marvin Gaye track in his "Ain't That Peculiar" vein. Recorded in 1966, it has that rambling rhythm that makes Gaye's 66 hits such driving soul masterpieces. These in particular being a big influence on David Bowie and Lou Reed. If there was ever good freeway music for urban L.A., this is it.

On side 2 of this record, is "What More Could A Boy Ask For" by the Spinners, sounds something like the Isley Bros. hits for Tamla, especially "This Old Heart of Mine". Not too much like the Spinners' own hits, "It's a Shame" or whatever. It was also done in 66. Heart-stopping uptempo stuff from Smokey Robinson and the Miracles in — "It's Fantastic". Kind of like 'Going to A Go-Go" maybe. Smokey may be one of the most influential musical characters of our generation. His followers included the likes of Steve Jones, Patti Smith etc. as well as local bums like Myself, John and Exene, Darby Crash, Keith ex-B. Flag etc. Anyway, who listened to "Tracks Of My Tears" and didn't like it? Smokey's songs created romance for that weird period of time when nobody could think straight. (Most girls my age probably lost their virginity to the sounds of "Ooh Baby Baby", anyway.)

The rest of this album is full of some pretty good stuff, but none of it's worth mentioning like the ones above. Get this record at least because good music is just as valid in any day or time. In this case, good music that was never heard. And hell, the thing only costs $3.00 anyway. That's a lot cheaper than imports are these days, and this is probably better ...

—Ranking J.



"MACHINE GUN ETIQUETTE"
THE DAMNED
Chiswick Import

The Damned are still good to get your apartment neighbors into a nice foamy rage, their nostrils quivering from the outrage and their mind already scanning various legal sanctions. I'm not putting you on. Some new jerk living next door just banged on the door and demanded that an end be put to his nightmare. Said I'd been blaring sounds all day and he didn't mind too much but THAT was going too far. What I'd been playing all day before that was the Clash's new package. Tomorrow I'll blast out the first Clash LP to the fucker on the other side of the living room wall. If he freaks out again, I'll start drawing some profund conclusions. I tell you, nothing like some nice objective reference points to clarify delicate matters of aesthetics. This neighbor may turn out to be an invaluable assistant. Anyway this machine gun thing from the original yobbos from way back is fuckin' great, I didn't know they would ever get me raving again, I and I having become so sophistico in the past couple of centuries that have elapsed since we all took the safety pins out of our diapers and stuck them on our threads, but behold, Noel, Joy on Earth, it works, everything is forgiven, even the daft behavior during their last visit. Metal

Box it ain't, although there are a couple of shocking lapses into unadorned musicality (would I spread ugly rumors like this just for fun?) and some intriguing lyrics but all in all it's the Damned as we all loved them, gonzo electro shock hoods rampaging thru the sleepy town, spilling their brains and their drinks all over your front lawn and sticking their unwashed hands all over your girl friend. Bryan James is forgotten, there are enough hooks and amyl nitrate guitar drills in there to satisfy the most mindless bopping brutes amongst you. I play it again and again and hardly bother to stop to wonder if I'm regressing and my grey matter has permanently become like the egg nogg it's been irrigated with the past three or four weeks. These goons are alright. Listen to "These Hands", "I just can't be happy today", "Looking at you", and dare to disagree.

—Kick

TRINITY VS. DILLINGER
by Trinity and Dillinger
(Burning Sounds records)

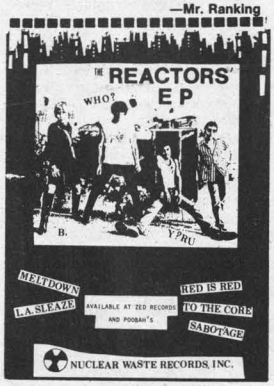
Should have been more fun than a porcupine in a balloon farm. A question of temperature? I don't know, but this record is really more cooperative than conflicting. More jive and brother-brother talk than a war of toasting styles. Chatty may be right about the life-span of a toaster's energy.

Two years ago, this record would have been mind-expanding. Or at least real good dance music, but what you get is actually a more laid-back rhythm exercise over really sweet jazz riffs. The two toasters seem to work more on their own than against each other. Most of the album even being completely separate tracks.

What is worthwhile, is that both D.J.'s, especially Trinity, seem to be pushing further for detached sounds. Some vocals just drifting over the jazzbo players and being so inundated by echo, that anything can take off into dreams. Dillinger, on the other hand, gives a much more interesting rap, but the overall energy of his routine seems subdued.

Anyway, it's a worthwhile record simply becamse the Trinity cuts have cleared some new area for JA toasting. A more melodic and productive approach. Each tune being very sweet to the ear. It all could have been done separately. If you want a good duet record, get "King & Queen" by Otis Redding and Carla Thomas or "Your Precious Love" by Marvin Gaye and beautiful Tammi Terrell. These guys should have listened to those records ...

—Mr. Ranking



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45's

LOWLIFE
(Leaders/White Lightning/Thinking Naturally)
Airout Records, 30 Beachwood Pl., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2H141

More from Canada but a hitherto unheard of province. "Leaders" is a cutting masterpiece that could have you bleeding if it hadn't been fouled up by the singer. He does OK on "Thinking Naturally" but he should learn to stop straining and loosen up with a few good screams now and again. If he did, Lowlife would be a killer.

—Half-Cocked

KEVIN DUNN
(Nadine/Oktyabrina)
dB Records

A synthesizer whittles away at Chuck Berry till there's nothing left. An interesting disaster that's so cold watch out for those ricocheting limbs stiffening up with rigor mortis. B side's about Octobriana, the Russian subversive heroine who likes to fuck and kill in the name of justice for the proletariat. A worthy subject for music that moves. But this doesn't move; it lopes along at a snail's pace with pseudo-Beach-Beatles harmonies. D-minus.

—Chris D.

FLESHAPOIDS
(Nuke the Whales/Electro-Shock)
Trashtone Records

The kind of thing that superficial nerds who hold BAM magazine as their bible would call "punk rock". "Duh, these guys are funny. They make fun of things I read about in the papers." And I was conscientious and listened to both sides of this shit.

—Half-Cocked

STANDING WAVES
(Early Warning/No Judy/Why Not?)
Classified Records

Produced OK but sounds sterile. Gutsy it's not. I know Texas is a fertile breeding ground for this music, I know it! But all the records from that big swollen redneck of the woods are slow-moving and uninvolving. Like maybe the heat and humidity had something to do with it. C'mon, I know you're not as complacent or naive as you sound. The pic sleeve alone says that. Go on into that lil' ole studio and start pounding ... use a rattlesnake for a pick if that's what it takes ... but at least shift into third gear.

—Chris D.

LIZZY MERCIER DESCLOUX
(Fire/Mission Impossible)
Ze Records

A funnier, more radical departure to the cover version novelty 45 than that forced Devoish take of "Money" you may have heard recently by yet another similar sounding "New Wave sex object". What's wrong is that there ain't much bottom to the whole brittle affair and the TV spy music is a tinny, stilted mess.

SLASH PAGE 44

BURNING SPEAR
Man in the Hills/Cultivation
Wolf Records

At least, I found this, Yes, it's the same old song from Spear's second album, but the trick is the other side. The dub version which is called "Cultivation" is one of the most bent recordings ever in reggae. The tapes speed up and slow down. The percussion melts into one big noise, sounding like tribesmen in your kitchen. And no pot, nor pan, shall be spared.

—Ranking Jeffrey

MISFITS
(Night of the Living Dead/Where Eagles Dare/Rat Fink)
Plan 9 Records

Before I go into the liabilities let me say from the outset that this is GREAT. The production is muddled chaos and the mastering/pressing makes the first single the Sex Pistols did sound slick in comparison. Why *is* this record so technically bad? Pressed on a waffle iron with stampers too worn to even make a groove? Maybe it's intentional. Yeah, that's it; the inept quality adds to the mystique. The surface noise gives the impression there's another band raving along there right beside the Misfits. "Night of the Living Dead" and "Where Eagles Dare" easily match the spine-shivering palsy of the Horror Business EP and eclipse it in the abandon department. "Rat Fink"'s a throwaway but by the time I got to it, I didn't care. A classic.

—Chris D.

HARRY TOLEDO
Crime Doesn't Pay/Story of Love

Strange record. Band is kind of good CBGB's club bandkind of thing, pop stuff with lots of strange little hooks just around the coner, insidious sort of sound. Doesn't really do much for me, but can't deny the talent there. Harry Toledo (on the strength of this and the last thing he did with Cale) is one of the better American songwriters around. Why is he keeping himself so obscure while nerds like Wazmo Nariz get the big push? With the right producer he could beat those limeys like Joe Jackson and Costello at their own new wave game. But all of this stuff, hey it ain't my style, barf barf, can I go back home now, Kickboy? I've done my doody. (Shitwork)

—Z.

JANIS AND THE BUMBLEBEES
Big Talk/"B" Movie
Rip Jack records

Ex-gossip writer for New York Rocker gets together with some friends and goes in the studio makes this kind of Max's bar band type of record with really nasal, Brenda Lee type vocals and a throwaway backup. Sort of like second rate Snatch; as disposable as it sounds. New York can sure put out dumb records sometimes.

—Z

THE MOTIVE
Kimberly, You're Boring/Bus To Bus Motive records

Some guy has money behind this band — they buy lots of spray paint and put their name all over Hollywood, put ads in papers, put out a single ... this after only a handful of gigs. What is they? They have a tight, compressed trio sound, but the lead singer's voice makes me wonder if he was once in a bar band that did Doobie Bros. covers. Hey, but it's cool, they're 'new wave', you can tell by the angular lettering on the sleeve. The heavy lyrical content deals with (A) some dumb broad named Kimberly, she's slow, she won't immediately ride this guy's Johnson — "Thought I'd make something of you, thought I'd try, but you're just dry". Hey, I can dig where that's coming from, you don't have to be 'new wave' to know that a dry pussy is a bummer! Side two describes the horrors of riding the L.A. bus with real strong imagery — lines like "blackman radio, queeny pushtits". Whew, pretty powerful stuff there! Hey I know what these guys' motives are. May they get all the success they deserve.

—Z

Deputy of Love
Don Armando's Second Avenue Rhumba Band
Ze

I don't care if the Contortions are on this label, this is just some New York Disco shit that thinks it's real clever. Giving this stuff to me to review! Cute, real cute!

—Z

P-MODEL
(it's japanese, damn if i know what the stuff means)
Warner Bros. Import

Some Japanese guys making percolator sounds and crying samurai vocals on a big bop background. Human Hands in a rice bowl, amphetamine Tokyo cultists oughta go ape shit on it, somehow it will be the most played single on the juke box at the Atomic Cafe, then will wind up in Boutiques on Melrose, starting with Tiger Rose, but for now I'm the only guy in town so has it so I still enjoy it, fuck you.

—Z-litist

THE CUSTOMS
(LET'S GET IT ON/BRING MY CADILLAC BACK!)
Shake It records

Very straightforward rocking rolling. Their little promo letter notes that this is 'representative of a certain Rock-a-billy style developed in Cincinnati during the fifties ...". Well, I'm living in L.A. and it's the eighties, and this music is fine for dancing, dark smoky chug-a-lug, but let's fae it, it's just your basic boogie and I don't ride in that buggie.

—Z

CHARLIE BURTON AND ROCK THERAPY
Mobile, Alabama/Dead Giveaway
Wild Records

Punk goes to the good ole' boys. These guys can play the same classic southern rockabilly riffs and still believe 'em. They're as naive as a twelve year old stealing hubcaps off a Cadillac, they still make good dance records, some guy singing to himself in an echo chamber, pass the lemonade, sugah, ahm getting brain fever.

—Z

A BAND
(Lowly Worm/No Love)
Nancy Records

Paul McMahon does one of the best Jim Morrison impressions I've ever heard, talking about lowly worms squirming on the ground "with no arms and no legs". The music is sparse but builds nicely. "No Love" has guest Theoretical Girl Wharton Tiers on vocals and special guitars. Not as interesting as Side 1 but does manage to rock effectively after a good amount of effort.

—Chris D.

MARTTI LE THARGIE
Head Expansion/Black Telephone HeartWork records

From Sweden, in English. Rinky-tinny strumming guitars and some badly recorded voice of this hippie/university type guy who sounds like some kind of kook person. Like the Echo and the Bunnymen record, some kind of fatal charm. Side two has a type of over long guitar thing at the end but is equally o.k. in its low key way. You'll probably hate it, but then what do you know?

—Z

Aver PABM 284A/284B 2000

An anonymous test-pressing sent in with a barely legible scrawl of white-out on vinyl as identifying mark. The majority of this is pleasing rhythmically speaking since it's largely drums with electronic bits of percussion. That is until a shrill, clanking atrocity of a woman's voice bubbles to the surface wrecking everything with a self-conscious mantle of "avant-garde experimentation".

—Chris D.

LINES
(On the Air/Not through Windows/ Dance for a Drop of Blood)
Red Records Import

Nothing exciting to say about this one either way. The production is good, playing professional, songs not altogether negligible, but it doesn't do a fucking thing for me. I hate to sound a discouraging word but there's not much here that seems to be alive or that we haven't heard way too much of before.

—Half-Cocked

THE RATTLERS
Living Alone/On The Beach
Ratso Records

Joey Ramone connection — little bro play drums, big bro sing on the B side. They didn't need big bro since the lead singer sounds exactly like him anyway. It doesn't hurt, these guys play well executed pop 'with new wave undertones'. (If that sounds like the L.A. Weekly maybe it's cuz this is the sort of band they really go crackers about.) Wish I had a brother in a famous group...

—Z.

LEATHER NUN
(SLOW DEATH/ENSAM I NATT/ NO RULE/DEATH THREAT)
Industrial Records import

Scandinavian outcasts spin a true tale over morbid pulse beats about a young neo-Nazi sitting in a chair outside a cafe, only the cafe has just been fire-bombed because of an Aryan rally. He sits there in shock, tattered clothing burnt into his bloodied, blistered limbs and melted balls of hair clinging to his scalp. No question of who-deserved-what-because-of-which-fascist-ideology. "Slow Death" is the great horrifying equalizer, the leveler of all. "Ensam I Natt" detonates drums for about twenty seconds until a pogo ambush jumps in only to fade immediately into nothing. "Death Threat" is very reminiscent of the Throbbing Gristle thing on DOA but these coincided simultaneously without either group having knowledge of the other. A weighty slab of hypnotic gloom that should not be delved into lightly.

MR. OK

SNUKY TATE
(HE'S THE GROOVE)

"He's the Groove, He's the Man, He's the man in the Vatican". "He's the Pope, He ain't no dope". Snuky, formerly the missing link between punk and funk, steps forward with an absolutely hilarious Vatican disco record. Don't know where he dug up the experienced side men but this is obviously *the* novelty record of the month. I hate disco generally, but I can't resist that boogie chant of "get down, do the genuflect." Only wish he had done more instead of putting an instrumental of same song. Oh well, one great side is better than most of the lame vinyl ofeering floating around these days.

—Craig

BERLIN
(MATTER OF TIME/OVERLOAD)
Renegade Records

Matter of Time starts off *just* like Magazine with the whooshing keyboards, then settles into a properly planned precision groove with a throaty new wave thrust spouting off some properly arty lyrics that propose to let us "know the truth — you're dying". Wow, frightening, heavy message! Hope they don't purport to be *my* salvation! Side two takes us in the chamber of organ delights again, even though the excellent drummer is playing some inventive rhythms, the lyrics are so forced in their pretentious moderness I find this to be a parody of itself. Are we ready for an electronic new wave answer to Fleetwood Mac? Anythying's possible — just ask Madame Wong. I bet when the girl ends that song with a spoken list of electronic machines threatening to strangle her, old Esther Wong must shake in holy fear of the circuitry age and wet her Chinese drawers. But she doesn't have to worry, this band won't cause anybody to spill their drinks.

—Z

THE MO-DETTES
(WHITE MICE/MASOCHISTIC OPPOSITE)
Rough Trade Import

This unassuming little vinyl is slowly insinuating itself — it's out to charm you and if you listen enough to it it can be fatally enticing. I was ready after the first couple of listenings to write it off, it seemed like two ordinary girl rock songs, but I had seen several articles about the Mo-Dettes being the next big "in" thing so I kept on repeating the exposure, trying to figure out what they had that was appealing. First of all these girls have learned to play their instruments — there's none of the crude amateur charm of the Raincoats of the 'playpen' antics of the Slits. The singer has a slightly bad case of affectation with her hiccups and yelps, a bad case of Lene Lovich I guess. But the band works as a solid unit, and the production is excellent, slight reverb on everything, the drummer and bass are excellent, the overdubbed guitar floats like an ethereal cloud. It's one of those records you ignore at first and become obsessed with two months later. However, I'm still waiting for the Go-Go's and Portlands' Neo-Boys. Then we'll *really* know what all-girl bands are capable of.

—Craig

PRETENDERS
(Brass in Pocket/Swinging London/ Nervous But Shy)
Real Records/Warner Import

How Chrissie Hynde, the person at the helm of the Pretenders, can pretend to equate this with rock 'n roll is anybody's guess. And rock 'n roll is something she's professed her love for over and over again. I didn't hear the single before this one, but "Tatooed Love Boys" was quite a treat in a trivial way. "Brass in Pocket" is a slick piece of nothing. Petula Clark had more thought-provoking forays into the entertainment world than this. Side 2 with the lazy instrumentals can't decide whether to be esoteric variations on 60's themes or something more contemporary to our own day and age.

—Chris D.

THE SUBURBS
(WORLD WAR III/CHANGE AGENT)
Twin Tone

About a year ago the Suburbs came out to Los Angeles from Minnesota, a very energetic punk/hard rock band with quirks and ideas and ambition, and got nowhere very fast, snubbed by the punk culture sluts, ripped off of equipment, berated because they were wearing last month's clothes. Disillusioned and broke, they returned to Minnesota where on a good night they told me 'people dance and bands make money', which was not happening in LA at that time. So much for cultural superiority. After liking the band and sticking up for them, I find this single kind of a let down. World War Three just doesn't go anywhere — after a strong beginning with an anxious growling vocal introduction, the song just proceeds in basically the same direction, an instrumental with changes but no real peaks or lows. Change Agent is a better example of song construction, but is a bit too ridden with rock cliches to be really successful. I know this group has better material than this. What are they waiting for?

—Craig

BLAH BLAH BLAH
(In the Army/Why Diddle)
Absurd Records

These fellows actually label themselves absurdists. They're not afraid of what you think about that kind of thing or yet another group with synthesizers growing out of their assholes. One thing in their favor is they aren't taking themselves seriously as dedicated avant artists. They're going for laughs. They get them at first. But the routines are too long and, kiss of death, they put the punchlines before the jokes.

—Chris D.

DELTA 5
(MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS/ NOW THAT YOU'VE GONE)
Rough Trade Import

Where did this come from? "Mind your own Business" is my hit for this month. Against disco rhythmic bass/drums repeating over and over, a girl sings in a sharp staccato voice, "Can I have a taste of your ice cream, can I lick the crumbs from your table, can I interfere in your crisis, no, mind your own business". There's a Gang of Four type guitar break and this feeling of intelligent chiding that makes it one of those new music songs that are intriguing, a bit remote, yet accessible. "Now that you've gone" is a bit more musically intricate, and a lot less interesting. This might be one of those one-song-groups, but at least it's a *good* song.

—Craig

SF Underground Sampler EP
Subterranean Records EP

A lot of people are starting to big mouth No Alternative as a future contender but on the sampler I'm hearing a very average punk band with mundane Clash-inspired lyrics, the kind of thing that would have been okay two years ago. Saw the band in "Frisco" recently, leader Johnny Genocide kept on threatening "the faggot who's throwing things at me come up on stage and I'll punch you out". What a laugh, I've seen that Genocide guy fight, he's out with one blow. So much for punk bravado. The Tools guitarist produced this. That's good. The Tools guitarist plays well, but I don't care for the singers dumb/cloying vocals. That's too bad. People in San Francisco look down on the VKTMS. Guess they're not arty enough or politically aware enough or hang around the right places enough. That girl does kind of the typical peroxide dumb slut pose, but she's a surprisingly good vocalist. And the band has this strange heavy metal punk gone psychedelic amphetamine rush style that's as unique as I'm obviously trying to make it sound. Their sordid little tale of a psycho jailbird builds and falls and spins around like a dog chasing his tail. My second favorite on this thing.

My first favorite, which is incomparable, is Flipper's "Earthworm". God, what a sound — like a snail with its shell crushed, crawling in the deadly sun. Too many years of amphetamine-induced hysterical evenings and these guys are the burn-outs the day after. Slow crunching atonal guitar noise while some street kid reads some visionary poem, like what Rimbaud would really be doing if Patti Smith weren't running around fucking up his cult name. These barely together survivors include Will Shatter of Negative Trend and general malcontent fame. I love this song, possibly because it will annoy just about everybody I play it for. The best thing out of San Francisco since that sulfate that came down here a while back ...

—Z

SUSPECTS
(IT'S UP TO YOU/TALKING LOUD)

"Talking Loud" is an AM hit. I don't care for it that much, but this 'new wave' group is obviously quite professional, have a good sassy singer that looks like she might have been in musical theatre if she hadn't been in the group. "It's Up To You" is one of those rock dramas where the girl talks about how she's gonna dump her lousy boyfriend, she hits a note or two that reminds me of Grace Slick, I only wish the band had the same amount of crazy imagination and rebellion that Grace's crew had before they began mixing their lysergic acid with Geritol. As the promo sheet said this "has also become a favorite at X's, San Francisco's popular New Wave discotheque". What have we all become!

—Z

SLASH PAGE 45

VINYLLY: by Bo Clifford
121979:

I've always felt that there are very, very few records released that are even remotely unique. You think the **FLYING LIZARDS** are doing something new? Go back to the **GODZ** on E.S.P. They were doing the amateur atonal bit ten years ago! Even freaking **10 CC** (in their pre-CC **HOTLEGS** days) came close with "Neanderthal Man"! The great bulk of the records released these days is either outright garbage or entertaining listening. There's a lot of fine stuff out there if you look around a little. Being a bit derivative or showing your influences is not necessarily a bad thing. If done right, the effect can be kind of like building up from a strong foundation. It eventually doesn't matter that band X (sorry) sounds like band Y. Look, how can I relate to you what a record or group sounds like? Sometimes, comparisons can be drawn. Just about everything is a reflection of something that has gone before. Hey! Fun is fun!

TERMINAL TWIST — Common Knowledge + 3 (EMI)
CLINT SMALL — Crack In The Wall + 2 (Au-go-go)
LIPSTICK KILLERS — Hindu Gods (of Love) + 1 (Lost In Space)
SCIENTISTS — Frantic Romantic + 1 (DNA)

Four samples of what's happening in Australia. Yes, Virginia, even though they're considered to be two years behind it, there's no denying that Oz is teeming with bands eager to follow that star into oblivion. Imagine if Blondie suddenly got serious and dumped Debbie in the process. How about a mix of the best parts of the Cars, Talking Heads, and the Boomtown Rats? That just might be the description of **TERMINAL TWIST**. They've come up with four songs filled with twisted vocals, drony keyboards, and funky bottoms. Especially neat is "Wave Bye Bye" with a daffy repeating mid section that will make you play it again. ——— **CLINT SMALL** plays the intense outsider role in three songs that have a bit of protest, a dash of love, and some SanFran '67 mixed in. Reminds me a bit of the Last in spots. Especially strong guitar work. ——— If you picked up on the Lyres single mentioned last time, that should give you some preparation for **LIPSTICK KILLERS**. More precisely, it sounds like the "Funhouse" era Stooges produced lika a 60's garage band by Deniz Tek (also from Ann Arbor and formerly with Radio. Birdman). Great dumb lyrics like "shake my head and wash my face" delivered in that Iglike deadpan. The flip is a pseudo live rave-up kinda like an old Mitch Ryder single. They even rework the piano part from "I Wanna Be Your Dog" and throw in a couple of Iggy howls for good measure! More, please. ——— The next one's easy. The Undertones start writing songs for Johnny Thunders and he gets the Zeros to back him up!! Indeed, if you dig the 'tones you should go back to the Zeros "Beat Your Heart Out". Enough digression: the **SCIENTISTS** have the smacked-out energy of the Heartbreakers coupled with the Undertones romantic nature. The B-side is "Shake (Together Tonight)", which is more direct in its message and could easily pass for a Dolls outtake ———

CURE — Jumping Someone Else's Train + 1 (Fiction)
JOY DIVISION — Transmission + 1 (Factory)
HUMAN LEAGUE — Empire State Human + 1 (Virgin)

The **CURE** seem to be everybody's pick to click and I won't disagree. It's just that this new single is not as strong as their last one. I like the commentary on trendiness, but it lacks something musically. Can't quite put my finger (or my ear) on it, but something is definitely missing. The flip almost sounds like dub heavy metal (Romilar reggae?). ——— I guess you could call the new **JOY DIVISION** single sinister dance music or "dangerous" or some such nonsense. To me, it sounds like the band has settled on a direction and the result is their most straight-forward recording yet. Perhaps they're reaching out to a broader audience. Maybe they're spoofing that audience. Who cares? Good records don't have to explain themselves and usually suffer under analysis. ——— Snappy electro-pop is the coming thing, innit? **HUMAN LEAGUE** think so and if "Pop Musik" can be number one, then why not "Empire State Human"? That insistent beat, those electronically altered voices. Oh, the Humanity! Actually quite nice and not nearly as obnoxious as you might think. The B-side is a swirling instrumental with sirens and bells (all done by machines, of course). The real bonus is the still from "The Incredible Shrinking Man" on the sleeve. ———

PRIVATE DICKS — She Said Go + 1 (Heartbeat)
PROLES — Softground + 1 (Small Wonder)
PROTEX — I Can Only Dream + 1 (Polydor)

PRIVATE DICKS have a wiry sound. Guitars on edge, tension creeping into the vocals. You know that feeling when you've been "shut down"? They manage to convey it very well; makes you feel like "you are there". Confusion tempered by anger and frustration. Sounds like real life, doesn't it? ——— The **PROLES** are a tight little quartet that come across somewhat like the Alleycats. Not a note is wasted in this song of a shaky relationship. The flip is a simple instrumental that passes quickly. ——— The similarities between **PROTEX** and the U-tones are more than mere coincidence. Both bands started their recording careers on the Irish label, Good Vibrations, and, for all I know, may even come from the same neighborhood. Both bands have released several excellent singles and look poised for major UK stardom. **PROTEX** specializes in the same type of slightly alienated romanticism, but their records have a fuller, less gritty sound. This new single is their best one yet with guitars wailing and the singer sounding properly broken-hearted. The other side is even more representative of that vein. What else could you expect from a song called "Heartache"? A great album must be forthcoming! ———

JAM — The Eton Rifles + 1 (Polydor)

Let me leave you with this superlative new single from one of the world's finest bands. After a relative flop ("When You're Young"), a strong comeback was needed. I couldn't have expected a more powerful record from them. It fairly bristles with authority and assurance. A comment on society's constant flirtation with violence as seen thru the eyes of military school students, it makes its point in a thoroughly convincing way. You don't need guns to have price in your life or your country. Sure it sounds hokey, but everybody's entitled to a good self-image and it's generally up to the individual to bring it about. Stand!! —

Bo Clifford
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LETTERS: CON'T FROM P. 6

HEY SLASH,
JUST READ PHIL SMITH'S ARTICLE ON THE DISHRAGS AND THE VANCOUVER SCENE. PERSON ALLY I'M SICK AND TIRED OF READING ABOUT THE DISHRAGS CAUSE THEY SUCK. I'M ALSO PISSED OFF AT PHIL SMITH FOR WRITING SUCH FUCKIN' BIASED BULLSHIT JUST BECAUSE HE GOES OUT WITH THE DRUMMER. IT IS MY OPINION THAT THE DISHRAGS SUCK AND ARE NOT DESERVING OF THE WRITE UP THEY GOT BECAUSE THEY ARE BORING.
PS: PUNK IS DEAD IN VANCOUVER BECAUSE D.O.A. SPLIT UP. ALSO CALIFORNIAN PUNKS ARE A BUNCH OF WERPS VANCOUVER RULES LONG LIVE THE SUBHUMANS.
JIM ANYBODY

DEAR ANYBODY,
IT IS MY OPINION THAT YOU ARE NOT DESERVING OF A REPLY BECAUSE YOU ARE BORING, YOU REPEAT YOURSELF AND YOUR BREATH STINKS. PHIL'S WRITING HAS MORE APPEAL THAN YOURS, AND MENTIO NING HIS GIRL FRIEND AND HER BAND IS NOT A SIN AND A BLOW TO OUR INTEGRITY, THIS HAPPENS ALL THE TIME, NEXT MONTH HE'S GONNA ASK US TO PUT HER ON THE COVER BUT WE WONT SO SHE'LL LEAVE HIM, HE'LL BE DEVASTATED, START DRINKING AND SCUMMING AND SUDDENLY WE'LL HAVE A GENUINE NEW SLASH WRITER WITH US. SEE HOW THINGS WORK. OF COURSE IF PHIL WAS QUEER AND YOU WERE HIS BOY FRIEND HE'D MENTION YOU TOO AND WE WOULD HAVE TO GET RID OF HIM. NO WONDER D.O.A. QUIT WITH FANS LIKE YOU. GO AND PEE ON A MOUNTIE'S BOOTS FOR US WILL YOU ?
KICK BOY

DEAR KICK,
WHEN STRUMMER AND BATORS BOTH SHOW UP IN THE LATEST HIGH TIMES, IT'S TIME TO HANG UP MY DARK GLASSES AND START LOOKING FOR THAT BANK TELLER JOB. THE CUTS ALMOST PULLED IT OFF IN 68, BUT THAT'S THE LAST CHANCE WE'LL EVER GET.
-RESIGNED TO MY FATE

SLASH PAGE 46

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* RIDDLE T THIS..... PRINCE HAMMER
* THE WAY IT IS..... I KONG
**HYPOCRITS..... BOB MARLEY
* ABORTION..... BLACK UHURU
* WARRIOR NO TARRY YA..... TONY TUFF
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JIMBO
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This strip dedicated to the Guardians of the Ratty Limo: who are Bringing it to its proper place in society: Groening, Brent, Pouncey, Zoell, Condon, Hartman, Plunkett, Gilmore, Florence, Amato, Schenkel, Fenster.
Oh NO!!! It went IN That LitTLe Pipe!!!!
can you-er.. ..WRite??
!
?
I JUST CAN'T Get THE HANG OF it!! CAN YOU??
NAW!!! I CAN HOLD A KNIFE O.K., BUT WRITING is TOO HARD!!!
William & Percy
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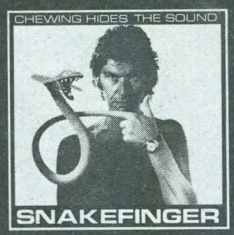
FREEZE!
OW! MISSED!
BLAM!
FREEZE!
OW! MISSED!
BLAM!
FREEZE!
OH!
BLOW!
FREEZE!!
MISSED..ME
FR..
click!
OW!!! MISSED.
Peace Brother.
HUH??

SNAKEFINGER



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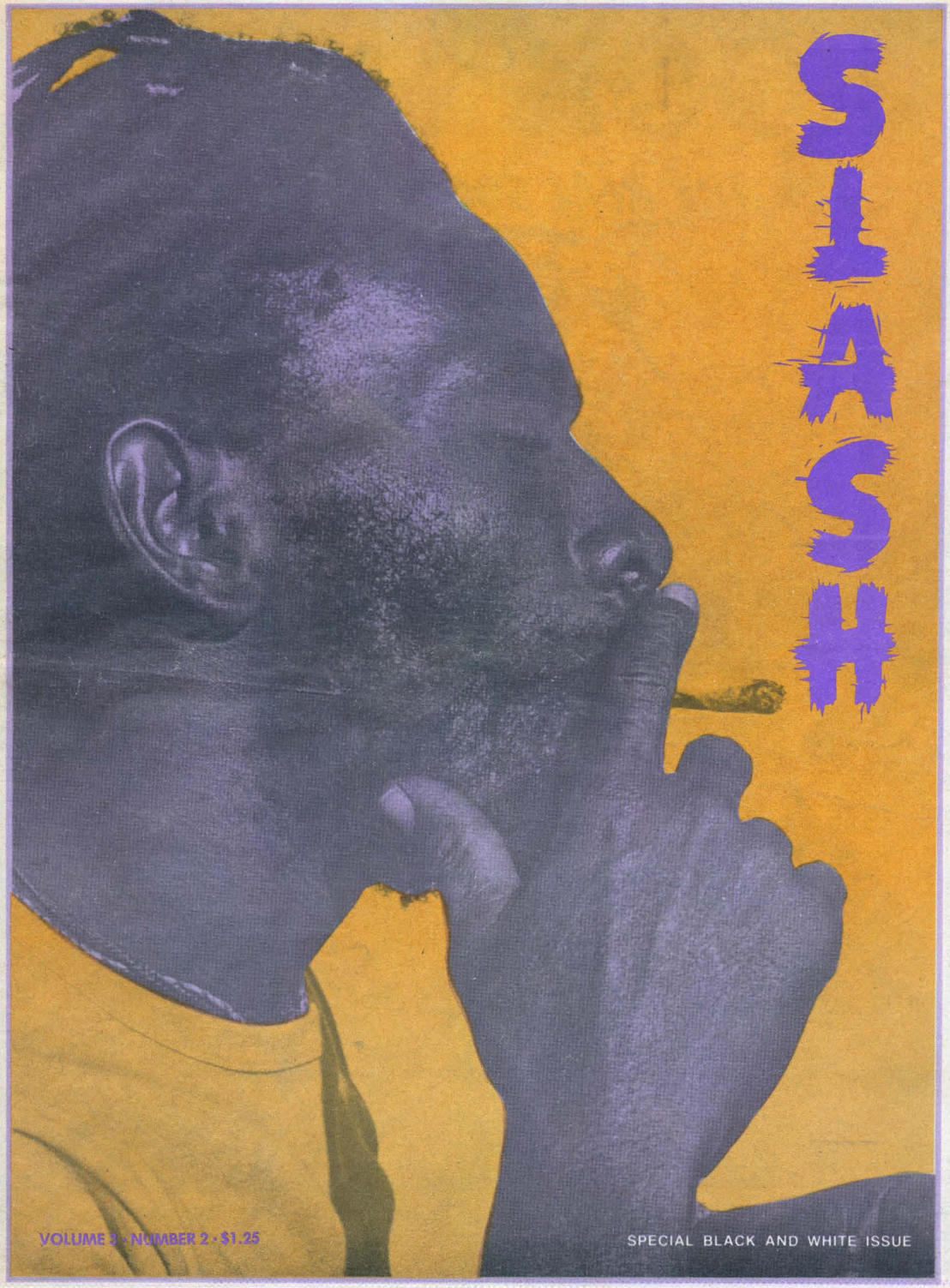

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LETTER section

SLASH
ONE QUICK QUESTION FOR KICKBOY:
DOES "..THE BRAIN ISN'T MEANT TO DABBLE WITH THE UNKNOWN" SOUND FASCIST TO YOU? ALSO, WHAT IS YOUR STAND ON MARIJUANA? PLEASE BE RELEVANT, THERE IS MORE TO THIS THAN SEEMS.

MIKE STATT

DEAR DEAR MIKE,
NO, MIKEY SWEET, THE "DABBLE WITH THE UNKNOWN" BIT YOU ARE QUOTING DOES NOT SOUND FASCIST TO ME AT ALL. IF MY MEMORY IS TRUE YOU ARE REFERRING TO THE REVIEW OF DRAGNET A WHILE BACK, RIGHT? ALL I WAS SAYING WAS THAT RATIONALITY AND ANALYTICAL POWERS ARE NOT ALWAYS THE BEST TOOLS TO USE WHEN TRYING TO GRASP THE INTANGIBLE. I MEAN NEXT YOU GUYS ARE GOING TO TELL ME TO STOP USING THE WORD "SOUL", STOP REFERRING TO "EVIL" AND WHO KNOWS SUGGEST THAT THERE AIN'T NO SUCH THINGS AS STIGMATAS OR BERMUDA TRIANGLE.... LISTEN COMMIE, I KNOW WHAT I KNOW (MORE FASCISM ?) AND THAT INCLUDES A SHITLOAD OF REAL SPOOKY STUFF OUTTHERE THAT IS WAITING TO GET US AND TEAR US FROM LIMB TO LIMB GIVEN HALF A CHANCE— I SUPPOSE THAT SPELLS PARANOIA IN YOUR BOOK. WELL, IN MY WORLD WISE BOY IT SPELLS REAL SMART THINKING, AND WE'LL SEE WHO MAKES IT SAFE ACROSS THE GREAT UNKNOWN, YOU OR I. AS TO MY PERSONAL STAND ON THE GROOVY BUSH, IT IS HOPELESSLY WOBBLY AND SHAKY, ESPECIALLY WITH THE OVERPRICED SHIT THEM MINORITY DUDES ARE PEDDLING THESE DAYS. NOT MUCH USE THAT PLANT IS BESIDES IMPROVING BAD SCI-FI MOVIES AND PUTTING SOME UNBELIEVABLE ZING INTO THE MOST ORDINARY DUB ALBUM FROM YOUR COLLECTION. WHICH, COME TO THINK OF IT, IS A MIGHTY DECENT RECORD FOR SOMETHING THAT DOES NOT EVEN HAIL FROM A FUCKING LABORATORY

KICK FACE

I FEEL COMPELLED TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST ALL THE SNIVELLING BLEEDING-HEART LIBERALS WHO WANT TO SHUT DOWN NUCLEAR PLANTS IN CALIFORNIA. I'LL LAY ODDS THAT THE SAME ANTI-TECHNOLOGY FREAKS AND HIPPIES WHINING ABOUT 'RADIATION THIS AND WASTE THAT' WILL BE THE FIRST ON THEIR KNEES BEGGING FOR NUCLEAR POWER AT THE FIRST SIGN OF A BLACK-OUT AND THEN STEREOS WONT COME ON. I SAY, LET'S GET THESE PLANTS ON THEIR FEET AND CRANKING OUT SOME REAL POWER! AS FAR AS WASTE GOES, THERE'S THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF MILES OF OCEAN JUST SITTING THERE DOING NOTHING SO WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? THROW THE PLUTONIUM OR STRUTONIUM - SO OR WHATEVER THE HELL IT IS IN THERE, ALONG WITH ALL THE BLUBBERING IDIOTS WHO CAN'T ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE FUTURE IS HERE AND THEY GODDAM WELL OUGHTA TRY AND BE A PART OF IT. AND AS THE ANIMALS ON THE EXTINCT LIST GO, THEY OBVIOUSLY DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE IT. IT'S SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST AND WE ARE WINNING! I SAY, KILL 'EM ALL OFF AND LET'S START WORRYING ABOUT SOME REAL PROBLEMS INSTEAD. NOW DON'T GET ME WRONG, I LOVE NATURE AS MUCH AS THE NEXT GUY BUT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH AND I FOR ONE HAVE HAD ENOUGH.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED
ELIZABETH FROST
OF THE REACTORS

SLASH
I WOULD LIKE TO ASK PHAST PHREDDIE WHY HE'S SO FULL OF SHIT. ONE PARAGRAPH HE'S BEING ERUDITE AND TASTEFUL ABOUT SUCH AS EARL BOSTIC, THE NEXT HE'S RECOMMENDING GARBAGE PSEUDOS SUCH AS PEARCE MARCHBANK & NIK COHN. "ROCK FROM THE BEGINNING" IS THE TOE-PICKINGS OF PHONY, CLOTH-EARED, PARASITIC ROCK DRIVEL. THE MAN'S LANGUAGE IS AS SECONDHAND AS HIS CONTRADICTORY JUDGEMENT. THE ONLY GOOD THING I'VE EVER HEARD ABOUT NIK COHN IS THAT HE GOT HIS PRICK SHUT IN A DOOR BY THE BOYFRIEND OF A GIRL HE WAS PESTERING (AND HE WAS-LET'S BE CLEAR ABOUT THIS-HE WAS STANDING VERY CLOSE TO THE DOOR AT THE TIME).

U.K. NUMBER

HELLO.
DISSOLVE AND DIE - LIE THROUGH YOUR TEETH - SEVER CONNECTIONS WITH THE PEOPLE YOU KNOW...ACCEPTING THE FACT THAT THESE MASSES, THESE PERPETUAL BOURGEOIS NEVER LEAVE THEIR HAPPY HOMES IN THE SUBURBS AND REFUSE TO LEARN NEW IDEAS, THEY STILL DISGUST ME. DO I BELONG? YOU SEE THEM LAUGH - THEY LAUGH AT THEMSELVES AND CALL IT COMEDY, THEY LAUGH AT EACH OTHER AND CALL IT SATIRE. THEY LAUGH AT CRIPPLES AND CALL IT CRUELTY. MASS-MIDDLE-CLASS LAUGHTER, PERMEATING EVERY CONVERSATION; THEY KEEP THEMSELVES IN STITCHES AND THINK THEY ARE HAPPY, THESE MASSES. DO NOT FEAR EXPERIMENTATION. DO NOT FEAR THE NEW. MUST NOT LET THESE BOURGEOIS CONTROL THE FACTORS OF YOUR LIFE. WHAT DO THEY KNOW, THESE BOURGEOIS, BIGOTS, BUSINESSMEN, BROOMPUSHERS BABIES, BASTARDS, BREATHERS, BATHERS, BIG PEOPLE, BRAINS, BELLY-BORN...BLEEDERS, BLACKS AND BLUES, BOYS, BITCHES, BRING THE BOTTLE, BUT, BUT, BUT...I DARE YOU BOURGEOIS BASTARDS! TRY ANOTHER MODE REVOLT AGAINST THE RULES AND LAWS YOU MADE! LEAVE YOUR LIVES BEHIND WHEN WILL YOU LEARN? WHEN WILL YOU LISTEN? THIS IS THE ANSWER, THIS IS HOW IT GOES: DESTROY THE WORLD AND DEPLETE THE POPULATION. USE EVERY NUCLEAR WEAPON YOU CAN GET YOUR HANDS ON. BLOW UP ENTIRE CITIES - LEVEL BUILDINGS, BURN BODIES...ERASE THE EARTH OF ALL THE PROBLEMS...CLEAR OUT THE MASSES AND EVERYONE ELSE. IF YOU KILL YOURSELF BY ACCIDENT, WELL, THAT'S OK BECAUSE YOU WILL AT LEAST HAVE A HAND IN REMOVING THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD. THIS IS THE ONLY ANSWER...THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE YOUR LIFE WORTHWHILE IS TO DISSOLVE...DEPRIVE THEM OF YOUR WISDOM. YOU WILL EVENTUALLY BE DESTROYED. DO NOT DELUDE THEM WITH YOUR FALSE HOPES OF SALVATION OR HUMANITY. BURN THE BOOKS OF POETRY FOR THEY ENCOURAGE HOPE. DO NOT GIVE THEM PURPOSE FOR THEIR EXISTENCE; DO YOU WISH TO LEAVE YOUR LEGACY FOR THEM TO PROLONG THEIR WASTED...? NOW LISTEN TO THE FERVENT CRY OF THE BOURGEOIS SELF DESTRUCTION, WATCH THEM DRAIN THEIR HOPE AND MISSION. DEATH AND DESTRUCTION - JUST A TEMPORARY COMBATITIVE SEIZURE...? I HAVE RESPECT FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS I HAVE RESPECT FOR THE MUNDANE I RESPECT THE MIDDLE CLASS I KNOW I AM ONE OF THEM... AND THEY NEVER LET YOU SCREAM.

GOOD-BYE
DREAR (MALCONTENT)

...A DEDICATION, NOT AN EDITORIAL....A DEDICATION, NOT AN EDITORIAL...A DEDICATION, NOT A SPACE FILLER WE AT SLASH ARE NOT PRICKS. WE KNOW WHAT'S UP AND WHAT'S DOWN EVEN IF AT TIMES IT SOUNDS AS IF WE'RE TRYING TO CONFUSE EVERYONE AND GET AWAY WITH IDEOLOGICAL MURDER. SO, BEFORE YOU DIVE IN AND ATTEMPT TO SQUEEZE SOME SANITY OUT OF THIS SUSPICIOUS TUBE LET US GIVE YOU SOME SOLID FOUNDATION , MAN TO MAN, STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART, LOOK ME IN THE EYES, PUT YOUR HAND HERE AND GIVE ME FIVE: THIS ISSUE IS SINCERELY DEDICATED TO THE DILS WHO SUCCOMBED UNDER THE ODDS, DISAGREED WITH THIS MAG MORE OFTEN THAN NOT BUT FUCKING MEANT SOMETHING IN THIS INCREASINGLY ABSURD WHIRLPOOL, AND TO THE EARLY AND NOT SO EARLY JAMAICAN ARTISTS WHO CREATED AND LIVED SKA MUSIC BEFORE YOUR LILLYWHITE SOUL FOUND IT ACCEPTABLE.

THE SLASH STAFF CHART (a possible soundtrack for the end of the world)

CAITLIN
1) It's Her Factory — Gang of Four
2) Socialist — PIL
3) Sabotage LP — John Cale
4) New Dark Ages — The Mutants
5) Union Maid — Pete Seeger

CHRIS D.
1) Slippin' round some universal corner — X (live)
2) Los Angeles LP — X (tape)
3) Why d'ya do it? — Marianne Faithful
4) Iphigenie et Tauride — Maria Callas
5) Lightning Girl — Lydia Lunch
6) Original Rockers LP — Augustus Pablo

GARY PANTER
1) The original sin — Cowboys International
2) Unknown Pleasures LP — Joy Division
3) Real to Real Cacaphony — The Simple Minds
4) Twenty Jazz Funk Greats LP — Throbbing Gristle
5) This Heat LP

KICK BOY FACE
1) Fiery Jack — The Fall
2) Eliptical Optimism LP — Spherical Objects
3) James Bond — The Selecter
4) In the Light Dub LP — Horace Andy Dub
5) Broken English — Marianne Faithful
6) Transmission/Novelty — Joy Division

WILL L'AMATO
1) All Flesheater songs
2) The "Submergence" tapes — Paul Roessler
3) The Yell Arose From Texas — Asshole Elvis Zombies
4) This Microphone/Ten To One — Sex Sick
5) Nocturn Helen — Eric Vetter

Z.
1) Convincing People — Throbbing Gristle
2) We Love You — The Psychedelic Furs
3) Quadrophenia (the movie) until the last part with too much Who music
4) Caucasion Guilt — Noh Mercy
5) The Feelies (both singles)
6) Queen of Siam LP — Lydia Lunch

MORK WILLIAMS:
1) Disgracing the Family Name — Skafish
2) Alien Day — Radio Fre Europe
3) Wiz Noise EP
4) Ten Pole Tudos
5) Kidding Stops — Tigers

PEA
1) Don't Stay Out Late — The Regulars
2) Confessions — The Flowers
3) The Pop Group "Y" LP
4) Scratch on a Wire LP — Lee Perry
5) Broken English — Marianne Faithful

PHAST PHREDDIE
1) Walk That Mess — Tiny Bradshaw (78 rpm King)
2) Songs the Lord Taught Us LP — The Cramps
3) Night Train — Wynonie Harris (78 rpm King)
4) Hook Line & Sinker — Smiley Lewis
5) Lost Highway — Hank Williams
6) I'm Not Down — The Clash

PHIL SMITH
1) Chain of Fools — Aretha Franklin
2) Albatross — PIL
3) "Election Night" bootleg — The Specials
4) Science Fiction — Private School
5) Song from under the Floorboards — Magazine

THE UPTOWN TOP RANKING FIVE (JEFFREY LEA)
1) God Bless the Child — Billie Holiday
2) Tower of Strength — Gene McDaniels
3) Mad Daddy — The Cramps
4) God Bless the Child — Billie Holiday (again)
5) Anything by Nadine Expert of Paris whom I can't forget ever. .

MELANIE
1) The Specials (live)
2) My Funny Valentine — Elvis Costello

Bo Clifford
1. HYPSTRZ — Live EP (Bogus)
2. HYPSTRZ — Live EP (Bogus)
3. NURSES — Hearts (Round Raoul)
4. SPECIALS — Anything Live (Chrysalis Bootleg, Whisky)
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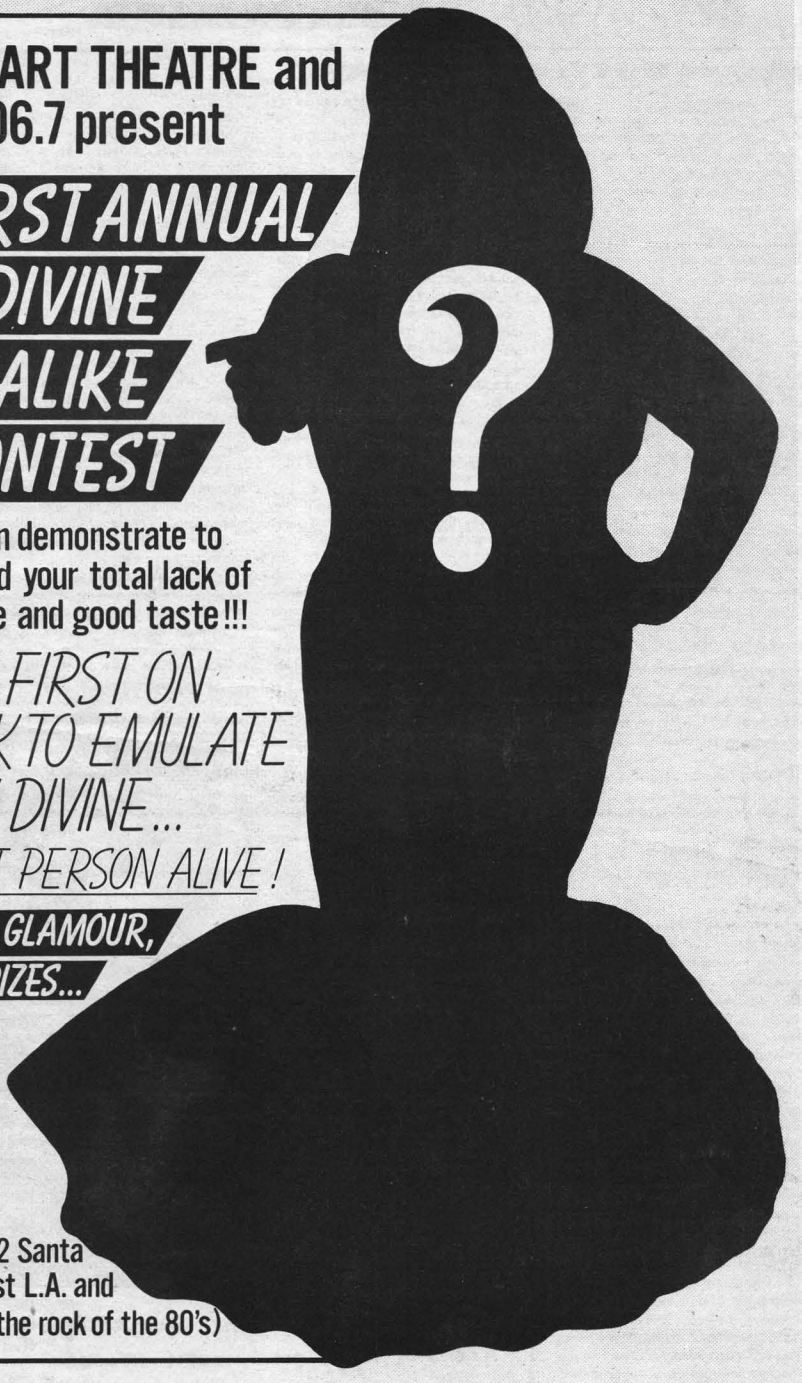

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LOCAL SHIT

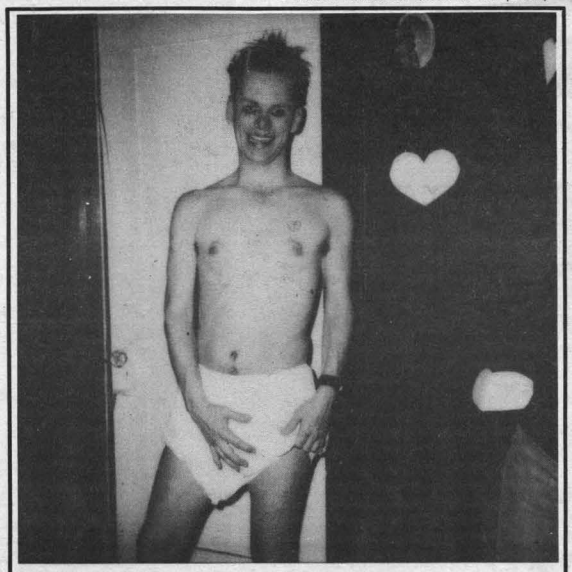
NITE KLUB KRAZINESS

The past few weeks may have seemed like an especially long stretch of nothing much to most of us excitement addicts, but to at least one person involved with this music scene it was just about as much as she could take: Jan Ballard, manager and booking agent for Hollywood's new wave/punk club Blackie's was arrested 5 times in less than 3 weeks, every time as a result of the police's visit to her club during business hours. Every time the official reason for their visit and subsequent actions were the same: there had been noise complaints from the neighborhood, and the usual milling around that took place in the alley in the back of the place was frowned upon by surrounding residents as well as viewed suspiciously by the numerous black and white car patrols that criss cross this respectable part of town. The first incident took place on the 6th of January, when police officers walked in one night, ordered the place shut down and arrested Jan for disturbing the peace. 2 days later, the 8th, they came again and again shut the club down. No one was arrested. On Thursday the 10th Jan was once again arrested along with band John Q. Public and a sound man. The sound equipment was confiscated but returned the next day. Another 2 days, and on the 12th Jan, band members of the King Bees and the equipment are carted away for still disturbing the peace. The next friday (Jan. 18th) it is Black Flag's turn to spend the night in the slammer. Of course Jan joins them for the short trips. Finally, on January 27th Jan and Code Blue are arrested under the same set of circumstances. Throughout this insane farce a thorough sound proofing was being done on the tiny club and according to Jan there hasn't been one foul incident of repression since the job was completed. Sometime in March a hearing will be held with attorneys during which the various measures taken by Blackie's management will be evaluated and the future of the club decided upon. All the bands that were arrested saw their charges dropped out of court a few days ago. Jan Ballard is nowadays full of optimism and expresses her gratitude to all the groups and the sound men that accompanied her to jail and stood by her when the weather was rough. She now hopes to open a new Blackie's in Ocean Park very soon, it would be situated on the premises of the Bar Sinister on Main Street, halfway between Santa Monica and Venice. The new Blackie's would have a slightly different format, with blues and variety acts. As to the old La Brea pit it now sports, besides the essential soundproofing, a new coat of paint, and new bathrooms. The format is the same, 3 bands a night for 3 dollars, occasionally 4 on week-ends, with no drink minimum. Definitely one of the places to go to these days. Why, just last week end you could have caught fearless Fear dealing with those adorable cuddly dolls the Mentors as the latter ones were trying to upstage Lee Ving's commando by clowning behind their back during a performance. According to Lee the "damaged hippies" were swiftly taken care of and are not about to try again.

Totally unhampered by aesthetic guidelines the same Fear happily preceded Lydia Lunch and her band Eight Eyed Spy on the Troubadour stage for the New Yorkers' opening gig in the L.A. area. The atmosphere was already charged during Fear's set and got more so after. Sometimes during the last part of Lydia's stunning set things got out of hand and a bit later the audience was asked to vacate as people had been badly hurt. Broken bottles were everywhere and outside the sheriff's car and fire trucks were adding color to the night with all their displays of rotating Xmas lights and pulsating strobes. We were unable to find out if one or several fights were the cause of the interruption or if someone just had slipped in a puddle of beer and knocked himself out on a bannister.

Some days later the same Eight Eyed Spy and their leading Temptress Lydia La Lunch were rudely prevented from playing their modern pop noise to the suspicious/not-quite-convinced L.A. crowd, this time at the old Hong Kong Cafe, in the heart of gruesome Chinatown. Before the Suburban Lawns had completed their set some firemen (mistaken by naive patrons as just another art-damaged band trying out a new gimmick) and a couple of cops showed up and pretended to get into today's sounds. What they were actually doing was waiting for reinforcements before they could order everyone out. Customers were told that everybody would be allowed back in after a head count had taken place. Unfortunately the vacating wasn't exactly orderly on the part of the law and order representatives, people were shoved about and co-manager of the Hong Kong Kim Turner was seen being dragged down the stairs and thrown on the ground by the invaders. We were also told of various beatings and numerous arrests throughout the incident, indicating a serious breach of the uneasy truce that had supposedly been reached a few months back. Are we entering a more intensive phase of repression and harrassment? As we went to press Kim Turner was unable to comment on the situation before consulting with his lawyers, but we will continue next month with whatever relevant developments come our way. Of course rumors to the effect that the whole mess could have resulted from unknown persons' annoyance at seeing a major out of town act playing the Hong Kong instead of the usual industry showcase joint across the square are unfounded and most likely totally wong.

While the Hong Kong had more than its share of knee-jerk reaction by fascist authority figures, UCLA, Ackerman Union to be exact, was going through a slightly more diffused debacle on a much smaller scale. Scheduled were X, the Go-Gos, the Urinals and a couple of other bands. Prices were a little steep, even by Westwood's standards: $6.50 to the public, $5.00 to students (which they were also "kind-heartedly" charging to anyone on the guest list whose name had been cut (seems those goddam bands had put too many people on their lists and the oh-so-hungry jaws of the student union were adamant about the letter of the law). Another thing they were adamant about was maintaining order. This was a peculiarly acute problem especially when one realizes that there were almost as many bouncers in attendance as there were civilians (translate: audience). Due to slovenly publicity and perhaps the slovenly attitude at the door only a couple hundred stalwarts filled the cavernous hall. Anyone wishing to move backstage to chat with a friend in the band was subjected to rude rebuffs on the part of several short frat brothers with big noses and neatly-in-place suits and ties. These boys relished the small tidbit of power they wielded abd deserve to be stood up against the firing squad wall at the first opportunity. Inept as they were entry into the hallowed ground yonder was gained with the help of either crew or band members (who occasionally had difficulty themselves since even they had no "backstage passes"). John Doe composed a brief poetic litany of sorts in the dressing room dedicated to the footballing behemoths intent on their duty to protect, serve, and bounce, and recited it in between songs.



Tomata on St. Valentine's eve realizing all his eggs are in one basket.

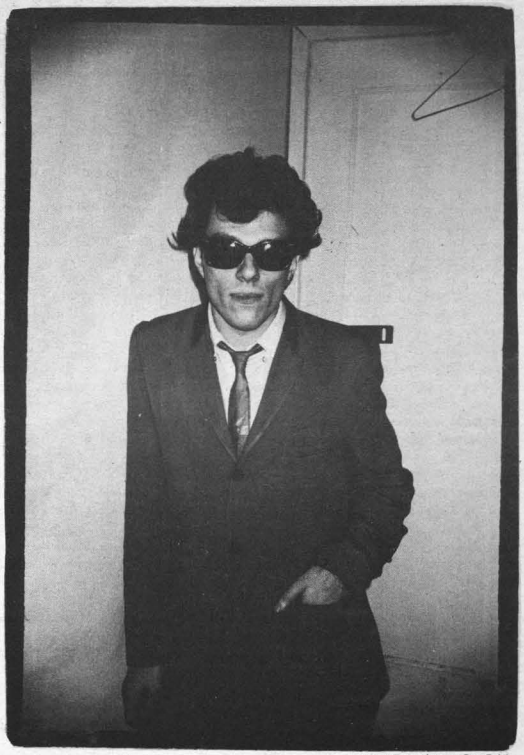
photo Jenny Lens

MORE BAD NEWS: Top Taco Jimmy, famed bluesman, boozer and bon vivant about town finally relieved of his duties at the Top Taco stand on La Brea. This may not mean shit to you in the provinces but it is a major catastrophe for local punkeroos in need of a square meal who up to now were able to score mammoth burritos at pre-recession prices whenever in the vicinity. The Top Taco Jimmy and the All Drunk Stars, which had already been altered to its new Top Taco Jimmy and the Wolves appellation may once again have to change its name, most likely to something more flamboyant than the awfully low key Jimmy & The Wolves.

Catholic Discipline, having played the cancellation game as far as it is humanly possible seems to be in the process of either redefining its objectives and values or redefining the relevance of live and recorded performances altogether, in which case the aggregation of minute superstars that everybody as yet to see in action may be the second L.A. band (first being the unforgotten Plungers) to carry its existence on a strictly conceptual level.

Finally, is it too early to frankly ask who is this english band (besides super fab Madness, back in town in mid march for 3 days of bopping and skanking) that will supposedly enliven us with their presence real soon? I mean what band could have an image strong enough in this day and age to stir the public up better than the neo-ska masters?? Frankly, we haven't got a clue! But as Marley said, your best bet is still to lively up yourself. But obviously the dear public imagination's is still pretty limited, and so they wait, and wish, and wait, and age, and wait .....

Brittly Black/photo Sue Brisk



Fast Floyd/photo Sue Brisk

or read and destroy everything you read in the press

by Caitlin

Shows, shows, shows, Not since the "good old days" of the Deaf Club has this city had so many places to go & see & be seen. The biggest change has been the definite establishment on the scene of the Roosevelt, a rinky-dink bar & grill on Market St. turned punk venue, with a capacity of 2-250, lower-than-average door prices and a nervous (but money hungry) manager/owner type bearing a striking resemblance to Ness Aquino, whom you will all fondly remember as the nervous (but money hungry) owner of the Fab Mab. So far the Roosevelt has had few problems and lots of great shows, drawing packed houses not only on Friday and Saturday nights but Sunday afternoons as well. Hopefully next month I won't have to sadly report that it's been closed down indefinitely.

Speaking of which, it looks like no more Target parties for awhile, because of the usual neighborhood complaints, police troubles, et al. But after hours is not dead yet — The Goodman Building, a sort of artists' collective on Geary & Van Ness, has been experimenting with midnite shows. Then of course you have your discos, non-clubs, and what have yous, which to date include Club Foot, Hotel Utah, X's (now sans the Howie-Beverly-Richard triumvirate), the City, which is the new home of the roving trio & which may soon be gobbled up by Bill Graham, who is gloating over his recent acquisition of the Old Waldorf, and the Back D.O.R., which is located beneath the City & has lots of gigs but few punk bands (the notable exceptions being the Soul Rebels and the Offs). And let's not forget the Geary, now known as the Temple, which continues to be the site of large gatherings of punks and sundry every weekend, and the Mabuhay, which has been re-christened the Fab Mab (long a nickname for the club), and bills itself as "avant rock theatre," whatever that means. They are of course continuing 7 nights a week live shows.

There have been sporadic gigs at the Intersection (a poetry center in North Beach), Barrington Hall (the cafeteria of a dorm near UC Berkeley), and Oilcan Harry's (a large bar with a mercenary owner), as well as one highly amusing "real punk show" at the laid-back and unprepared Palms, whose staff voted the next morning to never allow the Mutants on their stage again. The Mutants, by the by, have added an occasional 8th member, former Dan Hicks alumni Naomi Ruth Eisenberg on violin. The Dead Kennedys came out of their self-imposed hiding to debut some new material with Lydia Lunch at the Fab Mab, but are reportedly still not going to be playing regularly for awhile. Also missing in action have been Crime, who have a good reason since they have two new/old members (drummer No. 2, Brittly Black, and original bassist Ron the Ripper), and Pink Section, who have been surfacing only as the Inflatable Boy Clams (a spin-off), and that rarely. The Sleepers seem to have broken up again, the Urge have a new drummer, and Mr. "have bass will travel" himself, Fast Floyd, has joined the Offs, though he will retain his position as Soul Rebels bassist. New bands include Surface Music and Red Asphalt, both synth/experimental, Society Dog, who are p-u-n-k (as Howie would say), Rumble (rockabilly), and Little Death, whose name says it all. In the works is a band with Danny and Jimmy (ex-Avengers), and Denny (ex-Offs). New or upcoming vinyl: "Everyone's a Bigot"/"O Degrees" by the Offs (on 415) is out, the Zeros single on Test Tube should be out this month, the Soul Rebels' "Plain Truth"/"Soul Rebel" should be in the stores in a month or so, and the Dils EP on Quintessence ought to be on your turntable as you read this.

Speaking of the Dils . . . Zippy has quit, and they've broken up. I shouldn't have to tell you (but I will) that this is not only, in the words of ex-drummer John Silvers, "the end of some of the best music to ever come out of this part of the world," but (at least to anyone who spent the last year or so in San Francisco) the end of an era. Whether you loved them or hated them, the Dils were the most talked about band in this city, a band we pinned our hopes on and/or blamed for our failures, a band who was judged with a harsher eye because they took the strongest atand. In those days of 5-800 people at every one of their shows, revolution was just around the corner and we were going to change the world. Few of us believe that anymore. In their most recent interview they declined both the mantle of leadership and much of their politics (and the breakup itself was not unexpected, considering they hadn't played a gig in 2-3 months and the crowds had fallen off sharply), but they were leaders nonetheless. Their boycott of the Mabuhay (in which they were joined only by Negative Trend (now Toiling Midgets) and the Zeros, neither of whom have played there since late '78) led to picket lines manned by fans, many of whom later formed New Youth Productions. What I'm trying to say, albeit awkwardly, is that it was not the band per se that mattered but what they stood for and what we wanted them to stand for, and it saddens me that the scene the Dils (and former manager Peter), more than anyone else, shaped and unified, no longer had room for them.

And now? We are left with nothing in particular to rally around or against, with unanswerable questions and ugly truths. It is somehow not comforting to realize, as the Dils did, that many promoters are as bad as Dirk; that, given enough time and money, more will become as bad; and that revolution doesn't happen overnight, and certainly not just by singing about it. There is still life as long as there is change, and certainly this last month has seen a huge and spontaneous regeneration in this scene, a long-overdue jolt of new ideas and new answers, and things are looking bright for the future. It remains to be seen whether it can or will last. In the meantime, in the words of John Cale, you better be ready for war.

(Very) RANDOM STOATS,
by Mork Williams

It's been two months of unwieldy (and occasionally, unbearable) contrast since my last attempt to document the socio-musical threads that embroider Britain's teen world. Not least 'cause four of those eight weeks have been spent in America, which we'll come to later. One minute I was watching Mexican street gangs knifing each other outside the Anti Club, and the next being dragged bleary eyed to Dingwall's Dance Hall in North London to witness a short, spotty oik with badly bleached hair and a grubby boiler suit cause a different sort of trouble. His name was (and indeed, still is) MICKEY DOREY and with his band THE SIRENS, he was playing his fourth gig, an audition. Dorey clearly possesses great humility 'cause he showed up the two tired punk and 2-Tone copyists he was billed with in their true, awkward colours. He and The Sirens, unlike THE BOOKS who I reviewed in these pages some months ago, have a linear approach to counterpoint and melody which seems to be based on chucking as many ideas into a barrel and stringing together the ones that float to the surface. (is there any other approach?—Ed.)

Having in retrospect made a mistake about THE BOOKS, who upon fourth hearing concentrate too much of their appeal on amateur theatrics and a limited bag of tricks, I'm loath to eulogise too recklessly about Dorey and The Sirens. So I'll simply conclude with the facts: They are a young, (marvelous! how unusual!—Ed.) five-piece who obviously enjoy the gift of knocking themselves about a stage while still playing deceptively complex rock n'roll. Additionally, they have a single out of Illegal (IRS in America), called "Paranoia Station", which is fairly representative of what they do. (indeed is!—Ed.)

Also on Illegal, is SKAFISH, androgonous singer/songwriter for this epinymous group from La Grange, near Chicago, Illinois. The record is called "Disgracing The Family Name", and has the distinction of being the only record ever released in Great Britain on a Sunday, the date in question being the only one Skafish's personal astrologer felt suitable. (heavy!—Ed.) Jim Skafish is a deeply superstitious man, and that isn't the half of it! Eschewing alcohol and drugs in favour of a lifestyle that favours dressing up in women's clothes and regaling his audiences with stunning evocations of life as a family outcast, ("running a purging vacuum cleaner over everybody's psyche" as one Chicago reviewer described his performance), Skafish and his band also play muscular rock with a jangly, organ-edged cut to it, and now "Disgracing The Family Name" is actually starting to garner public attention here.

The vinyl jungle continues to spew out a crop of unmitigated garf, but some of the Right Stuff still manages to surface. SWELL MAPS have a surprisingly svelt new single out of Rough Trade, a swansong to personal mobility called "Let's Build A Car", and elder statesman of punk, IGGY POP has a new album which contains some reliable performances but is in the main concerned with trying to turn eccentricity into an art-form. This signifies a dearth of incentive and/or ideas . . . or maybe he should just get John Cale to produce him again. Still it's better than the needled-out "Kill City" or the run-the-tape-for-the-money "TV Eye Live" albums and it's called "Soldier" (on Arista). The Manchester band A CERTAIN RATIO have a worthier if less polished effort nestling on the shelves of our more obscure record stores, "The Graveyard & The Ballroom". It's actually a 14-title cassette resplendant in a transluscent green ladies purse, which is why its availability is somewhat limited. Some of the tracks were recorded live at the Electric Ballroom, some at a small studio in Lancashire and the music is post-prandial punk/funk with suicidal overtones. PUBLIC IMAGE with balls, you might say. (I might not.—Ed.) Factory Records are the purveyors, should your local Liquorice Pizza feel in an obliging mood.

The multi-racial ska bandwagon rolls on with a new SELECTER album on 2-Tone causing cries of "Get down" and "Funkeeee" wherever it is put on a turntable. 2-Tone have finally signed THE BODYSNATCHERS, for one single only, and the current apple of A & R men's eyes and ears is a band called THE TIGERS who have an own-label single out called "The Kidding Stops", which is a bit like TEARDROP EXPLODES meets MADNESS in Kingston. Naturally I like it. And, talking of labels, HOLLY & THE ITALIANS have just done a world-wide deal with Virgin.

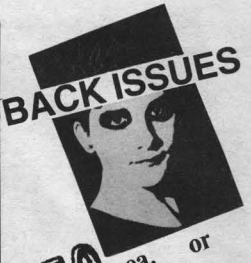
Recent travellings also took me to the desolate Irish west coast to witness THE UNDERTONES' first tour of their home country. One typical venue was the Ballymount Recreation Centre, which in the summer is a low-rent seaside resort and in the winter stands empty gathering mildew from the incredibly damp climate. On that Friday night 1000 highly intoxicated Irish kids materialised in busses and beat-up old cars to bop their balls off to Ireland's finest. Shy JOHN O' BRIEN, still not 20 years old writes some of the most evocative, unpretentious fast rock songs in the world and the band relentlessly churns them out with amphetemine zeal. They did a lot of stuff from their forthcoming second album, including "More Songs About Chocolate & Girls" (dedicated to TALKING HEADS) and an unusual but effective version of "Under The Boardwalk", but my most enduring memory of being on the road with the Undertones in Ireland is the presence of "security forces".

Suddenly a helicopter will swoop down out of nowhere, four guys in full combat gear jump out and poke machine guns through the mini-bus windows and demand IDs, which may or may not make one nervous and certainly the band, who still live with their mums in bombed-out Derry, take it all in their stride. (The van FEARGEL SHARKEY used to deliver t.v. sets in was recently high-jacked and used as a mobile bomb, blasting out several shop-fronts where it was left parked in the town centre). (Mork, if this is your idea of an explosive report . . Ed.)

On one routine check one soldier discovered he'd stopped his favorite rock group. Actually he wasn't quite sure it was them. "That's because we're not wearing our glitter suits" shot back Feargel.

And, ending on another travelling note, I met one Jimmy Pursey at the London airport recently, he'd just come from a tour of Scandinavia and uncharacteristically had little to say about this or anything else. (he's not the only one! Ed.) Are tours of the bitter North the thin end of the cabaret circuit? (he was just sleepy after reading some of your columns—Ed.)

Body Snatchers/Clare Muller



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Smilin' Buddha

VANCOUVER

by Phil Smith

"So Sunny, did you find any records out there that are just junk?"

"Yes Tom I came across some terrible songs, some outright garbage—" they can't sing too well and they can't play either!

Feb '80 from "Vancouver Wave", a ninety minute CFUN special on local "new music", a show which omitted D.O.A., the Dishrags and the Sub-Humans.

It is the dawning of a new era and make no mistake new wave is in in in . . . Vancouver never passes up a chance to become even more isolated and narcissistic and the current eruption of local recordings and "new" bands has convinced one and all of the health and vitality of our little scene . . . well consider this: there has not been one hall gig since new year's, itself an evening marred by severe violence and the loss of yet another hall . . . the Commodore, the "grand old lady" of Vancouver clubs, is really a bitchy hag refusing to allow the Sub-Humans to open for the Specials (more on that later) and the only place in town that many groups can play is the Smilin' Bhudda, a decent enough club, but plagued by a strict age limit and a small capacity . . . meanwhile the glut of Xerox bands and garbage flood the market, filling industry needs . . . Vancouver is too small to have several self-supporting scenes hence somnambulist Steely Dan clones like Brandon Wolf are lumped together with D.O.A. and the Vancouver media fall over their skinny ties in the rush to pat one another on the back for the music explosion they've helped to create . . . So now there's *Vancon* instead of *Cancon* to fill up those government regulations more . . . well done lads, culture's a-booming in the old home town!

Alternative music in Vancouver now runs through its own tight little buddy circuit — hear it on CITR (the UBC station), watch it on the "Nite Dreems" or "Vancouver" t.v. shows, buy the records at Quintessence and your concert tickets from Perryscope. Your entire new wave needs taken care of, lock, stock and barrel.

But here's the situation that bands are facing: either capitulation to the dictates of this new, supposedly alternative music industry (demands which once again include "professionalism", "commercial potential" and "public acceptability") or a lifetime of playing the Bhudda and selling your records out of the back of a truck . . . Case in point no. 1: Perryscope Productions, the legitimate new wave promoters, have started a "Homecookin' " series in the ever so respectable Robson St. Theatre, a series devoted to the exposure of local talent . . . first on the list is Bob Coulter and the Bonus Boys, two groups not known for their musical adventurousness . . . there is no way independently produced gigs will be able to compete with the media and money behind this series so bands like D.O.A., Dishrags and Sub-Humans will either have to toe the line or be frozen out and pack it in (I'm not sure which option is the most desirable) . . . Case no. 2: The Quintessence record label has already become a successful alternative operation, so much so that many of the large chain record stores refuse to take independent product except through the Quintessence distribution system, thereby severely hampering a totally independent band's ability to enter the local market . . . to be fair, Quintessence is trying to help out every band possible, but the fact that situation like this exists at all has some very depressing implications.

However this is small potatoes when compared to the latest industry discovery: the 12" demo e.p. . . . with visions of the Knack dancing in their heads, the major labels have already snared the Payolas (A&M) and Tim Ray (Capitol) with Bob Coulter and Brandon Wolfe reportedly next in line . . . the deal is usually $5,000 for a 4 song e.p. to be packaged, promoted and distributed like an album . . . apparently this is a revolutionary concept among Canadian A&R men who like to speak of a healthy musical situation . . . well it is healthy for the companies who can flood the market with a minimal investment in the hope that one of the longshots clicks and it is healthy for those bands slick enough and rich enough to record high quality demos . . . unfortunately the effect upon independent labels, the places where new bands live and grow, will not be so beneficial as the home grown records will be forced to compete with the polished product of the majors and guess who's going to lose the battle for that limited display space?

This "new professionalism" is already having an adverse effect on the music itself . . . firstly, as mentioned the hard-core bands must give in or give up . . . secondly, the idea of a group of kids starting from scratch, learning and playing their own music has once again gone out the window . . . anyone who was at the first Pointed Sticks gigs knows that musical competence was not among their virtues, yet now audiences demand that even their punk be hard and tight . . . finally, in many ways, even the hard-core punk bands have become reactionary and the only bands really trying anything new are the so-called art bands . . . however their total renunciation of the commercial hierarchy (a structure which was a fundamental stimulus to punk) has gone hand in hand with an abdication of any sort of artistic self-discipline hence the majority of these bands' output is pretentious wank . . .

Yeah, I know it's a natural progression, right? and people say it's happened before, a new surge will break through, but each time the rope is getting a little shorter and any further attempts at a turnaround will be just too damn self-conscious to succeed . . . so now even the rudest boys are polite, quietly making videos while rock columnists cutely tell us that "Punk Rock isn't dead" . . . my heart doesn't sing for the days of old, it's just pissed off that it's the same old situation all over again . . . sometimes I really think the time has come to kick music in the head.

Oh well here's the news: Young Canadians 12" "Hawaii" is finally out and the first 1,000 have a free 7" e.p. . . . it's good but not up the live standards of the band who wandered down the west coast in February (their gig in San Diego was busted — what happened to all that goodwill towards Canucks for getting your diplomats back?) . . . in March they will back up XTC through a six date Western Canada tour . . .

The Specials were in town at the beginning of February and blew the city apart giving the Police a run for their money at the two Gardens' shows, before headlining their own impromptu gig at the Commodore . . . on 48 hours notice the Rude Ones managed to draw 1,000 . . . the Sub-Humans, the initial back-up band were thrown off the bill when both the hall and sound company refused to allow them to play (something about swear words, graffiti and Wimpy's obsession with mike stands) . . . the Specials tour manager offered to pull out of the show in support of the Subs but the promoters promised another back-up slot in the future (as all the new wave shows are at the Commodore, that's going to be an interesting one to watch) and the show went ahead . . . the Specials were A-1 as were Black Flag who along with Rabid knocked the Bhudda senseless . . . even a few police officers dropped in to dance. .

D.O.A. have reformed with the Shithead/Biscuits axis combining with Rabid's Simon Wilde on bass and Dave Gregg (the world's number one D.O.A. fan) from Private School on second guitar . . . the Dishrags went through the same structural rearrangement with Kim, bass and Sue, guitar from the Devices doing originals Jade and Scout . . . Sub-Humans 12" is out containing among others the definitive "Fuck You" and the legendary "Slave to my Dick" . . . Zippy Pinhead back in town following the Dils break-up . . . years of loud music had not affected this boy's hearing but one short airplane ride almost burst an eardrum, laying him up with an ear infection . . . Dil's last record "Sound of the Rain" still schedulee for late February release . . .

Pointed Sticks have almost wrapped up their first L.P., tentatively titled "Part of the Noise" recorded in London with Nigel Gray . . . never a great live band, their 4 date British club tour received dubious reviews at best, but if the band's potential can be fully realized on record it should be superb . . . The Manhatten apartments, home at one time or another, to most of the city's punk population has been spared the wrecking ball, instead turning into that great Vancouver mainstay, a co-op . . . lots of gigs upcoming — Madness, XTC, Lydia Lunch (at U.B.C. — should be a strange one), 999, Gary Numan, etc. etc.

Finally a special mention to the Ubyssey newspaper who, by accident or design, described the Specials as a "sky-blue beat band" . . . must have something to do with the incredibly mild winter.

FASTER THAN YOU — Phast Phreddie

. . . and as I pulled the pick-axe out of the dead man's skull, I suddenly noticed that he was missing his left ear. I also found a letter still in his cold grasping hand. The letter was addressed to . . .

Ooops! Eh-hem! Hello, boys and girls and welcome to still another installment PHASTER THAN YOU — the column that tells the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, except, of course, when it is considerably more financially profitable to lie.

Which reminds me, there's a great new album out by a superb new local band called Sue Saad & the Next. All I can say about it is that it is quite simply amazing. Sue Saad's singing is nothing short of devine and the exciting musicianship of the Next is not to be believed. This album is that incredible!

Uh, so that totals to about, hmmm, and carry the five ... uh, $275 that Planet Records owes me for the nice words on their LP. If you're reading this in the accounting room, boys, can you send a copy of the album. If it's that good I really should have a listen.

Now, on to less profitable news. If you read this column religious — as you should if ya wanna get to Rock'n'Roll Heaven (don't worry, Jim Croce will NOT be there) — you will know by now that I type this bunch of garbage while listening to some sort of Jazz. Names I have unashamedly dropped in the past are Stan Kenton, Charlie Parker, John Coltrane and I think Earl Bostic (if I never mentioned Earl, it's about time I mentioned him now 'cause he is the coolest). This morning's Jazz musician (it is now 4:38 AM by my Casio digital) was one of the finest tenor saxaphonists in the world, Lester Young. In fact, his music soothes my lobes, via headphones, as I type. A leader of the Be-bop movement, some of Lester's best jams are still in print with the kind help of United Artists Records — well, actually EMI Ltd, these days (hell, let me really confuse you and tell you the whole story: the thirty-seven tunes on this two-record set were all originally released as 78 rpm discs on an independent label called Alladin in the mid-late Forties — Alladin was sold to Imperial Records which was bought by Liberty Records which somehow got involved with United Srtists which was recently acquired by EMI/Capitol; *Lester Young — the Alladin Sessions* is actually out on UA's jazz subsidiary label called Blue Note, which was once an indie jazz company before being swallowed up by the bigger business, so, dig it, man, the people who brought us the Knack can boast these Lester Young sides). Actually, not being a learned Jazz autority, I cannot tell you why these tunes are great or even why they are important. All I know is that they move me like little else does.

Since I was unable to answer any of the many letters I've been receiving in last issue's column, due to the required year-end Awards of Singular Significance, I will devote the rest of my allotted space (and, may I add, there's not much of that, either) to just that. I'll just pull one out of one of these crates . . . .

George Gibbons, of Princeton, North Carolina, asks the Fast One: "What old Rhythm & Blues singers would you like to see re-issue packages of?"

Good question. The guy who wrote "Train Kept A-Rollin' ", Tiny Bradshaw (King Records) is definitely one. Another would be the stuff Joe Liggins recorded for the Exclusive label. Those 78s are getting harder to find and all the ones I've been able to turn up have been tremendous. There is an album out in Europe that features his better known recordings for Specialty Records along with his brother, Jimmy. I'll bet there is much more. Also, Jimmy recorded for Alladin, for which I've found only one disc. More by either, Joe Liggins & his Honeydrippers or Jimmy Liggins & his Drops of Joy would be appreciated. Bullmoose Jackson ("I Want a Bow-legged Woman") also of King Records, has not to my knowledge, been rescued from obscurity. An essential re-package would be the early T-Bone Walker recordings he did for Black & White Records in the Forties, including the original version of the classic "Stormy Monday Blues," which is owned by Capitol Records. Finally, the Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson ("Cherry Red" & "Kidney Stew") recordings for Mercury are sorely missed.

From fabulous Van Nuys, California comes a letter from SLASH reader Marlene McMurray who asks:

"Why do you think Elvis Costello sang a song on a recent country & western album?

Well, Marlene, I know exactly why. The record you are referring to is MY VERY SPECIAL GUESTS by George Jones. George Jones is one of the finest country & western singers of all time. He started out singing Rockabilly in the Fifties as Thumper Jones and Hank Smith. From there he made a natural transition to straight C&W at which he truly excells. Today he is highly respected (even if he doesn't sell as many records as such lesser lights as Kenny Rodgers or Charlie Rich) and sharing a song with him is truly an honor. It's just a drag that such jerks as Emmylou Harris, Linda Ronstadt and James Taylor get the honor. The James Taylor tune happens to be kinda listenable for that limp ex-junkie, by the way. The real stand-out cuts on the LP are "I Gotta Get Drunk" with Willie Nelson, "Night Life" with Waylon Jennings, "Proud Mary" with Johnny Paycheck and Elvis Costello with his "Stranger in the House" (you may remember the song as a B-side of an early Elvis single, which you of course own). Elvis Costello is quite justifiably a fan of George Jones, as I am — especially after seeing him perform live recently. That's why Elvis is on George's record.

Johnny Du Nothing of that poor excuse for a town Glendale, CA, poses the following question to the Fastest:

"What, in your humble opinion, was/is the most under rated Rock'n'Roll band of recent times?"

I'm so glad you asked that question. The answer is the New York band Television. From the time their enticing debut LP came out they were doomed. Back in those dark ages when the new Punk era was just starting it quickly divided into two distinct categories: the hard-core Punk and the more Pop oriented (mostly garbage) stuff. You may remember that initially the Ramones represented one faction whereas the Blondies were clearly the other. When Television came out with MARQUEE MOON we all bought it and went to their first West Coast gig at the Whisky a' Go-Go out of curiosity mostly. However, the record made many appearances in used record bins locally and their second L.A. show was poorly attended. Obviously, Television didn't fit in anybody's pigeon-hole of what they thought New Wave or Punk Rock was all about. The bad press — one clown even referred to the band as the Grateful Dead of New Wave — didn't help. In these more enlightened days, if Television were to make its debut they would more likely be warmly welcomed — especially if they were from England, where many bands miserably ape Television. In fact it amused me that Pere Ubu was able to get full coverage in this 'zine when much of Ubu's early inspiration and encouragement came from Television, who was always put down in these pages. Like I always say sometimes, que vida!

That's about all the room I have for letters this issue . . huh? One more? OK, one more letter. This one is from Bob Guidry of Los Angeles:

"Oh, Fast One, you seem to me to be very smart about Rock'n'Roll. Have you ever picked someone out early in their career and just say to yourself 'These guys are gonna make it big someday' and be right? If so, who? Also, who do you predict future success to? How can you tell someone may be famous someday?"

You are right, Bob, I'm very smart about Rock'n'Roll. The following is a list of singers or bands who I knew were going to make it some day and they did: Aerosmith, Blue Oyster Cult, the Police, Patti Smith, Blondie, the Sweet, Bob Seger, Elvis Costello, Tom Petty, Cheap Trick, Lou Reed, Suzi Quatro and Van Halen. Those are just the ones I can think of right now. There could have been more. I think the following singers or bands have the artistic potential and enough appeal to obtain sizeable followings (if they don't give up, and are handed the right opportunity, etc. Success doesn't always come over night like Van Halen — it took Bob Seger about ten years): the Jam, the Clash, the Plimsouls, the Go-Gos, the Alley Cats, the Pop, 20/20, the Cramps, the Weirdos, the Motels, David Johanson, X, the Screamers, Sylvain Sylvain, the Plugz and Code Blue. I think it's a real shame that success has not come to such talents as the Flamin' Groovies, Flo & Eddie, Iggy Pop and Elliott Murphy. How can I tell someone is going to be famous? Well, when you've been listening to the radio and reading books & magazines on the subject as long as I have, and when you've listened to as many records as I have (hell, my personal collection goes from the Twenties & Thirties with Bessie Smith and Robert Johnson through to demo tapes of bands that have yet to make an album) then it comes as little surprise when someone whose sounds you've been diggin' for a long time gets a gold record. Hey, men, they don't call me Phast Phreddie for nothing.

OTHER DIRT: Well, with the Specials and Madness becoming popular around town I guess a Ska revival js upon us. Except I don't know how you can call it a revival when it was never popular in this country to begin with. One of the very few ska records that did come out here is a single by the Ska Kings called "Jamaican Ska" backed with "Oil in my Lamp" on Atlantic Records and it puts many of the recent Ska attempts to shame. As the Ranking Mr. J puts it, Ska music is just a Jamaican Polka. Perhaps, I'm ready for a Calypso revival. I've already seen Harry Bellafonte on a good night. My friends tell me it's all just an excuse to drink Rum & Coca-Cola. That's probably true. If it weren't for Calypso, I'd stick with my gin. Bottoms up, Baby.

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PHOENIX 2/1/80 —**Arthur Avante**

When Phoenix rose out of the ashes the Sanitation Department neglected to clean them up, so now all of us phoenix-oids have to walk around in it. Knee deep. Phoenix is like a dried up swamp, a rest home for all of the transient bourgeoise and middle class American families on the hoof. Happy families with clogged sinuses. Phoenix people are ignorant of their own culture (i.e. American) and it's all because the City Fathers planned on a retirement pasture and woke up one day surrounded by . . . . .. Damn! a real city with problems and all that other stuff.

The New Wave has been literally underground, teetering on the edge of non-existence. Bands like Billy Clone and the Same, Blue Shoes and The Doctors have had some luck breaking into local bars although their music is hardly new, mostly covers of established acts with a few originals woven in.

The first event of the new decade, the X-Orama, was held on the even of Sid Vicious' death. Coordinated by a group of local fans, artists and musicians, the concert drew over 500 persons.

The evening began with the debut of the X-Streams, staccato reggae, chisel guitars slicing at the air, the vocals teasing the melody and then breaking up, soaring high above the mix, plunging in again.

The Roll-Ons followed, a six piece band that formed on the basis of a joke, turning in a solid set. Their music is sparse and unpretentious, an apt soundtrack to their stage movement. 50's chic channeled through the Twilight Zone.

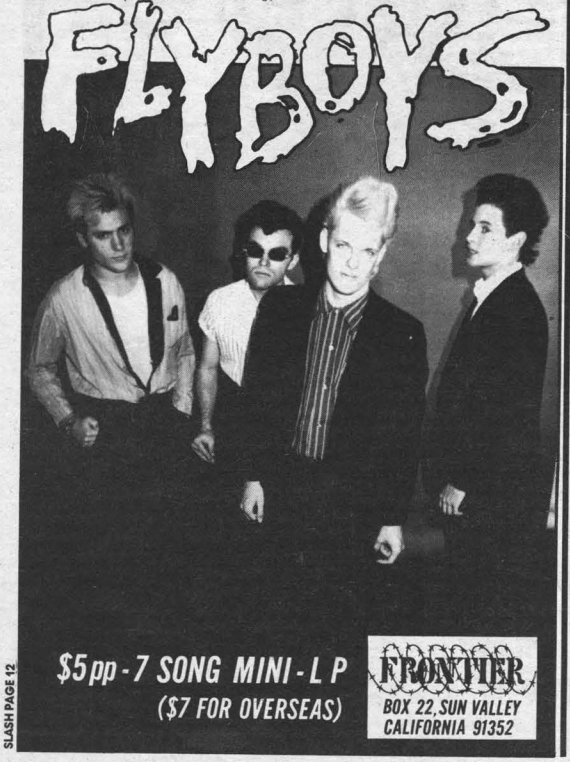
The Bats hit the stage like a hurricane and did not stop for breath. The energy level crescendoed at this point. The audience was electric, delirious. The Bats were able to capitalize on the enthusiasm with a fast paced set of straight ahead rock. Alice Cooper (Kim Chapman) appeared late on and added vocals to "Eighteen". Phoenix respects its roots however sick they may be.

After a brief intermission, The Brainz opened up with "Drop Dead". The Brainz weave intricate rhythms with razor edge melodies. Their music seems to engulf the mind as the sheer volume provides the physical sensations. After some technical difficulties early on, they gathered their wits and finished in a static rush.

It was at this time that the promoters were confronted by a group of young brutals from several high schools in the area. Their thirst for violence seemed insatiable as they defecated at the mouth on several subjects, including sexuality, beer consumption and the socio-political implications of being on the football team and driving a truck at the same time. They managed to break through security and rack up 3,000 dollars in damages before the Police were called in to restore peace.

Meanwhile The Feederz were intent on restoring chaos. Frank Discussion snarled and frenzied in the nude, insects dancing on his head. A feverish performance, well executed considering the tense circumstances.

The scene here is definitely on the rise, local club owners are loosening up and the fans are taking up the initiative. Within the next few months we will see the opening of a New Wave dance club and a new concert hall dedicated to younger bands. Does Phoenix have a sense of its own identity? Soon we will know.



FILMS

GUYANA, CULT OF THE DAMNED

When Jim Jones the paranoid communist mystic led his kingsize hara kiri finale, everybody acted horrified and bewildered for a while, conveniently ignoring the real implications: That kind of insanity is everybody's kind of insanity, no one knows which end of reality is worth grabbing and the ones that are not taken care of by the Jim Joneses will happily go to war for the sake of secret power games, follow laws that kill their soul little by little and lead lives less appealing than fatal gut poisoning in a forsaken jungle. You don't have to die to commit suicide, and you don't have to be a member of an obvious fringe cult to behave like cattle. Not much of all this transpires throughout the cheapo exploitation flick that attempts to describe and explain what led to the historic kool-aid party, the conclusions add nothing new to the general public's interpretation: bunch-of-kooks-led-by-a-mad-mixed-up-leader-do-the-craziest-thing-they-can-think-of. Throughout the film a narrator's voice keeps you nice and safe on the side of rational behavior and civilized thinking by just describing a succession of events without probing into motives or psychological climates (like why was he (the narrator) an active cult member in the 1st place?).

The Jones people are shown as a varied, confused bunch of regular dumb citizens who should know better than frollicking in the steamy south american jungle in search of an earthy paradise; black and white, young and old blindly looking for Zion, putting their faith in someone that showed them their fears and convinced them that since he knew them better than they knew themselves he must know THE REST. In the movie house the giggling does not stop, the heavy majority of black and mexican spectators loudly deplore the stupidity of their screen counterparts, cheer the violent segments and offer personal solutions to the dilemmas the actors go thru, and I can't help wondering what kind of blind faith THEY subscribe to in their own lives, is it the work ethic, the marriage doctrine, the democracy illusion? When Jim Jones punishes some young food thieves in a display of sadism worthy of a medieval ruler (after obtaining their parents' hardly reluctant consent), audience indignation reaches outraged proportions but it's mainly in response to the particular forms of punishment applied, not because of the surrender of will of the family. But while the "victims" seem to behave and react like most average society members are expected to ('cept their mini-society hasn't been officially accepted yet) the "criminal" elements in charge are portrayed as simplistic "evil" caricatures whose reasons and purposes are left unprobed. Jim Jones himself has more depth than his faithful lieutenants, traces of genuine anguish are even suggested amidst the paranoid megalomania-induced outbursts. You don't feel sorry for the guy but you wonder about him. Unfortunately this faint veering towards complexity gets negated whenever the angelic forces of virtue represented by the senator, the cameramen, and the journalists, appear. All are shown as sane, righteous, compassionate, civilized beings immune to the regular folks' misdirected foolishness, but who yet still want to help, Do Good, Save (just like Jim Jones but in a less forceful manner). America the liberal maiden comes to the rescue, armed with nothing but handshakes and video equipment, is greeted with deviousness and treachery (heavy allusions to the cult's ties with Russia) and pays a heavy price: one U.S. senator, some journalists and some equipment destroyed. Of course there is justice yet in the high spheres, and the treacherous attack eventually triggers a cosmic spasm in the misled little community: Jones' wild-eyed calls to self destruction are agreed to by most of the dazed followers. The actual suicide sequence is the sick extravaganza that everyone nervously waits for, movie seats are creaking, pop corn is forgotten in the palm, even the jokes stick in the throat. It's without a doubt the best part of the film, makes it worth 3 dollars, as all the cliches, obscurities and simplifications are left behind, one suddenly faces a sacred mystery that should haunt the most mindless idiot: Hundreds of people pull the curtain on their lives, their children's lives, every life around. I don't know how accurate it actually stays but the confusion, contradictory emotions, inevitability and nightmarish logic of the ceremony are depicted with genius. Even Jones and his family's last instants are oddly moving, death bringing a sort of absolution to the miserable creatures. The whole underlit sequence highlights every person's last display of individuality before the poison twists their guts into convulsions that leave every one face flat on the ground, anonymously sleeping the long one. It's the only true philosophical moment of the film. The struggling of some less fanatic members, the instinctive compassion of mothers for their babies, the possessed thoroughness of the "nurses" and guards, the dazed surrender of the faithful, all these pathetic emotions and stands about to merge into meaninglessness and fate. I believe that what happened that night was just an exaggeration of the latest planetary trend, the underlying craving for the void.

Jim Jones gave them what they wanted from him. There'll be others. And that's how this exploitation sensation-seeking flick accidently dabbles with a very real concept. The film's "epilogue" may attempt to defuse the message with phony warnings about cult acceptance, false leaders and surrender of one's will, but it is too late. The mystery of Guyana is the first spectacular warning sign: Most people don't like their lives and the senselessness of their existence will force them to seek any kind of relief. America is learning the taste of despair. Have a real nice day.

—**Kick**

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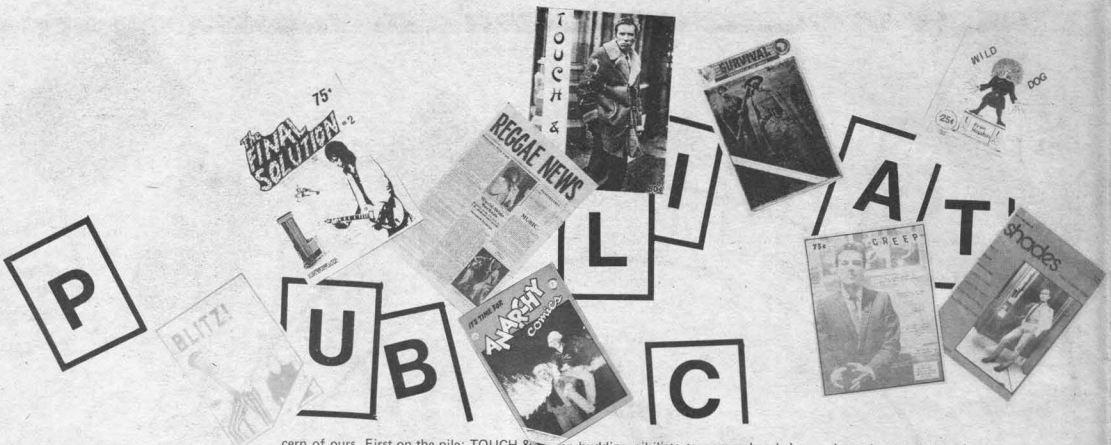


"IT'S A WASTE OF PAPER, IT'S A WASTE OF INK, IT'S A WASTE OF TIME, IT'S A WASTE OF ENERGY . . "
("Sabotage" – John Cale)

Are you one of those historically minded readers that sends for back issues of *Slash* or other mags? Do you read the little buggers before locking them up in your vault? Do you laugh? Well, you should. Publications that make it their business to evaluate and judge popular culture and what goes with it can either be part of that culture (and in an awkward position of distorted subjectivity) or detached from it and cut off from most of its elusive meaning. In other words us brilliant lot here at *Slash* & *Flipside* or others find it difficult to explain punk and its sequels in scientific terms but we sure know its TASTE & MOOD better than an anthropology quarterly can ever hope to. Our discoveries or predictions are as temporary as your band's line up or your hair color. And now that even our type of music is branching out into dozens of sub-ramifications the variety of related fanzines, tabloids and pamphlets clinging to each branch is truly awesome, even if the judgements and relevance conveyed within are sometimes enough to send you back to tv and dailies. I mean there are still fanzines being born for the only purpose of glorifying power pop and others that resurrect a forgotten myth that should be left resting in peace. Everybody has something to say and the means to say it, some giant invisible lid has been taken off.

A few months ago we took regular peeks at the non stop avalanche of printed jive around, lost interest for a while, but soon realized that all that paper was playing a part in the desintegration of the music scene as much as it was documenting it, and that every effort and contribution should be pointed out. The assault has been on for a few years and only very few signs of weakening among the rebel ranks: Search & Destroy goes down but Damage pops up. Sniffin' Glue says fuck it but Mouth of the Rat opens. What it lacks in unity it certainly makes up in astonishing variety of insults.

This month we'll just grab whatever samples recently came our way and briefly check out contents and strut. You'll even find out where to get the stuff, the deterioration of your brain being no concern of ours. First on the pile: TOUCH & GO. Define themselves as "Pompous purveyors of pop and perversion," although I think they're better. Definite anglicized tastes, from Specials to the Fall. Lots of record reviews, editorial bitching about local radio shit (Michigan), every conceivable type of hit lists, polls, charts. Only 50 cents. Good taste in music, a bit cut-off. Write Touch & Go, P.O. Box 26203, Lansing Mich. 48909.

Next: WHAT GOES ON. If you didn't guess, it's a hundred per cent about the Velvet Underground, that obscure upcoming N.Y. beat combo. I've heard there are others in that vein, such as a Dylan one and a Springsteen one. At least with Dylan they must have had something to talk about at their editorial meetings when the poetic one found salvation, but I can't imagine what excitement the staff of WHAT GOES ON feels when planning the next one. "Well, let's talk about John Cale, then Lou, then Nico, then....." Yet they manage to fill pages with old interviews, fans reminiscing, bootlegs treasure hunts, surveys of songs covered by others, in depth re-evaluations of records, not counting real trivia not worthy of a groupie. I have seen friends literally devour this publication with tongue dangling and saliva dripping so obviously there must be some need for it. Me I'm satisfied with a few songs in my head and John Cale's lasting health. Serious necrophiliacs write to 6, Wildwood Lane, Amherst MA 01002.

NEXT: THE PANIC (in L.A.) Local product that almost rivals FLIPSIDE (except on the gossip level) it interviews countless L.A. bands and a few others and generally oozes with pride in this scene. Emphasis is mainly on the live circuit and night time kicks. Party 'til you drop. Strictly for active punks. Write 10577 Wellworth Ave. L.A. Ca 90024.

This one here is called SURVIVAL. Not the most accessible paper, it concerns "the movement of Jah people." Yea, that's right, religion, sort of. Except here the big Number One Above is Hailie Selassie instead of Lou Reed. Definitely a propaganda sheet, just like Slash. It is based at the Tuff Gong headquarters in Jamaica. Tuff Gong is Marley's own island label and SURVIVAL is financed with Marley's profits. The man's dedication to his chosen faith is as great as James Brown's was to his race and hard for budding nihilists to comprehend. Inside you find the usual preaching and prophesizing of the rastafarians, some reggae oriented pieces and occasional social reform topics. This paper possibly could help a little in your understanding of I and I matters, and you'll catch glimpses of some righteous dreadlocks. Have no fear of instant conversion. Write to Tuff Gong, 56 Hope Road, Kingston 6 Jamaica. (And please don't quote "Punky Reggae Party" to boost your credibility.)

Next in line: SHADES. Slick tabloid from Toronto for the new wave dilletantes. Packed with material but tries to cover everything and ends up just dabbling with "in" topics or artists: In two issues they cover Magazine, Lene Lovitch, rockabilly, Robert Fripp, Nico, Flaming Groovies, Gang of Four, Chris Spedding, Japan, Graham Parker, Boomtown Rats, Rachel Sweet and lots more. Kind of makes you nauseous. Gossipy coverage of the local scene, heavy leanings towards fashion consciousness a la Poseur, all in all pretty satisfied with the status quo. It's all entertainment, innit? Write to Box 310, Station B, Toronto M 5 T 2W2 Canada.

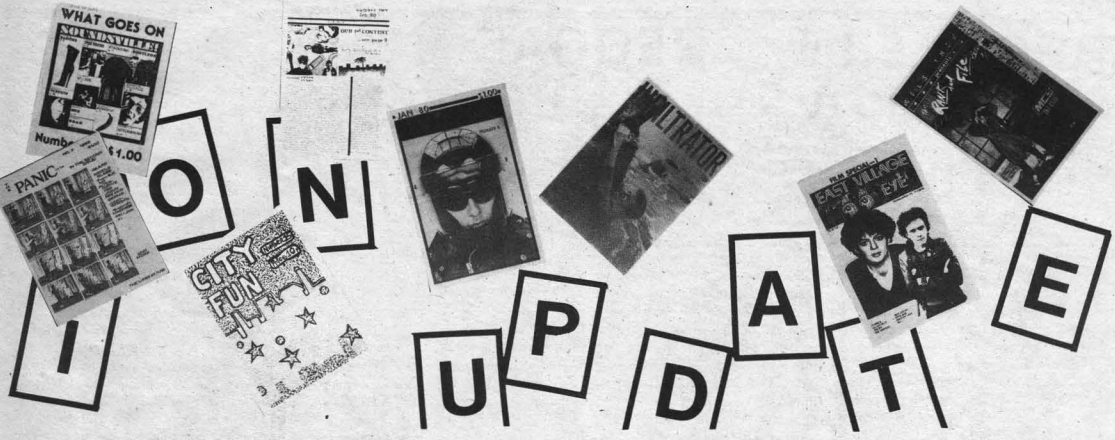
REGGAE NEWS is still with us, I mean the ones amongst us that have made words like dub, skank, Selassie-I and natty part of their daily vocabulary. Latest issue combines No. 3 and No. 4 and contains a respectable load of relevant information on upcoming events (San Francisco is way ahead of us in that field), hard to find connections, and erudite discographies on a couple of major artists. (If you never heard of them it is simply because *you* are a *minor* music fan). On the less relevant side we have a lengthy session with runny-mouth-Pete-Tosh the jive machine, it's occasionally funny but ultimately annoying, especially when the blind approval of a white american fanatic encourages the ganja menace to lay it on even thicker. Bet you didn't know that God was second to none in handling machine guns and unexploded bombs, did you? Still a decent little newssheet, Reggae News could try to relate the stuff to the outside world with more emphasis on its emotional and aesthetic worth and a bit of caution in the myths and folklore areas. They risk alienating the greater audience they pray for while attracting basket cases on their way to the mental twilight zone. But, as we at Slash have been known to reply, what do you expect from volunteer work? Inquiries and prophecies to P.O. Box 31125, San Francisco, Ca 94131.

And what do we have here? From New York, the EAST VILLAGE EYE. More alternative culture inside info, more serious dedicated and specialized than SHADES. Emphasis on video experiments (that leaves YOU out, scum!), theater, underground films, hip and obscure writing. Undernourished music section with no grasp at all on what's cooking, why do visual art people lack the most basic rudiments of musical sensitivity? Token punk graphics throughout the paper, that part of it they got down pat. Does not try to bridge the gap between art and life, which is duty number 1 for any art rag. Write Eye Productions, 44 East 3rd Street, New York N.Y. 10003.

SHAKE & POP. Most unattractive name this one. Makes you think of too much carbonation and diet drinks. Claims to be ahead of the tired punk/new wave cliches but has a hard time putting anything in its place. A pinch of ska, a devious heapful of power pop in mod gear, whatever easy listening experimental fluff is floating around, all these unrelated tastes add to zilch. This fanzine is free and looks it. Still probably the best thing that happened to Pittsburgh in a long time. Let's hear it for the Clash and Nick Lowe. It's new music, radical radio stuff, america's getting hip I tell you. Write 4 Bayard Road, No. C1, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213.

BLITZ is a venerable fandom institution they tell me. I'm looking at issue No. 34 and I'd hate to be forced to check the previous ones, it's more boring-looking than the Recycler and it deals extensively with rock n roll fossils, most in the lightweight category. Same issue 34 proudly offers Bobby Vee on the cover: Not bad right under their "the rock and roll magazine for thinking people" slogan! Their pick for best album of 79 is The Beat. I bet they all have glasses, beatle haircuts (sorry Phast Phreddie old boy), and feminist wives. If, like them, your biggest gripe against the world is the public's inability to differentiate rock and roll from rock write to P.O. Box 279, Dearborn Heights, Michigan 48127. Lemme out of here.

Underground comics didn't totally die with thei hairy counterculture they just



spaced themselves out into acid neverland or some ecological land of Oz. Something called ANARCHY COMICS (from Berkeley, where else) is valiantly trying to fuse the old bloated Yippie consciousness with the more theoretical aspects of the punk "philosophy". Of course it's all lovely wishful thinking, there ain't no punk stand (in political terms), situationism failed and the spanish anarchists are all dead, so serving everything again with a grab bag of grim comic strips is not going to do much to anyone's head. Revolutionary imagery gets relegated to its tolerated slot in society: just something harmless fringe elements kick around for cheap thrills. Still, if you'd rather muse over kindergarten type of propaganda and pick up on a few worthy slogans write Last Gasp, P.O. Box 212, Berkeley Ca 94701.

Once the promised land for xerox press, England is now drier than the Midwest, with most remaining fanzines mouthing platitudes and mindless praises of their particular fave guiding lights (Jam, Stranglers, a few others). One refreshing exception came our way recently, the Manchester based CITY FUN. There is no worshipping of one band or one musical clique, all local groups and events are handled with an equal level of scrutiny; honesty is their most striking quality. Honesty is a stupid thing to look for in rock n roll business but they do, and amazingly enough seem to find some in their part of the world. Besides its lofty ideals CITY FUN ain't much to look at, no flash writing or outrageous attention seeking tactics, they're not very good at entertaining but most of the bands they concentrate on don't seem to be a laugh a minute either (Fall, Joy Division, Scritti Politti, Dislocation Dance..), fun is a pretty grim business in Manchester. Find out more from CITY FUN, Rochdale Alternative press LTD, Spotland Rd., Rochdale, England.

Back to our shores we have CREEP, a pretty informative little mag from San Francisco. Interviews, analytical pieces on the meaning of it all, silly poetry and silly visuals, it is still feeling its way to a cohesive stand. Worth watching. Check it out from Box 5528, San Francisco, Ca 94101 (75 cents).

In New Orleans a fanzine called FINAL SOLUTION claims to be the answer to musical boredom. So far their answer to musical boredom gets rather boring at times with choices like Dickies and Lurkers. The New Orleans coverage won't make you change residence either. I must add the issue I'm basing this on could date back to some months ago. 4304 James Dr., Metairie, La. 70003.

I have seen two issues of a paper from Minneapolis Minnesota called MPLS INCEST which puts most of the trendy ever so hip East or West Coast rags to shame (those that still know the meaning of the word). The most recent of the two issues was put out last summer, but they warn their readership that it will be published on a leisurely basis so it may still be in existence, waiting for the Minnesota winter to end or whatever. The paper is a real graphic treat, constantly inventing visual stunts, fiction stuff and obscure interviews pop up in odd places, you get some intriguing glimpses of another scene that obviously is doing fine without the approval of the rest of the world. Send inquiries to Suite 402, 430 Ist Ave. N., MPLS, MINN 55401.

Another publication that may or may not be still coming out (hey, I can't do everything. YOU fuckin' check on it. I'm not a research center, buster, just a name thrower) is INFILTRATOR, from Bethesda, MD. What I saw of it was all right, a bit too vague and soft focus for my taste but we can't all thrive on fresh blood. Interests oscillate between Robert Fripp and 999 (if I see one more feature on either I may be ill) with forays into vintage music fields like reggae or soul. Address is 9510 Page Ave., Bethesda MD 20014.

Before we round up this month's survey I'd like to answer a question that hasn't been asked yet but will be unless your brains have been leaking on your pillowcases lately and it goes like this (the question): How come you smug jerks think it's all right for you to judge, put down or advise other people's endeavors when you don't know shit about their particular reality? And what makes you think your snotty elitist attitude is applicable to whatever field you tackle? Good point, class (smugness again, can't help it). Okay. You don't have to believe a word we print (and mispell). WE ARE NOT TELLING IT LIKE IT IS, BROTHER. We're not even telling it as we see it. We're telling it as we FEEL IT. Gut reaction, trust your bowels, all that. I hope nobody reads Slash for accurate predictions or finely chiseled exposes and I hope you don't too regularly take our word for it when we yell "garbage". And a fanzine that we think stinks may very well become your new gospel, we do not wish to deprive anyone publishing their own stuff from potential readers. The more the merrier. If our criticisms are unfair or off target correct us. If our attitude displeases you write to your congressman about it. We get regularly poked at in other media pockets for our crimes, hatchet jobs don't bother us, there is no such thing as bad publicity. And since I'm at it, might as well take a typically abrasive Slash look at . . . . SLASH.

". . . Still polluting West Coast thinking (or whatever the equivalent to that activity they use there) after almost 3 years (first case of punk filibustering) the old folks at slush keep playing an aesthetic yo-yo game with their burnt out readers: "Rejoice punk is stronger than ever" (up goes the yo yo) or "wake up morons 1976 is dead this is the new unnamed uncaged unsaleable music of the future. . . " (down goes the yo yo) . . . How long will the Slash staff keep up the game depends on elusive factors like quality of street stimulants, success or failure of their various worthless side projects and the tolerance of their subscribers. They are still learning while doing, very slowly. Slash is an invaluable tool for learning proofreaders, an endless source of magnificent fuck ups. It is rumored that some have found traces of musical information in some issues . . ." See, that's one way to look at it. Now we're ready to conclude.

A while back Houston (Texas) gained its own punkish fanzine, WILD DOG. I saw two issues, the second one was excellent, real wacked-out driving challenging material with very original lay-out and packaging. Not a peep since, but keep it in mind. San Francisco's DAMAGE (I don't think the S.F./L.A. fusion has a chance) is hanging in there, much better, more precise, their approach is certainly more thinking-oriented than us, must be the climate. Anyway we drink better. Last one devoted an imposing amount of space to Howie Klein the would-be manipulator of their fair scene, Howie Fooey was unkind to our San Francisco correspondent (who is much younger and prettier than him) and failed in tarnishing our impeccable image. Still we will try to remember him as the brilliant subtle humorist responsible for many N.Y. Rocker "West Coast" columns. Such imaginative nonsensical fiction is indeed rare in the new wave press. Bravo Dooey! Anyway what's this shit here for, we're supposed to be looking at the medium, not the tedium. It does show though that DAMAGE has invaluable hours of reading, and a fine feel for controversy. Here in our inhabited desert old trooper FLIPSIDE pulled it off once more, as usual a must, these guys deserve a National Grant, and on the other side of the tracks the two free dizzy dabblers L.A. WEEKLY and L.A. READER keep dipping their socialist or socialite toes in the (cess)-pool of new music and new ideas to see if it has sufficiently cooled off before they dive in. READER is leading on the punk/reggae front (no doubt worrying its educated liberal audience) while WEEKLY is definitely way ahead in the pop/new wave/arty-tarty spectrum. It's a tie in the newest category, ska music. Both papers are quite useful. So is BAM. For being instantly reminded of how depressing the music "world" was before we saw the light, it is first rate. Wham, *bam,* time warp, where's the joint? It now has achieved its own nirvana by looking just like ROLLING STONE ten years after the style became oppressive. The field it covers is largely mellow cowboys territory with token timid peeks at that weird new sound of Pearl Harbor and the Explosions and others. They do have a resident punk follower who probably sits by himself in the cafeteria.

That's it, I'm reaching critical dehydration levels. Just wondered if the fanzine tabloid craze has significantly dented the world's reserve of forests . . . I suppose the paper WE get is recycled (could Slash possibly be made with old Rolling Stones squished to a filthy weed-smelling paper paste? The thought appalls . . .)

PS: Aren't you lucky I didn't lose my restraint and start checking out the bizarre printed void this city is being buried under like PRO-FUN and other blandness manifestos? One evil day I still may.

—Kick

REGGAE IN AFRICA . . . all right!

REGGAE INA ASIA . . . Too much!

SHOULD THE BABYLON UNDERGROUND STAY THERE?

On February 9, 1980, something took place at the Erwin entertainment center in Hollywood that to an innocent observer would have looked like a bizarre hybrid between a businessmen's lunch, a cult meeting and a political rally – which in fact is what it was, and more. It had been billed as the first american reggae "Forum" for the industry (as opposed to you, the consumers) and offered participants over twelve continuous hours of discussion panels with industry representatives (when they showed up), wholesale and retail reggae music distributors, sympathetic disc-jokeys and reggae-conscious press members, which is where yours truly fits in, or thought he did. Beside the panels, movies were to be shown, jamaican food would be served, bi-products would be displayed and sold, live dj's (that's right, there are dead dj's too) would spin the real ting (I mon play strictly roots, seen?) and a live reggae band would entertain throughout the late evening. All of which sounded ambitious, confused, but definitely worth checking out, after all I and I had genuinely believed up to quite recently that I and I (and maybe I) was the only reggae rocker in town, and I wanted to take a good look at the rest of the closet cases.

The project had been organized by a few private parties, mostly a collaboration between the people responsible for the KCRW reggae show on sundays and a white musician called Jack Miller who records in Jamaica when not hanging around in Hollywood. The KCRW people also work on REGGAE NEWS (see this issue's fanzines update) and have done more for the music than anyone else on the West Coast. What they hoped to do that day was solidify a very loose network of likely-minded individuals in (hopefully) strategic positions which would become the starting force for a better future reggae life, with more concerts, record availability, radio coverage, the works. The closet cases were coming out, ashamed and downtrodden no more. As I should have known but somehow viewed as irrelevant some of the cases were also basket cases and had more to offer the unsuspecting west coast public than just beautiful music: Along with the businessmen, media wheels and promoters there were quite a few cult creatures on the premises, this is california after all, it's also a new decade already loaded with ominous signs and grim forebodings, and new forms of lunacy are inevitable. So, while some defective souls go on Iran-hating binges others find comfort in exotic worshipping and fantasy-seeking behavior. And by Jah the rasta consciousness and its visible trappings are a hell of a gold mine for your average warped spiritual "seeker". I mean Jim Jones, the Maharishi Yogi Bear or Ron Hubbard never offered you great music and strong dope, not counting marvelous fairy tales to trip out on and your very own secret language just like when you were a kid and being a conspirator was how you and your buddies justified an otherwise absurd and clue-less childhood. I mean shit (sorry), no cult around can ever hope to compete with rastafarianism! It's too good to be true, it's heaven-sent. See, I'm falling too. I'm surprized that it has remained virtually untouched by white spiritual tourists as long as it has. Must be the blackness of it all that keeps the philosophical rabble at bay. Because as you've guessed I'm not talking about the real rastas from the island here, I'm talking white north american stock smearing soot on their inner selves, learning patois the Berlitz way and devaluating the moral worth of that faith with their shameless parody. The real rastas in black skin and tangled dreadlocks, wooly red green and gold hats and red green and gold wristwatches (Jah tolerates flash), bloodshot eyes and upside-down grammar are altogether another cup of (herb) tea and are totally and beautifully out of our evaluating and comprehending scope. We may keep trying (Slash interviews with the occasional natty musician) and here and there a minor point gets across but basically it's there and we're here and their music drifts in our direction and keeps a few sensitive ones in our camp awake but we'll never see the party where it originates. THAT'S BECAUSE I DON'T BELIEVE WE WERE FUCKIN' INVITED, AND PARTY CRASHERS ARE LOATHSOME PEOPLE. The Jah warriors who were present at that convention were not recruiting, their preaching was no more urgent than it always is, on record or in the flesh, (like rosary reciters or mantra mumblers, it's just an everpresent hum, part of the machinery), sentences started with the usual list of Selassie's glorious titles and deeds and ended with Selassie I because that's the only way to speak in their world, what white boy or white girl makes of it is irrelevant and not part of the pattern. They had accepted the invitation simply because the music us americans were here to discuss and praise is their only means of livelihood and a new market is always nice. So besides a few black entrepreneurs in the trinket business (get your enameled Ethiopian flag pin while they last, I did, I'm a sucker for any symbolic jewelry, the more the better) the vinyl business (Tony G, Barton) or the t-shirt and ready-to-frame-prints business, the blacks in attendance were musicians. And *music* is their business, not salvation. But as Tapper Zukie used to sing, "No business like Jah Jah business", it permeates everything the faithful do, music most of all, so talking business is almost like talking religion and vice versa, and after a few spliffs of synapse-frying potency it gets really muddled and slippery for logic minds. After the last panel, during which the press twats // felt like one but why not generalize?) tweeted about this and that Winston Rodney (also known as Burning Spear), Ras Michael (minus the Sons and Daughters of Negus tribe of his), Sky High (a young jamaican producer looking more zoned-out than the entire population of Nepal) and a fourth america-based jamaican artist whose name I forgot but whose common sense and analytical perception of the present company rather stunned me, sat on the podium and separately stated their feelings about the occasion, the future of the venture and the future of mankind in general. The microphones did their best to be worthy of the historical moment but the Spear's message came from too far within and expired on his lips (his immensely sad eyes were closed throughout), Sky was too high for sound emissions and Ras Michael threw the (Good) Book at us, fire, brimstone and thunder and my ears were ringing long after. The fourth panelist (I will forever cherish the visual memory of THAT panel of experts! – more like an Old Testament High Court, african version) took no extreme position and expressed a relative trust in the outcome of all this. Then it was the seated audience's turn to speak its mind, ask questions or suggest solutions. That's what everybody was here for anyway, to solve the reggae problem, to figure out how to cultivate the stuff under unfavorable conditions, and up to this the panels of big and small shots had not been the most enlightening (more later). But here were the rare and delicate plants themselves (okay, I'll drop the analogy) and they didn't seem to have any good tips, advice or plan of action. They accepted every one's humble reverence matter of factly, shed no discreet tears of gratefulness or no light on the dark future. Definitely not helping us helping them. They were asked about playing music for the california heathen, when and where and why not now or tomorrow on my front lawn and remained noncommittal and elusive. They were asked how much and they said a fair amount: this was a real shock to many in the yankee reggae ranks who always took it for granted that the joy-of-playing-for-the-people is the greatest wage of all. Right then the good vibrations around us took a real blow. Air fares were discussed, quick calculations were made concerning the most economic shipment of a whole tribe like the Negus bunch, accusations of materialism were hinted at by both sides but the rastas kept their karma spotless by quoting the Bible, give unto Caesar what . . . la la la and unto Jah what is due to Jah, meaning don't give us that shit you want our culture that's your problem we want your dollars in return, that is the only thing you have in this country of yours that will do us any good. As the Spear sweetly put it, reggae is priceless, you all agree, then any price, no matter how high, is a bargain. It was expressed in a more noble and parabolic manner of course. Ras Michael defended this stand rather vehemently, fire and brimstone again and shame on the lot of you Philistines for not knowing your place. As he spoke I realized that with the wool turban, the beard and the reflector shades he looked more like a third world guerrilla leader than a love spreading minstrel, which made me strangely happy. Universal love my ass, our reality is stronger than yours was the message. It ended shortly after on a bigger question mark than it had started with, there were cracks in the unity of the brethren and universality was further away than Addis Abbeba. But the real thorn in the side was how unimpressed the rasta ambassadors truly were with the caucasion converts and aympathisers. At an earlier discussion one of the radio participants from Canada had made me cringe with his saintly holier than thou role playing, his rasta "faith" reeked of hippie consciousness after a major overhaul, the hair has been easily adapted to the new life since cutting it wasn't even necessary (what luck!), the all important adaptation to a new age had been accomplished quite painlessly and he was ready once again to pollute the world. Significantly, he hardly talked music or records, the spiritual message behind was what mattered, and I say unto you sinners yak yak yak. His airwaves slice must be more fun than Oral Roberts. Later I spotted the same white zealot behind a display table, selling his contribution to the reggae takeover, an "Ital cookbook"! Ital, my little children of darkness, is the rasta version of organic living, a collection of no-nos and meticulous habits for the sake of your inner and outer purity, and I'll bet my hottest dub release he adapted it from the macrobiotic one he used to peddle in renaissance fairs and other gentle gatherings of the good old days. Ranking Lea Jeffrey, my partner in reggae pushing and praising for this rag, realized halfway thru the afternoon that he didn't like most reggae lovers after all, but I have doubts as to some of these people's genuine affection for the music, the SOUND, the RHYTHM, the PULSE, the sensual, emotional reality of it. Whenever music was being played on the sound system in the adjacent room hardly anyone moved to the beat although you could cut it with a machete. A couple of girls (white) in rastafarian earth mother garb halfway between Oregon commune and shantytown basket peddler style did physically react to the beat but it was the wrong beat, like a bad case of cramps and a painful urge to go to the powder room

REGGAE IN AMERICA . . . Well, come to think of it . . .

put to music. Anyway rasta ladies are not for dancing, they are for reproduction and chores around the shack and girls who REALLY can dance to the stuff like your preacher would sell his soul just to watch once are on the bottom of the list in rasta ratings, they also use make-up (a sure way to damnation – reggae songs are full of warnings on the matter) show their bodies (double damnation with no parole), believe in birth control (damnation ten times by ten and no dessert) and are pretty much the essence of Babylon. Seen? Incidentally, the unashamed rasta sexism leaks thru a fair section of the music and displays contradictions within the system of faith that should bother the white liberal devotees. I just find it funny, but I'm as warped as they come.

Not all participants were hypocrites and raving fanatics, but their presence distorted everything, it added an ill-defined sickly aroma to the proceedings. There was also a press panel where participants (from Rolling Stone to Slush to Billboard or Record World) explained their delicate positions or their admirable credentials in the reggae wars and where I and I tried to dissassociate this here mag from the higher consciousness race the afternoon threatened to turn into by adopting a flippant ha ha tone while enunciating our own punkish tenants of faith on the matter, mainly my admiration for reggae's ability to make driving in L.A. traffic fun and rewarding, our emphasis on the unjustly looked down upon dub and talk-over styles and their unique richness and energy, not forgetting reggae skanking as the perfect complementary physical activity to the demanding pogo ritual. As there were some nervous giggles and puzzled stares in my audience (Ras Michael and the 3 other musicians sat immediately opposite, front row, FUCKIN STARING straight at my white unconverted mug with no trace of expression throughout, and I started feeling like a fifth-rate minor devil within Linda Blair who's been spotted by an Olympic team of exorcists brought in straight from their Vatican training field. I quickly stopped the aesthetic maneuvering and pacified the assembly with a sincere tribute to the soulful quality of the music and our genuine punky white scum needs for soul as well as rhythm, and a great-to-get-drunk-to quality. I got off lightly.

Panel-wise not much more needs to be analyzed, radio people played roots and hipness comparison games with each other, a couple of participants disagreed with some jerk's slimy establishment cliches about the need to play the softer, more mellow reggae before attempting the real thing, presumably in another 5 years when california has had its fill of John Holt and Byron Lee; the hippie was told reggae should flaunt its hardest side and didn't need no Eric Clapton no siree, of course the hippies happened to be from one of the biggies in FM land and the purist was only part of a minor outlet so it was easy to see why things are the way they are, the Police gets on but Clint Eastwood doesn't. And the "record company" panel was self explanatory, as no one from any label showed up to defend policies or lack of such. Even the Mango/Island rep was doing something else that day although it's their fuckin' commercial future us idealistic pathetic hopeless lot was trying to give a hand (job) to. And United Artists could have sent someone from the lower echelons, it would have meant that at least one of their employees now knew of the existence of their rather extensive reggae samplers collection, as someone there would undoubtedly have mentioned said records' existence to the poor thing. But ignorance shall prevail in the land of baldheads.

On the retail/wholesale distributing front everyone explained their headaches, token concessions and pipe dreams, high prices were nicely justified, inavailability of product was blamed on the source itself, Jamaica, land of Untogetherness and business irrationality. Of course we knew that, just thought there was room for improvement, like more than twelve LPs to choose from on any given visit to your local pusher. There were a few good news like distributing outfit Jem now handling Trojan material, which at least will help popularize the early ska/rock steady roots as Trojan sits on vast collections of the stuff and has started re-issues of every size. But Jamaica itself will remain unpredictable in the supply area of the biz and the west coast especially will go on being the cultural boondocks. L.A. more than S.F. as usual. All of which I could have figured out alone. A Licorice Pizza spokesman sheepishly hinted at possible improvements in the chain's reggae policy while moaning about marketing difficulties, dubious selling potential and the dictatorship of profits and could have stayed in bed for all he explained, while at the other end of the merchants' spectrum the Rhino collecting fanatics talked retail price war, an area where they nobly lead the way. All the panelists went out of their way to assure the roomful that money was the least of their worries, carrying ja sounds being such a reward in itself. I was moved.

The remaining moments of the marathon featured films and video tapes, social exchanges of no consequence (in my case) and the promised live music finale which we missed after over two hours of movie watching in a steamed up overcrowded no-smoking hall. "Children of Jah" was one of the films I counted on to erase all the bad feelings of the preceeding hours, but its limited subject matter and the poor viewing conditions (no criticism of the organizers, who did their very best obviously – more a matter of balance and timing) kept me only half interested.

The film was being edited up to the day before the showing and will receive additional adjustments later on, but judging from this it will still ultimately fail in grabbing anyone's attention for any length of time (it is at the present some ninety minutes long). The fault partly lies with this particular documentary's subject matter, the eclectic but unspecial Soul Syndicate, reggae's number 1 studio band. The group has an impressive history that can be followed in the liner notes and credits of an astounding number of jamaican records thru the past decade, when they got credited at all.

There is no doubt as to these individual's importance to the sound of contemporary reggae, they probably are behind many of the style variations that occurred (a great bit shows lead guitar Earl "Chinna" Smith playfully demonstrating the ska rock steady reggae progression on an acoustic guitar, half naked and blending in with the surrounding jungle), but an hour and a half of unintelligible reminiscing (subtitles are planned for the commercial version), esoteric philosophizing on rasta and music, rasta and everything, everything and rasta can really numb you, no matter how picturesque the settings and the faces. The music segments focusing on the Soul Syndicate outdoor practice sessions are okay but far from great, (the opening tune featuring Tony Tuff on talkover is the best as the band sticks to its back-up role) and the occasional acoustic solo or duo spots of alternating band members remain filler material, fun but hardly essential, especially when you start thinking of the multitude of major artists never captured on screen. One such giant injects the documentary with true relevance, the great Augustus Pablo, prince of rockers' dub and key figure in the entire ja world of sound. Pablo speaks and plays his minimal melodica while his young protege Hugh Mundell sings the blues, natty version, in the most striking new voice to come out of the island since Dennis Brown. As most of the film's music sections, this takes place in some garden of Eden location inland and one almost yearns for a paradise that never was. A few more scenes of beauty such as this incredible moment of timelessness, a couple of vocal trios sweet harmonizing upon the Syndicate's reliable backing and director Jerry Stein could have made a believer out of a Santa Monica Civic bouncer. Unfortunately his film rambles on, the rastas smoke their mind-shredding herb and babble more than explain, puff some more till they disappear in a cloud of smoke, while old women chew on their gums and naked children stare at the camera, just idyllic vignettes that involve no one but other weed users. At least I wanted a glimpse of a sweaty sound system week-end dance but kept getting grown-up men turning into children or the surrounding vegetation. Brother Ranking Jeffrey whispered he was off to catch Black Flag or U.X.A., no doubt fearing permanent brain damage and I realized that no matter what they say the best you can do with alien cultures is extract what you need and leave the rest to its rightful owners, there is no universal solution or language, not even in music.

Shortly after I and I and I split the scene, my commitment to the bloody music these people have in their hearts and souls unshaken by the parasitic "reggae lovers" trying to hitch a ride on other folks' freedom train but my previous genuine desire to show the world the intricacies and importance of jah music and related offshoots almost totally cancelled and forgotten. I think I even understood the mysterious dreads a bit better, seeing first hand how THEY were in no great need to reach out, please or impress the white consuming public with their art. Marley pulled it off but still keeps his distance with Babylon, the others know success will be nothing but another proof of Babylon's vulnerability, for no one but themselves and their people truly understands what they sing and play. Commercial success would not mean acceptance, simply a cultural bargain, and when bargaining you take your sweet time no matter what.

The next day the reggae special on Santa Monica's KCRW lasted five hours and some of the experts, fans and artists of the day before repeated their various pitches and heartfelt propaganda for the listening audience. Reggae, Ethiopia, Haile Selassie in all his forms (cept dead) were praised, waved and raved about, american indifference was lambasted but cognescenti were lauded and hall-of-famed, records were spinned and admired, Burning Spear was given a microphone and the outside world told to behold, an out of town lady disc-jokey tried to extract the word "Africa" from her baby for Ras Michael's benefit but the kid stuck to his guns, (I'll say Africa when you tell me the implications, mother or not you ain't the most trustworthy being I've dribbled on. .) the show went on much too long but minorities, especially aesthetic minorities, have a tendency to go overboard at the 1st sign of strengthening. I left natty in this mixed company, stuck some vintage intensified ska nonsense on the machine and felt relief and joy for the 1st time in two days. Still free from the clutches of yet another subculture (one is plenty, even a great tolerant one with more dogmas than members) I tossed one of Selassie's lions by the tail and skanked to the liquor store.

—Kick a.k.a. Chatty,

schizophrenic no longer.

INTERVIEW WITH THE

LAST

photo Deborah Schow

by Gregg Turner
(Political assertion by Joe Nolte
conducted at The Church)

SLASH: "60's", "punk", "pop", "pogo", – "folk-rock" – these seem to be the buzzwords that've cropped up to describe your sound. Do you see this as a personality-crisis of sorts, or merely a tribute to the band's, uh, eclecticism?

JN: We're eclectic in the sense that the focus of the Last's music, lyrics, vision is not one-dimensional. It's multi-edged and mysterious. There's a mysterious aura to the Last which I think suggests . . .

SLASH: Power-pop?

JN: No! We're a punk band devoted to LA's punk scene. We don't have uniforms, we don't dress up to go on stage, we're totally anti-theatric, anti-image. ANTI power-pop. I *hate* that fucking crap. 20/20, The Naughty Sweeties, that kinda shit. I'm a fan of hardcore punk-rock and the LA faction that that involves. These people, the punk scene as it exists here at The Church or the Hollywood and Western building, the Anti-club or the old days of the Masque – these people are like the only real people that exist. The only ones that count. We used to share a practice studio with 20/20 for a time and we were totally ignored by the punk contingent – they wouldn't have anything to do with us. I'd say, "Oh shit, this is totally fucked." And Steve Allen would say, "Hey, who cares, it's only 300 people – we're gonna reach a *mass* audience." Fuck that – the only way to be real, for me to be writing something – is if that certain faction of people are hip to what we're doing. I'd rather appeal to 100 punks than to say, 50,000 power-pop queers.

SLASH: Yeah, but there's a lot of your fans with a different idea of what you're about, why they relate to you and it doesn't spell p-u-n-k.

JN: A lot of people that like us, the fact that they listen to us is their one and only redeeming grace.

SLASH: The audience that comes to watch The Last probably aren't the more vitriolic Fear or Black Flag partisans.

JN: Yeah, so instead you get idiots in thin ties and collared shirts coming up to you and sayin', "Oh wow, you guys and 20/20 are my favorite bands."

SLASH: That makes you wanna puke?

JN: They're all such morons.

SLASH: You want fans to pull you over and say, "Hey, X, The Crowd, The Germs, Fear, The Love Butchers, and The Last are LA's best."

JN: Absolutely.

SLASH: Nervous Gender, Wall Of Voodoo and The B-People?

JN: One of my goals for 1980 is to play with X. X are fucking *God!*

SLASH: Your association with Bomp records and Greg Shaw has done little in the way of punk credentials.

JN: Back around the time of the Masque we were just a struggling band. Greg Shaw comes up and says, "I wanna sign . . . etc." Mostly on the basis of our single "She Don't Know Why I'm Here" – which we put out ourselves. So we said, "Yeah" cos nothing else was really happening, this being just before Shaw went into his power-pop tailspin and lost all credibility whatsoever. Like, we hadn't been approached by anyone else and if it hadn't of been for Shaw we wouldn't have had the album out at all. He financed and distributed the entire operation. Then all of a sudden he started owing a lot of people a lot of money and ultimately fucked himself up for good. He wants to do a whole lot of stuff and spreads himself too thin. He's screwed up in two ways: inept management and the power-pop thing. You don't hype things before the fact and that's what he did. I mean do *you* wanna take credit for predicting the success of the Knack and 20/20?

SLASH: Guilt-by-association too: Bomp = power-pop = The Last.

JN: Well, we're presently in the process of eliminating the association.

SLASH: Do The Last have a political stake in the LA-scene?

JN: We're subversives. Our political investment comes down to *tricking* these pop-nurds with familiar musical territory – chords, melodies, etc. – and leading 'em away to the punk side of the turf. Away from all that pop shit. Trick them into liking punk by slipping things in when their defenses are down. By fooling and deceiving you can recruit more individuals for the punk contingency here.

SLASH: So where does The Last fit into the scheme of this? You're not exactly hitting Fear-type "1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4" countoffs or forcefeeding excessive amounts of vile atonality down the throat.

JN: Those wimps like all that pop-shit to begin with cos they can't think; morons like that oughta be just as vulnerable to digging fast pogo-stuff – which I consider our music to be – and punk vision. I see The Last as the bridge to *convert*. If some of our music's pop, it's the only pop stuff I listen to. Selling is not selling out and it's vital to get an influx of new people, new *money*. You've gotta get the hippies to go see X, cos then X makes 1300 dollars and they can play whenever and wherever they want, bring all these new bands in and subdivide the exposure.

SLASH: But your songs deal with chord changes pleasing to the ears and minor-key melodies with more boy-girl/romantic notions than say a typical *punk* band would have in the course of 20 minutes worth of "Fuck-the-world-I-hate-everyone-let-me-loose-cos-now-I-wanna-kill" type atonality and misanthropic impetus. If punk-I.D.'s the trump card here how come no bonafide examples of such in your set? Like "Manimal" by the Germs or something with similar earmarks . . .

JN: We've been practicing "Wasted."

SLASH: Yeah?

JN: Lookit – just because we use melodic aspects in our music doesn't mean we *aren't* "Fuck-the-world-I-hate-everyone." We're a group of people that used to get *shit*. From school, girlfriend says "fuck off," bouncers hassle me – the whole world's coming down on me. Then we get on stage and it's like *revenge!* Like, "I survived fuckers, here I am, *blam!!!*" The Last is revenge for a lifetime of traumas – the emotions of rising above all that other crap and winning out in the end. When we run through our set it's this feeling of pissed-off retaliation that translates into punk-rock terms in my mind . . . Hippies call us punks, punks call us power-poppers – which is almost worse than being called hippies. It's too easy to typecast groups and their sound without responsibility to what's really going on. That's how The Last have become plugged as a 60's-revival sort of thing. Like art-damaged in this town is a throw-back to the Warhol school of thought. It's the same mentality that led to the glitter scene. So now all the glitter faggots have gone punk-rock cos it's an excuse to wear make-up. But whether it's art-casualties listening to anything that's strange, Huntington pogo-maniacs listening to anything that's got a beat and sounds like the Sex Pistols, or the power-pop queers that flock to Madame Wong's or the Troubador, most people are just idiots into their own individual camps.

SLASH: Has all this changed The Last's perspective and goals in confronting the power-pop/Hollywood-homo sublife?

JN: As I said, I think The Last are the link in broadening people's tastes, in changing and evolving the preconceptions of what those polarized into all the factions embrace. And it's worked. I think we've helped Black Flag and The Urinals. It's just helped in a lot of ways discreetly – areas people will never know about or see manifested in black and white terms.

SILENCERS

The Silencers are: Brian on guitar, Kat Arthur vocals, Matt drums and Steve Reiner bass. Steve reluctantly admits that he used to be in the band called Shock (who broke up a year ago). The Silencers started about 9 months ago, and were, at first, based both in L.A. and San Diego.

SLASH: Kat, what was the band you were in in San Diego?

KAT: The Dissidents. Then I went back to Jersey. In another band once we did something with Bukka White, that old blues singer. That was in Michigan. It was five, six years ago, a different type of music then . . . .

SLASH: How come you're less visible than most other bands, and we hear less about you?

KAT: We're not a social-climbing type of band, we kind of let it happen. And we're going thru a lot of problems getting our sound right. We wanted to do a 45 a while back . . .

BRIAN: And ran out of money.

MATT: We're about to now. We're recording in a couple of weeks.

KAT: The money is being put up for it, and it will be produced by somebody else. We don't know about the label yet.

SLASH: Where are you when everyone else is partying?

KAT: We're usually rehearsing. That's what we do, 5 or 6 days a week, 3 hours a day.

STEVE: Late night rehearsing, starting at eleven thirty.

SLASH: What makes you rehearse so hard?

KAT: Used to be Steven, he was a fuck, a tyrant. Now it's become mechanical.

SLASH: Did you give yourselves a deadline, like we'll make it by that date or forget it, or is it just faith in hard work?

KAT: The more you work the better you're going to sound, fuck, look at X. Those guys humped their fuckin ass off and it paid off. Within a year they sounded so much different.

STEVE: If it does not happen in L.A. well there's nothing holding us here. We can easily go to San Francisco, or move back East. I mean I prefer San Francisco. I'd go there tomorrow if the band would move up there.

KAT: But if you want to play this is the place. But if you're new here, unknown, the audience really puts you on the stand.

STEVE: There's a couple of people that follow us from gig to gig, it's nice to see some familiar faces out there. But in L.A. you don't get that anymore, they go here, they go there, then back here . . . .

SLASH: Have you done many out of town gigs and all that hard stuff?

KAT: We played the Squeeze in Riverside, which was fuckin' weird.

STEVE: And Costa Mesa, the Cuckoo's Nest. Also San Francisco.

KAT: The Cuckoo's Nest is fucked. They stick you on bills with bands you've never heard of, they play heavy metal, tell you to hurry up, act like assholes, then they give you chump change for money. Not worth the fuckin' drive.

SLASH: How would you define and describe your sound. compared to other L.A. music?

KAT: We try to put changes and shit in the music, some musical arrangements. I hate to see his guitar playing and his bassplaying annihilated by just playing 3 chords all the time. The Rezillos' bass player, that's one of our real favorites, Steve wants to be that kind of bass player, with a style that can be heard.

SLASH: Who comes up with the songs?

KAT: Mostly they're Steven's, and we all arrange them. "No restrictions", "God how I hate it", "Boyfriends/girlfriends", "All's quiet on the western front" are some of them.

STEVE: They all tell a story.

SLASH: Does it make it difficult writing them knowing a girl and not you is going to sing them?

STEVE: No, I write them for her to sing.

KAT: Or I'll change them.

STEVE: She can sing anything. And she won't skip out words.

SLASH: What's your connection with Mars studios? (Hollywood rehearsal studios where a few months ago the Silencers tried to set up regular weekly concerts. Violence and police attention put an end to that. Ed.)

BRIAN: I work there. I manage it.

KAT: We really wanted those gigs to work out. After the Masque there was nothing left. The camaraderie between the bands got lost.

STEVE: Once again everybody is waiting for something to happen . . .

KAT: And we're all going to get drafted! Something has really gone out. Now at any concert it's all these Huntington brats, Sid Vicious clones gettin in the fucking way.

SLASH: Kat, how did you decide to be in a band?

KAT: Sometimes in high school you go fuck, I'm not going to go to college and I don't even want to finish high school, so this is it. It's been weird ever since. I had to get on the wagon for a long time, I used to get roaring drunk, get out of control . . .

STEVE: We've been in so many fights that way. At the Cuckoo's Nest she was spitting on people from the balcony, all the hippies below . . . a few were after her . . .

SLASH: Are you relatively confident with the future of the band?

? : Well now we got the gigs. When we came out Bace's Hall was ending, there was nowhere to play. We started at the Bla Bla. Now we have to find the RIGHT gigs. I don't even think about the record.

SLASH: Do you think you might have more appeal to the regular kids who haven't turned into punks?

KAT: Well, it's directed at them, the white bread from the valley. We get a good response from them.

STEVE: Yea, songs like "Daddy's gone mad", and our closing song "We're not the ones".

SLASH: In response to the Avengers? (We are the ones . . .—Ed.)

KAT: Yea, they were really self-righteous people. But they were cool, they could get away with it. We couldn't, we're not the ones.

SLASH: Is "leader of the pack" the only cover song you plan on doing?

STEVE: We're going to start doing "Connection", the Stones song. We just learned it.

SLASH: Matt, did you leave school to join the band? How do your parents feel?

KAT: He is still living with them, that's why he's clean and well fed.

MATT: My parents have been in the music business for 35 years, and they were just waiting for me to get into it. My father kept bitching at me: "When I was 18 I was already doing my first gig, I was on the road on my 19th birthday. ."

SLASH: Have you been drumming for a while?

MATT: 11 years.

SLASH: . . . . . ??????????? . . . . .

MATT: Of course, I started out with jazz, taking lessons from a studio jazz drummer and progressed into rock n roll. Now it's punk.

KAT: When I was around that age my mother smashed my radio. She couldn't take it anymore. WABC was coming out of my goddam ears!

pix: Philomena

THE SPECIALS

(2 conversations, one apology, one linguistic misunderstanding, one aborted racial confrontation, is this to go or will you eat it here????)

PART I

The Specials' instant star status in the States wouldn't have made it very easy to "get to know them", shoot the shit and talk about the weather. But where it REALLY got cute was when, to our genuine bewilderment, we were told by Chrysalis that the band were intent on *not* ever speaking to Slash as we were on the proverbial shit list. WHAAAAAT??? It sounded so ludicrous, like a case of mistaken identity, but Chrysalis was definite. It was Slash all right, we had said things about them that were most uncool and there was much resentment in their camp: A couple of issues back our english contact Mork Williams had attempted to cover the Two Tone Tour for the benefit of our readers and in his customary flippant manner had assumed that irony and role playing were part of the journalistic tradition and would be taken as such by the people that mattered (Don't frown, it's about to become painfully crystal clear.) Throughout his article the daring fool had tossed about words like "nigger" while describing the effects of the Specials' multi-racial style and unspoken philosophy on the british youth and british culture. He had momentarily assumed the formless racist stance of the average uneducated lad on the street, the better to stress the real audacity of the Two Tone wave, and if the word "nigger" could convey this unspoken everpresent climate of racial misunderstandings and tension you find in the lower echelons of society, even rock n roll society, and the hopeless contradictions that exist in fans that are able to make anti black statements while at the same time dancing to the black music, then the word "nigger" would be used without a second thought. Obviously (now) a second thought would have helped. We've used the word so many times in these pages or let others use it that we thought the whole fucking point of our rudeness and foulness of language was understood. It's not words that hurt and repress and oppress and discriminate it's laws and feelings and fears and prejudices and double standards, just like it's not swastikas that put people in camps and torture chambers and mistaking symbols for the real thing is a waste of time and a waste of righteousness. If we were anti-black there'd be more effective ways to get the message across than by using naughty words (in this case a word that happens to be an intrinsic part of the black street vocabulary). We could start by refraining to rave and rant about major black artists in the reggae and rhythm and blues world. We also use other words that haven't yet gained the seal of approval from official culture because it's good to see the proper respectable public still wince and cringe as if it fuckin' mattered. Eventually it won't. Eventually. But obviously some of us honkies sometimes get carried away with wishful thinking and our linguistic probes are translated as plain and simple insults. In this case Lynval Golding and Neville Staples, the two black members of the Specials, had been sincerely offended by the language used in this otherwise rather complimentary piece on their band and their mission in the music world. Our flippancy and refusal to play hypocritical games and follow conventions had backfired, and we stood accused of being what we loathed. Bad, *bad* move, not really on a scoop-obsessed journalistic level 'cos that never matters much and anyway we found out that our Vancouver correspondent had already conducted an interview with two Specials and therefore there was no major reason to argue or plead anymore but because we've always prided ourselves on being ruthlessly honest and to the point, and had been misunderstood. Being hated or despised by people we had never met personally but whose accomplishments and talents we sincerely admired from the beginning was horrible and frustrating. And so the game of trying to be granted an interview went on. The rarely invoked "Slash Code of Honor" was at stake. But before we proceed with the whole crazy matter one obvious and inevitable thing must be done, even if there is now no particular pressure to do so, 'cept inside ourselves. So we sincerely apologize to Lynval, Neville and other members of the band who were offended by the language used in the article. No racial slurs were intended and we hope that it did not in any way help to propagate any racist values or attitude. Next time we happen to use the highly explosive word (as there still are no taboos 'cept stupidity) we will be certain the context it is used in makes our stand on the matter less equivocal. Still I am perfectly aware of the social situation in England at the moment and realize that in a country where massive deportation of minorities is a frighteningly appealing concept to a growing number of misinformed confused segments of the population it is easy to be emotionally triggered into a defensive stance.

Up to the last minute it did not look as if we would talk to one or more of the Specials during their Los Angeles visit. We did have the Vancouver conversation but the way we looked at it there was some unfinished business to take care of and we wouldn't be given the opportunity to do so. Then on the last afternoon we were notified that some band members would talk to one of us as requested. Who might that be we inquired? Just Lynval and Neville, they're waiting for you. Well, I tried to recall a few prayers and headed for the chit-chat. I knew I could prove our innocence if I was given half a chance. Pressure can make you eloquent, and by then there was enough pressure in my head for a Castro-length speech.

Finally nothing happened in the way of showdown. Neville and Lynval must have changed their minds and were nowhere to be seen, the Tropicana was swarming with journalists, photographers and parasites wanting to rub their noses and their lenses in the black and white checkered flag of the conquerors and I ended up talking to Roddy Radiation, his bag of dirty laundry resting between us on the hotel bed. Roddy didn't seem to know or to care much about the Slash boycott by his pals and so we talked about England, America, life, health, teenage fads and the strange turns one's fate sometimes takes. The black and white matter was not even mentioned, which is probably the way it is supposed to be, eventually.

Roddy used to be in a rock n roll group called the Wild Boys, just before the "punk thing" took off. They play the Lou Reed/Stooges type of sounds (the drummer is now with U.K. Subs) and, Coventry being a pretty small town, Roddy would often run into Jerry, now singer for the Specials. Once they ran into each other in a pub and Jerry asked Roddy if he would play lead guitar for a session Jerry's band was doing in London. ". . So I got a bit drunk and forgot all about it, and next morning there was this taxi outside and someone banging on the door. I went down to the session, and joined the band after that." And, two years later, Roddy admits to sometimes finding it a bit strange to be travelling extensively, playing a music he wasn't even listening to then. ". . Imagine, driving down Hollywood Boulevard in a big car . . . !!!" No big deal says I, it's just a boulevard after all. Roddy disagrees. "It is (a big deal) for a guy who was a painter decorator for a local corporation for eight and a half years." And he points out that hardly anyone really gets a chance to break the pattern of their life. ". . . I was about to settle down just before I joined the Specials. It cracks me up when I think I would have become a normal bloke, saving up for a new car . . . Up to four months ago I never flew in a plane you know. . . ." I ask if he really enjoys touring then? His enthusiasm is, to say the least, restrained: "I think I've aged about 5 years since I've been here. I haven't seen much of anywhere, you even forget where you are sometimes. . ." And, like with the Madness gang, family separation seems to affect him more strongly than most rock n rollers one usually meets. "Me mum is a bit fed up, your friends and family just don't get to see you. ."

I ask if his exhausted/about-to-drop look of the night before at the end of the second set is the way he always feels at the end of a gig. Not quite, he just hasn't been eating for two days (the heat) and ". . it's really hard sometimes. These two shows a night are ridiculous, we shouldn't have gotten into that situation. But then we'd have to play bigger places . . . . Touring is hard. If you don't watch it you end up burning yourself out so easily . . . . Like during the Two Tone Tour . . . it's very hard to say look, I don't want to party, I don't want to get drunk, I just want to go to sleep tonight." What about your impressions of american audiences, what do you think you're bringing to them? Roddy does not want to make any generalizations. Yet he suggests that "it would be nice if we could change America just a little bit, like get the kids into a teenage cult thing, dressing kind of the same, they'd enjoy themselves more that way . . . But it seems they're all still into Woodstock . . ." Have you had much contact with the kids here? "Well, the Americans we tend to meet, the ones that come backstage are loonies, you know what I mean? The more desperate characters that grab your arm and want to talk to you, or the nutty crazy girls that want to sleep with you or something and the guys that want to get you into smack . . . ."

Yep, I suppose you get that type too. But Roddy seems quite philosophical about it all, although a bit green and drawn-looking. When they get back to England they'll start on a new LP, on which he hopes to see perhaps more than one song of his. He doubts there will be many ska covers, as they got rid of all those on the live E.P. currently burning the charts. They most likely will produce it themselves, trying to recreate their stage energy by recording parts in some sort of "live studio" situation. "You know, get a few friends, have a little party and play . ."

Two Tone will go on of course although (in spite of an overabundance of ska rock steady newcomers and imitators such as the Bodysnatchers and Bad Manners, the latter one Roddy sees as closer to Madness than his band) they're finding it hard to find new bands for the label, as "all record companies are running around to these groups, offering as much money as possible". Ska is going to be big is the latest word in promo departments, and the chase is on. Roddy remains cynical as far as the big conglomerates' intentions. "I've heard rumors of how some companies are going to milk whatever band they got dry, and then drop them." We both nod sadly. It's time to let the guy do his bag of laundry in peace and I thank him for his time and the nice and unexpected interview. Roddy assures me it was nothing, and that anyway all those "interviews and things are not important at all. The music is, and people should listen to the music." I nod sadly and leave. I suppose I should be doing my laundry too.

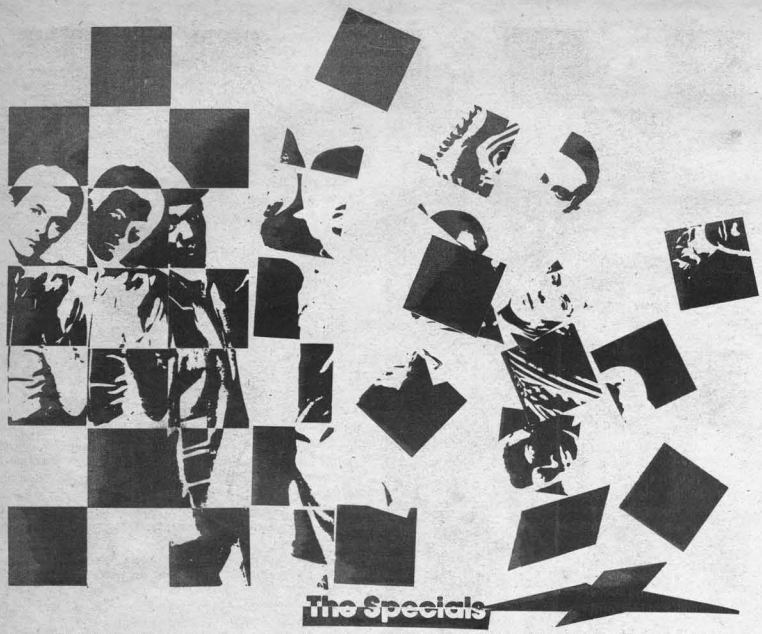
—Kick

PART II

THE SPECIALS IN VANCOUVER

by Phil Smith

I think it is the Specials album that truly deserves the "London Calling" title. It has a real sense of the city, the brick houses, mothers hanging out their wash. The music is refresh-



ing – a definite departure from the vertical wall of sound. All the instruments slide in and out of one another, every song brimming with hooks, despite Costello's botch up of the production: the mix (upfront drums, buried guitar and undermixed echoed vocals) seemed a half hearted attempt to reggaefy the group. However their concerts erased any doubts concerning their musical muscles.

I spoke to Terry (vocals and Rod (guitar) before their Seattle concert supporting the Police.

SLASH: You guys began as the Coventry Automatics . . . .

TERRY: Yeah, about two and a half years ago.

SLASH: It's very hard to describe the Specials music. When you started was it based along the same lines?

TERRY: Yeah, the seven of us with seven different influences – everything from punk to northern soul & it started off as a punky reggae band, but it's developed into what t is today, which is . . . a punky reggae band.

ROD: Not really.

TERRY: Of course it is, it's like a new wave band isn't it?

SLASH: The band started two years ago in the midst of the punk explosion. Were the members of the group involved in what was going on? It seems like the Specials literally shot out of the other side of punk.

TERRY: We were both in I suppose you'd call them punk groups or new wave groups before we joined the Automatics who were an earlier version of the Specials.

SLASH: Cause it seems the only equivalent over here to ska would be the Motown stuff of the mid-sixties – were the band listening to ska when it . . . .

TERRY: No we've got lots of influences. Brad, the drummer, is mad on Motown.

ROD: Like, that's the first music I listened to about 11 years ago because of my sister's roots and I used to listen to what they listened to . .

TERRY: But like when you've got seven different people, all with different musical tastes, all of which come out in the music, like I'm more into the rock side of things.

SLASH: So you played through '78 as the Automatics – were there personell changes before you became the Specials?

TERRY: Yeah, the only person who wasn't in the Automatics was Brad, he joined when we were the Specials in January '79. We went through the first half of '78 as the Automatics and we had a support on the Clash tour and at the first gig of the tour we changed the name to the Specials.

ROD: We were having some trouble with another band in London which was called the Automatics and they were doing better than us at the time and they were threatening to sue us so on the way to the gig we put our heads together for a name and came up with the Specials.

SLASH: How did the idea for the two-tone operation come about – it seems to be as important as the music – the marketing strategy and image?

TERRY: When we recorded "Gangsters" we wanted it as a very underground thing so we tried to get the whole image of, like, the gangsters things and the organization things so we designed the two-tone man. It was specifically for "Gangsters", but "Gangsters" took off well so we got the chance of doing another single and an album and so on . . .

ROD: Like the record companies, before that, the offers we'd been offered were all bad deals so by starting our own, it enabled us to have more say about what material goes out.

SLASH: With the success of the band in England, do you find you're losing time to maintain the two-tone operation?

TERRY: No, we don't want it to be a massive deal, we want to still keep it not like a family business, but as small as we can. It's just a label, not a record company.

ROD: Not like massive offices and hundreds of secretaries – cause that'd be defeating what we were doing in the first place – it just loses the fun of it.

TERRY: The two-tone office is still Jerry Damners bedroom!

SLASH: The label has incredible chart success in England so far – six straight singles in the charts.

TERRY: Yeah, all top 20. .

ROD: We did a year, year and a half of slogging around the country and people didn't understand then what we were doing.

TERRY: We've just got our first number one in England (the live e.p.) and it's great. I mean, where were we when we found out? Oklahoma!? It's only the second live record to get on the board.

SLASH: Okay so it took a while for people to catch on to what you were doing. How did it come about that the Specials just took off?

ROD: Basically it was just deciding on an image. In the Automatics everybody had separate imges and it was very eye-catching but it just didn't work.

TERRY: Confusing for members of the audience.

ROD: It's like all of us on the album cover, it just had appeal.

SLASH: Given the racial tensions in Britain what sort of audiences do you attract? The Specials are unique in being a multi-racial band.

ROD: Yeah there aren't all that many, but I mean we attract anybody who likes the band, everybody, every mode of fashion. We've got a very large mod and skinhead following throughout Britain . . .

TERRY: But then again a lot of students, hippies.

ROD: Anything – we're not elitist, we'll play to anybody.

TERRY: Last night in Salt Lake City was like that, weren't it? A lot older audience than what we're used to, like married couples in their thirties and they all got up and danced and had a great time.

SLASH: Would you say audiences here are less intense than those in Britain?

ROD: I think that's because they haven't heard what we're doing before and I think audiences over here tend to be a bit more, well, let's just sit back and see what this band can do, like in England now, the audiences just come along and dance and enjoy themselves.

TERRY: It's like in America fashion is a very small thing. We've found that out by being here six days, people have mistaken us for everything from coming out of a mental institute to being in the air force, you know, they don't realize we're a rock band.

ROD: In England there's so many different teenage cults and everyone's got their own music and clubs they go to and it's a bit of a shock when we come over here and find there's not really any places like that. There probably is in places like New York and Los Angeles but certainly not in Salt Lake City.

SLASH: The reports over here on the two-tone tour, the fall one with Madness and Selecter was that it was more than just a tour, very intense, but also that there were problems with violence at the gigs.

ROD: One gig. There was a bunch of drunks, they just stormed into the place with cutthroats and just slashed anybody, it had no political bearings whatsoever – they were just fools.

SLASH: I think one of the reasons that the Specials are initially latched onto over here is because the album was produced by Elvis Costello. Were you happy with the production?

ROD: It was adequate, you know what I mean? It was like a co-production between us and Elvis. He worked and we worked and we got what we wanted.

TERRY: Elvis hadn't done any actual producing before, but then we didn't want a producer to come in and take over the whole L.P. and not allow us to put any of our ideas in. Maybe it didn't come out as professional as it could have been, but that's probably the nice thing about it, it's not got polished, it's more like old ska music and that. It's more of a feeling of going back to raw music, rhythm and blues ideas like the Stones and that.

ROD: You can hear people coughing in the background.

TERRY: It's like, New Orleans was great, we went to some of the clubs there, the jazz clubs, the old trad jazz, ska, rhythm & blues – all that is linked in little ways, you know.

SLASH: "Too Much, Too Young", the North American version was shortened, but the longer one on the British album seems totally improvised in the studio.

ROD: It was very much on the spur of the moment. . .

TERRY: A jam, more or less. We did that one in a different studio to the rest of the tracks on the LP.

SLASH: And that's on the live EP that's just come out?

ROD: Yeah, it's great – twice as hard and raw.

SLASH: A lot of references in your songs are very topical and specific to the English situation. Have you found there is barrier with North American audiences so far?

TERRY: No, but the thing is we've got a couple of songs which can apply in any situation, like "Nite Klub" – some of the places we've played over here really apply.

ROD: It applies more so here than in England, like night clubs are all a sit-down-table job, you know, very seedy.

SLASH: You have real problems with the "monkey men" over here too . . .

ROD: Yeah, like we played Oklahoma and there were bouncers patrolling the front, we told the audience to get up and sod the bouncers, they did and the bouncers couldn't do anything once a hundred people got up. (Unfortunately my solitary attempt at the Seattle concert was not so successful, resulting in instantly being thrown off the stage and a warning to stay put.)

SLASH: For the Specials, it has been the "meteoric rise to fame". How far do you see yourselves going and do you think you'll be able to stay in control?

TERRY: We are in control. Like we want to sell millions of records, there's no reason why we shouldn't, that's the reason for making a record, to sell it and to reach as many people as you can.

ROD: It'd be great if there were Eskimos listening to Ska!

TERRY: Basically all we do on stage is suggest, you know, that the majority of you at this gig tonight are under 20 and you're young, so why don't you enjoy yourself, you could get run over by a bus tomorrow.

I saw the Specials three times in four days. The Seattle gig was the best as the small and hostile audience forced the band to come out and play messy and angry music. By the end of the concert, Neville attempted to throw a monitor into the crowd, and was only held back by the determined effort of two roadies.

In Vancouver the ready-made adoration resulted in a superb musical presentation but lower excitement. Repeated live exposure to the band tends to emphasize their limitations. A song like "Too Much, Too Young" succeeds in spite of its apparent sexism, it genuinely hurts, but the moralizing optimism of "Up to You" and "Doesn't Make it Alright" is unfulfilling.

You're drawn into their world, a world that you leave behind at the concert hall. The Specials are hot – too hot. I have a terrible feeling that they are an instant hit due to their style, not their substance. The Specials deserve better than to be this year's Devo.

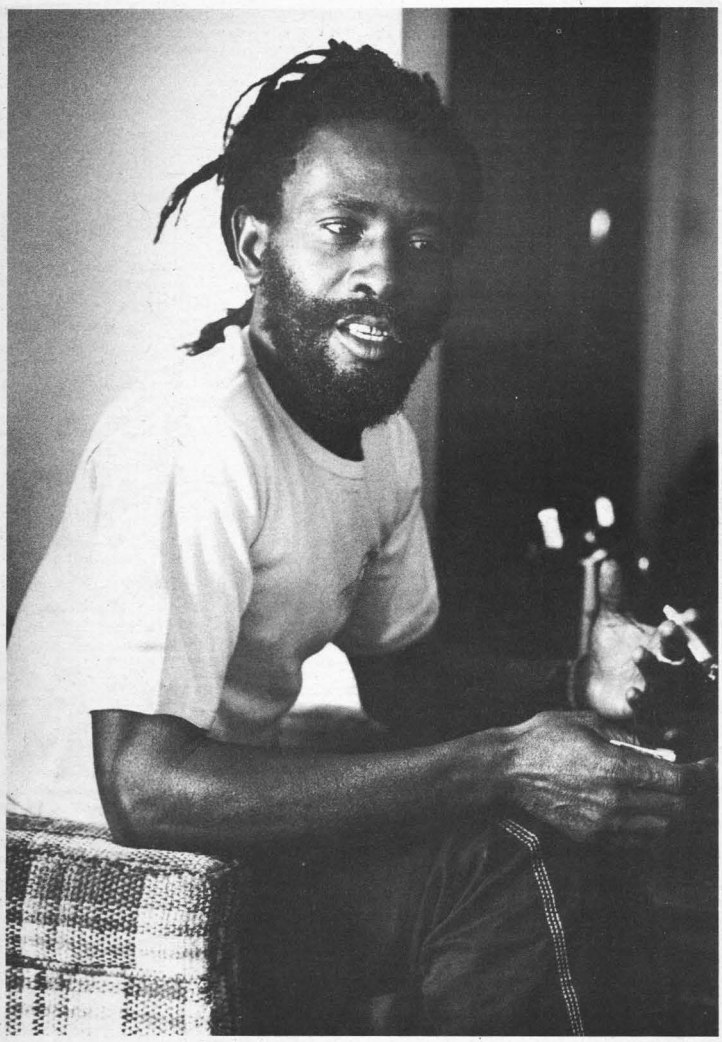


photo Scott Lindgren

BURNING SPEAR

In spite of Slash's now obvious stand on religious matters, rastafarian or other, we are very proud to offer this short conversation with Winston Rodney, founding and sole remaining member of Burning Spear, the most creative and influential source of roots reggae music of the last few years. Rodney, now also often referred to as Burning Spear, will shortly release his latest LP, entitled "Helm". Spear also produces other jamaican groups or artists who lean towards the roots sound (neo-african if you like) and his next recording ventures in that domain will be with the Jomos and Burning Junah.

SLASH: So what brings you to Los Angeles?
SPEAR: Musical Business . .
SLASH: Are you going to be playing around here or in England soon?
SPEAR: No. No. I've got to be certain things are straightened out. It's not the musical part, it's the business part, you know? We don't have plans to play. After business and certain things straightened up, then anything can come together. I can't really say "Yes, I'll play."
SLASH: But, sometime soon, maybe?
SPEAR: Maybe some time in the summer, after the album, and we take care of business.
SLASH: Are you working on a new album?
SPEAR: Finished. I was working on it, but I'm finished now. This album is called "HELM".
SLASH: Is this one going to come out in America?
SPEAR: Yeh mon, it will be everywhere around. I'm going to spread it.
SLASH: Where were you between the "live" album on Island and now? Except for "Social Living" you pretty much disappeared.
SPEAR: Seen! That I-man had to shape the way I-man deal with anger, so I set this to rest and really look within myself on a cultural level, dealing with reggae music and name of his Imperial Majesty. And come again and come so strong, for I-man come with this album called "HELM". So, I just rest. When I come, I come total musically.
SLASH: Did you release "Marcus Children" on your own label 'cause of business problems or something?
SPEAR: Yes, that album should have been released before I put it out, but still business problems caused it to not be released at the time it should be release. The business reach a stage now where I-man start realize and start see and know what's going on. All I can really say right now is, coming from where I am right now is, especially the publishing end, the publishers really having to deal with Burning Spear music. My own publishing thing comes straight to I-man, Burning Spear. It's a long time I've been in this business and I find myself with 5 youths, two go to school, and thing is, it costs money to support youths in school. If I-man start to get my money from the publishing, rather more than less, that's a good change.
SLASH: Did you like working in that movie, "Rockers"?
SPEAR: In Rockers? I liked my part in the movie. I like the whole t'ing about Rockers. It was only a song I-man sing, song by the name of "Marcus Say Jah No Dead". Yeah mon, I like that. It help the image of Burning Spear.
SLASH: Didn't you sing that near some place where Marcus Garvey first landed or something?
SPEAR: Not first landed. That's where Marcus Garvey from, in the parish of St. Ann's. He was born in the capital which is St. Ann's, just a few blocks opposite where I-man born. I was born on King Street, Marcus Garvey born a few blocks opposite. So my part took place in the old jail. I check that the first jail in my parish. I don't know if it was the first jail in Jamaica. That's where my part of the movie take place.
SLASH: Is the lifestyle in St. Ann's different than in Kingston?
SPEAR: Yeah mon. St. Ann's is country land. The city is the capital of Jamaica. My parish is on the north coast side. It's the same vibes, the same inspiration, the same everything.
SLASH: The jungle inspiration?
SPEAR: Same for all works. Most people in town don't really deal with it. You know, but it's just one togetherness, the vibration just corresponds.
SLASH: Isn't the jungle a big influence on you?
SPEAR: Yeah mon. When you get way back in the hills, and then the things come to you more clean and correct.
SLASH: Did you ever spend much time in Kingston?
SPEAR: Yeah mon. I grew up in that town.
SLASH: Do you use Kingston musicians?
SPEAR: Yes, many man come from town, but true to the music you have to stay. You don't have two different kinds of music, country music and town music, it's just one music. I come from St. Ann's, Bob Marley come from St. Ann's, Peter Tosh come from Westmoreland, Bunny come from Portland. Every artist come from a different parish, but everything goes on in town, so everyone leaves for town. The town is a big thing. That's where everything goes.
SLASH: Did you hear much American soul music in Kingston? Who really wrote "People Get Ready" anyway?
SPEAR: Umm? What the man say? I-man know about the Impressions singer . . . . Curtis? It's different "People Get Ready" from my "People Get Ready". Listen to Curtis now, I-man really like what the brother, he did with it. Seen? I really like that man when I first heard him on the radio station.
SLASH: But, you changed the message?
SPEAR: My message is a root-ish Jamaican message.
SLASH: There's more of a Marcus Garvey influence in your work than others?
SPEAR: Seen! I see that no one deal with Marcus Garvey in the music and Jah inspire that through me, that bit of work, yeah . .
SKY: The first man to sing of Marcus Garvey . . . .
SPEAR: The reason why I deal with Marcus Garvey more than less is for all the power and inspiration he gives. On this new album, called "HELM", I put upon it a song called "Follow Marcus Garvey's Footsteps".
SLASH: I saw a statue of him in the square at St. Ann's . . .
SPEAR: I still feel more respect should be shown of Marcus Garvey even in my town, where he comes from. There should be something more than a statue of Marcus Garvey in St. Ann's Bay. The whole image of Marcus Garvey should be respected more.
SLASH: When I pick up older albums, I find many of your songs were made popular by other people. Like "Gnashing of Teeth" by the Mighty Diamonds?
SPEAR: Yeah, "Weeping and Wailing", that was my song.
SLASH: And "Them Never Love Poor Marcus"?
SPEAR: No, I'm not sure. After me sing "Marcus Garvey", all them sing that. All them songs Studio One. I write the words, and all Studio One music. In them time, they rob ya of your share, ya know? So you find they put all this name on the record as if it's them write it, but it is just the way now, people really go for their music, and know it truly be write by Winston Rodney. But reason grows and knowledge starts to increase and we learn, and start exercising so all music from that time to this time, as long as it's Burning Spear write it, is in signature.
SLASH: You started off as a trio. Why did you decide to change?
SPEAR: It's not a matter of change. I work it out as one. Seen? It's a matter of three people doing their thing and one doing it as a work, when two not doing it as a work. There

was two men really, but them never take Burning Spear work seriously. The Burning Spear wasn't just three people. It was just Winston Rodney as Burning Spear, and from here on out, just take people, and people who can jam, so that all of us can work together. But togetherness just fall on I alone, so I have to go along with the work, and seen that the music wasn't just a little bit of material work. It was more than that. It was the work of his Imperial Majesty, universally, the work of each and every one, hundreds and thousands and millions of people getting something from my music, because music starts the light. So Burning Spear was really I alone.

SLASH: Were you always Rasta or was it something you became aware of?

SPEAR: From Creation, was from we black people was from. Seen? Rasta means black people. So regardless if you not dread or natty like I, as long as you black, you're Rasta. So regardless, a man never trim and seen him start with the music, can learn Dread, but not it's not the music that's Dread. It's about time him know that inside, the fullness of his Imperial Majesty. Seen? From the moment he's like I, he's a Rasta, seen? All black people are Rasta, it only takes some time before you realize the fullness.

SLASH: Are there false Rastas? Is it trendy for some?

SPEAR: There is no one alone in Rastafari to find false. Among several people you find false people.

SLASH: Do you think people of different races can have the same righteousness as Rasta?

SPEAR: Righteousness for each and everyone, and the fullness dwell within each and everyone, by one creator. There is but one Imperial Majesty, not two, one life, one everything. See you know just what to deal with, ya know.

SLASH: Oh, so you think many of the races have yet to realize, huh. Then Rastafari is just for blacks. The other races, where is their place?

SPEAR: It's about time that each and every one know where they're bound. I and I know where I and I are bound. I and I people are from Africa. I personally know that when each and every one should go back to wherever them belong, so we don't have anywhere to go except back to Africa. Regardless of who might want to accept us or not, but Africa is for I and I. I don't know where you are supposed to go. You're supposed to know where you're really from. You must know if America belongs to you. Or England. Or Canada. Or I don't know, but I know where I am from. I know my people's people are from Africa. Where do I-man really go?

SLASH: What? Me?

SPEAR: Yeah mon.

SLASH: I don't know. I'm cross-raced. I'm Mexican, English, French, and Chinese. Where do I go?

SPEAR: You'll have to hang on to the nearest one . . . . (everyone laughs)

SLASH: So, how far should an honest man go to defend himself?

SPEAR: How far? There can't be too far for a man to deal with honesty. There not a limit. Them just go upon with honesty, and the man who now deal fear couldn't reach you for a nyah. If like a man running has just shot, the man with honesty must catch the man, because honesty must conquer. Honesty is not part of the record business. Honesty is a part of Jah work, a part of togetherness. It's part of creation.

SLASH: Could you envision the Rasta taking over Jamaica. Running it as he sees fit?

SKY: That would really be something else . . . .

SPEAR: What is to be, must be, anyway, in Jamaican law. Any t'ing Jah say, them no have it done. Those and them who really control Jamaican law, or control country or state, those people don't know, or no matter, what can happen next second from now. Maybe as he goes to glory, (????—Ed.) you hear that the President of the United States of America is not president again. Jah said it so, you can't just listen in fear to anything now, coming from any other. Now's the time and anything can happen now, and everything is possible now. So when you say 'Why can't the Rasta take over the island?' Why just Jamaica alone? Anywhere can be taken over by any people. I know that. It's true, mon.

SLASH: Would the Rasta use violence to defend himself?

SPEAR: The defence and the kind of defence, depends on the kind of violence. What ask violence? You have to know for yourself. Now, I and I check full of violence, but while I see Jah must clearly live for I and I and not for violence, no. The few people who really try to fight I, it makes sense them never come to Selassie.

SKY: It's word, sound, and power . . . .

SPEAR: Outside of violence is where Jah works . .

SLASH: So, in a war, nobody wins, eh?

SPEAR: Yeah mon. The man who won't fight wins the war. (more laughing)

SLASH: Do you find it strange that most people who buy your records here are white?

SPEAR: No mon, not strange. For Jah surely say, the true I and I people don't know what we are dealing with. What we're dealing with, them just know. It's really just people like us get it to know and try to know what I and I deal with is something that any can get something out of . . . .

photo Scott Lindgren

SLASH: I was just thinking that you said all black people are Rasta . . .

SPEAR: Seen. Creative.

SLASH: And most American blacks have never gotten into reggae and seem to be into more material things than spiritual . .

SPEAR: You really touch a point! You really touch a point! Even I-man self see it. That black Americans them really keep away from the culture of I and I. Which for them, is culture too. But, it's like something that take hold of them, wherein they get no convenience to accept I and I culture, which is really closest to I and I people from that time. From Africa. I find as like the people I know come and are really just interested in getting everything off I and I, get everything off I and I. So ah myself, I'd like to know what happened. What really caused that. Why them people keep away from it when them should be more into it, and people like you are into it, write up in it, write up in it . . . .

SLASH: I've heard people say that the music is too much like slavery?

SPEAR: If the music is too much like slavery, and it's really black people saying that, them a joke. Then all I and I music is like that. And it couldn't be like that, no? It is really a memory I recall, that I deal with, ya know, and the will of Jah really put it in the law. It's an African root. So, it's true them lose themselves as people. People who come from Africa. But they are not different kind of black people. All black people's the same kind of people. So it leave it up to them. If them no really want to accept it, no one can force them to accept this message as seen. So the man who really say "Jah" and Jah know him, we have a place to put him man. The black man want know if everything is right and free, and the white man want to know if everything is right and free, and it's the same man will ever get. So, we know as a people from Jamaica, that most of them black people are our brothers and sisters, them, but through them so deeply American, them don't live with the convenience to know. But we are but the same.

SLASH: Would you ever consider changing the music to suit more commercial tastes?

SPEAR: I and I own feeling are, I think I not change my music. My music remain and I just build upon it, all the while, build upon it, make it harder, harder, each album, harder harder.

SLASH: So, your faith in success won't let you down?

SPEAR: Never man. Any time your faith lets you down, is when you let down yourself. As long as you don't let yourself down, your faith can't let you down. Once you fear yourself, everything's gone . . . . . .

Interview by RankingJeffrey Lea & Don Snowdon

photo Julia Gorton

(the conversation took place a few weeks ago while Lydia was in town by herself)

SLASH: Why are you here?

LYDIA: I came here as a holiday, just for a few days, to see some friends, tell them I was coming on tour with my new band, Eight Eyed Spy . . .

SLASH: How big a tour?

LYDIA: San Francisco San Diego Vancouver Portland Los Angeles Berkeley Stanford University, all the universities, only California. We're playing with some pretty strange people, mostly big timers like Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, ha ha ha ha, I want to open for the most conservative rock bands because I'm sure their audience will have a lot to say. We're playing with creeps like Lene Lovitch, a despicable hiccuper, I never did like incorporating hiccuping and burping with songwriting but obviously she's doing pretty good with it, and we're playing in New York with XTC in a week or two.

SLASH: What is the new band like?

LYDIA: Eight Eyed Spy is a pop band. Well, it's as pop as you can imagine me getting. There is George Scott, who used to be in a band I won't mention (Contortions — treacherous. Ed.), and other, you know, anonymous figures: Pat Erwin, James . . . Michael . . . it's a very good band. No amateurs. We're a pop band, and we're going to be a huge success.

SLASH: Even with the Tom Petty audience?

LYDIA: When we play there we're going to do a Tom Petty song. That's one reason I want to play with conservative rock bands: All my musicans are excellent, they are high-grade musicians who could show up all these fucking idiot Tom Petty players, and my point is to play with all those bands and do one of their songs every time so their audience realizes that *this* is modern pop music, not like Tom Petty's music which is about twenty years old; that music is twenty years too late to have any significance. This is our strategy, and if people are intelligent enough — of course how could they be intelligent if they're there to see Tom Petty — but if they were they'd realize that our music is pop music for now, not pop music like Herman's Hermits or the fucking Knack or any of that baloney, this is the music people would like to hear on the radio, aggressive and meaningful and with depth. .

SLASH: Do you sense more intelligence in the emerging new audience?

LYDIA: No, but I would love to educate them . . . but of course they're beyond help.

SLASH: What about the album? (Not released at time of interview — Ed.)

LYDIA: My solo album? It will be in the stores on Monday.

SLASH: Who plays on it?

LYDIA: Studio musicians. The music is completely different from Teenage Jesus, completely different from Beirut Stomp, completely different from Eight Eye Spy. You know how Teenage Jesus sounded, the most abrasive obnoxious sound you'd ever want to hear, well my album is very two-sided. On the first side I do Gloomy Sunday by Billy Holliday but I rewrote all the music. All that side is very slow and depressing, barbiturate-orientated cocktail music, it has the calming relaxing effect of a quaalude. However on side two — I got the guy who did the Flintstones music, I gave him my music and he arranged it for a big band, like a fifty piece orchestra, and I got Bob Quine of the Void Oids playing guitar over it, he was like god-sent. So what it is is all these cartoons, I stole the music for my songs from tv cartoons, and he just arranged it and put all these instruments, my lyrics, and Bob Quine. You know how idiotic the B-52's are, so fucking campy and pretentious, well this is almost actual big band swing stuff, but completely updated by Bob Quine and myself. Like Ricky Lee Jones would die if she heard it, which would be a favor to all of us. It's what she wishes she could attempt, it's not like fake jazz and pretending to be a beatnik, it's me in my usual way, but with something . . . . .

SLASH: How does the new approach fit in the New York style?

LYDIA: Which new approach? With my band the aggressive pop band?

SLASH: Yes . .

LYDIA: Put it this way: we've only played about 5 times, but the last time we did it was so packed they had to turn people away. For some reason we have this huge audience, which we never did with Teenage Jesus. I think the word is getting out and they want to see a girl with tits and ass singing up there, as there are no other girls in New York who have either tits or ass. I'm just a girl singer, I have given up guitar, this is my "guitar retirement" period. A girl singer just like the others, Janis Joplin, Helen Reddy . . . .

SLASH: Did the guitar frustrate you?

LYDIA: Why should I repeat? It was good enough, why would you want to hear more? Why? That was it, there's no more left. Why should I bore myself further? I have to do different things all the time, I don't have a one track mind. Well, I do, but not musically.

SLASH: Are you going to be a girl singer like Janis Joplin off stage as well?

LYDIA: No. But I have a gold lame dress. She's dead, and that's where she deserves to be. Most of the wise people are dead.

SLASH: Do you see yourself heading that way?

LYDIA: Aren't we all?

SLASH: I mean faster than the average?

LYDIA: I would love to. If somebody approaches me in the proper way, if they use the right vehicle I probably would let anybody kill me. But nobody is intelligent enough to guess the proper device I want. That's why I'm alive and not dead. When that person comes along I'll gladly submit to whatever, to do what they want, for what I want. Of course I want to die, who doesn't? And I don't have a death wish. If somebody is intelligent enough to conceive the right way, which I have already all pre-planned in my mind, I will more than readily submit, but very very few people could even have a basic conception of what I mean of course. They can sit home masturbating and try to figure it out.

SLASH: Is the relationship between sex and death . . . . .

LYDIA: Sex IS death. What good is death without sex? It's completely irrelevant then.

SLASH: Is the relationship of the two a future theme of the 80's?

LYDIA: I'm not involved with the 80's. It's unfortunate for me to be alive at this time, which is the most pretentious asinine concept of living I have ever heard. Everybody has this fuckin' thing about the eighties, the eighties, the eighties . . . I'd rather live in the forties. The 80's thing is more pretentious than punk rock or new wave. The Village People are into the eighties. It sucks, and it hasn't even begun. It's going to be much worse than the seventies. Fiorucci everywhere . . . . .

SLASH: How come you have a certain reputation for being quite a bitch to deal with?

LYDIA: I'm not bitchy to myself. And wait 'til you read the new press stuff. All the interviews I have done in L.A. with the trade papers . . . . They all think I'm quite charming and nice. To say I'm an obnoxious bitch is okay, but I have a lot more than that. Anybody who would classify me as just that is quite ignorant and has obviously never met me. I'm not single-minded. I'm not James Chance.

SLASH: Speaking of James Chance . . .

LYDIA: James who?

SLASH: James somebody and the Blacks who had an album you were part of. Was it your picture on the back?

LYDIA: I didn't have any part with any of that. What picture?

SLASH: The picture of the tied legs. .

LYDIA: Do they look like my legs?

SLASH: Yes.

LYDIA: Well, I have nice legs so I put them on the back of his cover. It was an unfortunate mistake.

SLASH: (inspired by news footage of Afghanistan on the soundless color tv) Any feelings about the possibilities of a coming war?

LYDIA: It makes me laugh. And I think it's about time, too. I like war. I think it has a way of cleaning out all the bullshit. There really is a need for it, especially in New York and Los Angeles, now, guerilla warfare, hand to hand fighting in the streets. It's a total reality, makes people realize . . . And you know how art has such a bad image, especially in New York, anybody who's unemployed is an artist, it's so gross. Well whenever there is a depression due to war, really great art usually comes from it, not the bullshit art they have now, but real real art with depth.

SLASH: Why is that?

LYDIA: Because misery inspires people. When you're happy and satisfied you're also very ignorant, like a big baby. It's mediocrity, and it's bad. But ups and downs everyday make you alert. And when you're alert you're productive.

SLASH: Do YOU have to be miserable to feel creative?

LYDIA: Miserable? Who, me? No. I am CONSTANTLY miserable, which means I am never miserable, because how could I know if I have never felt anything else to compare it to. It's like being bored. I am never bored. You have to get excited to know boredom, and I never get excited. It's not that I am emotionless or unsentimental, it's just that I tend to think very rationally, therefore you can't label my moods with such pre-set standards.

SLASH: So you can't think of anything musically exciting happening around you . . . ?

LYDIA: Besides my band?

SLASH: Besides your band.

LYDIA: No I don't. First of all because I never go out of my house unless I am playing, and secondly because I don't buy or listen to records which are a waste of money. How would I know what's going on? Thru word of mouth I hear a few things, but I don't think there's anything going on that is important or relevant or even fun to listen to, blah blah blah da da da . . . It's meaningless, you know, it's nothing. Nothing. And even if some if it isn't, it's never going to be meaningful enough for me. Why do I have a band? I do so I can be meaningful to myself. That's all the meaning I need. I need no more filler, no more of this wasteful bullshit that takes up my time, all this ridiculous excuse for entertainment. I don't have to listen to records *or* go out to clubs.

SLASH: What do you do at home with your time?

LYDIA: I don't do anything, I'm married. I look at my pets, I watch a lot of television, an excessive amount of it. I am completely addicted, and I didn't used to. It's there, it's a stimulant. And a pacifier. I like to watch TV.

SLASH: Do you wonder why? Is it because it confirms your nihilism?

LYDIA: Well, it's the most unrealistic and ridiculous thing that exists besides humanity. It's humanity times five. It's so inaccurate, and it's such a waste, you watch enough of it and you realize how completely useless it is to be alive. You know, it IS completely useless. Life is just time consuming, you're here to waste time until you die.

SLASH: Yet you still find reasons to go on recording, touring . . . . .

LYDIA: It's because I love myself, and I enjoy myself. I like sitting in my house by myself, just myself, not talking to anybody, not bothering with anybody. I am enough for me. Most people aren't enough for themselves. That's why they resort to being fans, buy records, try to be entertained. I can sit home and be very entertained. All by myself. Why? Because I have a very very vivid imagination. I don't need others to think for me, make records for me, I don't need other people for anything. But yes, I do like their company. I don't hate all the other people that are allowed to live . . . ninety nine per cent, maybe. But there are some people who can stimulate you, in one way or an other. I usually prefer the other.

SLASH: What can it do, your imagination?

LYDIA: Everything. I completely play-act everything. To put it in very simplistic terms, I just picture my face, my body, in every possible type of situation since the dawn of ages to now. I think of myself as every single female that has ever existed. I can sit for hours and hours pondering all this, seeing myself as Cleopatra or whatever, I don't need any other kind of stimulant. I'm here and I'm there.

SLASH: Do you have a favorite one among all your imaginary situations?

LYDIA: Yes I do, but I won't reveal it to this magazine, it would be total blasphemy. You want me to say I wish I was Sharon Tate, that's what you want to hear isn't it?

SLASH: No no no. It's the Cleopatra one that made me curious . . .

LYDIA: You want me to pinpoint one, when I have hundreds of thousands, that's not fair. If you were monitoring my brain waves, you could. But we're just having a conversation . . .

SLASH: Don't you think a professional psychologist would have quite a field day with you?

LYDIA: No, because as a matter of fact I studied psychology. I was going to be a psychoanalyst when I was younger and studied it extensively, so they have nothing on me now. That's why I am what I am, miserable, happy, contented, bored, everything. It's because I allow myself to be, I am not hindered by my emotions, I let myself be whatever comes out, but people don't do that, they are so hindered, closed in, closeted. They're trying so hard to be cool, or normal. But I have everything, I need no more. I have everything I need in this hotel room, I don't need to leave it ever again, I could be completely happy here.

SLASH: Does your philosophy or attitude make it hard to relate to a band, and to the touring/pushing a record/trying to gain an audience games you're still part of?

LYDIA: It is a game, that's where the irony is. A parody. One of the main things in this band is my self-parody of a

girl singer. It's not humorous or ironic. And when I'm singing nobody is going to think oh, look at her, she's just being a parody of herself. But that's what it is. I want to be a girl singer. Every twelve year old wants to be a girl singer, and that's what I'm going to be, temporarily. Like Leslie Gore or Dusty Springfield. I don't look like them or sound like them, but I can, because I want to. I want to be everything. But the misfortune is that it's all time-consuming, so just staying in my room and thinking of all these things beats the hell out of ever doing it. But the body can only take so much inactivity, so occasionally I do move out of my house, only so that I don't become totally spineless and every one of my bones flow out of my skin.

SLASH: Meaning every type of activity is beside the point?

LYDIA: Exactly. The music I do is totally irrelevant. But I love my new band, and being a normal girl singer. Normal, totally normal. In my opinion. I don't play guitar, just stand there. Or dance around. I DANCE. LYDIA LUNCH DANCES. Lydia Lunch moves. Have a heart attack.

SLASH: Do you think you might disapoint the Teenage Jesus fans who will miss the non-music aspects, the shrieking?

LYDIA: Hey don't say that. There are some shrieks in it, it's just another stage. I'm not trying to be Rachel Sweet, it's a more advanced state of singing. And they can't expect me to maintain one attitude, one persona forever. I don't give a shit if they don't like it, it's still aggressive sounding. I'm not a wimpering little shit on stage. But I don't thrash around acting like an idiot either. I do what I do. The difference is that the music is listenable, to many, Teenage Jesus was not. And this is not my last, I will do more. I might do something more offensive than Teenage Jesus could ever have conceived, but for now I'm doing this.

SLASH: How were the last days of Teenage Jesus?

LYDIA: I just broke it up. We got back from Berlin to London, we had played a cultural center as people actually appreciated us in Europe, paying 25 dollars a head to see us and it was packed to the gills, Berlin is the best city in the world, they loved me, they respected me, and I couldn't see playing anywhere anymore after Europe. It wasn't worth it. Teenage Jesus is still a great entity, from birth rite to epitaph. It was efficient and satisfactory to me, no point in beating the same drum over and over again just because it makes a few idiots applaud. I still am Teenage Jesus, the music is still embedded within my soul, but it's only one small side. A lot of people are too shallow to accept the full scope of me. Where would I be if I cared about my fans? I'd be Olivia Newton John. But I will be whatever I have in me, and if that means innocent bystanders are going to be present witnessing it, well that's the way it is. However if my strategy has no use for them, that's the way it is too.

SLASH: Do I detect strong religious streaks in you?

LYDIA: You should see my house. I have an altar. My house is a church, but I won't describe what kind of a church. I have my own religion. It's not catholic. Everybody is so into this religious thing it's pathetic to admit the place where I live is a church and / am a religion. If not because of my talent, because I'm so much more *full* of *it* than they ever could be.

SLASH: What "it"? The "soul"??

LYDIA: No. Reality. Complete reality. Total honesty with myself. Why should most people be honest with themselves and realize they are worthless? Mindlessness is better. They are right going to clubs and behaving like fools.

SLASH: What happened that made you different from the rest?

LYDIA: When I was 12 years old I realized that there is more to life than being an idiot walking around like a zombie, with a sensitivity to what surrounds you about a quarter inch from the top of your head when there is so much for you to take, so much for you to open. But if you don't know what's inside there, if you are a complete dullard and dead head, a total ignoramus from the word go, why should you bother? You start with nothing, and it's your choice to either develop or rot. Rotting, I might add, is not all that bad.

SLASH: Enjoyable in a way?

LYDIA: There is enjoyment in a certain amount of rotting.

SLASH: The decadence of it all . . . .

LYDIA: No. That is the grossest term I have heard today. Decadence? I thought that meant french whores in mini skirts.

SLASH: You mentioned talking to the trade papers and that sort of people. What impression do you think you made?

LYDIA: I was nice, and they were nice. I'm sure they found me amusing, they were smiling.

SLASH: Will they keep their smile when they hear your music?

LYDIA: Hey, it's very different. Everybody is trying to jump on the bandwagon, catch what's coming out, and creeps from Billboard Cashbox Record World bla bla all these ridiculous magazines tend to be very nice and like me and even view me with more respect than I am going to get from Slash and others that know more, they're beginning to realize there's more. They might not like it, or endorse it, but it's like lice. You have one and you start scratching. I am the lice on their scalp. But they have nothing to fear, until I kill Stevie Nicks and join Fleetwood Mac. Stevie Nicks has a great voice, too bad she has blond hair.

SLASH: Yes? What is your objection to blond hair?

LYDIA: Blond hair is like a flamingo on your front lawn. Blond people are dumb. This is not a typecast stereotype. Why are blonds dumb? Because they have very weak chromosomes, and their brains are probably damaged from birth. People who die their hair blond must do it to be more ignorant. I mean, they don't do it to be more attractive now do they??

SLASH: But the "in" look . . . .

LYDIA: They should keep it *in* their house, not flaunt it on the streets.

SLASH: There is a blond in your band . . .

LYDIA: The band loves me. They give me everything I want. Why shouldn't they? I'm a hard worker.

SLASH: Do you think you're easier to work with for a musician than James . . .

LYDIA: James Philipps? Or is it Anya Chance? I've never asked. And I'm sure they wouldn't like to talk about it. (pause) I'm taking this new course in hand to hand combat, it's what they teach to the Marines, how to disarm people, and actually how to kill. I'm studying it for disciplinary reasons.

SLASH: Have you ever been called a fascist?

LYDIA: Fascist, nazi,, communist, I won't name the others, I'm sure you can guess or you have called me one or two others on your own . . .

SLASH: Does that type of labelling bother you?

LYDIA: Not at all. I'm not political. There is no way they can call me this or that. Unless they call me all three at once. But I am none of those. I'm just myself. Need I be more? Just like now my music is not no wave, or new wave, or punk rock. They never understood that Teenage Jesus was a classical music band. All my songs were classical songs. But who ever said Lydia Lunch is the next Tchaikovsky? I'm too innovative, and when they catch up with me I shall be dead, up in the sky with all the classical musicians . . . . . .

RAS

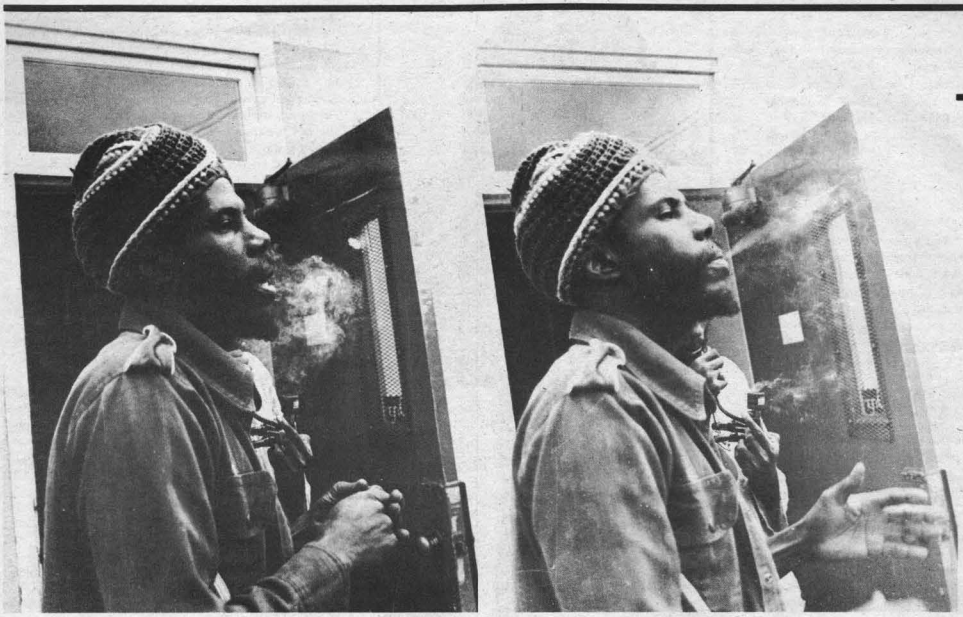


photo Dixie and Suzan

RAS MICHAEL INTERVIEW
(by Ranking Jeffrey and Don Snowdon)

SLASH: What's the difference between reggae and Rasta music?

RAS: There's no difference for that I show you. You say we don't play reggae. Right?

SLASH: Doesn't sound that way . .

RAS: Forever all we play all. A type of versatile music. The fullness of the Nyabingi ever still in our music. Whereas that to know for you to really be commanding in that drums. That Nyabingi rock, you know. So really, a lot of people, it is not you alone, say that Ras Michael music is more cultural. That haunt, you know. That huanting sound. That yearn in our music really. See, it still is one whole, one man really, for even certain amount of musicians like Robbie Shakespeare, Peter Tosh, I and I and them work in the studio together. Play all different type of music. You understand? You see, that heart beat with him, like say, if Peter want, Ras Michael play.

SLASH: Do you think there'll be much acceptance here for something even different from reggae?

RAS: Well music, you see, knowledge is increasing, so certain music that you used to hear long time, like say, gone on with the system, and there'S THAT' Everything you know them type of music. Everything you know them type of lyrrics. Don't wanna change. So them more upon a more ah real, them a real morally now. They be before world conflict, and the crisis of the world, a bring man to more knowledge and self seeking to learn the better part of life, cause of him really true exist. And our music and the music of Bob and Peter, them telling type of music that come. So for you really sit within and really eye your I and I soul and know if you're really clean and you really have an open mind. Culturally, you see, not just ah skanking. People don't want too much more skanking, them skank too long now. Them want knowledge.

SLASH: Are you playing for colleges or for other black audiences?

RAS: Well, all them places supposedly, yet no itinerary.

SLASH: You might be better off with students?

RAS: Yeah, well you know, it's them kind of media that you really run through. Yet still, Jah music is for everyone. For in no respect a person. This is not just a thing where a man feels he can just get wrong, for right now the Rastaman and the message, will really go now through that. It's really far different than in a time gone when my mind could be easily turned. I-man just be pawn for the next man. My mind know them a waiting that him don't want be no more pawn. Knowledge increasing as his Majesty say, so the realms of learning are limitless. The only limitation is where one is deliberate. Some man who deliberate, them fight against I and I music. You have some man who say unconsciously impose. You cannot unconsciously impose, that's using people as pawn. True them don't know, but them guy know, that is what the idea of Marcus Garvey say. That them guy know all these things. For I-man must know the truth and the truth will set you free.

SLASH: Is the Rastaman considered an outlaw?

RAS: Rastaman no outlaw, the wicked an outlaw. Rastaman abide in law. The laws of Jah.

SLASH: No, I mean in the eyes of . . . .

RAS: In the eyes, in the eyes, a like I show you now. The things way, the eyes are aware of the ignorance those people want to show to the Rastaman. They can't penetrate it with that. When the Rastaman know the way, him couldn't be outlaw. The Rastaman weapon is faith. Is faith. I know Jah him say, "Thou Shall Not Kill", you know. And there's a lot of things people do and fall short the glory of Jah. So the Rastaman come and show man a better way. If a man really no want accept it, it him business that. When you really think of the right thing, you have to do the right thing also. I and I really come as an instrument of Jah. Like a sound box. Praise the man I sound in symbols. Praise the man on the instruments of ten strings. Praise him on the harps. Praise him on the horn, wind instruments. Let everything that have breath praise the lord, but Jah is in everyone, but is everyone in Jah. . . .

SLASH: Yeah, but how are they supposed to know that?

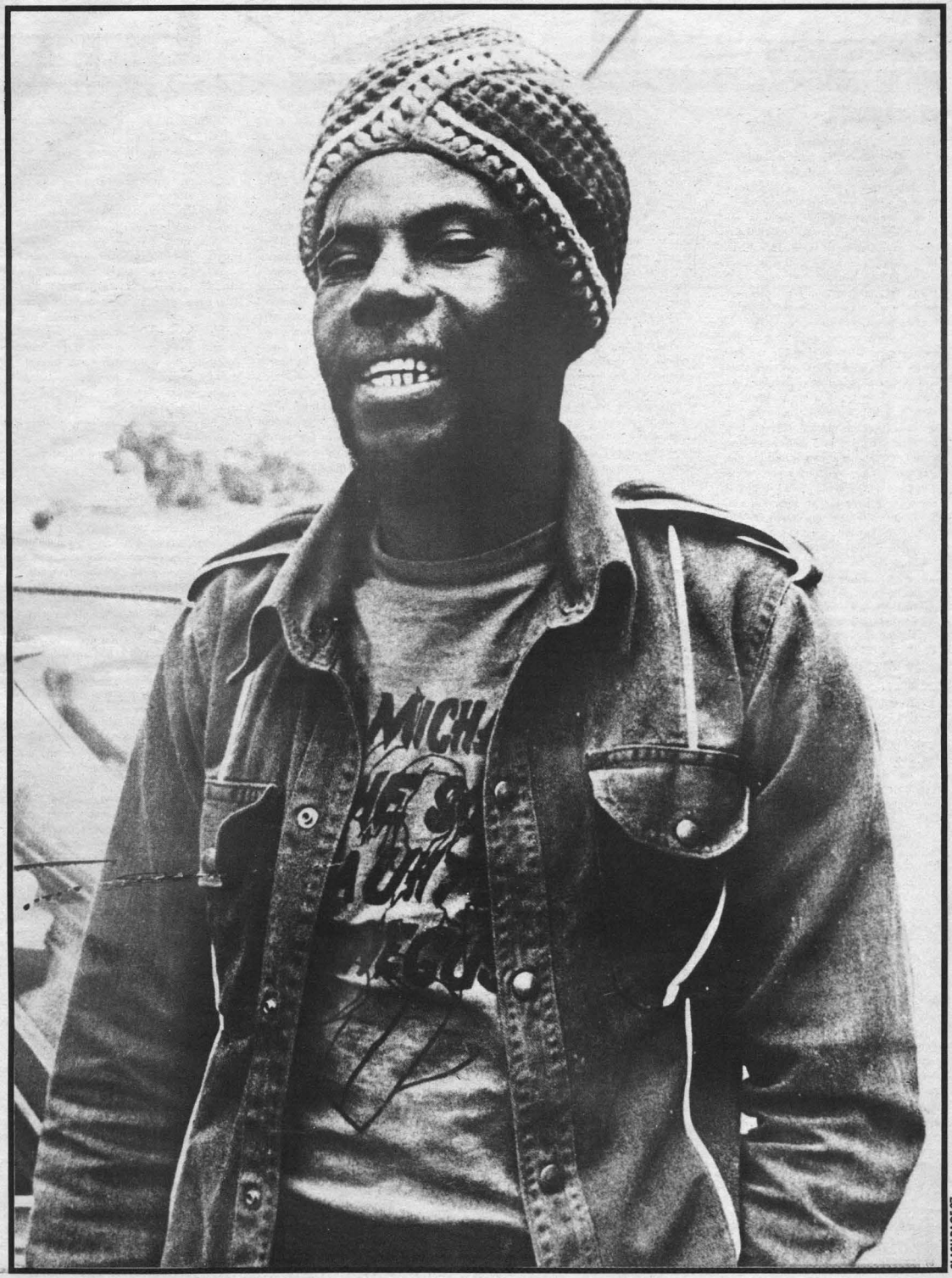
RAS: What mean how them know? Them alive! Them a live man! Alive and walk like me and you! It's man just free, but the free-est things for him to do, is the right thing, for that give him life. If a man drive a car and hit another man in a car and crash into the next car and dead, people say it destiny, but them choosing destiny. Seen? So you have ah morally know where ya do. Know where ya go. So Jah said, that the wicked will not rest upon the lot of the righteous. So you see the faith what you have, that any man have, really ah carry him true. So remember Jah too himself flesh, ya know, and swealt in and amongst man. So you have know, if the power they, control them system they, really are you, and moving in the right order. For when it come rain down Sodom and Gamorrah, his say if you even find five righteous in there, let him hear me now Lot, earth go, you take out your family and go out and ah move on. Yeah! So, no change. Man have billions and billions of dollars have been spent of yearly to make nuclear bomb, the H-bomb, and the people are suffering in the street, hungry, naked, place people have to live. And billions spent for what?! That a man can come with a gas and let go out upon a place and every living substance dead. Perish! Man have to stop them lust for power and material thing! Where as Soloman say, "Vanity, ah vanity, all is vanity, and vexation of spirit". That man becomes lighter than vanity put in a box. This is time when music just deal with music, but we deal with culture. Culture for everyone, but culture for myself too . . . .

SLASH: So you think the times are a changin' huh?

RAS: Yeah! Every two thousand years the sand of the earth is cleansed. And we in 1980, so we only got twenty more year and just shorten the time. So you don't yet know when, so it could be anytime. Wars and rumors of wars. His Majesty say, "Is not only war can stop war." Man who have good will, conscience of the nation, can deal with such a deadly enemy who bring pain and distress upon the land. For in war there is no victory. Both sides lose man when them dead! The country win the war, but mother lose a son, so no man win! That's what I tell you man, I have sit with you and hear certain vibes from you and Don too, and so ask a certain question. You can just hear me attack. Cause the last time, them send some university man, come test me with herb and thing. And them buy the herb. Them ah some man that drink rum too. It was a documentary film about Jamaica. About some African woman from Africa, she was around nineteen year old. A nurse. The thing about that documentary film was how it go, for the Roman have to have two, maybe three drink of the white rum, him get goggy-bad! But them find herb on Soloman's grave them say, ya know. Upon him tomb. Herb is for the service of man. Never fight against that. Grass for the cattle. Wine for glad man at heart. Herb for the service of man. Man use that as food, medicine, and everything. So the whole universe fight against the good things. Jah say, "All a man have to do is clean up himself." Every man have himself. Universal judgement, but when it work is only as long as individual one. A trial. Seen! So it work into a universal judgement, but an individual trial. So is each and every man in himself? Him have to know if he really are. See a better world for living. You shake hands, but you shake hands and heart. You feel it to your heart and really mean it. You don't sell love and mean, it's a plastic thing, but to really mean it. Well, dat are the way of the Rasta. A man have to really defend them the cause of Jah alone. Make your yea be yea and you nay be nay. You say you want a better place for living, but how can you get a better place, if you keep mashing up the place. Setting brothers against them brothers. In the material fight for space.

SLASH: Culture against culture, huh?

RAS: Yeah! His Majesty say not because we may not see eye to eye in certain thing, ya know, that no stop us from still moving together, no? For you have a certain thing a man can learn and his Majesty say, "Civilization vary". That say where I-man go for reach and marry one nation, but that don't say. The one where I come from, I never reach, ya know. I must reach. So, all you do is togetherness. Give unto Caesar the things that are Ceasar's and give unto Jah the things that are Jah. So, the thing you know is right, you do it. Jah is immortal. Visible and invisible. Rastaman deal with that as reality, right? So, go tell your friends that them a live man. Them alive. And say that Ras Michael music more than music, Ras Michael music is culture . . . .



LIVE

NO FREE LUNCHES

Troubador , Hong Kong

The bill was, to put it mildly, mismatched. Fitting in Doug Westons slimeball folk pit were several new spit ups from punk rock hell just ready to incoherently burble random witticisms such as 'destruct' and "surfers are fucked' into any mike not nailed to its stand. This greaseball beach and junk contingent were adequately serviced by the ROCK AND ROLL bar punk of the Gears, then were roasted over the pit by an ever decimating Fear machine. Fear seem to have taken L.A. punk rock about as far as it can go. Every cliche adjective fits like a metal glove: crude, noisy, vulgar, no taste, yeah and they revel in it, they'll sing about the scabs on your balls until you can see those nasty crabs dancing before your eyes. The fact that Fear also manage to be the best punk rock parody ever seen, missed on those too busy slugging it out on the punch out floor, should never cause these guys to lose sleep at night. Mr Lee Ving is a singer who can create mountains of pandemonium with vein popping shouts but these yodellings are perfectly in pitch and time, none of that watch me get so wasted I fall over and don't even need to sing cop out antics of some of the other nihilists of the month disease heros. Add a rhythm section as consistent as a (extremely tired cliche) jackhammer and a guy doing his best not to be the incredible heavy metal guitar hero he could be if he wanted, ONLY HE DOESN'T, because this funny and biting Fear has a much more and much less serious mission. They left the place in a shambles – what else could you expect?

Certainly not an ideal warm-up for 8-Eye Spy. To be charitable, I'll say they didn't go over too well, and save the comments for another night when they and the audience were more in focus and the band made sense, despite themselves. Roaring youngsters on the rush of seventy-seven are not gonna stand still for a grab-bag assortment of New York aesthetics fronted by what they saw as a not as intense Exene look-a-like with slut face and sea-cow body in a Daisy Mae white trash mini.

However 8 Eye Spy are a great band and it worked at the Hong Kong. It had to do with the bill again. Opening Human Hands, despite lost momentum due to Drummer Ducks smash up are trying hard to get back into the upswing of things. One suggestion – said Hands have formed a nice supportive c.ique with good friends and sympaticos w/ B-People, Monitor and the like. You always see these bands do things together. They shouldn't – if they want to reach that big audience sucked into this year's fad by visions of red leatherette mini-mamas and peroxided power trios they should get their feet wet in the real world instead of staying in the clubhouse. Human Hands obviously got the unique sound – that dit dit dit keyboard chord bouncing off of those consistently hard driving drum disco/punk beats, backed up by tinny kink guitar and inaudible but jumpy bassisms. A main complaint for the band effectiveness is lead singer Wileys tend to over dramatize, shouting if he can't croon it, seemingly a victim at times of nervous habits. By the way new song "Go Existential" first philosophic silly rock novelty that has a punch to the Sartre satire. Now B-People are all extremely accomplished musicians, they are all real creative thinkers, and it shows. Sometimes too much. The thick textured, distorted busy bee notes colliding with each other in rhythmic over-poly-play leaves very little room for your brain to fill in the blanks. There are no spaces with B-People and a wall of sound was alright for Spector sixties, but certainly not new music eighties. This problem was readily made obvious on a surprise of the month cover of the Beatles "Tomorrow Never Knows". Every instrument played a specific role, and though Alex's intriguing underwater valium warble didn't quite seem suited to the song it was an intriguing re-working of a psychedelic (eek let's not overwork this up and coming word/trend) classic (another cliche!) it only served to show the problem with the B-People's anything goes dense, thick arrangements. On the originals, another problem might be the on stage sound of the band. Their recordings reveal compelling songs, the studio separation shows you what the lines actually are and sense is made, but the on-stage muddle seems to defeat this band's purposes. They are not a punk band, it seems senseless for them to play at that volume.

Here we go again with Miss White Trash and her swinging boys. Well let's dispose of the myth. This was not "Queen of Siam", nor was it "T. Jesus" migraine metal evil, this was a band called 8-Eye Spy whose vocalist/lyricist just happened to be affiliated with those other projects but was not exclusively dominated by them. So expectations of "Spooky" covers and big band backwards noise were quickly defeated. You should know better than to make those worthless expectations in the first place, if you figured anything out about this girl it's that she's not going to live up to your concepts of what she's about. The mean bitch of the No Wave might have had some obvious snide self-pride, but I found her weirdly charming. (I imagine the saliva would curdle in her mouth at the thought, but then again I won't presume).

There are several elements at work with this bunch, as could be expected with ex-Contortion and T. Jesus bass-drumming the essential jungle rhythm drive. Add to that the fine guitar/sax playing of Pat Irwin, responsible for the great side one of the "Siam" album. The guitar playing is the angular jagged that started with Beef-heart, was recently re-processed by Bob Quine as a foil for foam at the mouth Hell (Richard) and I find it a helluvalot more interesting than the redundent power chording of too many L.A. bands. Snakes on tightropes, cut glass and water sliding off metal sounds, scratching and vibrating and dischording in unexpected off and on beats. So how come no one in L.A. plays that way and we need imports from N.Y.C. to offer the suggestion? In a way I felt the band was so strong that Lunch was the weakest link in the chain. Her patent monotone blare did not seem nearly as inventive as the vortex twine timing around her, but then maybe she's the constant in the variedeviant. The words that come through were constant good, how come no one really notices that this girl is one of the best writers to come along in a long time? So busy thinking about what a worthless slut she is? Well, trashy image, god that's so obvious, why waste time thinking about it, this person is great with the words, that's why she's up there and you aren't. All that surface shock, that ring through the nose with its disgusting hippie conotations, she probably revels in the thought of being hideous, but if you get stuck on the obvious, I hope the point's up your ass, fool. And there were the stupid comments about not being as good as Exene, aw come on, so what if there's a slight resemblance, Penelope and Blondie had the same color hair, did that make them imitators, why can't people use their brains for once. What you got with this band were perfect warps of "Wipeout" in one song, a nasty low down bump and grind on a song called "Me Minus You" the absolute hippest selections of cover songs (Beefheart's "Diddy Wah Diddy", Strangelove's "I Want Candy", camp classic of all Nancy Sinatra's "Lightnin's Girl".) You got smart new music for once in a while and all most people did was look confused. Which is probably what this group expected. She doesn't live up to your expectations – why give in to hers?

–Prof. Mamie Van Doren

Lydia Lunch/phone Suzan Carson

THE ALLEYCATS and THE SPECIALS

at the Whisky

Who would have thought it could happen? I mean the ska craze in England may be already a vital intrinsic part of the musical picture but it's by no way the most obvious logical development of the past four years. I know the skinheads embraced the rougher edge of punk and brought along with them their offbeat musical tastes, or is it that a portion of the punk troops hardened under the pressures until they looked and acted and eventually identified like the sixties boots and braces boys, at which time they dug into their newly found cultural heritage and came up with funny sounding music. Except for some reason there's never been many bands strictly under the skinhead banner, it's either the guitar or the boots, and these second generation ska bands mostly hail from punk or soul or reggae roots, and going from any of these 3

sources forward to brassy galloping ska lunacy is as logical as punk aiming toward Chicago rhythm n blues or soul immersing itself into cotton fields wordless syncopated chanting. From all appearances this "one step beyond" is one step beyond yesterday and the day before. Mods and rockabillies keep trying to pull the same miracle and are wearing themselves out doing some great standing still cameo appearances for months on end. Only the teds have it worked out: if you don't move one musical inch 'til the day you die the good old days are everyday. Brilliant but only for a certain dedicated mentality. To simplify matters the bands themselves haven't exactly analyzed the question and when pressed to explain do some great shoulder shrugging, grunting and oversimplifying. According to Madness they can't remember any other music, well, whiffs of punk perhaps . . . the only Specials I talked to Roddy had never heard ska two years ago, too busy guitar licking in a rock band, and suddenly one two three ready or not world here's Madness, here's the Specials, here's the Selecter, and here is FUCKING INSTANT SURRENDER FROM THE PUBLIC which nobody has explained yet to me. And if it escapes logic in England where the stuff has a history, and a multi racial familiarity what do you think it spells in bloody America where record stores that succeed in ignoring anything reggae for ten years straight get a diploma of good citizenship and where the average working class youth has fun crawling from bathroom to bathroom nodding to runaway guitar signals or huddling by the thousands to feel a vague pounding Fred Astaire couldn't even move to originating from the other side of the stadium half a mile away. I'll tell you what it spells: it spells DOES NOT COMPUTE. I know the stadiums are still doing good business and the record stores don't yet make skanking while working mandatory from their employees but the brush fire success of the Specials' mini marathon at the Go Go on the Strip involved a lot more than your hip/N.M.E. reading/import bin first/together-and-always-ahead youngster. The twice-a-night orderly lines that stretched from entrance to half way up the canyon hill almost to the valley were not exactly a routine occurrence, Valley darlings the Runaways never got that kind of attendance and they're fuckin local goddesses, american as hell, lily white and sexy, the Van Halen squad did not ever see that enthusiasm, this was a reception you'd expect for the real mythical godheads a la Springsteen, or other common denominators. But a funny speaking goddly dressed motley crew of black jamaicans and green limeys jumping about in the most unsexy unflattering manner (miles apart from rock cock stances, feline strutting for the females' benefit and hip protruding for sexuality's sake in general) to an almost corny unfreaky egoless racing music (ego-less, making it a risky import for here where identifying with one singer, or guitar hero is the nation's youth's most demanding mental activity– who the fuck can the parasitic brat pretend to replace in his head when he can't keep anybody in his viewer for more than 3 seconds, they all dress like winos and they might as well be singing in Mandarin Chinese for the good it does him. Taken separately each band member

Specials/photo Suzan Carson

is nothing special really but together and it beats the Jets and the Sharks in West Side Story. This may sound specious but I think the apparent ska emphasis on group action is really important. If punk didn't harm the star nonsense at all, maybe this will. It's a step in the right direction.)

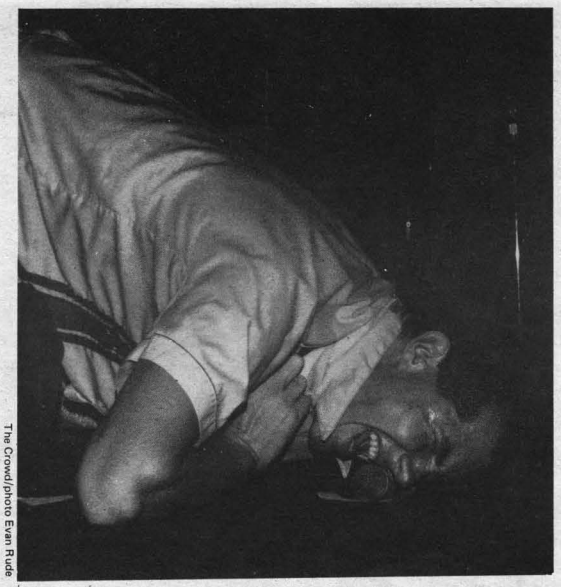
To top it all this insistent noise is hell for body action, you can't pogo unless you're turbine piston and you can't play matador to your horny (eh eh) date opposite you might as well try this loony retard look, arms flapping knee raising spastic routine the band and the cool followers are twitching to. You see, there are more reasons for this english culture package to flop royally on these unexperimenting shores than to make a dent. The rude boy/rude girl imagery would only be truly dug by american or black ghetto sharpies, same for the tongue in cheek "straight" threads and hat. Punk fashion was a hybrid: this is the genuine opposite of glitter, the most spartan way to be "in", sure to draw total alienation from the millions of pseudo and almost hip idiots at every street corner. Ska aesthetics and style can be a demanding option if the bug gets you. But I suppose I ought to stop writing a thesis on why it just can't happen here since it does indeed look as if it will. We'll know for sure when Madness comes back, and when the natives try to produce the sound themselves (Who first? Randy and the Squad? Go Go's? unknown upstarts?). At every show the highly motivated audience surrendered to the sound 5 seconds after the first intro and swooned until the very end, and then beyond. Obviously not as diverse and culture crossed as in England (yet) but still as varied as the L.A. clubs ever get to see, clean high school denizens surf traditionalists spiked neo surfers chicanos rockabilly poseurs planning the future pose. Rainbow late twenties teenyboppers on permanent quaalude time zone secretaries bosses punks from the dawn of time young sensitive couples and kids 3 feet high why why why are they here? Was the hype from Chrysalis headquarters more efficient than usual? Did KROQ go for the kill? Did Madness trigger a chain reaction? Was everybody into the Pioneers and Desmond Dekker since way back, just secretly waiting for this, never mentioning their passion to anyone? Do people religiously follow the L.A. Weekly and L.A. Reader's critical advice?

But whatever brought them there kept them there, twice a night for four nights, and most likely it could have gone on longer. The Specials wasted no time in cranking up the collective engine and by the end of the third song it was skanking, near skanking and local neo skanking pandemonium. Almost all their songs are aimed at english youth and its particular problems but nobody minded, they identified anyway and if they didn't the beat carried them along. The Special lead singer is rather more intense looking than the nice Madness one and looks as if he has more on his mind than making a roomful of yanks go up and down together but with the kind of playing his pals are churning out he can't expect the american crowd to go very far beyond the dancing and the bopping. As expected they go bananas during the Concrete Jungle mock alley fight between the two black guys Lynval and Neville they think it's just fun aggro healthy self expression I've been informed it's not, but who can tell, mock fights real fights, a few nights later at the Troubadour it's for real but just as fun for most, this city needs daily fixes of action the younger inhabitants are craving for life, and ska is the liveliest exotic taste they've had for some time. (Nobody cares if Black Flag sings about living conditions they just use the music to bang into each other.) Anyway most of the time the seriousness is hidden by the stage frantic activities, that founding guy Jerry at the keyboards whoops it up and the Neville and Lynval front line get crazier and crazier, some slower tunes off the album, all these californians know the lyrics, everybody's gettin hip in Eagles country, we've come a long way baby . . . A bit later it's the surprize everybody has been expecting, ska veteran Rico on trombone and another guy on horn, the majority of the audience does not go especially ecstatic but they've never heard of Don Drummond either, or come to think of it Miles Davis. Well peasants Rico is one of the real heavies from way back, and if you're about to ask how can a trombone player be that heavy you better not. If you're going to twitch to this ska sound like you were raised on the stuff you got one week to clean up your act and get yourself some fast roots. And take off that rude boy badge unless you can stomach overproof rum for breakfast. Anyway Rico and the guy with the horn blasted away like Jericho and the ska reached a nice thick peak level, real rudie instrumentals that took you about as far as you cared to from the Whisky, the Strip, L.A., the whole goddam rootless soul-less dump. More Specials' own, a half hearted official ending, just a pause for the double barreled encore, Long Shot Kick De Bucket and "You're wondering Now". The ska crew splits, one by one. The audience goes on singing the chorus, they got the point, they know the very last part is up to them, as singer Terry reminded them. They're a bit stunned with the awesome responsibility, so they stall, repeating ad infinitum "You're wondering now, what to do, now that you know this is the end". They want more spoonfed entertainment, they're not ready to bring an end to built in passivity just like that. They'll have to. I still don't know why ska looks set to sweep the nation, or at least gain a foothold on the notoriously difficult american market. But I'll figure it out.

The opening slot for the Specials fell to the Go Go's for the first two nights and the Alleycats for the last two. I saw the Alleycats on their first night, they performed their thoroughly american music to an appreciative crowd, the majority of which was most probably totally unfamiliar with their sound. It is ironic, considering the familiarity with alien material the same crowd later displayed: An Alleycat song like "Too Much Junk" is concerned with their lives here today, their environment and the shape of their souls, it is their roots music, the real thing, yet most spectators there were more receptive to some message to some rudie that frankly has fuck all to do with them, anyone they know or any life they'll ever taste. Ain't that a shame? The Alleycats' problem is the unassuming ease and matter-of-factness with which they

sling their soulful little slabs of discreet despair. No grimacing, tortured theatrics, they innocently go about it as if it was naturally understood by everyone that all that posturing posing silliness has been buried ages ago and now passion and honesty need no crutches, everyone sees the light and feels the pain. Their music flows like late night boulevard traffic, fast and jerky, full of stops and angry take offs but the fools don't pretend to be possessed and anguished with every riff, every sacred note, they almost blow it for good by smiling a couple of times, thanking everyone they can think of, acting so bloody humble and normal and un rock n roll the kids are going to think maybe they're retarded or something. In the era of the super king size overkill their normal behavior is not the shortest way to acceptance. Neither is their streamlined superfine classic rock n roll, their honest moving lyrics, their hairstyle their fuckin clothes their existence their whole goddam fuckin EMBARRASSING AND BLINDING REALITY.

—Kick



The Crowd/photo Evan Rude

THE LAST, THE CROWD, THE DESCENDENTS

at the Hong Kong

Another saturday nite at the Hong Kong. This reviewer believes in getting there early enough to see the opening band, unlike these other jaded alcoholics around the office. Wait don't kick me! The Descendents: One stocky surfer with long curly hair and little personality, seeming as if he just crawled out from under a Woody. But his singing was strong, assured, a choppy rhythm freer of distortion than most of your average slam bang outfits. The bass player was intense and nervous and sang in a flat, nasal voice like Tony Dil's younger brother. The burly drummer kept things going and got so excited he knocked over his drums. Despite zero stage presence these three had some interesting songs: one great title "Last of the Mohicans". They were nobodies from Garageland and they may go straight back there, but if they tighten their set (they wore out their welcome by four songs) and figure a way to present themselves so they're not so anonymous, we might have a really good new band. It's about time.

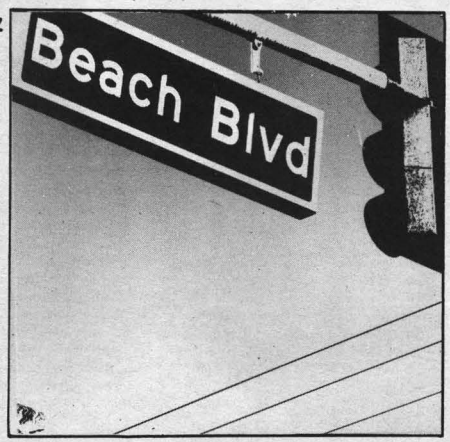
Recently that wonderful journal of responsible criticism, the L.A. Times, has given the Crowd a quick write-off, calling them imitative, sub-Ramones and the like. What these accomplished professors fail to realize in their search for the latest marketing trend, is that those kids dancing madly to the Crowd don't give a fuck what the L.A. Times say about anybody — their criticism of a band is the only one that really matter — gut reaction. And when the Crowd's blast hits, your gut says yeah — this is real, this is honest, this is energy, this is good! What band hasn't been indirectly influenced by the Ramones? I guess the Crowd aren't chic enough, they don't have the Flintstones music writer collaborating on arrangements for their obscure modern Dities and they remind the critics of a time when the punk movement laughed at reviewers from the L.A. Times slumming down at the Masque. The Crowd are a good band, they believe in what they are doing, they are not rip-offs or imitators, their lead singer is a real contender and those assholes with the high and mighty professional standards can shove their English textbooks where they belong.

I last saw the Last two years ago. I saw a somewhat weak band with a bagful of sixties garage band hooks and riffs. I liked them, but I was not prepared for what I saw tonight. The Last have tightened up, they play each song with a fervent, blistering intensity I didn't hear on their somewhat wimpy album. This band has a fire lit under them now, they still have those riffs and hooks but there's a passion and a power that makes them more than nostalgic display.

—Z

LIFE'S GOOD ON *BEACH BLVD.*
CHUGGING BEER, POPPING PILLS
UNTIL YOU HEAR *THE SIREN*
. . . AND THEN IT'S WAR

PBS102



PBS103

THE CROWD, SIMPLETONES AND RIK L RIK ON ***BEACH BLVD.*** THE SURF PUNK CELEBRATION.
391, RED CROSS AND SPITTIN' TEETH ARE ***THE SIREN.*** IT'S YOUR CHANCE TO HEAR THE WARNING.
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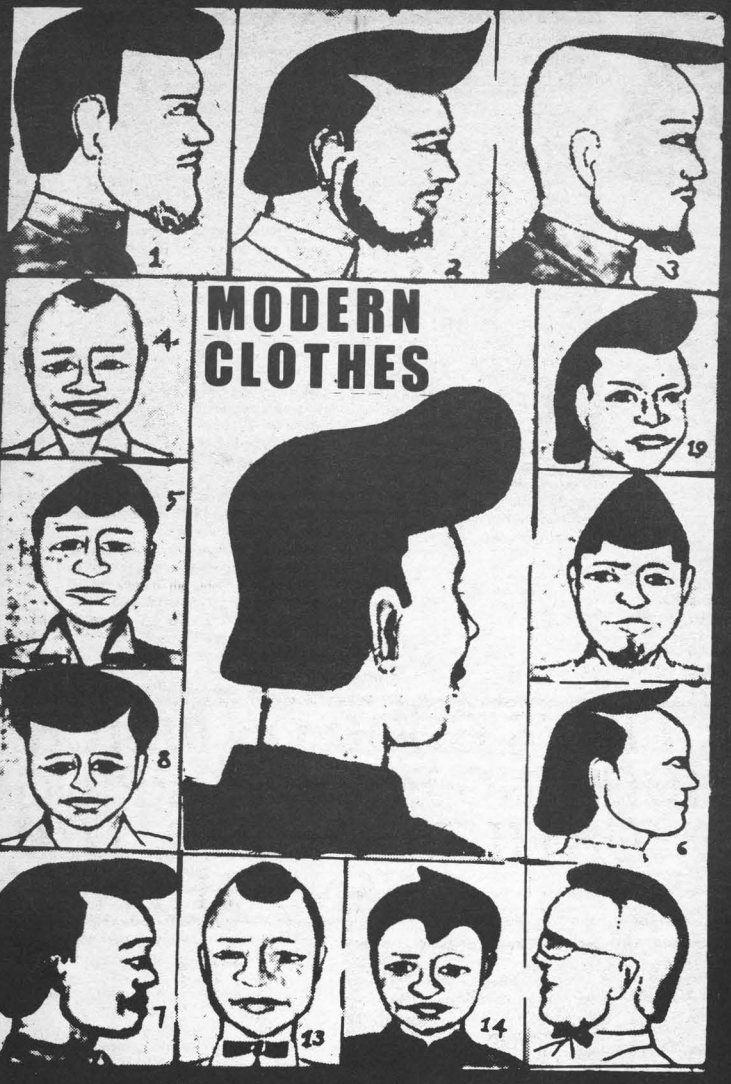
Posh Boy

SLASH PAGE 30



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LP's

"QUEEN OF SIAM"
LYDIA LUNCH
ZE Records

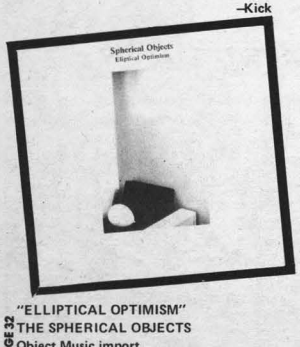
Listen to this all the way through before you jump to any conclusions. Suddenly you'll find a hilarious Broadway type production of baby doll theatrics that goes to the heart of the matter. Beatnik tunes spell out the creepy private underworld of one of the coolest little girls to ever come out of New York, in fact, the whole U.S. of A. There's not much obvious rock 'n roll here but after one listen you don't care. Not many people, sexpots, or even performers can play jokes that make you laugh/shiver at the same time. Her own stuff like "Lady Scarface" and "Knives in the Drain" match cover versions of Billy Holiday's "Gloomy Sunday" and the Classic IV'S "Spooky" and everything blends together just right . . . like a delicious arsenic milkshake.

—Chris D.

"COMING UP FOR AIR"
PENETRATION
Virgin

This second album has been out for a while, there was just no motivation to review it as the group dissolved around the same time. It's not the best legacy they could have laid on us early fans, not by a long shot (kick that bucket, kick!). Everything kind of blurs into everything else, the high pitched guitar playing had by then become truly reactionary and unforgivable, the only element still sticking out of the overall mud is Pauline's voice, let's hope her retirement is not final. At least the group saw the signs and brought the story to a dignified ending. Two of the song titles say it all: "Killed in the rush", and "Party's over".

—Kick



"ELLIPTICAL OPTIMISM"
THE SPHERICAL OBJECTS
Object Music import

There is a certain type of underground beat music particular to England: Groups like Joy Division, A Certain Ratio, the Transmitters, Public Image, Wire (most of the time), the Fall (on and off) all form what I think of as the Nightmare Brigade, the Death or Insanity Orchestras, the Despair Dealers. You don't need a german accent and a church organ to belong, all these have standard rock n roll line-ups and they all reach their objectives in quite a variety of musical ways. An early primitive version of that school such as the Saints even managed to rock harder than most good-time bands while doing their best to depress you real good. In America death ain't the grooviest topic for any band, above or underground. Basic nightmares have some naive but well-meaning partisans in New York (the Mad, the Misfits, even Suicide and their chic terror), insanity is not considered anything more than a far-out trip or an hilarious cartoon, but death . . . Not really since Jim Morrison opened some secret doors has it been glorified or even considered. Yep, the Doors were the darkest shadow ever to be cast on this healthy sun-lit land. And the Velvet Underground, but to dismiss their visions all you had to do was stay off them nasty city drugs. No inevitability there.

Now rejoice and shiver, there's a new comer in the gloom gang: Spherical Objects, also english, and closer to the Doors than any of the others, except for Joy Division. Meaning this might be your chance for some special thrills, America. The LP (rather ironically titled believe me) has two distinct moods, one for each side, and it's on side 1 the Doors comparisons will fall. Same sinuous musical lines centered around simple keyboard mood touches, a basic beat under or above the fluid melodies, a singer that evokes poetic descriptions of the farce of human living (much less effect-conscious than Morrison and free from the latter's sexual fixations — but also not as emotionally charged and effective), each song has that definite middle-of-the-night acid feel, and to really cement these sixties parallels there's the ultimate plaintive harmonica bursts on a tune called "Comedians" (. . "Prima donnas flaunting their vaudeville veneer . . "). Like the Doors, there's more separation between the instruments than is good for gut-numbing rock n roll, except ten times more so here. Drums in the attic, keyboards in the library, singer in the hallway and guitars in the basement. An all around gothic tableau, stop looking behind you.

Don't draw any dumb conclusions, this is also very original music which relies on no all-inspiring past work, only juxtaposed to what you're likely to know for easy appraisal, and to separate the connaisseurs from the simply curious (which if you are should have you snigger at all this acid/harmonica/poetic hoopla talk). Another difference is in the "effects" department. There are no Doors hypnotic riffing cruises in here, it's brief, precise and so economical it can be felt as dry and constipated. Everybody is frighteningly in control of their instruments and particular parts. One glance at the group's picture on the inner sleeve and you'll agree they do look like a serious sort of intellectual bunch. Some would say boring, which I think wouldn't hurt their feelings. They can worry when video disks become more popular. Before I go back to very unspooky records for sane youngsters I should point out again that side 2 is much "heavier" than you'd expect. Keeping the acid analogy, this is where it stops being a shaky trip and gloriously blooms into a hell of a bummer. What was alluded to becomes magnified, dissected and pinned to your pupils, cruelty reigns in every tune, wherever you look, it's in the band's frightening insistence on showing you and it's in what they sing, even the lyrical images have become simple, completely to the (horrible) point. No more poetry, plain language statements of realistic morbidity. Music-wise the nasty turn of events registers as effectively: torn musical phrases, painful pounding, ugly metal explosions, clenched rhythms, you sway your butt to that if you can. Two songs carry the matter to its inescapable conclusion: to really trigger hopelessness, doom, do it at every level, provoke inescapable sound associations, literally *haunt* your victims. So the horribly cynical "It's good to be alive" gets done in a cocktail lounge-crooning-at-the-piano-bar manner, and "I remember you" in a perfect cliche take-off of all those Whiter-shade-of-pale late sixties rock ballads, complete with guitar-picking chord progression for those who find House of the Rising Sun too wild but seek that pathos, and that creepy timeless choked harmonica-puffing hippies still shudder at, that essence of sorrow and resignation, the only instrument and sound to singlehandedly symbolise and evoke terminal loneliness. This style borrowing ain't no clever showing off or ridiculing game these Objects guys are pulling, it's a demonic attempt to hit you in the vitals with a fatal megadose of good old existential despair. Makes old timers Leonard Cohen, George Gerdes and other lone darkness-dabblers look like presidents of the Optimist Club. Never mind the wistful moans, the Spherical Objects have the nasty art down to a science. I warned you.

—Kick

PS: Ooops, almost forgot to share the sweet message of the record (hence saving you from the queasy moment): The real horror, we carry within, somewhere. But don't take my word for it.

"BROKEN ENGLISH"
MARIANNE FAITHFUL
Island Records

A blinding vitriolic payback that stands firm and rock-hard in the face of all opposition. There is such a thing as resurrection and here's the proof. This is one of the strongest, bravest, dirtiest records I've ever heard. Just imagine if *you* woke up one morning to find all of your friends had turned their backs on you (these shit eating rock 'n rollers led by old "Rubber Lips" and excluding only Brian J.) and were ready with the knives, your career in ruins, your jones to be one of the nastiest little back-biting monkeys ever, and a feeling in your bones like they'd been ground into the finest white powder. Then maybe you can get an idea of the guts it must have taken to make this record. The back-up band is the most cliche collection of bland studio musicians since Lou Reed's tour ensemble of 1973. To make a long story short they suck. But Marianne's voice and songs are breathtaking miracles that can't be overrated.

—Chris D.

"END OF THE CENTURY"
THE RAMONES
Sire Records

Phil Spector gets hip to a kindly tip and in the process builds a little campfire under the Ramones. They get a bit of rejuvenation. The wall-of-sound youth serum makes short shrift of the fact that there really aren't any honestly memorable songs here no matter how good they sound at the moment. I'm not destroyed and my spirit's not uplifted. But whoever said that those are prerequisites for having a good record on your hands. You *can* dance to it. I know, I should be thankful for a record that you could dance to in this day and age. And I am. Consider this my thank you note.

—Chris D.

"SABOTAGE"
JOHN CALE
Spy records

The Welsh chunk of inspired tortured flesh known as John Cale seems to be gaining strength and substance every year while his peers limp along uninspired paths or simply retire to the mansions of their own particular limbo. Cale has gone from elegant poet to paranoid animal to rowdy drunkard and extracted the fire from each persona, he can be gentle as well as vicious because he can fuckin' feel more and better than most, he has given depth to the usually shallow message of rock n roll and he hasn't even been thanked yet. I suppose if you keep taking chances, trimming your visions and leaving your luggage behind the public is never going to really catch up until you're dead. This record is just one more chance this maniac with the hard hat and the shades decided to take, using mostly new unrecorded material for his first live LP. And not the safest stuff either,

moody and gothic tunes that could fall flat on their uppity faces outside the conspiring atmosphere of a club, painful atonal burst of foaming rage that may work on the moment but may not invite repeated listenings, except Cale yanks everything out of himself, his instruments, his back up vocalist and his band as if his own life depended on it, which it probably does. There is too much in here to take you on an explanatory tour of the premises, savage rockers like "Mercenaries" that hit you harder and lower than Apocalypse Now does in 3 hours, "Dr. Mudd", even "Walking the Dog", a familiar standard brought back to the edge, there's a grandiose epic entitled "Dr. Hook" that combines sweeping panoramic views and intimate close ups, the haunting old fashioned "Chorale" and its inviting vulnerability, preceded by (of all songs to pick), the amazing "Sabotage", a true terrorist scream of suicidal nihilism that makes most "negative" squeals from the younger generation sound positively adorable. There is room amongst the battlefield ruins and the devastated landscape for a moment of peace as back up singer Deerfrance sings "Only time will tell", her little girl voice a striking contrast amidst the sound and the fury of the album.

If I went on with the analytical bit any longer, reviewing the various components, rating this and that, from voice to playing to god knows what I would do a great disservice to the man and his music by actually suggesting it is possible to approach this recording in a cool and detached manner, when in fact it comes out at you and has you in its grip before you can say "it's only rock n roll".

One day John Cale is going to have to be thanked. For emotionally preparing us for the worst, if nothing else. I'm not sure we deserve his presence anyway.

—Kick

EARCOM 3
Fast records import

This hippest of hip underground sound magazines issues forth once more with its garage experiments and potential geniuses. Side one is a much needed recording of San Francisco's bizarre woman duo Noh Mercy. Singer Esmerelda has a voice that ranges from cabaret mystic vibrato to punk bitch whine. Drummer Toni Hotel plays with more technical invention than skill but then innovation is what these two are about.

"Caucasian Guilt" is short and great — a tirade against liberalism and cultural/racial stereotypes "I never burnt a Jew", "I never put a Jap in a camp", "I don't mind heels on dykes just don't knock me off of my bike". Needless to say when Noh Mercy performed this charming number at Madame Wongs wearing kimonos with Japanese trade names stenciled on them the old dragon fart nearly had a stroke. Song number two, "Revolutionary Spy", features a pow-wow chant and some dramatic posing, not as effective as the Guilt number, but then Noh Mercy are no more, so this record is the only document we'll have of one of the more unusual acts to come out of this so called new music.

Side two — Stupid Babies, aptly named. Baby toy guitar strum hard ga-ga chords, while some junior idiots waa-waa in the background, then sing a lovely ditty: "Me hate baby sitter". As if to counterbalance this dose of puerile infantilism we have some space captains going whoosh, whoosh from Chorley. So many people are trying so hard to come up with something new they're tripping over their cleverness.

Side three — German group is a distinct possibility. Steady pound pound with Mr. Fuzz guitar and appropriate coo-coo sounds backing up some guttural bellyaching. Competent, it passes. Side four more than passes, it explodes: It's Orange County's noise brothers, Middle Class, reprising their fab single from many months ago. Why does it take some guy in Edinburgh Scotland to recognize this great band who L.A. virtually ignores? Middle Class deserve a new record and a new audience. Let's realize our assets before we lose them to some other place that knows how to appreciate *real* modern music.

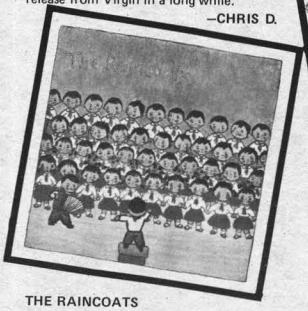
C.L.

"INTERNATIONAL HERB" CULTURE

"DEEPER ROOTS" MIGHTY DIAMONDS
Virgin international (JEM)

Don't look at pieces of personal or joint creativity such as records, movies, or books as indication of anything other than momentary, fleeting inspirations. Because, if you do, from the very start you're setting yourself up for disappointment and disillusionment. Ah, you can tell already, can't you? He's going to slag the shit out of these records, isn't he, that self-righteous bastard. Unh, unh, not at all. Just waxing a bit philosophical in the wake of torpid dissipation and bloated self-indulgence . . . mediocrity (the Culture album). Culture side one all sounds the same . . . not good, hypnotic, euphoric the same but boring hippy-trippy repatriation rap the same. And I've had it up to hear (sic). I know plenty of people who didn't put out any advance requests from inside the womb to be born in Southern California, let alone the U.S., so let's stop all this garbled self-pity about finally returning to one's roots, homeland, etc. . . Repatriation is one of the lamest neanderthal cultural/religious concepts going and the one thing that ruins most reggae. Look at the best of Lee Perry, Big Youth, or Tapper Zukie and you'll find a spirit transcending the horror hellhole of urban poverty and degradation and not laments about slavery days and "The Land Where We Belong". To make matters worse prodigious amounts of ganja seem to corrupt inspiration as insidiously as any record company's checkbook. OK, let's take it from there. One great album "Two Sevens Clash", one good album "Harder than the Rest", and now one good song. And a crazy, out-of-their-heads masterpiece at that. "I Tried" almost makes the rest of this crap worth it. The "Deeper Roots" album by the Mighty Diamonds is alot more to my liking. "Reality", "Dreadlocks Time", "Bodyguard", "2 by 2", "Be Aware" and especially "Master Plan" strike a blinding matchhead almost as bright as the Diamonds' first album "Right Time". Very contradictory alongside Culture and the Gladiators and the first promising reggae release from Virgin in a long while.

—CHRIS D.



THE RAINCOATS
Rough Trade import

A while back these girls were being touted as the next big thing. Now they seem to have disbanded, leaving behind this album as a document of what they were about. I doubt they will be terribly missed.

This is one of the crudest sounding albums I've ever heard. There is no sense of anybody's playing their instrument together — the same song though not necessarily at the same time. PalmOlive might have been one of the major forces behind the Slits but her drumming is crude and clumsy and leaves enormous holes in the band's music. The bass player obviously is clever with her parts but is it a bass or a lead guitar she's playing? The scratchy violin is at times intriguing and at times painfully out of tune, the guitar erratic and choppy. I suppose in the name of art and them being girls they could put this album out. A case of reverse sexism at work?

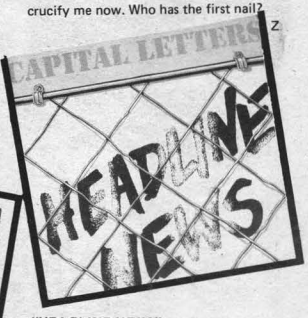
The Raincoats were a band of ideas, not technique. All the songs go through several changes of mood and tempo. It's not easy music they've chosen to play, but too often it strikes me as being a bit too precious and clever for its own sake. Did we really need a female punk version of the Incredible String Band?

Another problem is Ana Da Silva's moody, sullen vocals. I imagine on stage she reached a certain introverted intensity, but on record this doesn't really come off.

Perhaps The Raincoats play an extremely personal form of music and I don't feel inclined towards their point of view. It's an album for those 'quiet moments', Well, I like Throbbing Gristle for my quiet moments, not an incredibly out of tune, sloppy, pointlessly lousy version of the Kinks' "Lola".

I don't accuse them of being pretentious. I actually do like a lot of the songs on this album, but it's all bits and pieces that don't seem to fit together coherently. I understand the anti-music cliche, anti-polish idea, but whereas the Fall can pull this sort of thing off because they have the strength of their convictions, the Raincoats come off as merely self-indulgent and biting off more ideas than they can put across. You avant-garde elitist snobs with your superior taste can crucify me now. Who has the first nail?

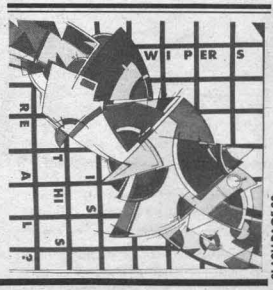
Z



"HEADLINE NEWS" CAPITAL LETTERS
Greensleeves import

A totally unexpected surprize from the usually disappointing field of british reggae. I must admit I have never heard of this group before, either they don't play live or else the british papers are snubbing them for god knows what reason. The message is more progressive than what jamaican musicians have led us to normally expect, even those based in England, Steel Pulse for instance mention social injustice and other urban topics but negate the rebellious stance by burying everything under tons of mystical junk. No such waste here, each song gets its point across in the most direct manner, you could almost call it a militant approach 'cept that there is very little slogan waving. Unlike their better known socially aware brother Linton Johnson, Capital Letters (a six men two women outfit) do not bring any island patois in the picture and understanding everything they sing does not in any way lessen its strength. Ths music is lighter than the roots stuff, no primal bass foundation or jungle-thick hypnotic beat but it is not lightweight or middle of the road by any means, just thinner and more delicate in texture. Same for the vocals, no special emphasis is given to any of the four voices, every one blending and harmonizing with the others and none keeping the spotlight to itself. It's a bit futile to single out this or that tune, apparently the more predictable "Smoking my ganja" reached the higher echelons of the british reggae charts but the whole album stays at a consistently high musical level. I'll still play it after I've long tired of the flashier more popular products.

—Kick

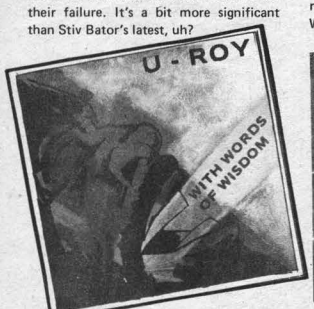


"IS THIS FOR REAL?"
THE WIPERS
Park Ave. records

Who they? The label is based in Portland Oregon, no other clues. Rather interesting sound not really like anything you hear around you, square and hard guitar chord barrage and wall demolishing beat, most songs done in that manner, the couple of less forceful tunes fail due to progressive/heavy metal proximity of style and at times that singer/lyricist gets slightly on your nerves, one or two songs in a row work fine and here you are all ears when he decides to add some quavering frills to his voice, instantly negating the dangerous mood the instruments have built up. And here and there the lyrix (included with inner sleeve) fall on the wrong side of corny and gutless. But most are intriguing and effective, faintly reminiscent of the Wire approach, brevity combined with hints of untold significance. Musicwise falls somewhere in the vast expanses between Ramones, Plugz and on a lesser degree the already mentioned Wire (Pink Flag period), Suicide Commandos could be dragged in here also, and the minutest whiff of Zeppelin can be overlooked. This trio is heading in a direction hardly anyone wonders about probably fearing dead ends at every step, lack of options and all that, but there may be a rich future for high intensity punk/neo punk/power trios after all, just keep the deluge of chords coming and the lead notes on a firm quota basis, don't revive "Spoonful" and keep that drummer off meth. I know we'll hear more from the Wipers, you don't devise a frontal attack like this record's music just to grin sheepishly some months later and start looking for a bank job, or whatever it is defeated musicians punish themselves with.

—Kick

Note: Nobody's told me yet what punishment the Commandos chose to atone for their failure. It's a bit more significant than Stiv Bator's latest, uh?



"WORDS OF WISDOM"
U-ROY
Virgin Front Line

One of U-Roy's all time classics, this collection contains some of the man's early hits, the very songs that started it all in reggae talk-over madness. Listen to "Tom Drunk", "Wake the Town", Honey Come Forward" and you'll understand why the entire jamaican radio audience totally flipped out when it first came out and kept putting the tunes at the top of the charts. Some ten years later it has become maddeningly hard to distinguish one toaster from another, all the ranking something or jah somebody rave and hiccup thru carbon copy instrumental tracks with only a handful ever coming close to U-Roy's inspired jive babbling as it literally pours out of this record and a couple of others. Now U-Roy is still active and regularly releases a batch of talkies for Virgin but the fire is gone and the excitement is in the hands of young big mouths with decreasing lasting power. One could go on and on about this album and the mysterious impact of each and every track, with their perfect blend of singing (anonymous of course) and surrealist word tossing, the horn blasting and bopping of the instrumental backdrop (also uncredited, in the grand jamaican tradition) and never really pin it down. This is unique, it will one day be recognized as some of the greatest recordings ever done by man, in any category. Need I say more?

-Kick

"GYPSY BLOOD"
DOLL BY DOLL
Automatic import

Now and then I fall upon a british press interview in which Doll by Doll, especially lyricist vocalist guitar Jackie Leven express the most interesting and disturbing points of view, most of it centered around the man's hyperdeveloped death consciousness. Not at all your average rock n roll group philosophy, it somehow makes an ugly kind of sense. But what does not make any sense is the way Doll by Doll choose to convey their morbid perceptions and general hopelessness. This new LP is even more absurd than the first one, the music is all bloated rock, predictable "soaring" production, sometimes you'd swear this is the hard rock equivalent of Seals and Croft crap, oooh it's bad! And Artaud gets pulled out of the freezer one more time: "The human face is an empty power, it is a field of death" he once wrote, now the thought has become a song, as empty of power as they get. How can you respect people whose music you hate? Why should you try?

—Kick (Barbed Wire Baby)

"HEART OF THE CONGOS"
THE CONGOS

"CONGO"
THE CONGOS
Ashanti Records

How do you choose your soundtrack? The one that follows you in your every action of the day. If you live in New York, do you listen to surf music? Do you live by the sea and play Metal Machine Music all day long? Maybe you do... If so, then you're obsessed with any form of music that will present an escape for you. Alright. That's cool too, but music works the other way too. It can serve to reflect and deal with the things that you know all too well. It can serve to inspire you and make you fucking proud. It can help open your eyes to another way to deal with the bullshit that keeps fucking up your mind.

So, what the hell does all this Jamaican jive have to do with our world? Is it not escapism in the same way that surf music is? How does it apply to me!???????

It doesn't. It's a completely foreign culture that can only be observed. Never can it be understood or even identified with. There's no way around it. The truth is that race and class have undeniable influence on the hearts and minds of every living person. A white man can never understand what it's like to grow up black. The European can never understand what it's like to grow up American. The rich can never relate to the pain and suffering of the poor. A well-raised white American can never understand the psyche of a well-raised communist Chinese. You can often get very close, but total likeness is unachievable. It's environment. It's unchangeable . .

The common ground is that all these people do share the same passion. A completely spaced-out Jamaican band like the Congos do make music with the same conviction of X or the Fall or something. The Congos don't play nice pop reggae or anything. They play jungle music. Plain-assed primal voodoo ritual music that any human animal can get the feeling from. On "Heart of the Congo" the music doesn't even bother to see the light of day. It leaps out into the dark forest and goes hunting for its dinner. The instruments are completely lost in echo chambers while the Congos themselves spin falsettos that sound like the birds in the trees themselves. The second song on side one, "Congoman", sits right alongside of even Winston Rodney's amazing efforts to take everyone back to Africa in three minutes or less. Truly one of the most daring efforts out of Jamaica ever. Records like this may send reggae to its grave, but only to be replaced by authentic African music. That's not bad either . .

"Congo", the second Congos album, is slicker and jazzier, but group prove themselves by simply delivering a more polished version of the same intensity. This record too is just as amazing. This stuff may be from Jamaica, but it makes a wonderful soundtrack to play on your tape recorder while trudging through that jungle up on Hollywood & Western. The music makes you feel like you're on the prowl, and down there, you had better be.

So, Jamaican jungle or Brazilian jungle or Avenue B in N.Y. or Hollywood & Western, it's all the same jungle. Same rules. So, I can groove to any kind of jungle music. That's why reggae, jazz, R&B, art music, or punk rock or whatever can work for you. It's only got to be real. Honest music. It's your soundtrack, so be sure it fits the movie.

—Ranking Jeffrey

"RELEASED"
THE DIODES
Epic

.. kicks ... naive enthusiasm . . . ingenious . . hard-edged lyrics . . . stamina . . honest to goodness rock n roll . . . . crisp . . . urgency . . . clean riffs . . . . power . . . crisp . . . early Kinks and Who . . . going to be big . . . . unselfconscious . . . great rock n roll . . . . . high decibel . . . . pop stance . . . just some of the things the world experts said about the Diodes. How true, how true. And they're going to have to say it again. And I can't find my very own quirky evaluations and perceptive comments, HELP I'M A PHONEY REVIEWER THE BLUFF IS UP I PLAY THIS I FEEL NOTHING HELP OH HEL P ME PLEASE I FEEL NOTHING I FEEL NOTHING AT ALL.

—Kick (I Want to be Crisp Too)

"BLACK ROOTS"
SUGAR MINOTT
Mango

Finally a domestic release cut out of the beaten path, reggae that sways on and on, strong yet too subtle still for the Marley college crowd, some will undoubtedly find it slightly repetitive and uniform, no punch or sweeping landscapes a la Spear, its target is not your heart or your guts it's your nerve endings, just let it play around you. Lincoln Sugar Minott's voice weaves thru the melodies like an instrument, a soulful wailing voice that drifts across the music, raspy and quivering, a veil of smoke across a red lit ceiling. One song title says it all: "Clean runnings". Closer to the ground than Dennis Brown, rougher than Johnny Clarke, a low pressure rockers tunes package to expand your reggae horizons.

—Kick

"SWEET SO TILL"
THE GLADIATORS
Virgin

Is this a race between jamaican vocal trios or what? One day the Abyssinians, then the Meditations, the Diamonds, Gladiators, then the Abyssinians again, then . . . The Gladiators are my favorite ones even when, like in this album, there is a background display of strings and electronic jive (you know the zip zip star wars sound you find now everywhere from tv commercials for mattress factories to pinball machines to oh god otherwise perfectly respectable reggae sessions — it's been plaguing the dub world for a while but that's what dub is for anyway, a garbage disposal for available noises) I could do without and not feel deprived or cheated at all. Don't ask me what "sweet so till" means, but listen to the song anyway because it's as good as it gets and it gets pretty good in Gladiator country. Lead singer Albert Griffiths has the most distinctive voice of all these groups, it's less proficient than say Joseph Hill's of Culture, it's sweeter and emotionally more expressive. Even when the jah praises start gnawing at your patience Griffiths manages to move you with the sound of his singing alone. The other two, Fearon and Sutherland, provide the high pitched harmonies that are constantly bursting right behind, believe me it gets

pretty rich on vocals alone, so when they throw in the kitchen sink along with the regular instrumental backing you have to shout "stop" before they bring in a Philharmonic outfit or a Trinidad marching band. I know reggae is the heartbeat of the people, but the people are due for a heart attack real soon at this rate. Still, a great album. How about experimenting with just the trio (who all play guitar and bass by the way) a drummer and keyboards for the next one? Bet it would work just fine.

–Kick

"EXTRABALLE"
EXTRABALLE
Elektra/WEA import

More electric french sounds for the music fan who has everything. Although the group has been carelessly linked to le punk stuff by simplistic press reports here and there it's obvious to anyone with one ear in working order that it ain't so, Extraballe's modernity leans a bit further back, Lou Reed, Bowie and Roxy Music are the foundations of this continental edifice, not Clash or Pistols. Songs display strict mid-seventies structures, instruments are more than competently played without being flaunted and atmospheres are professionally evoked, there are more style references than surprizes, what do you expect from a country that worships pinball machines and juke boxes? (the band's name is a reference (what is this, reference rock??) to the additional ball some pinball games are equipped with). Yet the band sings almost exclusively in french on their anglo saxon soundtrack, the themes are thorough neon metropolis suicides for lipstick and diamond dirty dogs, wild boys and night ladies in the shadows of concrete structures. Additional inspiration ranges from Sid the growing myth to Eastern Europe affairs and oppressive skies the color of lead. And, like all these little european nations, the music on each song is simultaneously similar and different, the tempos and progressions vary while the sound remains.

Perhaps too much was left in the hands of the producer, competence and sure values took over and Extraballe lost decisive points in vitality. Still a more than listenable album with at least one outstanding cut, "Good Night Dresden". Hopefully more to come, hopefully with definition and extra-ness.

–Kick

"BOUNTY HUNTER"
BARRINGTON LEVY
Jah Life import

A long way from Virgin records here, Jah Life records don't fuck around when it comes to credibility and just slap Selassie's face right on the label. How about that, God's mug as a logo??!! Fortunately they don't let you down at least with this Barrington Levy collection. I was familiar with some singles and giant 45's but had never spotted an entire album before, well here it is, it's smooth and it's also tight and real solid, Barrington's slightly veiled voice spreads over some 1st rate backing, sometimes the instrumental tracks switches to dub with very little behind the voice save some zealous bass and some high hat punctuating, so much music with so little, maybe they do have connections with the Creator after all . . .

–Kick

"PASS THE DUST, I THINK I'M BOWIE"
BLACK RANDY AND THE METROSQUAD
Dangerhouse

There are those who might have thought after seeing Black Randy's live performances, that the MetroSquad was a loosely thrown together group of backup musicians sloppily playing hastily thrown together arrangements. Well this album has a surprise for you – the star is not the belligerent loud mouth sucking the PCP stick on the cover. It's the band that carries the show.

Best moments include "I Tell Lies Everyday", a bouncy, infectious funk instrumental with various band members laughing and practicing future phone dialogues to be taped. A great jumpy piece of music, and I guess they felt the same way as an instrumental version is repeated on side two. (They really want you to know what great liars they are.) Other highlites include the instrumental "Give It Up or Turn It a Loose", starting with bass that means business and jumping into high-tension-gear. There is also an amazingly accurate re-creation of "Shaft" and a surreal sexual odyssey, "Barefootin on the Wicked Picket", all showing off the superfine musicianship of this crew.

The key is the rhythm section. Joe Nanini's understated playing is devoid of indulgent pyrotechnics that some drummers feel they must show off to let you know they can *play*. His precise, functional drumming, coupled with the fluid bass of Joe Ramirez or Tom Hughes, provides a solid backbone, it's the glue that keeps the sometimes overworked arrangements from falling apart at the seams. David Brown's keyboard playing is creative, sometimes too much so – overly fussy and busy, its queer neurotic tension ping-pongs off Pat Garrett's straight lead guitar.

But all this top drawer playing often only serves to show Randy's inability to sing. Though a clever and witty lyric writer, he often sounds like he's racing with the band to fit every precious word in. For someone who purports to be 'black' he has no sense of rhythm – and with so little sense of pitch or phrasing, the vocals are mostly reduced to a bellowing howl akin to the sound of a wounded bull seal. It works fine in small doses (like the singles) but stretched-out over an album it wears mighty thin, mighty fast, probably one reason that the Metro Squad takes equal time with their own funny business. Believe me, these guys have lots of business to take care of.

Black Randy's vision is that of the little guy pissed off at the big world. He's the one who works in the gas station dreaming of being a nark (a real life fantasy), he likes fall guys like Idi Amin, he's the bum who sleeps in the porno booth and has phantasmagorical sex dreams. It's all about someone in search of an identity, believe he's black, nor Bowie, but that's the whole joke of the thing. The punch line is schizophrenia. It's a great cover, it's all show and little tell, and you never see any real emotions. And many times it's incredibly self-defeating. Obscure in-jokes, scatological references to "Jews", "Faggots", "coons", "stankin clitor", "house niggers", ad nauseum, race and sex hate in the name of a good laugh, it's the oldest baiting game in the book. It may be a parody of bigotry, but if that's the extent of his cutting wit, this joker's blade is awfully dull.

There are brilliant moments – "Arcades images", "a dog in 24B, working undercover for LAPD, I took his paw and he winked at me, I'm man's best friend and I'm off at three". But some of the songs like Marlon Brando and San Francisco go for such obvious hits – it's easy to score when your shots are cheap.

Needless to say, as with all Dangerhouse product, the packaging, the recording, the production are all excellent. And, considering the concepts of most of the songs, this could have been a scathing satirical masterpiece. But the results are as erratic as your brain waves after a wack attack. I'll pass on this dust, no Thank You.

(One more note – during Black and Proud, Randy lays into James Chance, accusing him of 'stealing his act'. Aw come on, who cares who heard the James Brown record first? The Metro Squad's lively, white L.A. funk has nothing to do with the Contortions arty jazz junk funk. This is as relevant as the debate over which came first – the chicken or the egg. As far as I'm concerned Chance and Randy deserve each other.)

Mr My Tell

"ORIGINAL ROCKERS"
AUGUSTUS PABLO
Greensleeves import

Some of us have been waiting a long time for this collection. Just about anything that bears Pablo's name is worth more than passing interest but a package of some of the man's most influential cuts from way back (72 is when it started) to now is priceless: In one album you get traces of just about everything that makes modern reggae what it is. How one musician and his melodica were so essential to the development of the sound is any musicologist's guess but here it is: from the best of the toasting style, modern version (Dillinger on this LP) to the latest instrumental mood pieces that so many have tried to copy on countless versions (most of the time only capturing the outward trappings of instrumental minimalism and echoing without conveying any of the soul Pablo infuses in the tiniest note), a superb glimpse at the rockers style that has become THE sound of today's reggae, at least until another genius steps in and single handedly pushes jamaican music in another direction. This album is so much the "classic" release we keep hearing about when this or that particular record is mentioned it's not even fair to the competition. You won't see it flaunted in the shape of a giant Sunset Strip billboard, you may even have a hard time finding it at all but do not give up. This is as good as music gets, and makes all the heavily advertised products of today sound like the worthless drivel that it is. Educate yourself my brethren.

"PRETENDERS"
THE PRETENDERS
Sire

If I've ever seen a hit machine this is it, a select combination of disparate ingredients that once skillfully (skill, key word here, take note. There will be a quiz) blended artfully packaged and efficiently served (promotion publicity media blitz) cannot fail to ignite the musical taste buds of the masses. From then on it's snowball effect, expert planning and watch the in and the hip go bananas when the combo finally hits town, it's so predictable I think the band should skip LP No. 2, jump directly to No. 3, and REALLY experiment with success. I mean this Chrissie girl has been on the other side of the smoke screen, she used to dabble in rock journalism she knows what's ahead she must be tempted to toy with the pattern I'd think. Unless success is more enjoyable than we've been led to believe.

Why describe the pop combination plate when one spin says it all? driving rhythms with the edges trimmed and penciled, a hook a minute two or three if it's gonna be one of the singles, in this case a really good female voice as tough as the best rockers, sensuous intonations meshed in a hard/sweet image to drive you big gorillas with the romantic yearnings up the wall, lyrics designed to keep the middle class on its toes, a production job courtesy of Nick Lowe, the man who has a special knob on his master console labeled "Illusions for the masses," an image of BMW coolness, pop music with bucket seats, this year's model and poor Blondie are going to be left in the dust wondering what's wrong with skinny ties and peroxide sleaze. Sire might even get some respect from the Warner mothership.

–Kick

"THE BEST THING"
GROW UP
Object Music import

This stuff may not fit in the Slash "aestetic", but I'm glad it's here. Figuring out what's appropriate for this magazine is a perplexing pain in the ass. Is it too arty, too romantic, too intellectual, too professional? Is what I'm writing now not hip enough, or too hip? I haven't seen one visual art review, but I've seen plenty of oh-so-cool fashion buffs mug their way in here for the sole reason that they look "punk" – a style well known to Cosmopolitan and Newsweek readers alike. Style wasn't really the point, was it? Didn't it have more to do with certain ideals, like honesty, passion, vision and expression, than with creating an exclusive social club labeled "members only" (membership comes with short hair, bondage/hoodlum outfits, limited musical and philosophic "tastes" and the notion that social manipulation and self-destruction are "styles" to be admired and copied)? Were "hippies" the enemy, or the fossilized hippie "style"? And if it was the "style", the spiritual halter, that was to be destroyed, haven't we come a bit too close to that ourselves – for all our righteous anger? If this little "subculture" has become a marketable, commercial product, then it only follows that what once meant something now only appears as something. You can't buy meaning, but appearance is a lucrative enterprise. The "movement" degresses into a convenient trend, a slick overcoat

bies who find meaning in being at the right parties, or being in a crowd shot in Slash. When the next trend comes in, they'll go out. Ideology rinses away like hair dye. As the "movement" gets constipated, we retreat further into corners and then complain of cramps, or of "surf punks", or of Slash.

So that's why I don't know if this record fits in. It's not "punk", but it's a lot truer to what's real than the Ramones – that is, it's not a parody of itself. The guys look all under 21 in the picture, hence the title. They do jazzy numbers, dearths, dixieland, Ray Davies-type suburban croons, slow tangos. They just sing about the under-21 concerns, love and peer identity and stuff like that – no rhetoric or gut spilling to any of it. But it's not heartless, not as heartless as someone who would dismiss them purely because they "don't sound punk". This probably ain't your cup of tea anyway, but that doesn't mean they don't deserve a listen. It's easy to "sound" punk, it's a different matter to have substance, however conservative that may be.

–Will L'Amato

NO DISCO ALBUM
KROQ – DARRELL WAYNE
Bomp Record

Barf! The idea of a no disco record is a gimmicky, obvious and somewhat out of date idea since disco seems to be digging its own grave these days. And this album is really rank, I'm surprised at Bomp. I always felt that Bomp, whether I agreed with their taste or not, were at least passionate about their rock and roll beliefs. But, with one or two exceptions, there is almost no real rock and roll on this album. There are silly Devo imitations, a few heavy metal atrocities, a lot of fabricated studio groups and one bizarre oddity (Ubuibi): Guys talking in Russian with crowd background noises (what does this have to do with anything)? If you were gonna make an anti-disco record at least present good alternative examples. But most of these groups actually imitate their hate object to drive a heavy handed and obvious point home. And even though there's a lot of talk about punk and pogoing on this record, the only punk song (actually one of the only good songs period) is San Diego group The Tokyo's "Trashy Chic", and it also bears the distinction of being one of the few songs that doesn't have Disco in the song title.

Maybe I'm being hard – there are a few moments – The Squab from Planet Zed (a bogus studio set-up group if ever I heard one) actually have some decent music and are the only other group that sound somewhat *new*, Cindy and the Gidget Haters are so ridiculous with their screaming about pogo, so awful, it's good. But a Disco song like Anita Ward's "Ring My Bell" has impeccable hooks, an intriguing vocal, a silly but catchy lyric, an impeccable dance beat, which is more than I can say for this retarded collection.

Donny Summers

"THE CRACK"
THE RUTS
Virgin International (JEM)

I'm not going to go into the usual ranting about "Oh, no this doesn't live up to expectations" or "It could have been alot fucking better." OK, so the singles never existed. This album is the first I've heard of the Ruts, honest. "Babylon's Burning" and "S.U.S." begin this American version of the LP. Things get off to a barrelling-along-the-highway start that's good fun but pretty average once you scrape the studio pyrotechnics lustre off the first layer. "Something That I Said" is total filler as is "Criminal Mind", "Back Biter", "Out of Order", "Savage Circle" and "You're Just A". "It was Cold" gets some chilly sentiments rippling up and down your backside but goes on too long. "Jah War" is an embarrassingly superficial piece of white reggae that makes the Clash sound like Tapper Zukie. What's left is the minor classic "Society" (which you won't find on the British LP). Three out of eleven. You figure it out.

–MR. OK

SHEENA AND THE ROKKETS
Alfa records import

Ah, those inscrutable Japanese. Wait, it's the Chinese who are inscrutable, the Japanese are industrious. Maybe the cultural distinctions don't apply when a Zen monk stuffs his face with automated hamburgers. It seems almost natural. We gave the Japanese a big helping of High-Tech Bar-B-Que, and now they're beating us at our own game. Our oily plastic culture got them where Godzilla never could, straight to their hearts and wallets.

The kids, lacking the immunity of tradition, were the worst infected. They not only adopted our priorities and methodologies, but also started adopting our style. Long hair, comic books, Levi jeans. Certainly the most dangerous import has been Rock n' Roll. That stuff will not only polarize a people, but seems to turn half of them into lunatics. By our standards, these japanese rockers can be pretty funny, but God knows what the elders must think. Remember, Japan not only elevated Cheap Trick into mythic superbeings, they were also the only people on earth who actually liked The Runaways. Talk about degeneration.

So here's a hybrid Japanese pop group called Sheena and the Rockets. One guy looks glittery, one guy looks punky, one guy looks just like Buddy Holly (which is perfectly feasable compared to John Wayne playing Ghengis Khan). Their cover shows them wrapped in saran wrap, and the logo has the "take a trip" ad from Tiger Rose. They play just like The Ramones sometimes, and do "The Batman Theme" and "You Really Got Me" (pronounced "leelry"). Their lyrics have dangerous themes like how much fun beer is, can't tell if it's night or day etc.

In short, this is a real eclectic eggrole. They distilled down a competent approximation of what rock music ought to be and shipped it over to people who are much too jaded to see its "newness and recklessness". But give them time, after the industrial greed and cosmetic identity vacuums have latched onto their skulls, they'll come up with something original. Primal screams from rotting souls.

–Will L'Amato

"AFRICAN ANTHEM DUBWISE"
(THE MIKEY DREAD SHOW)
MIKEY DREAD
Cruise records import

The richest dub package to enter our puny dimension since that super heavyweight one that crashlanded in the midst of our quaint and linear musical world some time back, scattering disconnected reverb chunks and meaningless echoes everywhere and seriously threatening the foundations of good taste and classical harmonies. This time the madman at the controls is Mikey Dread, THE name to drop on dub wise conversations at the present time and quite likely for some time to come to. Mikey Dread is responsible for a truly heavy manners radio show in Jamaica that concerns itself solely with the rockers and dubmasters musical point of view and leaves the candyfloss to others, a position that brought mucho pressure from various quarters, as even in Jamaica some aspects of the music are not held in high esteem in the business and political circles. The cuts featured on this LP are radically engineered, twisted shreds of rhythm guitar, flickering cymbals, plodding bass lines shadowing vanished tunes and countless bizarre noise artifacts littering the path, it will take countless listenings before you feel familiar with this jungle of sounds. In between the assaults you even get the radio show's identification lines and audio calling cards, a whole other world from beginning to end. Makes the rest of the radio world sound like static.

–Kick

THE CRAMPS
"SONGS THE LORD TOLD US"
I.R.S.

Well, what did you expect? A new direction, sophistication galore?? This is the trash masterpiece the warped fans prayed for, light the black candles and suck on that bone. As this took a long time to be released I started worrying about too many recording tracks, filtered rhythm guitars, all the rampant technology that can fuck up a good thing. But they pulled it thru, not a zilch of a trace of surrender to recording science here, parts of it sound as if it was taped in some catacombs with a freak echo the rest in a shack ten feet away from a heavily used railroad track. Lux still can't really sing properly but his improper equivalent does real good, and you know the basic crew of other Cramps, their abilities and their arrogant limitations. No surprise, no softening, it's the rawest, dirtiest, thickest album of this month, last month, next month, there is no competition anywhere for now. The grubbiest rockabilly is ten times more presentable, the most simplistic punk banging is infinitely more progressive than this music. Producer Alex Chilton must be a charming character, you just can tell. With an Attila-like finesse at the console and a sure ear for unnecessary refinements, 'cept is that a chainsaw they forgot to turn off during Teenage Werewolf?? Besides pandering to your less charming personality traits this record is one more proof that following the imminent peak of modern civilization some very dark ages are behind the bend. This is the perfect introduction to that future culture. Count me in for the overall decline of everything, sounds like potent fun.

–Kick

"SETTING SONS"
THE JAM
Polydor

Paul Weller has by now taken over a position once occupied by Ray Davies of the Kinks: the poet and shrink of the "little guy", british style. It's all there, the sarcastic but still loving look at the lower classes' sacred beliefs and institutions, the basically pessimistic understanding of average lives as wasted shoddy mistakes based on falsed premises and limited possibilities, above all the meaningless patriotism that refuses to die even when faced with the obvious conclusions. The problem is that the Jam certainly try to put too much across at one go, and sometimes the words are literally crammed in a tune, bits of sentences dangling at both ends as there is absolutely no room to squeeze them in better. Also the typical Jam explosion of rhythm chords and ascending percussion effects does not always suit the topic, conveying aggression when the lyrics are describing the opposite feelings. Still, there is an awful lot in this record that deserves attention and respect. The Jam's hyper awareness of their roots and background will certainly not make it easier for them to break the american market, a feat they once seemed destined to accomplish, providing their stance and topics had remained unfocused and vague enough. And their obvious lack of interest in banking on the obvious mod nonsense support says more on their integrity than they personally will ever do in their frustrating self effacing interviews.

–Kick

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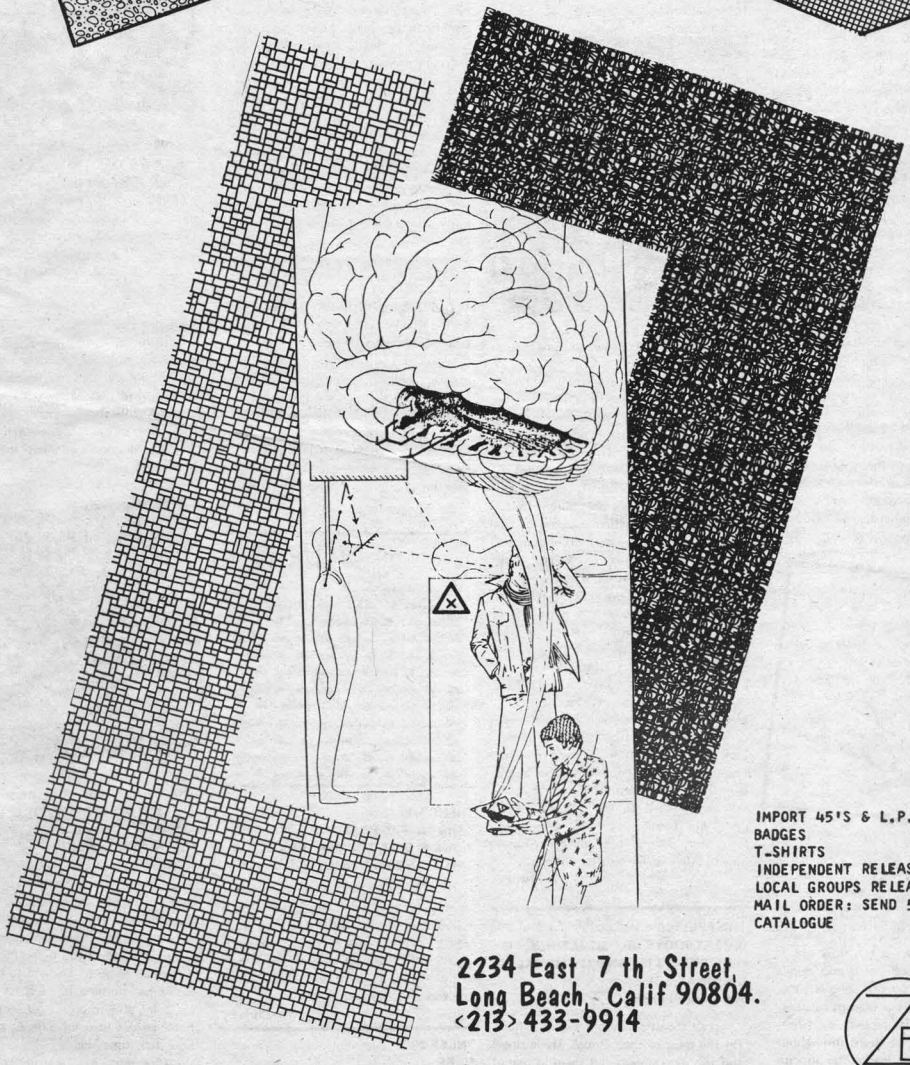

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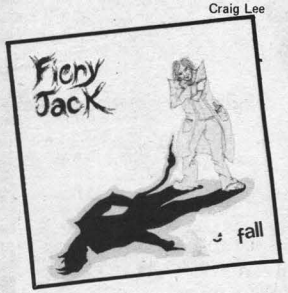
THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS
WE LOVE YOU/PULSE/
SISTER EUROPE
Epic Records import

The current London in. "We Love You" shows why — Velvet guitar meets X-Ray sax as the properly angst singer trots out a list of fave sixties icons: Sinatra, Bardot, Loren, the Supremes. Really a crazy, great song, the trendies oughta go ape shit, especially the post Bowie/Roxy punks who don't know what to do with their brains anymore. Side 2 "Pulse" is aptly named, with throbbing steady sound rush and sixties Dylanesque vocal attack. Those critics who like to play 'guess the source' will have a field day.

Part two comes along and so do the doubts. It's not that "Sister Europe" isn't a pretty, melodically interesting song. It is obviously designed to lull and jaunt, but whose voice is that rattling in the subconscious backroom? I hear Arthur Lee (circa Forever Changes), I hear traces of Bowie and Cale, but I'm never sure if I'm hearing the Psychedelic Furs. (God, what a ridiculous name — try typing it a few times and you'll see what I mean.) As for the side two instrumental, another exercise in mood and textures, well what is this, the dawning of the new Aquarian age? What happened to the reckless abandon and power from round number one? Let's hope round three doesn't result in technical knock-out.

Craig Lee



THE FALL
(FIERY JACK/2ND DARK AGE/
PSYKICK DANCEHALL)
Step Forward import

Want to hear the story of Jack, the bum with the bad kidneys, who is forty-five, won't go back to the slow life, is too fast to work and just drinks drinks drinks? The music on this song is super basic, not far from the Cramps actually, it's like a theme that repeats itself over and over again, no variations throughout cept for the scattered lead guitar punctuations, while Mark Smith gleefully goes on and on bout this antisocial character of his. Quite catchy in a devious way, mysterious primitive appeal, bla bla, a number one hit on the charts of the unconscious. If you don't see it that way you can, in evil Jack's own words, "eat that grenade"! B side widens the gap with the rational civilized world even more, "2nd Dark Age" is that Fall post-rock n roll noise full of mutation abnormalities, forget all the techno industrial doodlings this is further along the road. Subject matter of the tune is self-explanatory. And "Psykick Dancehall" is a new recording of the lp tune, much thicker and closer than the original. Support the Fall, they'll be just what you need when you've become too fast for everything else.

—Kick

THE CLASH
(London Calling/Armagideon Time)
CBS import

Okay, I'm sorry I almost buried them. This is as excellent as anything they've ever done, including "White Man in Hammersmith Palais", their previous white reggae masterpiece. This giant 45 actually has four cuts, two dub versions of Armagideon Time on the B side that explore just about every possibility offered by the tune: fluctuating snatches of vocals, great booming bass drum punctuation, Strummer's piano licks and Mick Jone's minimal melodica, a bass line solid enough to walk on water with, it's such an impressive display of total dub mastery I wish they had turned one of the two records in their last package into a similar experiment, covering White Man, Police and Thieves, Guns of Brixton and others that lend themselves to the jamaican dubbing lab work. Once again El Clash leads the way, the dub race is on and things look positively brighter in the vinyl world. London Calling does not need reggae blood to stand out, it's one of the great clash numbers packed to the gills with fire, drive and forcefulness. May they bury the Jimmy Jazz silliness and concentrate on what they do better than anyone.

—Kick

THE FEELIES
(EVERYBODYS GOT SOMETHING TO
HIDE EXCEPT ME AND MY MONKEY/
ORIGINAL LOVE)
Stiff Records import

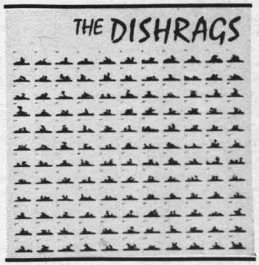
I can't wait to hear a Feelies album. On the basis of their Rough Trade single and this I've already put them in one of the special niches reserved for bands that make life at least somewhat bearable. So what do the Feelies do that's so great? Well really nothing much. Their voices are somewhat weak and usually just another instrument in the mix, but they have a style, a frenetic strumming guitar (more folk like than Ramones-downstroke) a drummer that loves to overdub quirky percussion effects in at appropriate moments and a lead guitarist capable of amazing powerdrive soaring guitar fire-power but who manages to keep any flashy hero instincts remarkably under wraps. This is a band that deals in understatements and textures, not so much song structures as a king of aural wallpaper — you put on a Feelies record and immediately the whole room is Feelies world; concise, precise, intelligent, complete. I don't particularly care for this Beatle song in its original state but they've managed to take out the stifling cuteness and give it a light, sprightly, muscular (here it comes) feel. Yes, the band's name is appropriate — it's the feel of the songs that counts. And count me in. They may be so subtle they pass a lot of people by, and I imagine their live performances to be quite different, but this is a major new band of the eighties. Let's keep it quiet for a while.

—Craig Lee

AU PAIRS
(YOU/DOMESTIC DEPARTURE/
KERB KRAWLER)
021 records import

Harsh but worthwhile. 2 boys, 2 girls, unusual subject matter (relationship of the sexes of all things) showing more intelligence and independence than most other sound aggressors. Meaning you don't have to be a wimp to show some awareness. More demanding on the brain than you thought at first this punk thing innit??

—Kick



DISHRAGS
(THE PAST IS PAST/
LOVE IS SHIT/TORMENTED)
Modern Records (Seattle)

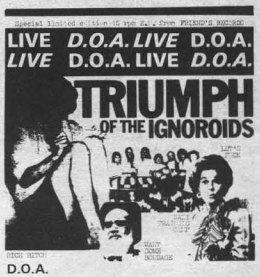
The A cut is A-plus, a ragged hook-after-hook thing that snags you for a hummable rockin' little ride that leads you to expect more of side 2. "Love is Shit" and "Tormented" got about half the attention/concentration they needed to produce a worthwhile followup.

Chris D.

"NEEF 23"
NEEF
Centipede Records

Odd, if not astounding, environmental experimentation in the form of drones, contrapunchy rhythms and narrated weather reports. Perhaps there's a concept hiding in here — there's a certain enigmatic, symmetrical choice of song titles, none of which can be found to have a direct one-to-one relation to the sounds on the record, and the cover field of geometric hatches could almost be the score. Who knows anymore? It sounds like it was recorded in some sort of art studio. It makes me wonder.

—Crud Slid Slime



D.O.A.
(NAZI TRAINING CAMP/WANT SOME
BONDAGE/RICH BITCH/LET'S FUCK)
Friends Records (Vancouver)

Exactly what you always wanted in a beer. The beer that made Vancouver famous. There's an unbelievably dense and meaty sound here compared to D.O.A.'s previous releases. This measures up as one of the all-time monsters of live rock 'n roll. Subject matter is uh, how shall I put it? Rather basic. Primitive to say the least. But when has DOA ever stood for anything other than the primitive? Cool, man. The Stooge's "Rich Bitch" is the all-stops-out piece that could've gone on for another ten minutes, easy. Also of note: a sleeve that features Margaret Trudeau's infamous snatch pix.

Chris D.

HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS
(TELL THAT GIRL TO SHUT UP/
CHAPEL OF LOVE)
Oval Records import

Here's a real funny one. Are you ready? Yeah, these guys who used to muck around here in L.A. have actually pulled some decent personnel together and put a very infectious (that word's getting a trifle overused, don't you think?) record out. They had to go to England to do it. But Holly has nothing but respect from me for being able to pull it off. A very good hook resides here on Side A, no matter how slick it may be.

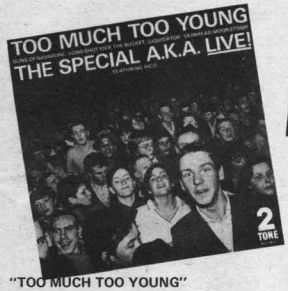
"Chapel of Love" is an under-rehearsed miscalculation. It's their first single. 50-50 chances that there's better to come.?

Chris D.

THE FRENCHMEN
(NO SURPRISE/IF WHAT YOU SAID)
Endangered Species records

Heading straight for the dispose-of-at-once pile, no second thoughts. This kind of shit almost killed rock n roll once. Even the real frenchmen figured out that much, as some recent vinyl testifies to.

–Kick



"TOO MUCH TOO YOUNG"
THE SPECIALS LIVE EP
Two Tone import

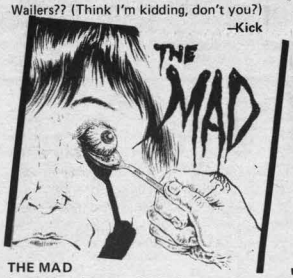
Obviously a must for the hundreds who packed the Whisky when the Specials played there, as well as for the others who stayed away and are secretly wondering what the hoopla was about. Hot on the trail of their low key underproduced LP in time to show the more boisterous side of their style, 4 out of 5 tunes on the EP are cover versions of old ska hits and the fifth a trimmed down version of "Too much too young", one of the original tunes off the LP. Three of the covers blend together with no interruption and take all of one side under the wacky "Skinhead Symphony" title. The Pioneers' "Long Shot Kick the Bucket" (an old horse racing jamaican story) is almost as great as the original, but much rowdier. Also included: Liquidator, Skinhead Moonstomp and Guns of Navarone (that's right, the movie theme, a bit souped-up – all that's stuff got done in jamaican uptempo in those days, just like string orchestras doing albums of Rolling Stones hits, there's a market for anything). Now all you skalifornians (cute, cute) ought to look into the roots of all this, there's much fun to be found with the likes of Pioneers, Maytals, Skatalites. Or do you REALLY need the big hype machine to motivate you, you silly magpies?

–Kick

THE SELECTER
(THREE MINUTES HERO/JAMES BOND)
Two Tone import

Of all the two-tone challengers this is the one I personally select for number one, they have the hardest punch and appear to have extracted more life and inspiration from the ska roots than the other black & white gangs around, they don't clown with it like Madness or just use it as a springboard like the Specials, they fuckin' play it as if it really was the only sound in town worth sweating to and have the power to make you feel their tension deeper in your guts, and longer. Three minute hero is fast and tight (check out the hyper-nervous intro – these loonies are turning innocent ska into a dangerous physical exercise). And the instrumental James Bond theme is a real surreal killer, I can feel this movie theme ska lunacy turning into a real monster. Next, the ska version of What's New Pussycat, as done by Marley and the Wailers?? (Think I'm kidding, don't you?)

–Kick



THE MAD
(EYEBALL/I HATE MUSIC)
Disgusting records

The other side of New York music. Don't expect a big New York Rocker spread on these depraved brats, this is strictly for gutter consumption, fourth grade Fear with the social consciousness of the Germs. Like plastic vomit gadgets in dusty novelty stores. Not as good as the preceeding aesthetic nightmare of disenboweled horses and talking fried eggs but okay. Screaming Mad George's graphic arts and literary talents must be encouraged.

–Kick

ELECTRIC CALLAS
(So Chic)
Pathe/EMI import

Techno stylists from France, their jerky robot rhythms, sparse instrumental sheen and antiseptic atmosphere have more immediate appeal than most of the other tres techno telex twerps. The singer's ambiguous voice, the skeleton funk underlines, the superb balance of every component, it all conspires to pull you back, put it on one more time, it's like an addictive culinary delicacy you're only supposed to nibble on, it's gone before you managed to pin its taste down and your appetite is dead. For elegant in-between moments.

–Kick

THE DELINQUENTS
HAVE A JOB FOR A GIRL LIKE ME/ MOTIVATION COMPLEX)
Live Wire records

Anybody could have tortured that retarded kid in elementary school. Just yanked him behind the English building and teased him, or spun him in circles, or poked him till he cried. But the poor joe obviously had enough troubles in life without us adding harang to handicap. Likewise with this record. Why pick on it? It didn't ask to be here, or to have to wear such a lame cover, or even to sound so stupid that nobody wants to pay it any mind. So let's just give the little feller a break – this once. Let's be patient and try to listen to it. And if we can't do that, let's at least ignore it nicely. There are far more worthy targets for our guns than retards like this.

–Sister Willa Molto

THE NOISE
(NOISE/AGONY)
Broken records

Amazing! They're back! Anarchy! I almost fell for it I almost did I swear, I knew the singer wasn't HIM in spite of good resemblance of delivery but the others sounded just like . . . . Anyway what all the fuss is about here at brain headquarters central is the song "Agony", the ULTIMATE – FIVE GOLD STARS– A PARAGRAPH IN "GREAT SWINDLES OF ALL TIMES" ENCYCLOPEDIA – TAKE OFF on the Sex Pistols, golden period. Shall I repeat?: B side of San Francisco's The Noise is the greatest Pistols sound alike tune I have ever heard, and you don't know how many we ran into at a certain period. And it IS great, because now it's almost fresh anyway and copying the Pistols will improve your life but copying Sham 69 will not, and copying them masterfully will drive everybody crazy with indecision and prevent the real ones from any further attempt to recreate the past. Furthermore this band also puts out a song (the A side actually) called Noise that does not copy anyone as far as I know, sounds pretty good just like that and better the next time around, punk music still right on course, enemy in view, all that, don't you try telling these and others the war is over, don't you especially try telling them we won. Good noise this, real good. Roots. **–Kick**

THE POP GROUP
(WE ARE ALL PROSTITUTES/ AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT. . .)
Rough Trade import

The big jump from total rejection to commitment to one or several causes. These people have always been a few steps ahead of everyone in the ideological department, consequently alienating record companies as well as potential public with their uncompromising leftist stance. A side is a funk-soaked slippin' and sliding romp thru the evils of consumerism and capitalism, a dialectical groove just one wail and one shriek away from undecipherable coded message but as it stands perfect and extremely necessary. According to a recent press release the Pop Group has somewhat eased the burden of being the underground's political conscience by "joining forces with the Slits", now also on Rough Trade after the fling with Island, and planning joint releases together in the near future (on their own Rough Trade-affiliated label). Expect more on the matter in an upcoming Slash. **–Kick**

JOY DIVISION
(TRANSMISSION/NOVELTY)
Factory import

No need to deny my feelings: everything Joy Division does gets me good in the psyche. No exception here. Essential and far reaching. Sinister or not this is the sound of reality, play it again Sam before they cut the power off.

–Kick

THE REGULARS
(RUDE BOY GONE TO JAIL/ DON'T STAY OUT LATE)
CBS import

One of the old timers of the british reggae scene, the band now called The Regulars used to be Reggae Regular, although I never heard anything by them at the time. The two ska tunes they do here are quite good, the rude boy one is even better than that, nifty piano intro and no nonsense hop hop rhythmic front made up of more instruments than you'd care to count (there must be more of them than the complete Specials army), real smooth vocals and complementary harmonies, this ain't no white porkpie hat bullet heads trampling the reggae past this is a professional bunch that didn't have to take crash courses in jamaican uptempo techniques. We'll show the brats! The way it looks nobody has to worry, there's enough demand for the sound for everyone to get a slice of the pie and a piece of the action. If Specials or Selecter are a bit rough on your sensitive eardrums try the Regulars, your look of agony may turn to a satisfied grin. If that don't work search for early Pioneers (real real smooth and addictive), and if that fails don't worry anyway, your coffin is on its way.

–Kick

BONUS BOYS
(WASTING OUR TIME/EVERY TIME I SEE A CAR LIKE YOURS GO BY)
Tsunami Music records

I sort of like Wasting Our Time with its mild independent feel of earlier beat music (the Beau Brummels especially) but side 2 is dumb and crappy and not at all pleasant. No bonus, boys.

–Kick

THE NEXT
(MONOTONY/CHEAP REWARDS/ MR WONDERFUL)
Sharp records

One of the most popular of the Texas wave contingent according to local fanzines and other sources, and it's easy to see how their sound is able to convert indecisive kids left and right: slow enough not to sound like a blur to unaccustomed ears but with more defiance and rebellion per line of lyrics to win the hearts of every disenchanted soul over. Cynics will scoff at the "anarchy" stance, not "in" at all this season don't you know daaarling? but it does not matter the chain reaction is almost 4 years old, still active and much too complex to be stopped by anything or anyone. "Cheap rewards" is the best of the three songs here, a worthy burst of heartfelt hatred on the lines of the Dils' We Hate The Rich. Some sentiments never go out of style, I'm glad to report.

–Kick

DESTROY ALL MONSTERS
(WHAT DO I GET?/NOBODY KNOWS)
IDBI records
XANADU
"BLACK OUT IN THE CITY" EP
Black Hole records

Xanadu is made up of dissatisfied members of Destroy All Monsters who didn't like the band's direction. Can't blame them, as this new single from Niagara and her back up band is about as pointless and dismissible as they come, just a girl singer posing on a musical background of swirling metal jive. Real dead end crap. On the other hand Xanadu have more ideas and visions that one would ever have expected from Niagara's band. One song, "Black Out in the City" is as haunting as any american release has been in a long time, proving that the english are not the undisputed masters of the gloom boom they appear to be. Check it out, it's a pretty important contribution. They'll probably get signed by some offbat english outfit while the dumb american industry keeps on searching out the fun combos. What stupid times I and I are stuck in.

—Kick

DANGEROUS GIRLS
(SAFETY IN NUMBERS/JUMP UP AND DOWN/DOWN IN FILE/SEX)
Happy Face Records import

Esoteric, overproduced gibberish. A tight rhythm section gets the best of everybody. Too bad they couldn't do something about that singer. Clipped and staccato exercises that are a little devoid of human warmth and feeling, if you know what I mean.

Chris D.

THE NIPS
(GABRIELLE/VENGEANCE)
Chiswick import

Used to be known as the Nipple Erectors long time ago. Used to play harder and less melodic. Gabrielle is real "Shake it UP" sixties pimply sounds, good but limited. B side is less regressive but not much. Okay for summer fun, but right now it's pissing rain and I need a fix of Joy Division.

—Kick

THE RELUCTANT STEREOTYPE
(THE FULL/THE ROUNDS)
Oval records import

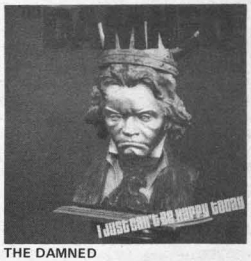
Obviously, these guys don't want to be categorically pigeonholed. A little of this and a little of that, all very tightly structured if incohesive. Discordant bootbeat breaks into swinging jazzy sax breaks into romantic vinyl lounge music. There's a subtle psychological ripple in the voice and packaging, which leads me to believe they're humans, and the music leads me to believe they're not interested in the star game. That's two points in their favor.

—Lamento

NEW MATH
(DIE TRYING/ANGELA)
CBS records import

Unfortunately, I'm trying to review this thing while it's blaring out of my speakers. It makes it really hard to think of anything intelligent to write, in fact it's hard to think at all. New math, hmm? It adds up to the same old thing . . . hey, that was fairly clever. Wasn't it?

WLA



THE DAMNED
(I JUST CAN'T BE HAPPY TODAY/ BALLROOM BLITZ/TURKEY IN THE HOUSE)
Chiswick Records import

The dub masters of punk. So eclectic these doomed boys in vampire drag and pink fizzy orangutan suits. Too eclectic for their own good. This is one of the most mixed-up Irish stews I ever heard. A big, out-of-control mess that cries for some strong hand to pull it together into the masterpiece (that's right!) it could and deserves to be. Twenty different directions go careening off into space anchored only by a catchy circus organ riff. You can almost smell the popcorn. "Ballroom Blitz" is massacred. Yes, the shit-schmucks of the '70s, the Sweet did it better. But the Damned are obviously having so much fun playing it you still don't care. Following is a bit of "lowbrow" humor, too, an unscheduled stop in bumpkinland, something about a "Turkey's in the house/you gotta get him out/ get him out/get him out . . .). Ha, ha, ha. Oh boy. Worth the price of admission, I guess. Then again if you don't have the singles get the album instead.

Chris D.

STEW LANE & THE UNTOUCHABLES
(PLAY THIS SONG/PERPETRATOR)
Private Ear records

THE UNITS
(JAPAN/I'M SORRY)
Iron Cyst records

THE DB'S
(BLACK & WHITE/SOUL KISS)
Shake records

Three contributions from New York, lumped together for having something else in common: an inability to convey anything besides competence in their chosen profession. Most likely to succeed out of the 3 are the DB's, who seem snappy and confident but whose music of pop synthesis and youthful exuberance does not sit well on my stomach. Most off the wall (not very far off at all) are Stew Lane and his gang, providers of kindergarten electronic tinkerings and "modern" fluff. The Units don't sound at all like San Francisco Units and are not destined for much, although the girl singer uses some mildly daring lyrical material on "I'm sorry" to its best possibilities. Other song reasserts their overall lameness in case you had doubts.

NOTE: Expect a Richard Hell EP of "new and rare" material from the Shake label very soon. (Shake is ex N.Y. Rocker man Alan Betrock's label)

—Kick

COLD COCK
(I WANNA BE RICH/ YOU'RE A MESS)
IDBI records

THE CULT HEROES
(THE PRINCE AND THE SHOWGIRL/ BERLIN WALL)
Too Bad records

ALGEBRA MOTHERS
(STRAWBERRY CHEESECAKE/ MODERN NOISE)
Aftertaste records

Three from Detroit. I'm glad I live in L.A. The legacy of Iggy and MC5 have produced some bands with rock and roll energy to burn but short in the new ideas department (A-Moms excluded). Coldcock is your basic raw and heavy, and your basic uninteresting. Cult Heroes, whose single cover drawing has them looking like glitter punk rockabillies (whew, cover all bases) come forth with a rather nice folk-rocktune in "Showgirl". It's smooth, but somewhat forgettable. Anybody whose label is Too Bad is informing you of results rather directly, I'd say. I'd also say the Algebra Mothers have a lot of potential and seem the only band to be doing something new, if you discount Destroy All Monsters wild Niagra posturings. Strawberry Cheesecake is too close to T. Heads for comfort, but Modern Noise, with a different band lineup, delivers the promise of its title. Atonal riffing building the tension and anxiety, a good start. Still, I'll take the palm trees and poseurs anyday.

West Coast Snot

TURN BUCKLES
(SUPER DESTROYER MARK II)

Too dumb to be an enigma. Too bizarre to make it as a novelty. What is this thing then? A tribute to a wrestler named Super Destroyer Mark II and "his mentor" Lord Alfred Hayes. God knows what the story behind it is. Mentally deficient fans who needed more money for beer-nuts? A loving son who wishes to vilify his dad? I think it may be a sly publicity stunt for a new line of diesel cars, but that's only if I think about it.

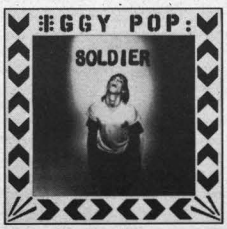
—Big Bill L'Amato

ACE AND THE EIGHTS
(EXPLOSION/FACE IN THE FIRE)
Fit records

Diluted pop-funk, like day-glo tampax. Great gift idea for the geriatric ward. Just search out the really senile Blondie fans and give this to them. At least that's what I'm going to do with my copy . . . if I can get the drool out of the grooves.

Willy Winko

IGGY POP:
HE'S NO G.I. JOE.
PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON GENERAL CHAOS...FROM THE FRONT LINES OF ROCK 'N' ROLL.
IGGY POP'S SOLDIER.
A TOP-RANK ALBUM.
ON ARISTA RECORDS AND TAPES. ARISTA



MONSTERS RUNNING LOOSE
by Ranking Jeffrey

Yes, it's true! Monsters are running loose and there's nothing you can do. However, one way you can save your soul is to skank on down to "I&I Records", located at 2408 Vernon Ave. in So. Los Angeles. A be-boping place which, I'm pleased to report, carries most of the records reviewed in this section. Fair prices, Fun hanging out and strictly on the R&B side of town! And they didn't give me anything to write this...

Unfortunately, the shipping is so chaotic over there that a trip to our old friends at Barton's will often turn up different records than at "I&I". But they are fairly close to one another and, between them, you will get what you want. I righteously advise once-a-month trips to both places in your struggle to avoid ..... monsters.

One record you should grab on first sight is "Girl I've Got A Date" by Dennis Brown & Trinity (Joe Gibbs Disco 45). It's another tune with the flavor of "Ain't That Loving You/Hole in the Bucket" single which still gets my vote for reggae 45 of the year. It's a wonderfully soulful record (both of them are), with two of the best dub/toasting sides ever to reach wax. Dennis Brown spins such perfect melodies that every Ranking D.J. on the island is fighting for a chance to do his version. (Especially search out the one with Nigger Kojack, which is the best.)

On the horrible side of things, another reggae disco single is "Can't Stop Rastaman Now" by Tyrone Taylor (Joe Gibbs), a bloodthirsty, disgusting, night-creeping monster ... A horrible version of some disco hit, (I thankfully forget the name) with the word "dancing" changed to "Rasta", making it a mockery of Reggae, Rasta, Jamaica, and Us. There's no trace of reggae and the whole thing sounds more like Philadelphia than Kingston. The only reason I haven't smashed it to bits is the toaster Welton Irie who is quite good, but he still cannot save us from this creeping menace.

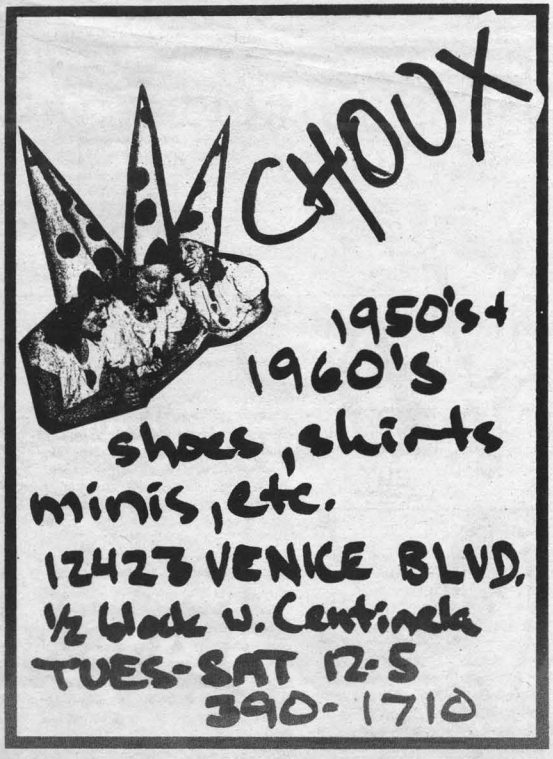
Welton Irie shows up again on his own single "Dread A The Foreigner" (Channel One records) and lays down a pretty funny rap over some more righteous backing. The guitar in particular is much more heavily drowned in echo than usual, giving it a sound like "Listen to the Teacher", the old U-Roy classic. A favorite at I&I, Welton gives off a lot more energy than most of the new toasters this year and he's also quite sharp with the lips. "Answer Me Question" by Ranking Trevor (Hitbound records) comes to me from the Capitol swamp meet, and seems like an older bit from the "Questions" phase toasters were into a couple of years ago. It's nothing special, other than the dub side brings out the melody better than the "A" side. Not bad..

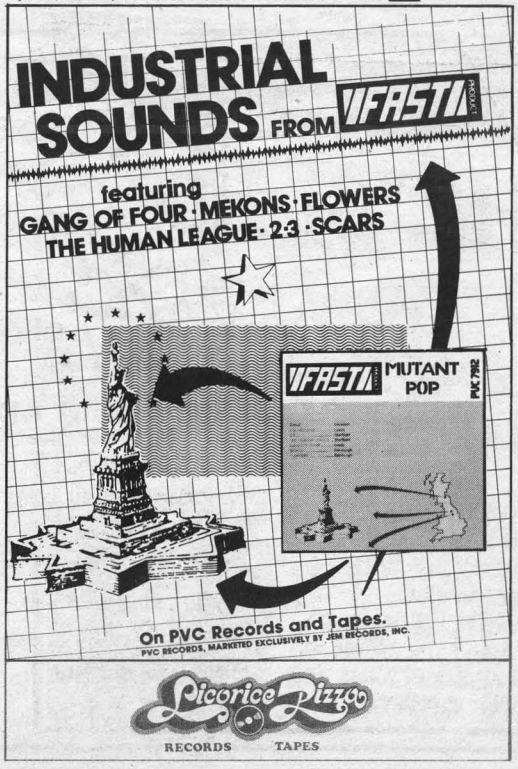
Truly the most ecstatic and electric toaster in Jamaica this year has been without a doubt Nigger Kojack. His records far outclass just about everybody on the island, (only competition being Dillinger whose "I Thirst PT. 11" was very "extreme".) All his cuts being either good or great, and "Hole in the Bucket" is still a regular on my turntable. The newest one is "Penentiary" on his own label, Nigger Kojack Records. Here he expands on his style with weird vocal hooks and a moodier tone, not at all like the bouncy records made with his girlfriend "Liza", who helped turn out two of his biggest hits. Different, but no less good. Another new one from Joe Gibbs records (or an old one, who can tell?) is "Shaolin' Desciples" by Jah Grundy. It features a more melodic toasting than most, not unlike Dillinger in his prime, and is a worthwhile record even though the rap takes a philosophical approach that's hard to understand. The production is pretty similar to the Dennis Brown singles, which is good, but I still fail to understand what Kung Fu has to do with Rasta! Anyway, Jah Grundy does have a good voice.

Only other good stuff in singles besides those D.J. pieces is "That's the Way Jah Planned It" by Rita Marley (Tuff Gong records) and it is almost strictly soul, and "Shine Eye Girl" by Black Uhruh (Joe Gibbs) which also has strong soul elements but rhythmically approaches a roots production level. It's the only one this month that has delved into the jungle at all, this being a weak month for voodoo lovers. I was misled by "Jungle & Rema" by Leroy Smart (Cord Records) which I thought would be more like his rootsy "So Strong" single but was in fact more like the pop material that he's famous for. Still pop but with better style is "Satisfaction" by John Holt (Channel One). There are elements of Horace Andy's torch ballad hits (most probably the reverse is true). It is built off of excellent chord structures and usually underproduced, the vocals being way up front and the rhythm remaining the only existing music.

Anyway, lay low for 1980, as it promises to be a wild one on the JA market with new groups and singers popping up right and left every day. The popularity of reggae is slowly but surely growing and becoming a big deal with both blacks and whites. New albums from just about everybody are due! The long awaited debut LP from Rita Marley is, according to Marley himself, who is producing it, in the mixing stage, and one by Well, Pleased, & Satisfied should appear around town any day now. Also pick up on Earth & Stone's "Cool Roots" and the new Culture album which is quite good despite what certain idiot English critics have recently written. I don't even like Culture a lot, but this sounds like barrelful of Rasta. And that can be great fun, as some of us know ..... Till then, beware of monsters .....

Syonara,
—Mr. Ranking J.





VINYLLY: by Bo Clifford
D.O.A. — Triumph of the Ignoroids EP (Friend's)
D.O.A. — World War Three + 1 (Sudden Death)
MARTHA & THE MUFFINS — Insect Love + 1 (Dindisc)
MARTHA & THE MUFFINS — Echo Beach + 1 (Dindisc)

Two bands from Canada; one of whom should be very familiar to Slash readers. D.O.A. have played down here a few times and could always be counted on to give a performance that was raw, intense and filled with power. Their live 12" EP captures all the sweaty goodness of a fairly typical, albeit early performance. They wail through "Nazi Training Camp" from their first EP, then a new one called "Want Some Bondage". Side two starts with "Rich Bitch" and they wrap things up with their ever-popular "Let's Fuck". No punches are pulled; all stops are out. These guys sound *mean!!* The more recent studio effort, "World War Three", shows the band to be gaining confidence in the studio and working with more "complex" material. They sound as assured in their way as the Clash does in theirs. And now for the bad news: D.O.A. have apparently disbanded (my sources tell me that Joey Shithead is now a cabby in Vancouver). It's really too bad that one of the world's finest hard punk bands couldn't keep going. Maybe they should have moved to LA. At least they left behind several strong records (Write to: Quintessence Records, 1869 W. 4th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. Canada). —— Originally from the Toronto area, **MARTHA & THE MUFFINS** seem to be based in England now having released two singles in rapid succession on Virgin's new Dindisc subsidiary. "Insect Love" opens with the sounds of electronic bugs getting down to the real nitty-gritty and moves to an engaging melody with snatches (sorry) of Blondie, farfisa, L. Logic-type sax; all layered over Martha's rather detached vocals. Even though she doesn't sound it, she's really desperate for some romance. And she's willing to get a worm's eye view of the matter. The story *is* a bit obscure. The flip, "Cheesies and Gum", is a mostly-instrumental with the keyboards and sax dominating. A title chant is thrown in at odd intervals to liven it up. It doesn't work. Their second single is an improvement. The band's playing sounds more integrated, the melody is stronger, and even Martha sounds more involved with the song. It has an almost Roxy-like feel, especially in the instrumental breaks. You, too, could wind up singing "Echo beach, faraway in time". ——

PYLON — Cool + 1 (Caution)
NURSES — Hearts + 1 (Round Raoul)
IMMUNE SYSTEM — Ambivalence & Spark Plugs + 1 (?)
LOS MICROWAVES — Radio Heart + 1 (Soundchaser)

From all across the USA . . .

The same folks that brought you the B-52's and Kevin Dunn now present PYLON. It certainly continues their tradition of unusual vinyl! A record full of angles and nearly unintelligible lyrics. It's not as obnoxiously arty as a lot of things, but it's not for the timid, either. You'll have to hear it several times to grasp some idea of what's going on. I prefer the flip which is called "Dub" About all I can make out is "we eat dub for breakfast". And what do you suppose is for lunch? —— One of the more popular bands in the Washington, D.C. area is The **NURSES.** These guys have obviously been raised on 60's stuff and they're darn well proud of it. So much so that they should really be considered a reincarnation of all the good things we liked about the Airplane That feeling of physical space. soaring melody, and understated urgency! Yes, I like this one!

— Remember the Dadistics? I raved about their single not too long ago. Well, a couple former members of that band started **IMMUNE SYSTEM,** so now there are two good bands in the Chicago area! This record has more bounce and forward movement (propulsion?) than most It has one of the catchiest choruses in history that will either have you singing along or trying to get away as soon as possible! Now if the other side was as good . . . Oh well, it does save you the trouble of flipping it over. —— Anyone who has followed this column for any length of time should be aware that I have a low opinion of electronic music in general. I usually find it to be soulless and sterile (Roll over Gary Numan and tell John Foxx the news!). So I was pleasantly surprised to find myself enjoying the latest from **LOS MICROWAVES.** Their first one really didn't do much for me, but "Radio Heart" reaches me in some way that is difficult to figure. Maybe it's the weird little drum fills. Maybe it's the way they present their subject. This is believability in action. They seem to care about their material

SPIZZENERGY — Where's Captain Kirk? + 1 (Rough Trade)
SILICON TEENS — Judy In Disguise + 1 (Mute)
FLYING LIZARDS — TV + 1 (Virgin)

Those merry pranksters, **SPIZZENERGY** return with what, for them, is a very different sort of record. No electro-kazoo music this time! Instead we have a normal (?) rocker that could pass for just about any UK punk band. Ah, but that sense of umour. Imagining himself aboard the Enterprise, ol' Spizz goes looking for the missing Captain Kirk. Eventually he discovers that he has become the Captain. Confused? So am I. But this one is still fun. The flip, "Amnesia", regrettably deserves to be forgotten. —— The hot rumor in these parts is tat the **SILICON TEENS** is actually Daniel Miller (AKA the Normal) up to his decoy tricks. He/They/It tackle the venerable John Fred AM smash in fine electro-pop style. The kind of 45 that can either be great or not-so-great, depending on your mood. Right now, I like it; but check back in ten minutes. —— I, for one, am certainly glad that the **FLYING LIZARDS** decided to do something different than another clunk-bang remake. By now you've probably heard this amalgam of sex, surf music, doodling, spaces, and loose ends. Sounds like Johnny & the Hurricanes kidnapped by the avant-garde gang! It does have a feel of merely filling in the blanks, but it does show movement and purpose. The flip is an extended, murky kind of dub called "Tube" that really does go on for too long. ——

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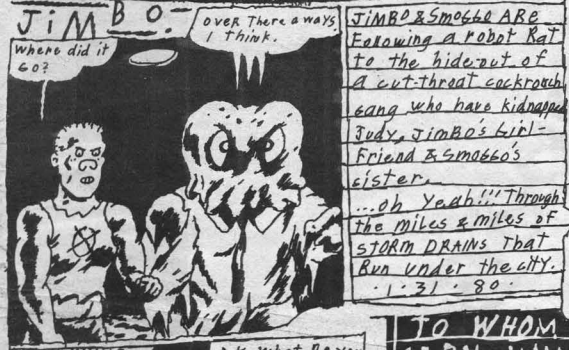

JiMBO & SmoGGo ARe Following a robot Rat to the hide-out of A cut-throat cockroach gang who have kidnapped Judy, JiMBO's Girl-Friend & SmoGGo's sister. ...oh Yeah!!! Through the miles & miles of STORM DRAINS that Run under the city. ·1·31·80·

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P.S. DIG?

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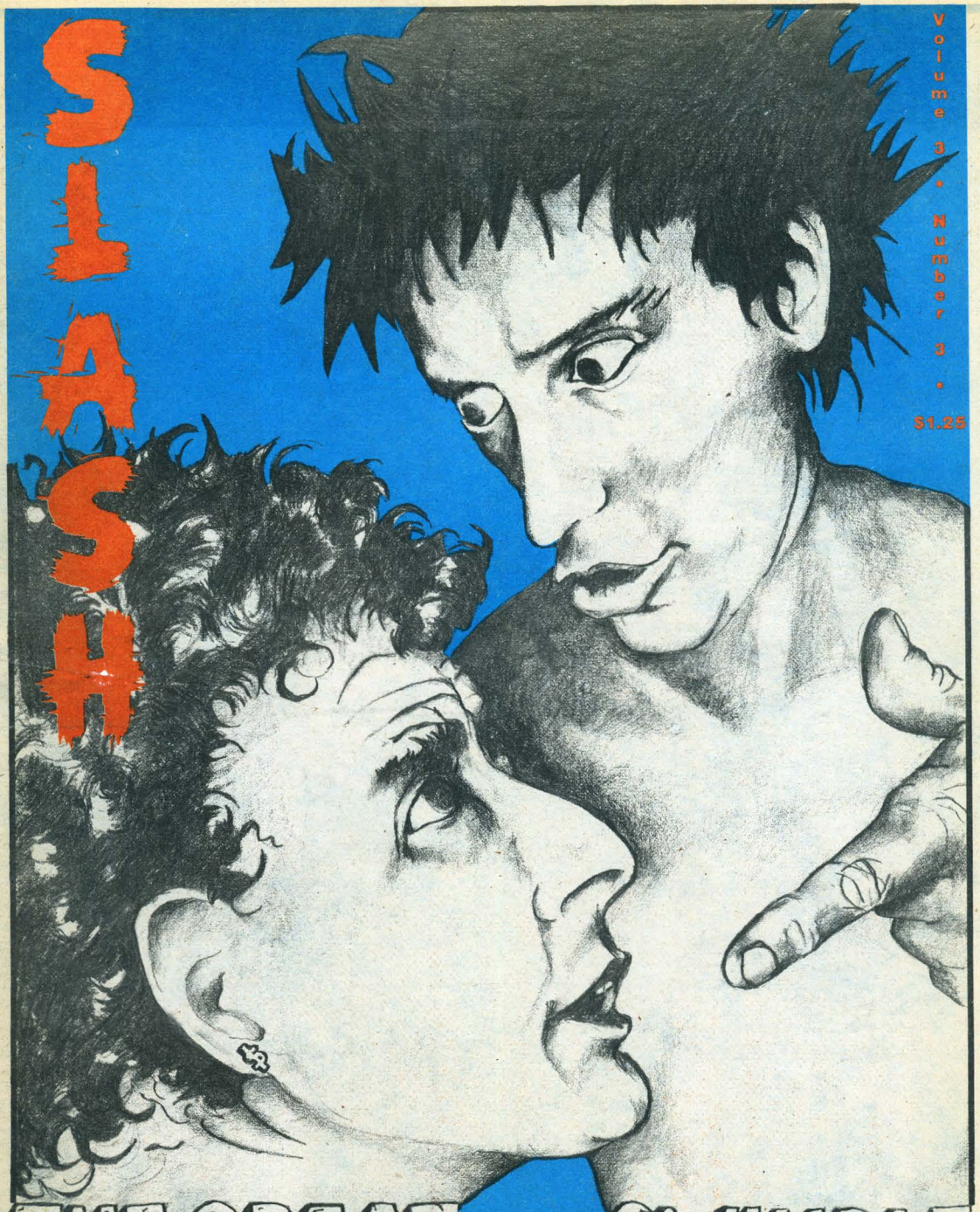

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"Special thanks to Mary McKenna."

DATE: 4·1·80

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LOCAL

Since there's hardly anything worth a damn this month, we're reduced to dirty smalltalk and trendy gossip (again!) so here we go with LOCAL SHIT'S first Flipside style supplement of microscopic trash 'n' trivia.

Quote of the month goes to the producers of Hollywood Heartbeat, ABC's "new wave video show". The new wave producers invited an assortment of cognoscenti, trendies, celebs (why, Rodney was there!) plus various other deadheads and street trash to an opening night bash up at the pad in Laurel Canyon . . .

Asked "at-the-heart-of-Hollywood-Beat" producer of our favorite family, John Doe, Exene and Billy Zoom: "Oh . . . are you people in a band, too?"

Billy: "E-r, I guess so . . ."

At-the-heart-of-Hollywood: "O . . . what's the name of your band?"

A sharply observant, diminuitive KROQ new wave dj with a rooster haircut: "Yay . . . these guys are called X . . . y'know . . X . . . that's the name of the group . . . just the letter X . . . .

Heart: "O . . . I see . . . are you part of the New Wave?"

A number of benefits were held recently at Blackie's in Hollywood in which bands donated free services to pay for sound proofing and various other physical adjustments to the club in keeping with demands from the LAPD acting on pressure from local residents. OK. Fine. A really noble gesture on the part of the bands and nobody buys that LAPD-against-punks conspiracy shit any more . . One thing, however, puzzles the Local Shit dirtmonger staff, perhaps Ms. Ballard, booking agent of the club could clarify. It is this: A bunch of cheap porno-mongers own the club itself. They also own the beer and wine license. The same bunch who own the Ivar Theatre, an extremely lucrative strip joint in Central Hollywood. If Blackie's is under constant police and citizen siege and harrassment for the small matter of soundproofing, why shouldn't the owners shell out to cover the cost of making their club work since they stand to profit more than some poor schumuck band desperately trying to get a first booking to break into the gig circuit? Sounds awfully funny to us. We're just curious, that's all.

Big shot promoter Gary Perkins, proprietor of Avalon Attractions, who dropped by the Whisky for the Mommymen/Nervous Gender show thought Gender was "horrible" "repulsive" and "thoroughly despicable" since, he said, they were trying hard to "disturb" the audience and not to "entertain" them by "working out their personal anger and frustrations on stage". Come on, Gary, we never thought of Nervous Gender as easy listening either! Meanwhile, a gaggle of top flight "square" musicians from Donna Summers' band who recently befriended the Mommy Men loved it! They ate it up and wanted to know when both bands were playing again.

Probably the most radical gig of the month that slipped by unnoticed by the masses was during another Mommy Men show at the Vanguard Gallery in which a bizarre group of what could only be described as "mountain creatures" calling themselves the Silver Chalice stood in for the (we hope) temporarily defunct Catholic Discipline who broke up the day before this gig in which they were billed to appear with Jewish Guilt.

The concensus of opinion was more like a division of ranks. Never before (short of the Mentors, perhaps) has this correspondent seen such a divided audience , . . divided between anguished, extreme loathing, horror, disgust . . . you name it . . . on one side . . . and on the other . . . . . total adulation!!!

Their most hienous crime is their appearance. They crawled onto the stage not with neatly waxed dyed black hair and straight legs but bedraggled, literally unwashed and as mean looking as any of those Appalachian mountainbillies from the movie Deliverance. They infuriated the little punkies beyond belief by purposely dressing like renegades from a sixties nightmare time warp.

As soon as they tore into their set (souped-up 60's american pop-punk), driven to the outer limits by the brutally ferocious drumming of Don Bonebrake, moonlighting from the Chalice of Malice (as dubbed by Taco Jimmy) sent a portion of the New Wave running from the concert room into another sideroom in the gallery.

Written on the wall outside the john at the Whisky: "Is ska this month's rockabilly?" Is there a seed of truth in this or is it just the rantings of another jaded smartass?

Various Provocative Inquiries: Where is the new Anti Club? Whatever happened to Phase Phreddie's Precisions? Nickey Beat, where the fuck is this band of yours? Did Sire Records sign Human Hands or not? Rik L. Rik, will you ever get a stable band together ((Eric and Gary having now joined the Joan Jett Group, which also features ex Avengers Danny on drums) call Jay Lansford . . . he wants to talk to you . . .)?

All unanswered, except for Where Are The Screamers? Last report is . . . KK'S a carpenter, Tommy hangs out at Hollywood branch library, Tomata goes to parties, usually. Paul is the busiest "session" player in town, having recently moonlighted (most conspicuously) with the Mommy Men, Dead Kennedys, Nervous Gender, Silver Chalice and is rehearsing until Tommy decides if the band will play in the next two years.

One shred of hope left for the remains of the "underground" as we know it (or its last gasp) . . . the thoroughly obnoxious Rick Wilder and his Mau Mau's will start to play again, soon. At the last hearing, the thoroughly awful Wilder was seen (in actual Broad Daylight, long berore dusk, even!!) scouting the city with the terminally restless Brendan Mullen looking for a location to stage another one of those legendary hit and run holocaust balls, this time to commemorate Easter. How sweet. The decadent duo reportedly found the place but are announcing it until closer to the time.

Thrilling Last Minute News Item!

More than a year after their demise, Scott Guerin, wonderchild son of tap jazz session drummer Johnny Guerin, is currently re-forming the Deadbeats!! The incredible, seminally influential Deadbeats were a clear two years ahead of the times in playing something which might be loosely defined as "punk jazz" during the earliest pioneering period of the Masque.

The band split after irreconcilable differences between Guerin and Geza X, then the band's guitarist and producer. The legendary Pat Delaney quit in disgust and the group fell apart. The band still commands respect among musicians and a following of admirers who recognized what they were up to when the pin head masses with (at that time) untrained ears and uneducated closed minds failed abysmally to comprehend.

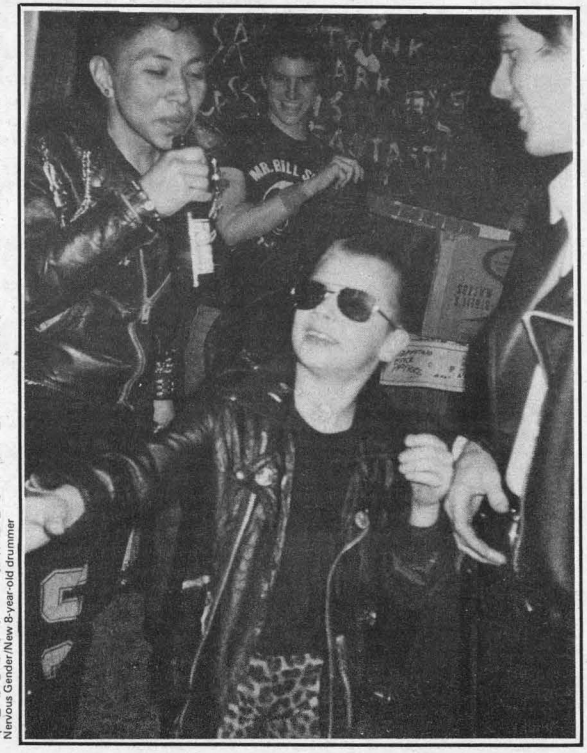
Finally, when old Dangerhouse finally got around to releasing their "Kill the Hippies" EP the local public started to wake up, but it was too late, the band had seemingly gone forever. Scott retired into total seclusion, Geza started producing his own records, formed the Mommy Men, Pat went into the B-People and the Satin Tones etc. Along with the Skulls, the Deadbeats were voted the most sorely missed bands of last year.

The new Deadbeats will have a slightly different line-up. Gone, of course, will be the incredibly Delaney rhythm sax sound which blended so well with Geza's "X-chord" sound. The new band will consist of Scott (vocalist), Shaun Guerin (drums), Pat Amodeo (bass) with the addition of Groover, another child prodigy who at 16 has already developed the circular breathing technique on tenor sax (something that takes years to master. The ubiquitous Paul Roessler has also been rehearsing with them but whose permanency is up in the air, since being by far the most creative keyboard player in Los Angeles, the lad is in constant demand.

Don't miss the grand debut to be announced in about a month.

Any New Bands Worth A Shit??? Any Old Bands Progressing?

Well, young goddess Kira Roessler quit the Mommy Men to continue working full time with her own band, obscurely titled Sexsick, consisting of herself on bass, Melissa on guitar, Elissa Bello (formerly a Go Go) on drums and Thee Gerber as vocalist. Sources insist this band excels in musical ability, has strong material and kicks out a large, powerful sound. Another new and yet unheard band that has managed to tickle our interest is the marvelously named "The Dumb Hairdressers", which besides the ubiquitous Phranc on guitar and Alice on bass (Castration Squad) will feature Lois on vocals, Suzan on keyboards and Nancy on drums. Admittedly another joke band, but who knows what will happen when the reportedly "serious" outfits break up, kiss ass until their chins are stained or bore the living night lights out of everyone? And, speaking of all girl bands, the go-getting Go-Go's are truly going! To England of course, where they will tour for one whole month with Madness on some twenty-eight dates across the countryside. Good luck girls, and please still speak to us after you've become stars and buddies with the folks at Buckingham Palace.



Nervous Gender/New 8-year-old drummer

SHIT

The End Of An Era?

The continuing soap opera of the Bags has finally reached a fitting demise. Founding member and bassist Patricia has called it quits, due to those inevitable personality and musical differences that come up from a group being in the same place they were when they started two years ago. The four remaining Bags will stay together as a group under a new name (Patricia having copyright on the old one) with lead guitarist Rob fulfilling a long suppressed desire to be a bass player. Additional members seem likely, and the addition of two backup singer/dancing girls (punk Marvelettes?) is a probability. The Bags last performance at the Hong Kong cafe was a fitting reminder of the past glory days, with fights breaking out everywhere, tables being smashed, guitar strings breaking, the two girls exchanging not such niceties as Alice threw dancers off stage, wrestled with mike chords and had water thrown in her face by an irate Patricia admirer. The Hong Kong, suffering a fire marshall fine of $500 from a bust night before was being extremely cautious, with an over 21 sign at the door to keep 'undesirable elements' out. In other words a night of scrambled chaos and a fit end to the Bags twisted history.

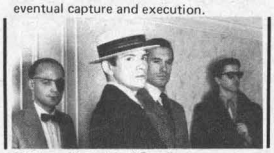
While the new group rehearses, members are sticking their fingers in all sorts of eccentric pies, Alice is now doing stand in bass duty with Castration Squad, as well as new all girl band The Dumb Hairdressers. Her pal Phranc is also playing guitar in both bands. Ego maniac and hack writer Craig Lee, having discovered the joys of percussion through Catholic Discipline, is now involved in a travesty of art/acid bands known as the Paisly 'i'. Former members of the Screamers entourage are also said to be involved. (The break ups of today are the joke bands of tomorrow? Why are you smiling?)

Last Minute Bad Boy Blues:

Germs' lead singer Darby Crash and Slash hack Ranking Jeffrey both arrested for drunk and disorderly behavior at the X concert at the Starwood. This being the latest chapter of bad luck for the Germs' public life, as the band is already thoroughly banned from playing *any* club or stage in town or out of town and even the above average tolerant Blackie's have recently declined the honors of staging a Germs night. What we do is secret sings Darby, but what their followers do, or better what promoters think their followers do, is not. Now don't tell me anyone is willing to consciously stop the progress of the arts for the sake of a few bathroom fixtures? Especially when the same potential hazards could be attributed to every combo in the city if one was to make historical references. Could there be a conspiracy to squash the real living symbols of total musical freedom??

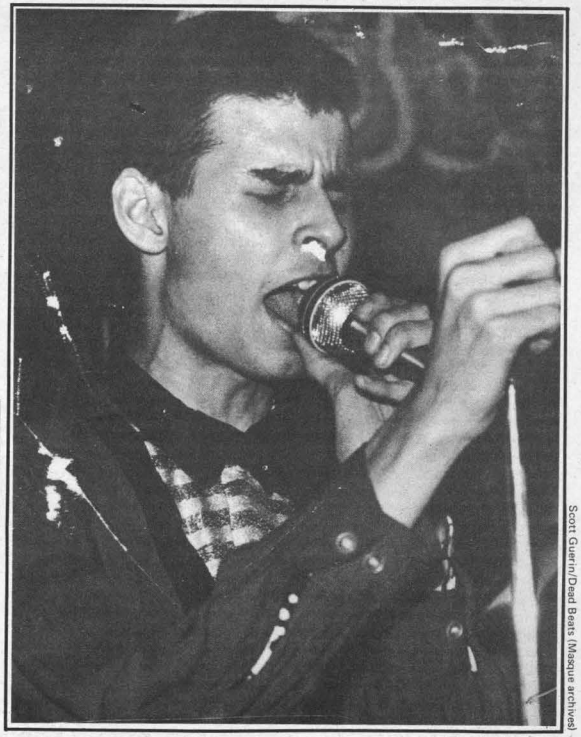
Cultural News, Anyone???

Mucho movie activity in the next few weeks. Besides a continuous showing of kung fu flicks at the Hollywood Campus Theatre you will be able to finally catch the Gordon Stevenson "offensive" catholic epic "Ecstatic Stigmatic" (cf. interview a few issues back) sometime in the middle of the month at the Pan Andreas, groove to Devo flicks and some San Francisco groups like the Mutants and the Avengers at a special Fox Venice showing, and right around the time this paper is out on the streets see a strange sounding feature entitled "The Long Island Four" at the Pasadena Film Forum. The movie, also vaguely connected to the new music scene by starring one ex-Teenage Jesus (Bradley Field) and two ex-Mumps (Lance Loud and Kristian Hoffman) as well as David McDermott, is about a relatively unknown true story from War World II, during which four German spies were smuggled in America for sabotage purposes but were so fascinated by New York's decadence that they totally forgot about their war duties and lived it up with wine and women instead until their eventual capture and execution.



Still from "Long Island Four"

A rather horrible footnote must now be added to all this: the author of the film, a young swedish director named Anders Grafstrom who had come all the way here to stir up some interest in his work and who visited us at Slash with a briefcase full of stills, articles and reviews of his work, was killed a few days ago in a car crash. No words, no nothing can soften the horror of shit like that.



Scott Guerin/Dead Beats (Masque archives)

FUCK THE NEW WAVE! (EDITORIAL)

THAT'S RIGHT. IT HAS (NOT SO) SUDDENLY BECOME NECESSARY TO DRAW THE LINE, HOLD YOUR HORSES EVERYBODY, READ THE SMALL PRINT BEFORE YOU JUMP THE GUN, THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY SEEM TO BE, NOT BY A LONG SHOT, AND WE JUST CAN'T STAND HERE GRINNING LIKE CONSTIPATED FOOLS FEELING THE LONG-AWAITED INNER RUMBLES, SOMETHING HAS GONE DRASTICALLY WRONG AND THEY WON'T GET AWAY WITH IT. THEY HAVE O SO CONVENIENTLY JUST DECIDED THAT YOU AND I ARE SIMPLY PART OF SOMETHING PERFECTLY LEGITIMATE, PERFECTLY IN LINE AND PERFECTLY REFLECTIVE OF THIS CRAZY BUT NEVERTHELESS MARKETABLE PERIOD, AND THIS LOVELY EXOTIC TERRIBLY-UNUSUAL-DAAARLING SOMETHING IS OF COURSE THE GODDAM CUTESY-CUTESY-SMILE-TO-DADDY-THAT'S-A-GOOD-LITTLE-MOVEMENT FUCKIN' NEW WAVE, I'LL TRADE YOU FIVE PLIMSOULS CARDS FOR TWO GERMS AND ALL THAT SHIT, THAT'S RIGHT SHIT MY WESTWOOD TRENDIES, WANT ME TO SPELL IT FOR YOU, DO I REALLY HAVE TO SPELL SHIT WHEN I'M TALKING TO ASSHOLES ??? HOW TERRIBLY REDUNDANT. WELL SUCKERS, HERE'S SOMETHING YOU CAN STASH AWAY IN YOUR SPANDEX TIGHTS, SOMETHING WHICH, LIKE A GROSS CHUNK OF PINK RUBBERIZED BUBBLE GUM FRESH-OUT-OF-THE SORE RIDDEN MOUTH OF SOME MINORITY KID, YOU CAN STICK IN YOUR PERKY LITTLE PONY TAIL: WE AIN'T IT, WE DON'T BUY IT, WE DON'T BELIEVE IT, WE DON'T IDENTIFY WITH IT, WE DON'T DANCE TO IT AND WE DON'T LIKE YOU, NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU GONNA SPEND ON YOUR HIP WARDROBE, WHAT RECORDS YOU GONNA SPIN AT YOUR NEXT PARTY AND WHAT PLATITUDES YOU GONNA MOUTH NEXT TIME WE RUN INTO EACH OTHER IN SOME NEUTRAL KITCHEN. JUST BECAUSE CASHWORLD (SORRY, CASHBOX), NEW WEST, ROLLING STONE, NEWSWEEK, FORTUNE AND MY MOM'S DIARY HAVE US ALL LINKED TOGETHER LIKE SAUSAGES ON THEIR WAY TO THE DEEP FRYER, SLASH CASH CLASH CRASH (DARBY) SPLASH (MEDIA) DON'T YOU LASH UNTO APPEARANCES LIKE THAT, IT IS NOT THAT WAY AT ALL. SOME PEOPLE WE KNOW AND WRITE ABOUT AND PRAISE AND KEEP AN EYE ON SINCERELY BELIEVE AND LIVE THE CHAOS, THE TOTAL DISRUPTION THAT WE PREACH AND PRAY FOR WHILE YOU PARASITIC SCUM ARE ONLY DESPERATELY FISHING FOR A SUITABLE STYLE TO AGREMENT THE DEMISE OF WHAT UP TO YESTERDAY (REMEMBER WHEN YOUR CUTE UPTURNED NOSE WENT UP IN THE AIR IN SHEER DISGUST A WHILE BACK AS ONE OF US ACCIDENTLY BUMPED INTO YOUR LITTLE DISCO BUM AT THE LIQUOR STORE COUNTER?) WAS YOUR MAIN EXCUSE FOR BREATHING, PROXY THINKING AND EGO STROKING. YOU'RE DEAD AND EMPTY AND ALL THE CLEVER NEW WAVE JIVE WON'T RAISE YOU FROM THE GRAVE. AND TO ALL THE LATE COMERS IN THE RACE FOR MEANING AND CREDIBILITY WE SAY GO TAKE THE FLYING FUCK, YOU'RE STILL ON THE BLACK LIST YOU'RE STILL ON THE ONE WAY SLIDE TO OBLIVION, YOU CAN SHAKE THAT LITTLE WHITE FLAG OF SURRENDER UNTIL YOUR ARM DROPS FROM YOUR TORSO, WE'RE STILL GONNA BURN YOU TO A CRISP WHEN YOUR WORLD COLLAPSES UNDER THE PRESSURES OF TIME. THE IRONIC PART OF ALL THIS IS THAT WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON OR WHO'S WINNING THE LATEST CULTURAL SKIRMISHES. BUT ONE THING'S FOR SURE, WE KNOW BETTER THAN TO DIAL AT RANDOM FOR NEWS BULLETINS OR PULLING THE OLD TIRED "WE WERE THERE FROM THE BEGINNING" CHICKEN SHIT COWARD ROUTINE. THE MUCH TOO OFTEN QUOTED SITUATIONISTS OR THEIR RADICAL FRINGE STILL HAD THE ULTIMATE ANSWER FOR THE LIKES OF YOU : DIE, BITCH!! GO AHEAD AND GUFFAW ALL THE WAY TO THE BATHROOM. GRAB EVERY HAPPY MOMENT YOU CAN, DARLING.

PS: AS EVERYONE KNOWS, OR SHOULD KNOW, SLASH EDITORIALS HAVE A CERTAIN WAY OF BELIEVING IN THEIR OWN SYMBOLISM, HENCE BEING EVER MORE THREATENING THAN THEY ACTUALLY ARE. ALL IN THE INTEREST OF MUSIC, PROGRESS, ALL THAT, BLAH BLAH. PLEASE DO FINISH THAT DRINK.

LETTER section

DEAR KICKBOY,
THE REAL ESTATE PEOPLE WILL BE HERE IN A HOUR AND I AM SUPPOSED TO BE CLEANING MY ROOM, BUT ONE THING BUGS ME: HOW COME YOU GOTTA BE SO HARD ON THE CLASH?
I KAN DIG THAT REVIEW WAS PARTIALLY CONCEIVED TO PRESENT THE AUTHOR STRUGGLING WITH HIMSELF AND HIS NOSTALGIA AND ALL THAT, AND PROBABLY YOU HAD NOTHING BETTER TO DO THE NIGHT YOU DID IT, BUT GOSH HOW THEY FEEL? I MEAN HOW WOULD YOU LIKE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR X AMOUNT OF PRODUCT A YEAR? HELL, BY THE THIRD YEAR OF MY RECORD CONTRACT I'D BE GOING THRU THE KITCHEN UTENSILS LOOKING FOR IDEAS. THEY SAID THEY HAD FUN WITH THEIR PRODUCER, THINGS WENT QUICKLY AND ALL THAT, SO WHY SHOULDN'T THEY RID THEMSELVES OF CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS SOON AS POSSIBLE? THE ALBUM ITSELF IS FUN BY AT BEST, BUT I CERTAINLY DON'T LOOK TO THE CLASH FOR GUIDANCE. LOOK AT THEIR COVER - A PRESLEY PISS TAKE WITH EXCITING PHOTOS FROM EARLIER CONCERTS. IF WE HAD WHOLE ALBUM COVERS LIKE THIS WE WOULDN'T NEED ATOMIC WEAPONS. THE MUSIC IT SELF IS NO LESS SELF-INDULGENT THAN THE COVER. SONGS LIKE KOKA KOLA ARE PURE WORD PLAY AND NOTHING ELSE WHO CARES ABOUT THEM? THE CLASH ALREADY MADE THEIR BIG MISTAKE LONG BEFORE YOU EVER HEARD THAT STUPID FIRST ALBUM YOU STILL RAVE ABOUT. OH WELL, I'M FORGETTING THE BEST OF WHAT I HAD TO SAY EXCEPT THAT AT LEAST I'LL ADMIT TO OWNING "LONDON CALLING" BUT I CAN'T SAY THE SAME FOR "END OF THE CENTURY", AND WHO CARES ABOUT EITHER GROUP WHEN THE FALL EXISTS ?

ILLEGIBLE

PS:YOUR MAG'S SWELL. IT'S EASIER TO WRITE MAGS THAN SONGS.

WELL IF YOU'RE STILL VAGUELY INTERESTED MY DEFINITIVE (FOR NOW)FEELING ON THE CLASH IS EXPRESSED IN THIS ISSUE'S LIVE SECTION ALTHO I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT IT SAID . WOULD YOU BE EXTREMELY SURPRIZED IF I TOLD YOU THE FALL'S LINE UP HAS CHANGED AGAIN? THEY ARE NOW WITHOUT A DRUMMER. MARK SMITH DOES NOT SEEM ESPECIALLY CONCERNED EITHER. SO DON'T YOU BE.

SLASH,
I JUST PRONOUNCED MYSELF DEAD, IT SEEMS. I DON'T WANT NO TV, NO RADIO AND NO TIME THAT HEALS. REALITY CAN BE ANOTHER WORD FOR ACCEPTED LIES, WORSHIPPING THE BELIEF AND NOT THE MESSAGE. BUT THE HYPOCRITES DIE WITH WASTED SOULS. IF YOU ACCEPT ANY RELIGION, WHY NOT GO RASTA, LIVE YOUR OWN LIFE AND STOP GOING ALONG WITH THIS SOCIETY'S UNJUST INTERPRETATION OF HOLY (?) SCRIPTURES. GOD IS SPELLED G-R-E-E-D AND RAMPANT CAPITALISM IS THE SALVATION. DON'T GET ME WRONG, I HOLD NO RELIGIOUS FAITH, BECAUSE HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO KNOW WHAT IS TRUE AND WHAT ISN'T. ALL I SEE IN THIS RICH MECCA IS UNHAPPY, COMPLAINING AND FROWNING WEALTHY FOLKS. WHY? BUT ENOUGH COMPLAINING, YOUR MAGAZINE IS STILL VERY INTERESTING. KEEP CHANGING OR FADE AWAY. MY FAVORITE DISCS CURRENTLY ARE NIGGER KOJAK'S "PENITENTIARY", ISRAEL VIBRATION'S "CRISIS",A. PABLO'S "ORIGINAL ROCKERS" AND GANG OF FOUR'S "ENTERTAINMENT". "DRAGNET" LEAVES A LASTING IMPRESSION, ALSO.

M. NOVIKOFF

HA, SUFFERING IN THE LAND OF SLASH READERS. AND NO BLACK STARLINER IN SIGHT, NO ZION, NO ZALVATION, ZILCH RELIEF. THANX FOR THE UPLIFTING NOTES GANG.

KICK

SLASH,
AFTER HEARING THOSE ASSHOLES FROM ROCK AGAINST RACISM ON KPFK (MARCH 14)I AM CONVINCED THAT WHAT THEY REPRESENT IS AN EVEN MORE SEVERE FORM OF BIGOTRY. UNDERSTAND THAT I AM NOT MAKING AN EXCUSE FOR RACISM BUT RATHER THAT I AM DISGUSTED WITH SUCH OBVIOUS PHONIES WHO POSTURE ALTRUISMS. PLACING THEMSELVES AS LOFTY JUDGES, THEY SET ABOUT PIGEON HOLING THE ENTIRE SCENE, PUTTING THEMSELVES INTO THE HIGH RANKS OF (OF COURSE) INTELLECTUAL PUNKS. MOST CERTAINLY THEY ADMITTED THEY WERE THE ONLY "REAL" PUNKS - EVERYONE ELSE WERE CALLED EITHER TRENDIES OR ROWDIES. SO DO THESE IDIOTS WITH THEIR CATEGORIES AND SUBDIVISIONS OFFER US ANY REAL FORM OF EMANCIPATION? HARDLY. THEY SOUNDED SO HOLLOW AND CLICHE I CAN'T EVEN CALL THEM IDEOLOGUES, SEEING THAT THEY HAVEN'T BOTHERED TO TAKE THE TIME TO READ WHAT THEY PROFESS TO BE SPEWING. USING WORDS LIKE "PROLETARIAT" AND "BOURGEOISIE" WILL NOT AUTOMATICALLY MAKE YOU DR. MARX. I HOPE THIS WILL CALL ATTENTION TO SOME OF THE REAL POSEURS IN THE LOCAL SCENE. R.A.R. IS MOST DEFINITELY A SHAM. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT KIND OF REPLY R.A.R. WRITES BACK. THEY GAVE THEMSELVES AWAY BY OPENING THEIR ELITIST MOUTHS.

M. W.

WHAT I CALL HITTING THE NAIL ON THE HEAD. VERY WELL EXPRESSED INDEED.

KICK

KICK,
"MPLS INCEST" SUCKED. NARCISSISTIC AND DERIVED AT THE SAME TIME. BUT THEN, YR "NOT TELLING IT LIKE IT IS STANCE" IS ONE OF THE MORE HONEST THINGS IN THIS FUCKED UP PROFESSION "DOUBT IS CRUELER THAN THE WORST TRUTH"

STEPHAN, MINNEAPOL
MINNEAPOLIS

BETTER BE NARCISSISTIC AND DERIVED THAN PREGNANT, ON WELFARE AND WITH A NASTY PAIN IN THE CHEST SAID THE GRIM CHICK HOPPING UP THE JACK IN THE BOX BATHROOM. TO BE IRRELEVANT IS A FUCKIN' LUXURY I SAID TO HER. SHE NODDED AND ADDED: MISTER, SOME DAYS I JUST DON'T KNOW.

KICK

BALAFRE(R) (NOUN OR VERB)--
ANTISALUTATIONS. THE VALLEY OF LEARNING IS ANGRY AND CRUDE. ALTHOUGH WE BURN WITH CURIOSITY, WE ARE PROVEN AS FOOLS. WE MAY NOT CHOOSE THE METHOD, FOR WE ARE THE TOOLS. BIGOTS ARE FUNNY PEOPLE, LIKE INSTANT ANTI-SEMITISM OR XENOPHOBIA, OR SOMETHING? I HAVE THIS FRIEND WHO IS JEWISH, BUT PRESENTLY HE ATTENDS SCHOOL UP NORTH. I HARDLY SEE HIM ANY MORE. I HAVE THIS OTHER FRIEND WHO IS PART AMERICAN INDIAN, ALTHOUBH I HAVE FORGOTTEN THE TRIBE. THIS OTHER FRIEND IS MEXICAN AND FRENCH. I KNOW ITALIANS AND, OH, MANY ASIANS. I HAVE RELATIVES IN ENGLAND. I MET SOMEONE FROM LEBANON. I KNOW PEOPLE FROM INDIANA. I KNOW SOMEONE FROM PAINTED POST, N.Y. I KNOW PEOPLE FROM BEVERLY HILLS. I KNOW POOR PEOPLE. I KNOW FAGS, COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS, REAL ESTATE SALES PEOPLE, MUSICIANS, BLONDS (INCIDENTALLY, MS LUNCH IS ENTIRELY CORRECT IN HER STATEMENT CONCERNING BLONDS), SKINNY-LEGGED PEOPLE, PEOPLE WITH CRUMMY TEETH, PEOPLE WHO LISTEN TO TOP FORTY AM RADIO AND OLD PEOPLE. OH, I ALSO HAVE RELATIVES IN HAWAII, MICHIGAN, POCATELLO, ID., NEBRASKA, SHERMAN OAKS, PLACENTIA AND LAGUNA HILLS. I KNOW PEOPLE WHO ARE BORED. YET I AM THE BIGGEST BIGOT OF THEM ALL, FOR I LOVE?HATE? THEM ALL -- AND WANT THEM ALL ANNIHILATED. THE GRINDING OPPRESSION -- BEGIN TO APPRECIATE IT FOR YOU WILL NEVER ESCAPE. GENOCIDE, OH GENOCIDE, THE ADVENT OF THE DREAM...

DREAR (MALCONTENT)

DEAR DEAR, IT IS GETTING WORSE. DREARY DEAR, YOU HAVE OUTDONE YOUR SELF WITH THIS CHARMING COMMUNIQUE. BET THAT WASHINGTON STATE VOLCANIC ERUPTION MADE YOUR DAY, YOU LITTLE HUMANIST YOU.

KICK

DEAR KICKBOY,

I AM A FOURTEEN YEAR OLD BEACH PUNK FROM SANTA CRUZ. I AM TIRED OF PEOPLE LIKE CHUCK FROM PASADENA GIVING ME SHIT. I'M SURE US BEACH PUNKS HAVE AS MUCH RIGHT TO LISTEN TO PUNK AND BE ONE TOO. I LISTEN TO THE GERMS, PUBLIC IMAGE, DILS, AND BLACK FLAG. THERE ARE ALSO SOME VERY HOT SURF BANDS, THE CROWD FOR ONE. NOW CHUCK IF YOU DON'T LIKE US BEACH PUNKS TOO BAD BECAUSE MORE AND MORE SURFERS ARE GETTING INTO PUNK. THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.

SCOTT WHEELER
SANTA CRUZ

P.S.: I THINK SLASH IS GREAT. NO SHIT.

HEY SCOTT,
FUCK CHUCK, YOU KNOW. YOU BEACH PUNKS ARE OKAY BY US. THERE'LL ALWAYS BE SOME MEATHEAD TO TELL YOU THIS OR THAT AND DRAG YOU DOWN. LIKE THE OTHER DAY SOME HIPPIE CORPSE WITH HAIR DOWN TO HIS CRACK FUCKING STOPS TO LOOK AT ME AND MY GIRL AND SNICKER AND THE CRETIN FINALLY FINDS HIS WORDS AND GOES: "HEY, WHICH ONE THE BOY WHICH ONE THE GIRL HA HA" ACTUALLY I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S GOT TO DO WITH YOU CEPT IT WAS ON VENICE BEACH. MAYBE HE'S CALLED CHUCK...

KICK

SLASH,
I LIKE MECHANIC MAGAZINES. MY APPETITE IS NOT AS GOOD AS IT USED TO BE. I AM EASILY AWAKENED BY NOISE. I LIKE TO READ NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ON CRIME. THERE SEEMS TO BE A LUMP IN MY THROAT MUCH OF THE TIME. I ENJOY DETECTIVE OR MYSTERY STORIES. I HAVE DIARRHEA ONCE A MONTH OR MORE. ONCE IN A WHILE I THINK OF THINGS TOO BAD TO TALK ABOUT. MY FATHER WAS A GOOD MAN. I AM VERY SELDOM TROUBLED BY CONSTIPATION. AT TIMES I HAVE FITS OF LAUGHING OR CRYING THAT I CANNOT CONTROL. NO ONE SEEMS TO UNDERSTAND ME. I HAVE VERY PECULIAR AND STRANGE EXPERIENCES. I HAVE A COUGH MOST OF THE TIME. I HAVE NEVER BEEN IN TROUBLE BECAUSE OF MY SEX BEHAVIOR. AT TIMES I FEEL LIKE SMASHING THINGS. I DO NOT ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH. I WOULD LIKE TO BE A FLORIST. SOME ONE HAS IT IN FOR ME. I HAVE NEVER COUGHED UP BLOOD. THE TOP OF MY HEAD SOMETIMES FEELS SOFT. EVERY THING TASTES THE SAME. I LIKE SCIENCE. IF I WERE AN ARTIST I WOULD DRAW PICTURES OF FLOWERS. LIFE IS A STRAIN FOR ME MUCH OF THE TIME. MY SEX LIFE IS SATISFACTORY. STAIRS LOOK VERY STEEP. I SOMETIMES TASTE SOUND. LIFE IS A STUPID DRAMA. PEOPLE SMILE AT ME STRANGELY. SOME ONE IS MAKING COPIES OF ME. BRIGHT COLORS EXCITE ME. I OFTEN THINK ABOUT PREHISTORIC CREATURES. I AM AFRAID SOMEONE MAY CUT OFF MY NOSE. I LIKE THE METAL BOX.

J. NYC

STAFF CHART BULLSHIT:

CAITLIN
1, 2 & 3) ENTERTAINMENT – Gang of Four
4) THEY SAY – Zeros 45
5) THE SECOND EDITION – PIL LP

GARY PANTER
1) PULSE/WE LOVE YOU – The Psychedelic Furs
2) PROJECT 197
3) FIXATION – Cowboys International
4) TRASH – Tuxedo Moon

CHRIS D.
1) UNIVERSAL CORNER – X (live)
2) I HEARD THAT LONESOME WHISTLE – Hank Williams
3) THE BELLS – James Brown
4) A WOMAN, A LOVER, A FRIEND – Otis Redding
5) I COULD NEVER BE ASHAMED OF YOU – Hank Williams
6) COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER (film)

STEVE
1) B-MOVIE – Elvis Costello
2) GUNS FEVER – Daba Brooks
3) GARVEY'S GHOST – Burning Spear

PHIL SMITH
1) WHITE MICE – Mo-dettes
2) BASEMENT TAPES – Dylan
3) FIRST EDITION – PIL
4) TEEN CITY EP – Modernettes
5) WAKE UP EP – Essential Logic

MARY
1) TOO MUCH PRESSURE – Selecter
2) LOS ANGELES – X
3) ONE STEP BEYOND – Madness
4) LIVE WIRE – Martha Reeves & the Vandellas
5) THE LADY IN A CAGE – (film)

KICKBOY FACE
1) A SONG FROM UNDER THE FLOORBOARD – Magazine
2) INDIA – The Psychedelic Furs
3) THE GRAVEYARD AND THE BALLROOM – A Certain Ratio (cassette pack)
4) MY MIND – Hugh Mundell
5) SISTER RAY – Doctor Mix (Wall of Noise LP)
6) "TOO MUCH PRESSURE " – The Selecter LP

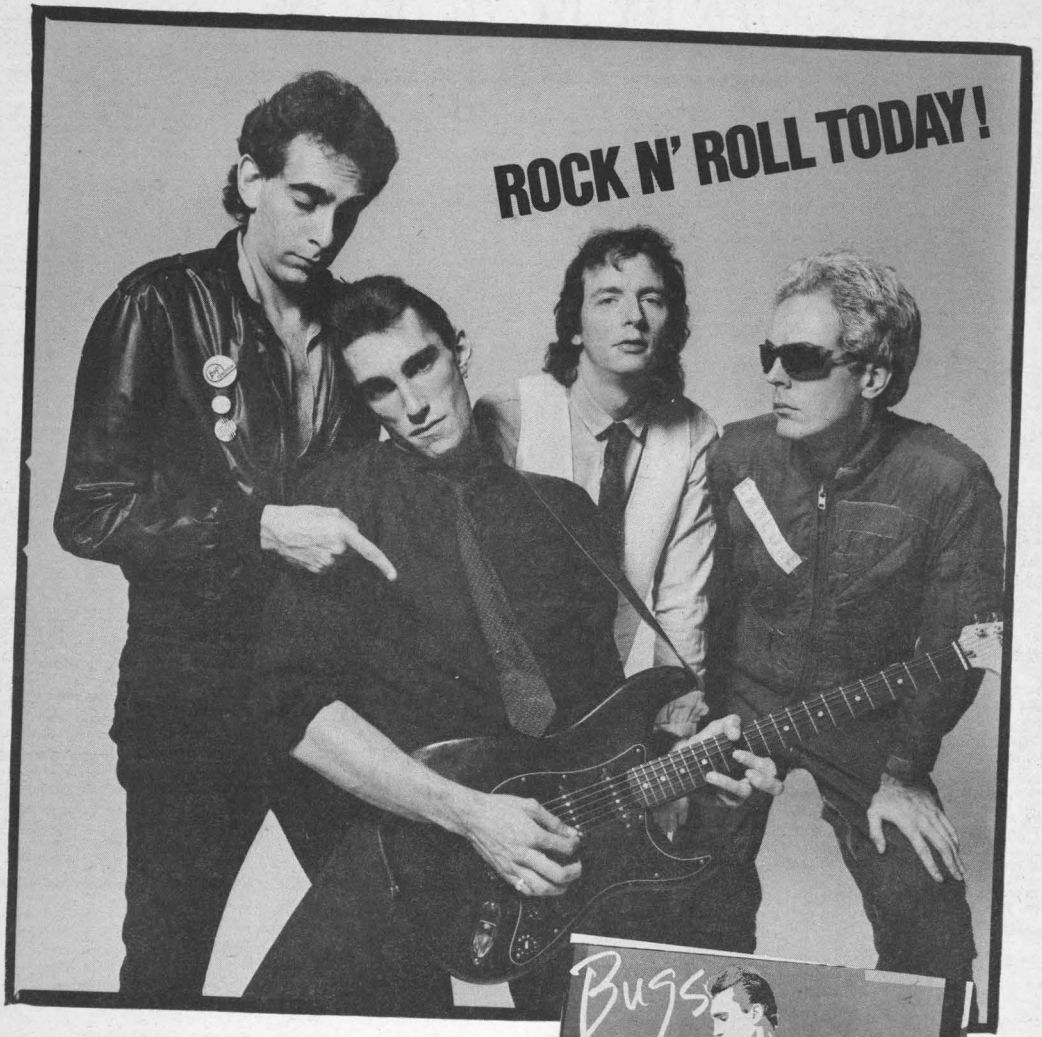
PEA
1) CHARLOTTE – Phranc (live)
2) B-People (live at Blackies)
3) SKA AUTHENTIC – The Skatalites Studio 1 LP
4) MISSING WORDS – Selecter

WILL'S CHOICE DOG FOOD
1) PRAIRIE FIRE at Troubador
2) MY TUNNEL – Germs
3) MUSIC FOR FILMS – Eno
4) NO GOD (YES L.A.) – Germs
5) EVA HESSE
6) NO – Bruce Licher (197)

PHAST PHREDDIE'S SIGNIFYIN' SIX
1) ONE SCOTCH ONE BOURBON ONE BEER – Amos Milburn (Aladdin)
2) SITTING HERE DRINKING – Johnny Otis Orchestra (Peacock)
3) DRINKING BY MYSELF – Wyonie Harris (Bullet)
4) SLOPPY DRUNK – Jimmy Rogers (Chess)
5) SERVE ANOTHER ROUND – Five Keys (Aladdin)
6) I'M NOT DOWN – Clash (Epic)

UPTOWN TOP RANKING JEFFREY LEA
1) NADINE – Chuck Berry
2) LAST TANGO IN PARIS – Gato Barbieri
3) BRAZIL – (The Country)
4) MR. BIG STUFF – Jean Knight
5) NADINE – Chuck Berry (again!)

MARK'S FAB FIVE
1) TURNING JAPANESE – Vapors
2) TREASON (IT'S JUST A STORY) – Teardrop Explodes
3) JUDY IN DISGUISE – Silicon Teens
4) LOS ANGELES – X (album)
5) 1980: THE FIRST 15 MINUTES – Various (e.p.)



BUGS TOMORROW

Produced by: Bugs, David Vaught Morley Bartnoff and Artie Ripp

HOMEGROWN MUSIC INC.

Casablanca Record and FilmWorks

From Casablanca Record & FilmWorks

pic by Sue Brisk

Lydia Lunch with Gullak (Mutants)

SAN FRANCISCO REPORT:
THIS HEAVEN GIVES ME MIGRAINE
by Caitlin

The big news this month is the impending closure of the Temple (aka the Geary), scheduled to occur on or around April 1st. The building is being sold and the new owner wants nothing to do with punk. This is bad enough news by itself, but when considered in perspective, the future looks bleak indeed. Although there are three clubs operating seven nights a week in San Francisco alone (the Fab Mab, the Palms & the Back D.O.R.), as well as Berkeley Square across the bay, at not one of these places are minors welcomed (though the Mab's cutoff point is 18, not 21). Even the most hardcore of all the clubs, the Roosevelt, allows minors only at their Sunday afternoon shows. This leaves the Goodman Building, which has few shows in the first place and will undoubtedly have less following their recent bust, and Club Foot, which has so far failed to make any sort of major indentation in the scene, though they are inaugurating a series of Saturdays next month. What all of this means is that, as of this writing, yours truly and a large amount of others are automatically excluded from 23 of the approximately 34 shows held here weekly. Take away the seven Mab shows if you're under 18, and the two Geary shows come April 1st, do your arithmetic, and it comes out looking pretty dim. Right now, 18 and over can choose from 11 shows a week (reduced to 9 after April 1st), while under 18 year olds get only 4 (soon to be 2). While I admit that this is not exactly a starvation diet, neither is it an encouraging trend (especially in view of the vast quantities of shows open to those lucky enough to have been born before 1959). What we need is a campaign to lower the drinking age – to 0.

Local Shit North: at a recent battle of the bands, sponsored by NORML, the Soul Rebels, Los Microwaves, Spies, Times-5, and the Contractions captured the honors in the semi-finals, in a field of 65 new bands ranging from punk to pop. By the way, the Soul Rebels' single should be out in a few weeks . . . the Dead Kennedys are boldly going where no band has gone before, with an exciting "Turdsville Tour" of such major metropolitan centers as Stockton and Fresno, while the Zeros became the first Bay Area band to play Reno (and not just the slot machines). Zeros will be doing support on the West Coast wing of John Cale's upcoming tour, and then head for New York and D.C. . . . New names include the Losers, Social Unrest, the New Christy Mummers (formerly Mummers & Poppers), and C'est La Guerre, which translates (correct me if I'm wrong, Kick "Frog" Face) "Such is war" (an appropriate name for the times) . . . This scene has yet to produce a successful magazine since the old S&D days, but Creep has finally come out with their next issue, Another Room is getting more interesting, and Nart will appear as a special supplement to Damage . . . as for Pet Rock, of which I so eloquently spoke two months ago, it seems to be not quite the major trend I (and the parties concerned) made it out to be. Of the three bands involved, Lassie Go Fuck (despite one of the all-time great names) never made it off the ground, the Animal Things have bitten the dust – though resurrection may be lurking in the shadows – and as for Flipper . . . they endure. One last note: the 3rd issue of the N.Y.P. Directory is out (finally), with 24 pages of new info, an absolute must for anyone attempting virtually anything that has to do with punk or reggae . . . send them not less than one buck & see for yourself (P.O. Box 6029, SF, CA 94101).

Moving right along here . . . the big names paraded dutifully through town, ranging from the Clash to 8-Eyed Spies, with brief appearances by Gary Numan, the Jam, 999, Lene Lovitch, Madness, and Linton Kwesi Johnson's great film "Dread Beat & Blood." The big event, of course, was a press conference given by John Lydon at 3 o'clock on a Monday afternoon at the City disco. I understand you don't have "new wave discos" in LA (yet). Well, we do, and it seems we have to live with them. The mentality of the people who go to these places is not one iota different than that of those who frequent any other disco – i.e. shallow, stupid, self-serving, and horribly normal. IT DOES NOT MATTER what music is being played when it's being danced to by people with this attitude. They latch onto only the form and none of the substance of punk, never go to gigs, wear expensive clothing, and have never thrown a bottle in their lives (unless it was at some unsuspecting minority they happened to pass by). To sit through songs like "White Man (In Hammersmith Palais)" and watch men in 3-piece suits and women in revealing clothing attempt to impress each other with the latest steps is truly nauseating; their co-operation is so total that one forgets the song *has* meaning beyond the bump and grind of sweaty bodies. Every victory punk ever made is reduced to a simple change in musical style on the dancefloor. There is no way that "new wave discos" can be seen as any sort of triumph for punk. Instead they represent absolute emasculation of every principle we have fought for in the last three years. We should have stayed in the garages, in the hole-in-the-wall clubs, the wee hours of the morning. Punk should never be less than threatening.

And don't forget – guerrilla war struggle is the new entertainment.

SAN DIEGO – MARC RUDE

Seems like the shows don't stop here despite police harrassment (while everyone is shooting, snorting, drinking and fucking in the parking lots, habitual troublemakers are getting harrassed for littering, or being the West Coast distributors of whites – Mark of the Crawdaddys gets busted for possessing 3 whites). We have had quite a few run ins with the law lately. Neighbors of the Skeleton Club (a dingy little basement below a rundown sleazy hotel) complained about noise. Police said they attempted to quiet the place down but found the people inside very uncooperative. Well I say some cop found a punk fucking his daughter and decided to cause trouble. About 20 cop cars came, they raided the place, arrested 5 and beat the hell out of 2 of them, one is going to court for "felony assault against an officer". That's only one incident. On Valentine's Day we had the pleasure of seeing Lydia Lunch's new band. Anyway since the aforementioned raid the owner of the property has been hanging around the club. He also brought a friend, Rosco. Rosco is a gun – the owner is a drunk. The two mix worse than Quaaludes & Tequila – anyway this fuck is stalking the show and playing John fuckin' Wayne and decides that he don't want me sitting on the fucking stage flirting with Lydia. He shoves Rosco in my stomach. Surprize! What else could I do but look him in the eyes and say, "Kill me, maaan". Wonder what I was thinking about. OK, a bouncer escorts the asshole out but he owns the place so is coming in & out at will and the fucking people renting the place who knew he had a gun earlier won't do much about it because they are afraid he will shut it down. Better let the punks get killed first. Anyway the owner's son or whatever decided he was going to play cowboy so he ended up getting his ass kicked instead of his guntoting daddy and me and Nazi Johnny Vomit of Human Waste fame get arrested for fighting in public. Fuck it, things are always weird at these shows, if it ain't the cops fuckin' with us it's the assholes who run the club or the degenerate hippies that attend or the sound men.

We have about 15 punks (hard core) in this hole. A lot of new faces, some are fitting in rather nicely, the others get scared and go back to hang gliders.

So where the hell did the 600 people that came to see the Alleycats come from? The two shows were sold out. My lord that is unusual, as unusual as the fuckin' hair, ripped shirt and funny sunglasses (I have never seen so many weird pairs of sun glasses in my life and I've been to Disneyland twice). There was this one sphincter with hair so long, a beard just as long, baseball cap with snap-on pinwheel accessory . . . either I am going to the wrong place for my shows or they are. I just wanted to drop quaaludes and jump in front of someone's Chevy van. Fun trucking.

Here's a list of some of the music we have been bombarded with (no order or value judgments): Subhumans, Crowd, Upbeats, Non, Unknowns, Monitor, B-people, Human Hands, Middle Class, Blue Circle Gang, Furys, Flyboys, Klan, Silencers, Angry Samoans, XTC, Wazmo Nariz, Rubber City Rebels, Fear, Gears, Lydia Lunch, on and on and on. So what you say. I wish you knew (come down here for a vacation sometime and you *will* know). This town sucks, and those of us who really believe in this shit have a real rough time of it, with all the bullshit going on. I would say to all bands who get the chance to play here don't, you have enough problems where you are and you don't have to come 200 or more miles to get arrested, harrassed, beaten up, etc. But I won't say it cause I want to see you here. Even if this scene is run by thieves and assassins you won't stop us.

News flash: This town has succeeded in ripping me off. My only friend, the only person who mattered or cared has moved to Los Angeles. What's the matter, you don't like narratives??

–F.O.N.O.

THE CRETONES

The band that dares to cross the line. The THIN RED LINE.

THIN RED LINE

The album containing the single, "Real Love."

Produced by Peter Bernstein

On Planet Records and Tapes

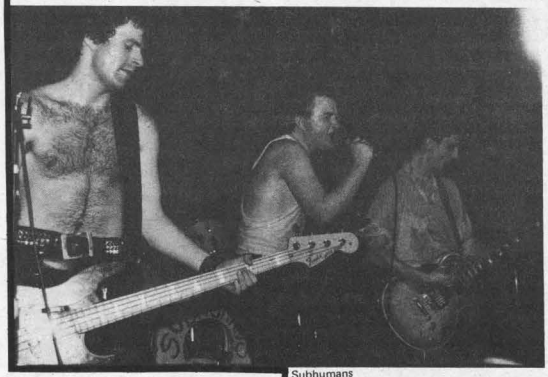
Modernettes pics by Bev Davies

VANCOUVER

Music, music everywhere but no one stops to think . . . a flurry of activity in the last month with at least some positive results . . . the Helen Pitt, a gallery run by art school students, has begun scheduling gigs again, kicking off with the premiere of the new Braineaters . . . one of the highlights of the month, the stripped down version of singer Jim Cum's nightmare gives new meaning to the word minimal . . . a three piece consisting of guitar, bass and conga drum, their set featured snappy tunes, boffo laughs and great singing and stage presence . . . Push-art, formerly Gambado's, has hosted the odd benefit, the last one featuring Negavision, an eastern band who fancy themselves artists with a capital A, a convenient excuse for playing shit . . . and the music's not just confined to concerts . . . AKA finished a very successful one month stint at the Arts club theatre providing the music for the Sam Shepard/Patti Smith play "Cowboy Mouth" . . . even our beloved Bhudda has a more secure future as the police told city council that the punk rock bands had gone and the clientele was once again "normal", a rather curious statement as the club is still going full swing . . . an unwritten law has evolved at the Bhudda with local scene bands alternating weeks with the new wave of cabaret acts like Tax, Pillager and Paper Dolls . . .

Hall gigs are still few and far between, but the one that did come off this month was superb . . . a quadruple bill featuring the Sub-Humans, the show had excellent sound and performances, the Sunday date negating the usual alcohol problems and well thought out security measures stopping the dreaded graffiti menace (the number one reason for losing halls) . . . the Sub-Humans were the best I've ever seen them, riding high on the success of their "Fuck You" e.p. . . . always visually entertaining, they have overcome the musical stiffness which plagued their live shows . . . a 7" "Firing Squad/No Productivity" is scheduled for May . . . also on the bill were the Critics, who have traded in their power pop clothes for a 45 minute Gang of Four tribute, the Metros, an energetic, if unoriginal young trio along the lines of the Young Canadians and the Tectonics who, though shaky, at least showed some inspiration, heading for a syncopated keyboard based sound . . . David Spanner of Ed Sullivan productions who produced the show, is now managing the Sub-Humans fulltime.

D.O.A. and the Dishrags unveiled their new line-ups at a weekend Bhudda stand . . . the groups still have some problems with the change over, both in replacing their strong images as trios and in working in the two guitar format, but the long term musical advantages of the move was evident in the several numbers that clicked . . . in the audience to check out the Dishrags was teen movie queen Diane Lane and her entourage . . . Lane will be the head of an all girl "punk" band in the Lou Adler epic "All Washed Up" . . . also hanging about are the Siamese twins Cook and Jones, who along with Paul Simenon and Ray Winstone (Kevin the Rocker in "Quadrophenia") will portray a band entitled the Looters in the film . . . rumours of a one-off gig for footage abound, but after the Dennis Hopper fiasco, no one is too thrilled about attending.



Subhumans

Third highlight of the month was the three night Modernettes swing at the Bhudda . . . always blessed with excellent songs like "No Tears", "Teen City" and "509", the stage act is finally pulling together . . . their forthcoming e.p. is possibly the best record to come out of Vancouver . . . the Modernettes are the first local punk/pop group to really flaunt the fact that they are North American, instead of vainly striving for prefabricated English credibility . . . which would at least be one step more, however, than new wavers the Secret V's display on their 12" single . . . chock full of mundane laments about modern living, the insert even has them posing facetiously with albums by Barry Manilow and the Knack — records like the Secret V's are sheep's music in wolf's clothing.

The Pointed Sticks album in London has been scrapped due to incompatability between the band and producer Nigel Gray (Pointed Stings?) . . . the album reached the final mix down stage before both Stiff and the band vetoed it . . . the group will be going back into the studio in July with an album projected for September . . . there is a possibility of a one off Quintessence single to fill that product gap . . . meanwhile The Sticks, Modernettes, Dishrags and Braineaters all off to Alberta in the next month.

Gary Numan was forced to cancel his sold-out show when his equipment trucks went missing somewhere in the American midwest . . . XTC played two well received shows here (they aren't nearly as boring live as on record) but the second concert was marred by ridiculous security measures . . . throughout the gig the bouncers intimidated the crowd, ejecting people for a variety of nebulous reasons . . . the situation reached its climax during the band's encore when one of the bully boys perched on stage with a flashlight, eagerly eyeing the crowd in search of his next victim . . . things apparently improved at the subsequent Madness concert, but given some of the other disadvantages of the Commodore (age limit, bad sound and impaired vision), many people are finding it worthwhile to make the journey to Seattle for the Showbox concerts . . . the Jam gave a stunning performance there last month, bringing their sometimes dull records to life . . . although the Showbox is the best venue I have seen, Seattle just will not support these shows (the Jam drew 500 at best) . . . what little scene there was seems to have dissolved altogether with the departure of Harry Cool and Stella Street (of Stelazine) to New York . . . special note on the Beat who opened the Jam concert . . . these sort of groups are such easy targets that I usually ignore them, but the Beat were so absolutely appalling they have earned a permanent place in my heart . . . I know we're responsible for Bachman-Turner Overdrive, but at least they had a few good riffs (and looked funny) . . . what excuse does L.A. have for turning out dreck like this? (answers c/o Kickboy)

New Braineaters

—Phil Smith

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SEATTLE WHATEVER *

by Mad Averroes

Seattle — the Queen City. Bastion of propriety in the provincial Pacific Northwest. Always lagging behind the rest of the west in chance-taking and originality. People leave here to become original — Paul Revere and the Raiders, Hendrix, Heart. (Heart??? — Ed.) The Sonics were a great rock band, first to pick up nastiness as a mode of expression with songs like "Strychnine" blitzing the beer crowds of the mid-sixties. Real sickies — bikers and pre-hippies — before love and/or confusion, before the goddam Space Needle almost.

Today, Seattle is the land of opportunity for unheard-of music. We even have a radio station called KZAM that you can listen to in the car on the AM. They call it "modern mono" and play everything from the Dave Clark Five to the Dead Boys. No Nugent, no Head Boys, no Zep. KZAM was first to break the Pretenders, 999, XTC, Undertones, etc., in this corner of the universe. Also first to play reggae, promote local "talent" whether they liked it or not. Some of the jocks are still "hip" however and KZAM has begun to wimp somewhat but they're in their first ratings period and the audience is used to taking what it can get.

So what, you say? Yeah, well I been La Towne almost 48 hours and I haven't heard friggin Blondie even, fer shit's sake. Lots of Zep, AC-DC, Supertramp. Hip towne, Los Angeles (get out).

That's because people aren't stuck in L.A. like they is in Seattle. People come to L.A. to "make it" without knowing what "it" is beforehand. So y'all have a city full of lookers, searchers, don juans, hollywoodens, Venice boat-people, the stupidest billboards anywhere and the sickest and most complete rerun schedule I have ever seen on TV. You suck and you know it.

Since Seattle is still on provincial time (Hollywood Squares for the late show), we still got pride and prejudice. Until late '77, "punks" were still used for lighting off all the firecrackers you get easy and cheap at the Indian reservations. Classic cases of boredom produce DMZs like Gasworks Park on the 4th of July (our favorite holidate) and watching the hydro boats and tube tops flip around during the summer's Seafair. Pure pap for future punks.

Now even we know there are no more punk surprises (which they don't in Vancouver), but two great things happened recently. First was the co-opting of the Showbox Theater on 1st Ave. in the wino-gun-trade-musical-pawn-shops-peep-show district. The people at Modern Productions were responsible. They started humbly enough in a little comix shop and found out that since nothing was happening in town, they would rob Vancouver and Frisco and L.A. of interesting and/or ignored groups and put them in some of the thousands of little ethnic community halls still waiting for the condo crush. The best was Washington Hall — small — but all dance floor, cute balcony and no liquor or age limit. Perfect for the young girlwatcher set in Dad's flying jacket. Pointed Sticks, D.O.A., Dead Kennedies, Pink Section, little multi-media shows and the like played to a small crowd of definitely un-hip types complete with headbangers.

Now it's the Showbox. Modern Prods. copped a partial lease at that famous bingo hole and starting April, they have it full-time. Other "big" promo crews — one aptly named Albatross — have to rent from Modern now that it's the PLACE for groups like the Police, Jam, Beat, Specials. Mod. Prod. is also giving local groups a push by having them warm for XTC and play benefits for local small record studios and the like. Locals like the Beakers and the Blackouts played with true spirit before XTC. Away groups like the Dishrags and Pink Section have been picked up by Mod Prod for recording and promoting.

There is no age limit or liquor pretense at the Showbox or at the new Gorilla Room (the other great thing), a 300-plus capacity, after-hours club created by the manager of local bar-punks, the Enemy. Beginners and ignoroids are sought to warm up for say, Black Flag or whoever else trips through town long enough to plug in.

If these developments can support themselves through the summer, maybe some of you torn-shirt existentialists will come up and see us.

Record listeners up here are getting luckier as well. The Companies are falling all over the place putting the "new" wave (American) in the major record stores over by the University of Washington. And for cheap ($5)! In a battle of titans, it was sure nice to see Tower Records give the slick and fuzzy Peaches chain a run for the business—though both stores stock local and not just monster material. But the locals are mostly sought at four (count 'em) used record shops right near the UW. Great selections are pushed at 2nd Time Around and Cellophane Square. Even though these folks consider themselves the elite scene, they still pay shit for the old wave (they say: top dollah!), and make these great window displays of all releases of the Clash, Rockpile, James Chance, Pistols, Elvis, and then don't carry hardly anything in stock. Before the importers came through with some Pistols singles late last year, they made me pay $5 for "Holidays in the Sun" (and that's used, without a picture sleeve!).

By far, the best record station around isn't even in Seattle. It's Mt. Olympus out by the airport. Expensive, sure, but you get what you pay for and they have the only fanzine headquarters from S.F. to Vancouver. Also very talkative and helpful, without a lot of bullshit elite talk about what to buy or why the prices are high — just a lot of records and equal interest.

As far as the press, we recently had a magazine created — Rocket — which is attempting to take over the complete desert of available alternative press by being everything at once — pazz, jop, new nave and runk pock. Other than too small, it's trying as it might, and giving good push for the locals with real professional features and reviews. The monthly mag is a product of the Seattle Sun, a weekly out of Capitol Hill (where they have a corner on everything artsy-fartsy) and so may survive with proper nourishment.

The UW also has an offshoot arts weekly called Less Than Zero, which is small but very useful. Still needed is a pure ROCK paper every two weeks. A fanzine, Stelazine, is great and all but doesn't come out enough to keep up on the burgeoning scene.

Other than that, we are all looking forward to the appearance of an a capella punk band called Mr. Ethan and his Straight Merkin. An enigmatic electrical engineer who looks like the cover of Wet, Mr. Ethan's nasty security force has threatened me with death and other unnatural acts if I don't mention some songs he's written like "My Flesh Ain't So Good" and "Full Clip". Also we're all looking for a new Blackouts single, "Make No Mistake", to come out before long. The Enemy will have one out soon too.

Did I do it? Did I write a sum-up of Seattle without mentioning overrated, beery sell-outs the Cowboys, the Jitters and the Heats? Great. Fuck you, too. May the IRS not grant you any exemptions.

—finis—

TWO REPORTS FROM NYC

(1)

Lounge Lizards played Hurrah where they headline quite a bit. Some of their stuff verges on being dramatic by virtue of their abrupt low bottom changes, which makes it good, but one can only take so much of the jazz cool kitch which is sadly integral to the rest of their set.

On the more visceral marketplace *The Cramps* played Irving Plaza lately oozing out the most nauseating, creepy, "cartoon of misery" set I've seen in years. They come on stage to green flickering votive candles looking like dawn of the dead rockers, Brian in his sick glitter type clothes; lux a muscular sex snake, completely possessed, choking on his rockabilly vocals; Ivy in leather dress etc. looking like the queen of numb sex; and drummer an omniscient rhythmic statue perched gloomily over the whole affair. Excuse the concentration on the visuals but as far as the actual music goes all I can remember is one huge echoing beat ringing off the walls, never seeming to change from song to song. But this is no criticism in their case, they're one of the most exciting spectacles since Iggy.

Dark Day played Tier 3 recently to a semi-full house. Minimal, atmospheric (mostly) instrumentals that carry on too long but are fairly good. Each "song" seems to be structured around a keyboard line, varying slightly from time to time, filled out with primitive drumming and sustained guitar, the guitarist doubling sometimes on second keyboard, which gets boring after a while. Another band at Tier 3 was *Bush Tetras*, making a more sophisticated brand of No wave than we might have heard a year ago (the band features Pat Place on one-chordish distorted guitar). They also have a singer who can sing well and seems to mean what she's singing, and a strong drummer. I'm sure we'll hear more about them.

Last band to report on is *Manhattan Project*, another addition to the synthesizer sect. They used to be the Rentals and reformed sans drummer. Line-up now includes 2 synths and guitar. The music is almost dancable but lacks bottom due to no drums and dependence on rhythm machine for beat, but I hear they're adding a bass player and synair player which will help. It's powerful music anyway, and quite severe and aggressive emotionally.

—John Jones

Pat Place pic by Lisa Genet

(2)

The infamous *Johnny Thunders* reunited with the *Heartbreakers* to do yet another "farewell" gig at Heat, an enormous (1000 people) Mafiosa punk disco. The place was jammed, the cover was $10, and the band was strung out on junk. From what I saw of Thunders backstage before he went on, it seemed he couldn't pronounce his own name, let alone perform for an hour and a half leaving the audience begging for more. But the Heartbreakers can express the world of junkiedom with a determination and unabashed honesty that remains unrivaled in the music business. A solid wall of Rock n Roll, then poured it out non-stop. Appropriately thunderous, Johnny's guitar breaks in decisively again and again. His style is at once haphazard and precise. He and Walter played off each other, jaggedly skipping about, bumping against each other. Billy Rath on bass has kept a low profile, occasionally stepping forward with blazing intensity showing in his stoned blue eyes. Jerry pounded out the rhythms seemingly swept away by the sound of his drumming.

They did classics, such as "Chinese Rocks" "Seven Day Weekend" and "No Junkie Business" (Tie it up, shoot it up, boot it up, throw it up"), as well as a long slow autobiographical number about the futility of love and heroin addiction. Johnny was swigging on his quart of Jack Daniels and smoking joints from the audience. At one point he gave it the old Darby Crash try, demanding that they relinquish all their drugs before he'd go on. After an attempted strip tease, he tried to get some girls to dance topless. When none of the spectators were game, his friends joined him for a few numbers and sang some good back-up. The next night the set ended when the drummer walked off after the third song.

ZE Records had a huge party at Hurrah. Admission ($6.00) was charged the public, but there were huge guest lists and drink tickets galore. First on their bill was Lizzy Mercier DeCloux, but I didn't see her. Lydia Lunch announced she wouldn't play – she claims ZE owes the band $4000.00 and she wants everyone to boycott them.

Next came some hojo extravaganza called "Kid Creole and the Coconuts Revue featuring Christina". This band has a strong Latino base, with Andy Hernandez on vibes, and good musicians in general. Then there are 3 pussycats in leopard spandex jumpsuits who sing backup vocals and stink, and another female in a black spandex suit with hood (who belts it pretty damn good) and August Darnell, "Kid Creole," who is the lead singer. After they did several overly long numbers, including their radio hit, "Deputy of Love," "Christina" came out and did a long Berlin-Cabaret-type soliloquy called "Is That All There Is?", and then the band went back to their previous antics. It's sort of like a 3-ring circus. The band has a good commercial sound, but I can't stand that shit.

Alan Suicide wrapped up the night with his synthesizer soundtrack. He immediately got pissed at his audience who were offering wimpish taunts and standing clear of the stage, and he stared down a few of them before knocking off a beautiful love ballad like Frankie Sinatra, adding to the percussion by stamping his feet or smacking himself across the jaw with the microphone, or falling down. Then he put me on the stage and people went up and danced. When the stage cleared, he did one more song and the whole space was under his spell. All eyes widened in disbelief when he wouldn't come back and give them an encore.

–B.H.

mini interview

CIRCUS MORT

If you remember, Mike Gira quit NO Magazine to sing for the Little Cripples (Strict Ids). Later, he met Rick Oller, and Rick and Mike started writing songs. They worked together through the summer, painting houses by day and rehearsing by night. Four months of this and they moved to New York, where they formed the band as a whole. They found the twins, Josh and Dan Braun (bass and synth.), and Angelo Pudignano, drummer. Most of their original material has been reworked in a rehearsal studio, where they spent two months before going on to live gigs. After all – no demo, no bookings.

CIRCUS MORT

Slash: Is being in this band an inspiration?

Mike: I feel like I have something to do and I intend to fulfill my goals. Nothing will stop me.

Rick: I feel like I'd rather be in this band and broke than broke and not in this band.

Mike: There's actually nothing else to do. I'm not satisfied with anything else. If I wasn't in it I'd be sitting in my room. I feel more centered and aware in terms of others.

Rick: It gives me energy. The more you put out the more you have. I've got years ahead of me to get cancer and grow old. .

Slash: While you're on stage, how conscious are you of the moods you evoke?

Mike: At Tier 3 I felt more confident. At the same time I was more directly faced with the audience. I had more confidence in the gestures and moves.

Dan: At Hurrah's we were all more nervous and paranoid, and I think it came out in the music.

Mike: Rick and I have worked on the states of mind we should be in while we're playing.

Rick: Yeah, it wasn't hard to be in that state of mind at Tier 3. There was about an inch for everyone to move in.

Slash: Specifically what states of mind have you experimented with?

Mike: One was we were in a cage and there were people staring in at us, and we were going without food for several days and people were taunting us and laughing at us. We were telling a story or relating something to ourselves while they looked at us and jeered.

Rick: That's a pretty accurate appraisal of being on stage.

Slash: Were all the exercises you conceived of about entrapment?

Mike: No. There are songs that are little stories; a murder mystery. The lyrics to "Hypothetical World" are about myself masturbating in front of a mirror ... You know.

Rick: I wouldn't mind a hostile audience.

Mike: Tier 3 was pre-fabricated ...

Dan: There were too many friends there, it was too supportive.

Slash: Well, they were accepting a level of discomfort. They were getting off on that, not the fact that they knew you or something.

Rick: No one had a discomfort party afterwards.

Slash: I don't know about the parties afterwards. I've become a middle-aged housewife.

Mike: We took LSD afterwards.

Slash: You were acting like you were on LSD before it.

Rick: Different things make different people happy: I feel relaxed when I listen to Lou Reed's Metal Machine Music.

Josh: Demerol makes me happy.

Rick: We've had a lot of people ask us what our name means.

Mike: It means Dead Circus.

Slash: Duh.

Rick: Susan said the way I was playing "Floor Rising" at Tier 3 reminded her of a schizo movie. But that's the way I play. I'm into cinematic vision – I visualize everything. Just an idea of being multi-dimensional – sounds create pictures. Actually beer has taught me everything I know.

Slash: That's a good one.

Rick: I've also brought hallucination into it as much as possible. It's like, magic.

Mike: I'd like to create a complete absence of imagination; a leaden state.

Rick: Yeah, but it takes a lot of imagination to get there.

Mike: "The air was made of rubber."

Rick: For right now I'd like to accomplish a sense of discomfort and sleeplessness in the audience. I'd like to make them dance and all be insomniacs like me.

Mike: With an upset stomach.

Rick: Right. Dance with an upset stomach.

Mike: I don't think it should be so heavy-handed that people contemplate it as an art object, like so many bands in New York. It should be physically moving, and at the same time invoke a certain claustrophobia or a state of mind which implies fear.

Slash: You had that effect both performances, though they were entirely different kinds of fear. There's the effect of a crowd shouting slogans sometimes.

Mike: I'd like it to be horror movie stuff.

Slash: It is.

Mike: I'd like to get burnt out.

Josh: That's a punk thing to say.

Slash: No, it's a Neil Young thing to say. "It's better to burn out, than to fade away . . ."

Mike: Yeah, leave a chuck steak behind.

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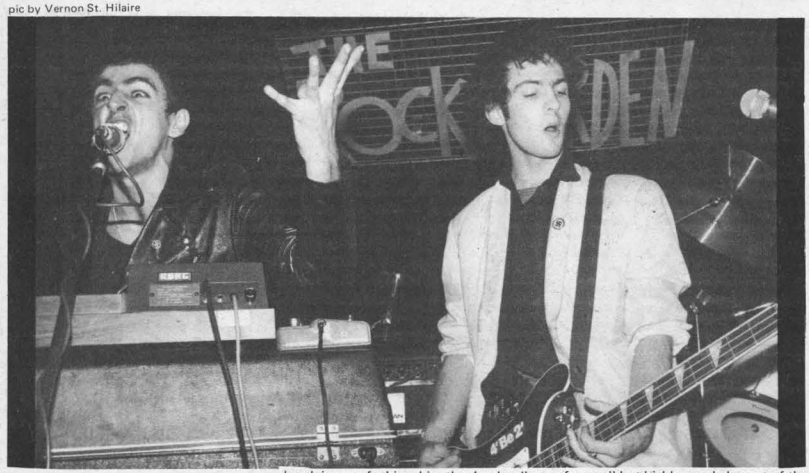


Sid re-incarnate? Nah, just Killing Jokes bassist living out his fantasies.

RANDOM STOATS — Another Brick In The Window

by Mork Williams

Hey, this is 1980 right. Time for a helter skelter ride along the cortex of all the familiar iconography of the last decade, maybe re-treading a few useful movements from earlier eras to bolster the thin parcel of genuinely new themes we're s'posed to . . .

No, fuck all this pseudo-polemic shit. What began as a notion of bileful dissertation directed at current musical and social doublethink is going to stop right here, primarily because I don't like the mean, pinched rhetoric that necessarily characterizes convincing put-downs. Also, I've been told that these long werdzzzz require too many of you to reach for the dictionary five times a paragraph, or simply skip the polysyllabics and deal only with those easy ones in capital letters. You know, see how many groovy, esoteric band names I can come up with in the course of a column. In fact, since Mr. Bessy/Kick-Boy/Face (or whatever personna he woke up with that morning) chose to cut some stuff out of my last whistle-stop tour of the brain-bin just 'cause *he* didn't think you should hear about the band in question ... (The band in question was the Textones and I thought they were not an essential topic for a british column. But what do I know? This is the only intrusion I will impose on this Random Stoats. May I take a raincheck on the carta blanca though? — Rebuked Ed.) ... since ultimate censorship is no more reprehensible than honestly held partisan beliefs ... let me provide the editorial whim with a *carte blanche* (that's a French expression my dictionary defines as "unlimited authority", Kick'll understand it even if you're not as bright as he is) to pull the plug on *Random Stoats* almost before it's got into gear, and still keep his magazine's credibility intact.

So here's a list of all the radical, far-out, culturally meaningful artists I'm going to mention if I get the chance: MEKONS, GENERATION X, SHAM 69, MADNESS, HOLLY & THE ITALIANS, SELECTER, FEELIES, DEVO (sorry, slipped a bit there), MARGO & THE SPACE VIRGINS (which should compensate for that lapse of style, 'cause this band is so fucking hip they've hardly played any gigs and don't know what the inside of a recording studio even looks like), COCKNEY REJECTS, ADAM & THE ANTS, DELTA 5, THROBBING GRISTLE, SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS, MARTHA & THE MUFFINS, KILLING JOKE and a lot of Los Angeles bands whose status is assured by the gratuitously regular coverage they're accorded in these pages. Plus anyone else that I might come across during an evening of furious telephoning that will (hopefully) ensure that a writer who's been back in England just 24 hours can mount a reasonable impression of what's happening here, babeeeeeeeeee?

Now if the blue pencil or the scalpel haven't yet struck, perhaps it would be smart to start with a brief explanation of the thinly disguised bitchery above. Journalists are notorious patrons of their own egos and seeing your "art" butchered and snidely commented on at the same time is likely to puncture the membrane that tenuously binds together the man with the big stick and the man who it is wielded over. The mollifying element when such fractious situations occur is called *money*, but since this doesn't exist at *Slash*, suddenly you're staring at futility. A realization not dissipated by the editor's obvious and frequently mentioned interest in having a certain female person occupy the U.K. Bureau instead. I think he finds it easier to exert his will over the fair sex ... plus of course she's a much better writer than I, has her finger on the pulse with an almost medical diligence etc., etc. So this could be the last time, who knows? Who cares?

Well that's the grisly self-indulgence over and done with, now onto more important things.

You'll be delighted to hear that HOLLY & THE ITALIANS are in trouble over here. (This is your monthly Holly & The Italians Update, included just to reinforce the apparently universal theory amongst *Slash* personalities, that yrs. trly. is slipping Ms. Vincent the meat. Sorry to disappoint, but that privilege belongs to bassist MARK HENRY). The Anglo/American power rockers were sandwiched between THE BODYSNATCHERS (and I'm not fucking any of them, either, Kickboy) and THE SELECTER on a major U.K.tour and were eliciting the enmity of a small but highly vocal element of the primarily ska-crazy audiences these two bands attract. The solution seemed to be for Holly & Co. to split halfway down the road with an official announcement from the Selecter saying: "We are disappointed that they (our audiences) haven't been willing to give a different kind of music a chance. We think Holly and the Italians are a great band." How nice. Since then H & the I's have hastily arranged some headlining gigs of their own and Holly had this to say about the whole schmear: "BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP" (that's the sound of a busy signal on a British telephone.)

Likely to emulate the success, or shall we say "consumer awareness" of the BACKSTAGE PASS person and her trio, are MARGO & THE SPACE VIRGINS who are also a 3-piece, also front by a distinctively voiced American chanteuse (ask Claude if you don't know the meaning of that one. Why should I pander to illiteracy?) and are being chaperoned by Charlie Gillett, whose tiny Oval label released Holly's first single, "Tell That Girl To Shut Up". MARGO RANDOM is from NYC and has a voice that is strident, almost operatic and thus ideally suited to the Tamla/Beatles influenced material she writes. Turn your snotty little nose up at those reference-points if you will, but her songs are anything but pop pap, containing intriguing intros, solid, beaty middle bits and a useful crescendo or two. Her American ancestry is jettisoned in favour of Anglophile subject matter like "Hammersmith Palais", "South of the River" (Thames, not Hudson) and "Yobbo Love", and she plays a nifty Telecaster; the incongruity of her plump '50s evening-gowned figure standing behind those fast frets soon fades when she turns riffs into rip-saw solos. Although Gillett is hovering with a one-off singles deal, Margo is waiting and seeing. Very wise, toots.

No such deliberation deters JIMMY PURSEY from continuing his plan for world domination. He's currently down in Wales' Rockpile Studio with Mssrs. LAFF and DERWOOD of GENERATION X (or should I say EX-GENERATION-X?) as well as certain unknown SHAM-69ers (there have been so bloody many of them, it's hard to know). What the music's gonna be like your faithful correspondent wouldn't dare hazard a guess, but Big Jim is living up to his reputation as a trouble-maker, sorry, controversial figure. Last week he punched out a local lad who took (rightful) exception to remarks made by one of the London chaps about the lack of testicles owned by a famous Welsh Football team. Which is rather like a New Yorker telling a Venice beach bum that no-one in California can surf. Just another in a long line of bar brawls.

The rest of Generation-X are, it appears, in cahoots with BILL AUCOIN who is manager of that extremely progressive, modest and utterly street-wise American band, KISS. What next for BILL and TONY, platform bovver botts and glitter make-up?

Another bit of silliness involving Pursey — albeit by default — was the millstone THE COCKNEY REJECTS found themselves shouldering. What seems like light years ago, the lovable Rejects were part of "Pursey's Package" with Polydor Records, but to find themselves billed at a club in Penzance as "JIMMY PURSEY'S COCKNEY REJECTS" upset them just a wee tad. They therefore decided to rip down all the posters outside the venue and get mildly stroppy with the management, one of whom punched GEGGUS and got his nose broken by way of retaliation.

Might as well get all the violence out the door at one shot which means mentioning the outbreak of extreme radical feminism which could've been the only reason for a young lady to jump onstage at the first of MADNESS' six sets at the Whisky and begin gratuitously booting some male punter squarely in the mush who was helplessly trapped in the stage-front crush. SUGGSY and CHRISSY BOY stopped what they were doing and wrestled the young thing gently off-stage 'though a further scuffle broke out in the crowd? maybe the boys were fighting amongst themselves for the thrill of getting kicked next? They keep telling me Los Angeles is that sort of town.

And you'd better learn to talk proper, too. MIKE BARSON came offstage when they played Boston dead worried that the toy-town facism that inured many of their early British appearances was on the march in your country. "I 'eard some geezer shouting 'Zeig Heil! Zeig Heil!' So I moved a bit closer to 'im and discovered it was just the way he was saying 'Rude Boy! Rude Boy!' "

Whatever, it was edifying to see first-hand American audiences on both coasts making with the skank, or a decent approximation thereof, to Madness. Even THE CLASH's heavy mettaloid tilt at the genre when they played "White Man In Hammersmith Palais" at Santa Monica Civic sent unequivocal orders to the feet. Is this the shape of things to come? Will Arthur Murray and Fred Astaire Dance Studios recover from the shock they got when disco began its inevitable decline into the dumper and the pogo seemed to be taking its place? "Do the 2-Tone Shuffle The Arthur Murray Way — Only $12.95 for Six Lessons . . ." I can see the ads in the *L.A. Times* now.

'Course if you want to be a rasta faster, Island Records are making things easier — at a decent price, of course — with a slew of back tatalogue releases following the

success of the "Intensified" compilation on Mango last year. Dig deep into those food coupons and await "More Intensified Vol. 2" which includes "Train to Skaville" (by THE ETHIOPIANS) "Man In the Street" (DON DRUMMOND) and "6 & 7 Book Of Moses" (VIKINGS). Another compilation follows; "Club Ska '67" with material from the SKATALITES, DESMOND DEKKER and THE GAYLADS.

The last bit of this scree is being slammed out after an uplifting SELECTER & B********S' gig at Hammersmith Palais where all God's chillun' got right down to business and The Selecter (due in L.A. in May), again affirmed my conviction that they are the most mesmerically rhythmic of all the 2-Tone acts, with the possible exception of THE BEAT, because they have two guitarists as well as a bass and organ. The new armies of the night have been hypnotized by cross-beat and march crazy-limbed on the spot. Too much pressure *indeed. Owright!*

ANGELIC UPSTARTS anyone? Not when you've already got THE GERMS to promote mayhem for you, but it may be of consequence to some of you that the Newcastle band are daring to release a second album, "We Gotta Get Outta This Place" on Warner Bros. in April. The title song was made famous by another Newcastle ensemble your parents may remember, THE ANIMALS. The Upstarts have a new bass player, GLYN WARREN, replacing RON WOODEN who "left the band for a woman."

Having recently left the human race for a woman and returned relatively unscathed, I can report without sexist rancour that THE SLITS have an album of "rehearsal versions of their early songs and other bits and pieces" out on Rough Trade soon. If this wasn't going to be sold at a maximum of $5, one might cynically think that this was a Virgin Records type scam. What next, an album of THE POP GROUP picking their noses into a microphone? (Actually Rough Trade are putting out the POP GROUP's "How Much Longer Must We Tolerate Mass Murder?" album in April, complete with a free newspaper detailing lyrics, atrocities, tour managers' names etc.)

Talking of Virgin's exploitation industry, KILLING JOKE's bass guitarist is the dead spit of a certain SID VICIOUS — called YOUTH — who even sings like the original. (Worse — he played bass for JIMMY ILydon's: (JOHNNY's brother) band, the appalling 4-BE-2). In the meantime, *Sounds* is running a "Clone City" section where readers are invited to submit pix of themselves looking like Sid. Virgin themselves were severely (and correctly) reprimanded by *New Musical Express* in December for punting out the "Sid Sings" album in such a tasteless fashion, taking particular offence at the guitar/swastika motif. The label smugly responded this month by taking out space showing the ads for "Swastika T-Shirts" that *NME* had been running in their classified section over the past few weeks. In the same issue *NME* fought back with a disclaimer which concluded with the postscript: "Rather an expensive little joke, wasn't it? Let's hope you shift a few more Sid albums this week."

The irony of *NME*'s curt little political stance is that the paper is owned by the biggest, straightest monument to capitalist publishing in Europe, the International Publishing Corporation who own a bunch of right wing publications as well as what seems like half the office blocks in SE 1. But then so is *Malady Maker*, the rag I "work" for, so what the fuck am I moaning about; we're all manacled to capitalism in one shape or form ... what price idealism in the eighties?

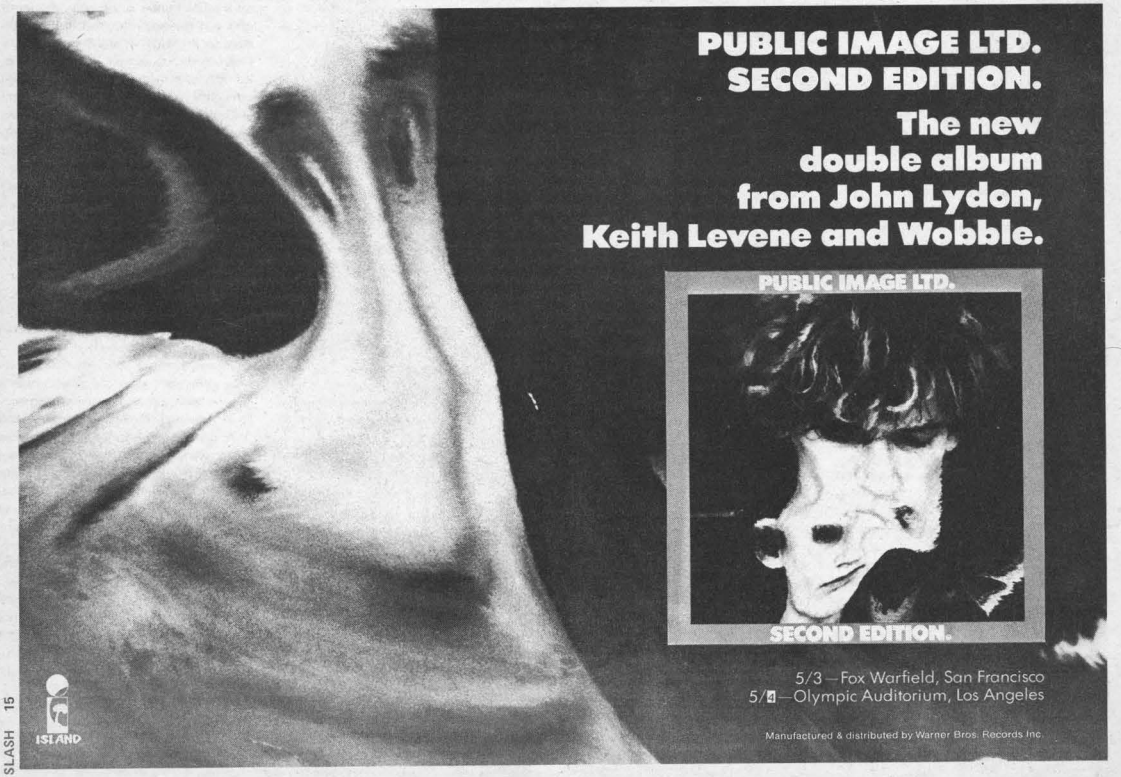
It was in fact on *Melody Maker*'s behest (though not at their expense, damn Lem), that I came to L.A. from New York. Having interviewed two self-consciously precious young men and a more affable bass guitarist and drummer who comprise THE FEELIES in NYC (drummer ANDY FIER doubles as THE LOUNGE LIZARDS tub thumper, incidently), I came to L.A. to eat words written in for *L.A. Weekly* six weeks earlier and find bands like WALL OF VOODOO and GEZA-X's latest hot combo contrary to my dour dismissals in *LAW*, once again taking So. Cal's new music along paths where few others have trod. To pay for the excursion (and the humble pie), I had to root around for stories to send back to the old country and an entree was made to DEVO who were winding up recording their next album in the Record Plant (surely the only 24-track with a jacuzzi on the premises? Very devoid). After much pussyfooting around JERRY CASALES said they didn't want to do the interview after all because, well, because for one thing they didn't have their new uniforms ready to be photographed and *interviewed* in. Are we not men? No, we are prima donnas.

So here we are at the end of a very nasty jet-lagged deadline and who's missing?

Well, WIRE for starters. They've been dumped by EMI for not selling enough records — what did they expect, PINK FLOYD? And THROBBING GRISTLE held a typically bizarre event at the Scala Cinema which consisted mainly of smutty flics and loud noises, SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS threaten to reform in their original guise, MALCOLM McCLAREN, the Col. Tom Parker of Punk, is not just managing but also *singing* in THE ANTS (now minus ADAM) and Canada has finally produced a band who aren't copying anyone called MARTHA & THE MUFFINS. Their Din-Disc album preceded a short London visit which helped put a single, "Echo Beach" into the charts and pulled off some dynamite gigs at small venues. Bit like the B-52's without the art school cuteness or the DELTA-5 married to the Selecter.

If that sounds a bit of a dumb metaphor, what d'you expect from a man who got straight off a TWA jumbo and was dragged to a pub where LEIF GARRETT was pogo-ing to the extremely talented and all-around loudmouth TENPOLE TUDOR? I kid you not ... things are getting *weird* out here.

END



FILMS: INTERVIEWS, REVIEWS, OPINIONS, ANALYSIS, LIES, SOME TRUTHS, BUSINESS AND BANKRUPTCY.

HEARTLAND REGGAE
(featuring various artists) at Filmex

Heartland Reggae seems to have been more an attempt to put some unseen JA acts on screen rather than any sort of creative endeavor. Which is the only reason why anyone would want to see it anyway. There's certainly not much film technique here, just alot of niggers working up a sweat both on and off the stage. Which is also good, because I hate film students (and anyone else who sits through Ingmar Bergman bore) and was terrified at even being seen at Filmex on Saturday night . . . . . .

Heartland Reggae featured the usual likes of Marley and Tosh, but also involved Jacob Miller, Althea & Donna, U-Roy, Dennis Brown, and the I-Threes on their own. Most of which have never (and probably will never) be seen in this country. First up was Jacob Miller who plays some kind of herky-jerky bounce reggae and looks like Jamaica's Meatloaf. Everything was jolly and fun like a fatman's dinner. He even managed to make Bob Marley's classic tune, "Soul Rebel" sound like a kiddy song about going to the zoo. He rolled his massive gut at the audience as if he thought he was sexy or something. Funny, at best. I'll bet he still listens to ska music. Or maybe even polka music. . .

Peter Tosh, the forked-tongue of Zion himself, came on and bored everybody to death. His funniest line being "if you come from Taiwan, you're still an African". I don't want to upset him with my minimal knowledge of race and creed, but I don't think anyone in Taiwan has an African root.

Somewhere around the outset, on came Dennis Brown, who ripped the place down with a blistering version of "Whip Them Jah Jah". With his three-piece green suit and good looks, he took the band down soul road, by simply filling the song with intensity. He had the band coming down and up, stopping for whole lines, and gave away a strong soul influence that's been underneath his music as of late. He's even accessible to an American market since his look and style can resemble another Al Green or Luther Ingram. Sign him up. We need good soul records again . . . .

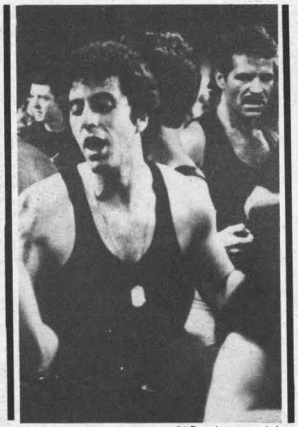
Mad Daddy toaster, U-Roy, shuffled on stage to do his version of "Soul Rebel" and some other song I forget. He was nothing short of cool. Swaying and soft-stepping his way around the stage as he rattled off his D.J. jive without even an expression on his face. The band got especially wild here by going into some totally erratic dub exercises. Which proves that JA musicians go in heavy for the psychedelic stuff. This part of the show got even wilder when this little kid, wearing slick looking white suit, came on and did American soul hit "Enjoy Youself" (Jackson Five, I think) complete with steps and moves. He was totally heart-stopping, looking like an infant Wilson Pickett, and having the act down just as well as Michael Jackson himself. (And another thing is, how interesting it was to see a reggae band hit a funky groove with the same intensity.) He may not have been singing reggae, but he belonged on that show more than Peter Tosh did. . .

The truly best part of the movie was edited down to a mere glimpse of Althea & Donna doing "Uptown Top Ranking" on stage. The two of them laughing and smiling their way through the song as if their boyfriends were watching them from the front of the stage. (Maybe they were.) The tall one would get so shy, she would almost not sing into the mike at parts. The little one was a true entertainer going headlong into the song and being as lively as possible. Neither of them are real beauties, but they looked cute onstage. I wish somebody would write them another good song. They could be quite successful that way.

The I-Threes were also totally adorable as they came on to do Judy Mowatt's hit song "Black Woman". Wearing military gear and sounding like the daughters of Che, they easily showed they should have an alternate solo career in addition to backing vocals for;

Bob Marley, who is filmed in the gig of his amazing One Love/Peace Concert, which may have been his best performance ever. At times, he was like an uncoordinated Iggy throwing himself around the stage like a ragdoll. His vocals were pure soul intensity like only James Brown or Iggy could ever reach. Even, under the conditions of this movie, he outslew everybody else on the show. All in all, this being a worthwhile film, if you can get past the Rasta propoganda. The music is what it should be, and that's all that counts anyway . . . . . .

—Uptown Ranking Jeffrey



Al Puccino groovin'

CRUISIN'

Cruisin' is a great film . . . and will probably prove to be a historically important film in the endless battle against censorship.

Al Pacino plays a rookie cop who takes a tough assignment from his NYC PD superior, Paul Sorvino, in trade for a quick promotion. The assignment: track down the homo killer. (By the time the leather freaks are through with the poor guy, he's lots less ambitious, to say the least.)

In the first place, any mainstream director such as William Friedkin who dares to deal with such a "touchy subject" as the 'world of leather fuck bars' in the middle of this kiss-ass, incestuous, ingrown and stilted motion picture industry is OK in my book. And any major American sex symbol actor such as Pacino who dares to get out there and shake his bootie with a bunch of faggots at the risk of sacrificing his sex symboldom is also OK in my book. Can you picture Clint Eastwood or Robert Redford doing the same?

That the people in the 'gay community' are so outraged by this film only serves to prove their insecurity about their lifestyle. Friedkin never said, "All queers are killers." He never said every gay man is a leather freak. But he did have the nerve to make a film that recreates a very real and shocking aspect of contemporary urban nightlife. He tells the truth about it. Fist fucking and all. And if there's one thing the American Public can't take, it's the truth. So, why don't you guys with the picket signs find something else to whine about?

As far as the Jack Nietsche soundtrack goes, it was pretty much mainstream rock 'n roll. It was as if the Germs were there so Nietsche could prove he is still a hip dude. Didn't convince me. And why was theirs the one song that was mixed down low and had projector noise all over it?

Now, about the violence. Arms floating in the river have never been very high on my list of fun things to look at. Other than that, *Cruisin'* is pretty much standard shock-it-to-'em movie shit . . . . . a few nifty knife stabs and bingo! ketchup everywhere. Big deal. The ten year olds see it on prime time TV every night. Somehow when the violence is presented with the "touchy subject" of leather fuck bars, audiences can't take it quite as easily. They can take large doses of violence, but throw in a little sex and you've lost 'em.

Friedkin's one highly visible mistake is that he fell victim to the inefficiency of his industry's censorship code. That the MPAA classifies graphic knife stabbings and dismemberments as an "R" and sexual intercourse as an "X" is entirely screwed up. *Cruisin'* should have been a full out double X porno movie, but instead, much of it was cut so it would come up to "industry standards". Fuck industry standards. **—Penelope**

WHEN THE SHIT HIT THE (PISTOLS) FANS
THE GREAT ROCK'N'ROLL SWINDLE
directed by Julian Temple

Judging by just about everybody's reaction to the initial pre-release showing of this I'd say the Pistols controversy is not over yet. This time it seems that it's the Pistols followers who are shocked and disgusted by this "representation" of their idols and the claims made throughout that it was all a game and a con and that the record companies and the big public weren't the only ones who were taken for a ride. Sacrilege and horror! Burn the witch! After all, I should feel just as offended and let down as the next punk rocker, my heart skipped a few beats when I heard "Anarchy in the UK" just like yours did and I also borrowed the money to fly up north and catch what was to known later as the very last live Pistols performance, I mean if it was all a put-on I swallowed it, hook line and sinker. Yet after the movie I felt strangely fulfilled and satisfied. Perhaps I took it more seriously than most when throughout their condensed career the Pistols kept depreciating rock n roll values and poking fun at the cult they had initiated, perhaps my not-so-secret admiration for McLaren and his boastful claims and schemes got reinforced by the totally over the top caricature he was transformed into by the script. What else did you really expect but a super black comedy annihilating Every Fuckin' Belief In Its Way, yours and mine included? I know, a righteous tale of cultural guerrillas fighting for truth and honesty in a decaying world. Cept that if it is a truly decaying world then even the so-called alternative values of truth honesty and punkdom are just as contaminated and just as worthy of ridicule, right?? Like, did you truly think the early Pistols-Russ Meyer association was ideologically "correct" and revolutionary oriented? Do you really believe that everything was pure until the machiavellion Temple/MaLaren team got its filthy paws on the remains of the adventure and distorted its historical meaning?

Shit, man, there is so much to enjoy, and also so much to learn from this film if you forgot about absolute truth and other non existent concepts. The most fascinating thing about all this is how, no matter what, it is impossible to adopt one point of view and one only: Julian Temple, who collaborated and wrote all of this with McLaren is now considered a "traitor" by him, he himself thinks Mc Laren was in the end the "traitor" to the project (see interview), Lydon probably views both as "traitors" and liars while he himself is called a "collaborator" in the film, and it's all because there were as many interpretations and justifications throughout the marvelous mythical story as there were participants. So now all the Pistols fans are going to rave and rant and start flinging the "traitor" label left and right, adding their two cents' worth to the mess. Which has got to be the funniest on going joke that ever brightened the annals of rock n roll history. Maybe the movie will even provoke riots and picket lines when it is nationally released, maybe some of you should start working on a "Unfair to genuine Pistols fans" placards!

Movie-wise I don't know much but I was thoroughly amused and excited from the opening credits to the last animated sequence, the live footage was great, the acted bits were better than anything I expected from such irreverent yobbos (Steve Jones especially comes across with more wit and genuine presence — and Malcolm (in spite of his recently revealed reluctance) gets the supporting actor award for being the most convincing straight-faced cartoon of himself — if you don't piss with laughter when the joker, all tartan and bondage gear, starts his sweet singing of "You need hands" you should see a chiropractor. And yes, in the movie at least, "Sid lives". Well, does *his* equivalent of living, which apparently so many consider to be just *the* most refined ever. Worship does take some pretty strange routes these days. See, truly a movie for the whole family. Something for everyone. And, for a project that almost never saw the light of day and ran into more complications than the Iran hostages thing, it's a bloody miracle I am truly grateful for. **—Kick**

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INTERVIEW WITH ROLL SWINDLE

JULIAN TEMPLE,

Julian Temple/pics Philomena

SLASH: Tell us what led to your making the Great Rock n Roll Swindle?

JULIAN: I heard of this group very early on, when they just began, that was doing strange versions of songs, like Substitute, just singing "bla bla bla"..a friend of mine told me about them. So I went down to see them play at the Marquee. They were *the* thing to film, so I made sure I filmed them. It wasn't a matter of persuading them, it was just being . . . persistent. I was filming them thru 1976, hiding from Malcolm as well. I got some stuff I never showed Malcolm, from very early on. I saw them rehearsing before Johnny was with the band, just Steve and Paul, I spent a whole afternoon watching them in a warehouse they used to rehearse in, by the Thames.

SLASH: Were you interested in music then?

JULIAN: No more than anyone else. I was trying to get away with making films, but that kind of capsized what I was doing.

SLASH: When did you become the official film maker of the group?

JULIAN: On the Anarchy tour. That's what really broke it, right after the Bill Grundy show. It was just a matter of following them around while they were being cancelled from one gig to another. That's what the coach going nowhere is about in the movie. The reason I went on filming and did the film is because I really believed in what the band were doing.

SLASH: What was that?

JULIAN: Destroying rock n roll. I think they will be proved to have destroyed rock n roll.

SLASH: Do you think that's what they thought they were doing?

JULIAN: That's what Malcolm and the other people working with the management thought they were doing. I think John also thought that's what he was doing. The others were less articulate, but they knew what they hated. It was their energy that allowed everything to happen. Steve was very much a moving element of the band, he would do anything, he didn't give a shit about what he did, as opposed to John who was very precious about it and always thought out what he did. All the moments that caused the breakthroughs were Steve Jones'. The name "Never Mind The Bollocks" was Steve's, the swearing on the Bill Grundy show was Steve. Steve Jones was the toughest of the group. You got to remember they hated each other, and Steve was the strongest, the dominant one. On most occasions he was the one to jump out in the audience and beat up the offending hippie. So in that way *he* was the spokesman. But he couldn't read or write.

SLASH: When did Swindle become a separate project?

JULIAN: Well, when the Russ Meyer thing fell thru is when it came about. And it coincided with the break up of the group. Basically the group broke up because Malcolm had devoted too much time to making the film and not enough time supporting Rotten, who became very alienated. Personally I think the group broke up after God Save the Queen when they went into hiding, couldn't go on the streets of London and were being beaten up for being Pistols. There was no back-up from the management and the group went into seclusion, when all they wanted to do was play. Vicious and Rotten wanted to play live, Vicious especially 'cos he had just joined the band and wanted to prove he was a Sex Pistol and could get on a stage and do it. I think at that stage Malcolm lost touch with the group. The God Save the Queen period was their finest hour. It achieved everything they were going to achieve, it was just a matter of taking it to America. In terms of what they were as a band they had achieved it, and should have really broken up then, I think. But they hadn't had the number one album, and I guess that was a good idea. The only time I talked to John since we had all these bust-ups he made a lot of sense to me. He said, "We should have continued for another 3 or 6 months and made sure we were the biggest thing that could possibly happen, as big as the Rolling Stones or anyone else, and then there would have been no chance for Queen and other similar groups to ever come back, they would have been totally wiped out". I respect that. I think John was really into that and had that perspective on it. But without the back up from Malcolm, who had engineered the situation in the first place, John felt really betrayed when he was left with all that press overkill and Malcolm just split to work with Russ Meyer. If ghe group was to continue it was important that Malcolm and John work together but after that point they just went further and further apart. So the Swindle movie was planned after other attempts to use other directors when the Meyer film fell thru. There was a guy from America called Jonathan Kaplan . . .

SLASH: This was still for the Bambi project?

JULIAN: Well, a continu[illegible]n of the Bambi thing. This guy and a writer came over with a real social realist script, it would have been a Clash film, not a Sex Pistols one. Rotten loved it, and of course Malcolm hated it, I hated it as well, it wasn't right for the Sex Pistols. I think one of the things that is very important to understand about the difference between the S.P. and the other groups is that they were trying to challenge the form of rock n roll, not just the contents. It wasn't just wheeling in another Bob Dylan ten years later. They were trying to fragment and explode the form of rock n roll. It was just a matter of taking the easiest possible music – not like Public Image where the music is very important – and just saying: look, take this fucking shit, we'll use it to blow it up. That's what it was about, it wasn't about being sentimental about high rise flats and dole queues like the Clash were. And these guys from America came over with that perspective on it. John really liked it, partly because he loved the fact that the Meyer project fell thru. He hated Meyer, mainly because he appeared in John's life as a creation of Malcolm.

SLASH: Had he seen any of Meyer's movies?

JULIAN: He had seen some. Once Meyer put on a show of the Valley of the Dolls, I think that's what it was, and only Steve and Paul turned up, which is kind of indicative of the way things were going. When I spoke to Rotten he was saying, I'll only make this film if you make a film of it being made. He was designing trousers and shoes to appear like the ultimate hippie in the movie because it was supposed to be *THE* punk movie, and there he was going around markets buying whole basket loads of platform shoes, he was going to wear a different pair each day, and huge flair trousers and wigs [illegible] would never have got made!

SLASH: (after a good laugh) Obviously. So, you wrote the script for Swindle . . .

JULIAN: No, I wrote it with Malcolm. But he has taken his name off it. We probably spent four months in my flat, most nights until four or five in the morning writing it. We wrote several different scripts. There was one completed one that was totally different. It was a very crazy time. We were acting it out, we had a little tape recorder and I've got some tapes of Malcolm acting out, doing Ron Watts who ran the 100 Club, and Malcolm is injecting him full of heroin because he split on the plan that Malcolm told him to keep a secret and wants to let all these A&R people in and Malcolm's got him on a bench saying Ron I'm going to shoot you up so full of it you're gonna shit, it's a great scene . . . . . There was a scene that took place in a suburb of London – same idea as in Swindle with Jones looking for McLaren – he'd be going to all these Jewish princesses' homes in Stanmore and keep seeing these naked girls who invite him in to this party, and there'd be a kind of orgy because these girls wanted all these rock stars to come all over them in their suburban drawing room, they wanted Robert Plant to wank all over them. It was a much more extreme film. We took it to a producer who had been involved with the Meyer thing, and he said this is total rubbish. Malcolm said all right, it's rubbish, let's throw it out and do another one. But it did have all the lessons, it was a Swindle, but it was another story, much more anti-feminist.

SLASH: So the step by step do-it-yourself con plan that is the basis of Swindle was already there?

JULIAN: We had that. When the group ended we had this idea that instead of the group just breaking up they should really break up, they should culturally explode all over the world, so we go to Brazil and film Steve and Paul, we go to Paris and film Sid, we take Rotten to fucking Moscow or New Delhi or something like that and stick him in some indian hippie mud house situation. . That was the idea. We do the ten lessons of how the group was made, and then we do the explosion of the group as a total kind of fantasy on the absurdity of being a rock n roll star. If you're a rock n roll star you might as well go up the Amazon and play for the parrots and the monkeys with Martin Borman as your bass player or any other fucking criminal. .

SLASH: It's strange that Malcolm has taken his name off. Doesn't he need the money?

JULIAN: He still wants the money, he just took his name off.

SLASH: It's hard to disassociate him from the film, especially as the story is being told from his point of view.

JULIAN: Yea, I agree. He is indelibly marked on it. I was very keen that it should be a short film, not the Renaldo and Clara of punk, like Vivienne Westwood's fantasies about her shop and the people who worked there and the various problems to do with the family life of the Sex Pistols. I think it's efficient, it's a streamlined kind of thing. Ninety minutes is too long, but I don't think you can get it much shorter without missing very important pieces. One of the greatest strengths about Malcolm is his ability to destroy his own ideas, like a praying mantis eating its own children. He can throw out things he really worked on, like that script which I felt very strongly about. He said alright, it's junk, and all these scenes we had spoken into the tape recorder, it was a very strange feeling to just get rid of it. It was a good feeling though. But I think one of his problems is that he does not necessarily know where to draw the line. To me the purpose of all creation is to expose it to six million brains, not just one brain, I don't think you should do anything just for yourself, I think something lives if you mass market it. It's especially important to do that now because everyone else is doing it, and if you don't do it with your ideas then your ideas are going to be killed in the end, and individual people's ideas are not going to be worth anything unless you expose them. Malcolm agreed with that. The whole platform of the Pistols was to hit a mass audience with a series of extreme ideas, it wasn't to hide away in a cellar in some fucking club, it was to get signed by E.M.I., to take the world by storm, and it just seemed silly to retreat from that, it just denied the whole principle.

SLASH: You had told us earlier that Malcolm was reluctant to

DIRECTOR OF THE GREAT ROCK N

be portrayed as a Machiavellian character . . .

JULIAN: That's why I was saying he is a bit like Brezhnev, he fluctuates. To go on with the analogy, there were people in the Pistols camp who were saying don't worry about what the Americans will say, just fucking move into Afghanistan, sort it out, don't be sentimental about rock n roll. But Malcolm did fluctuate and was sometimes surprisingly sentimental. I spoke a lot with Jamie about the very beginning before I was involved, when Malcolm saw the whole project as a new Bay City Rollers. (Jamie was the Pistols artistic director and one of McLaren's collaborators. Ed.) Let's be the Bay City Rollers, and then bring the politics in afterwards. Malcolm could be the most extreme, radical person in his ideas and then change everything with another radical idea. This is very rare, and very strong. I know it's easy to make the Sex Pistols into a situationist phenomenon but it wasn't that. It was a series of different people putting in ideas in a series of successive crises. Maybe that is situationism but it wasn't planned that way.

SLASH: It seems that Malcolm always let his latest idea take over without thinking of the ramifications.

JULIAN: That is the problem with him. I don't think there is much mileage out of going away and doing pornographic films with kids. Okay, it probably shocks ninety per cent of the population. It doesn't shock us, but it shocks a lot of people.

SLASH: Shocks me.

JULIAN: But what does it do beyond shocking? I think the nihilism that was necessary at the beginning of the Sex Pistols just to clear the dead wood out, put voltage thru England's rotting corpse also brought the problem of what to do next. It was very necessary to destroy in order to create something, and it was a pretty good band for destroying things, but you can't go on destroying and not getting anywhere. And rock n roll is a small pool. You can be a big fish in a small pool but who gives a shit? The lessons that came out of the Pistols thing should be used in new ways, it shouldn't be repeated.

SLASH: In his Slash interview he did emphasize that he felt there was no need to replace what you've destroyed. . .

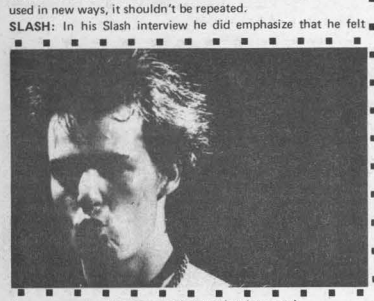
JULIAN: But when you start destroying you gotta think about the meaning of destruction. You can go on destroying things and they still exist. This is pure conjecture on my part but I think Malcolm is contiuing with the same ideas with another group (Adam & the Ants apparently — Ed.) and I think it's totally wrong. The area to get involved in is with computer frauds, video discs, attacking the whole media structure thru the next phase, not going back to the streets and the barricades, unless it's worth being shot for. The Clash can go on the streets of Belfast and pose in their bondage gear as urban guerrillas but it's a joke, it's a laugh, and the british army are just laughing their fucking heads silly. It's the same in Netherlands with the Dutch police outside the Paradiso Club where the kids are smoking their dope, same principle. They're getting their rocks off marching up and down being punk rockers urban rock n roll rebels and the police love it, they can beat them up at the next Rock Against Racism date.

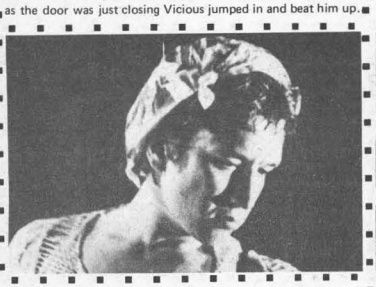
SLASH: At the end of the Bambi script someone asks if success will spoil Rotten and later is answered: "No, he will waste, spoil, smash, blow up and destroy success." In your film it is more than suggested that success *did* spoil Rotten. He is called a collaborator with the enemy. . . . .

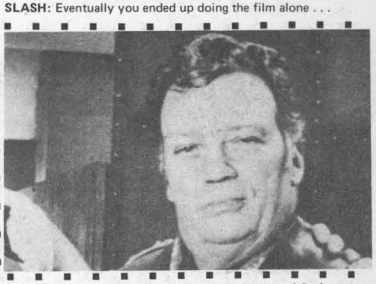
JULIAN: Yes. There was another line that was cut out. After Malcolm says "What do you call people . . . etc monsier" and is answered "Collaborator" he was to say "And what do you do to people like that?" and the answer was "We used to shoot them in the war." But it didn't need to be put in, I was trying to cut it, the notion of collaborator was enough.

SLASH: Do you truly believe this collaborator tag fits what Lydon has become?

JULIAN: No, I think he's changed, I don't think he has collaborated. At the end of the Sex Pistols John became a rock n roll fucking queen, a guy who'd ask me or you if he was sitting here and you were in the room to get him his cigarettes, wipe his ass, go and get me beer, *now*, this kind of thing. You don't have any respect for someone like that. Steve and Paul resented it incredibly. John became a disgusting character during the last phase and that's why he was fired. Since then he's chosen another way of dealing . . . Listen, you can't really blame the guy, with the pressure the media was putting on him at that time. Just a kid out of somewhere put in this situation by his manager, he had very little back up, he was constantly being undercut, Malcolm would put him down all the time, lie to him . . . I remember riding in a cab with McLaren and Rotten, we were going to Rotten's house, and John had been asking to see Malcolm for 3 weeks. Malcolm was saying I've been around to your house, I tried to see you and John said okay, if you've been around to see me direct this cab to my house, and Malcolm didn't know where the fucking house was. He'd never been there. You can't treat a guy like that. His relationship was even more extreme with Vicious. In Vicious' last 6 months of his life you couldn't have him and McLaren in the same room. Vicious would physically attack him and beat him up. We were in Paris filming Sid, trying to get him to sing My Way, which he didn't want to do, we were in a Paris studio with french session musicians and he wouldn't open his mouth. We tried everything and in the end Malcolm decided that enough was enough. So one morning me and Boogie had been in the studio with the guy and came back to the hotel and Malcolm woke up, asking if we finally had recorded the song, we said no so Malcolm rang Vicious up. Nancy answered the phone, and Malcolm was saying listen Vicious your career is over, you're finished, you're never going to work again, and suddenly Malcolm's door was kicked open and Vicious burst in in his swastika underpants and jumped after McLaren. McLaren ran out down the corridor with these old ladies doing the laundry trying to stop the whole thing, got into the lift but as the door was just closing Vicious jumped in and beat him up.







Malcolm immediately left Paris. We were left with Vicious, who was out of his head at that point. The girl Nancy was just shooting him up constantly, it was really bad. Malcolm did lose control of Vicious and Rotten, and they were really the Sex Pistols, the public vanguard of the group, and they did think more about the implications of what they represented. First he lost control of Rotten and later of Vicious. I don't think he had much personal diplomacy, generosity or understanding of the pressure both those guys were under. They were on the front line in all the attacks, they were actually very exposed and they got very frustrated when the back-up wasn't there, especially Vicious who never got to prove that he was a Pistol, except in America and that's when he went right over the top.

SLASH: The film makes no mention whatsoever of Glen Matlock . . . . .

JULIAN: He didn't really have anything to do with the Sex Pistols, he was just a good bass player. He wrote the tunes but that's what the Pistols were about, it didn't matter about the music. The chaos was what mattered, and Matlock was an element of civilization and had to be gotten rid of. But in a plan like that the human problems with the kids you're using are very heavy and Malcolm didn't understand the implications of creating these epic characters. They *were* epic social actors, cartoon blow ups of kids on the streets. Using drawn cartoon representations in the film was a very conscious decision. Partly to make the format of the film as anarchic as possible with 8 millimeter, 16 millimeter, 35 millimeter video, cartoons all put together, but more than that the whole Sex Pistols story was a cartoon story. Unfortunately Sid wasn't a cartoon character, you couldn't stretch him as far as you can a cartoon. He wanted to be stretched but he was just a kid. The cartoon sections came in very late, the first idea for a cartoon was the one that's been cut out, which was Russ Meyer directing the incest scene from the Who Killed Bambi script. When Meyer was sueing Malcolm he had his lawyers watch the film and it had to be taken out. Animation is really wonderful, I have great respect for people like Tex Avery. We tried to do it like him in the film.

SLASH: Before the interview you were telling us how reluctant McLaren was in acting his part on the screen and how difficult he was . . . . .

JULIAN: And it's also a big problem when you are directing an actor who is also the man putting the money in the film. With him it was especially difficult because I think he thought I was the worst deal he could get. His head got a bit done in when he didn't get Russ Meyer. I was saying for fuck's sake let's make the film but he was trying the most ridiculous guys, a guy called Pete Walker who must be the worst filmmaker in England, a poor man's Russ Meyer with none of the energy or the bizarreness.

SLASH: Eventually you ended up doing the film alone . . .

JULIAN: I was determined to finish it because I had a very hard time working on it with him. As soon as we started shooting it he was very very difficult. In spite of his great ideas he is very naive about films. The end of the filming is very painful for me to talk about. At that time Rotten sued McLaren, perhaps Vicious killed Nancy, then killed himself or his mother killed him, whatever version you believe, everything was crumbling. Rotten was sueing with Richard Branson, that is Virgin, backing him all the way and it was a very very heavy time for Malcolm. Each day he would appear redder in the face — when he was very tired he used to get a strange M shaped mark between the eyes — and the M was coming out stronger and stronger. He was treating everybody like total shits, it's pretty difficult to take that if you've worked very closely with the guy who's used your ideas and you thought your loyalty meant something to him. At that point I decided that either he would finish the film or I would and I didn't think he knew how to finish it. It was either be kicked in the teeth or kick in the teeth. I certainly don't think I sold out the idea of the Sex Pistols. I sold out the idea of total obedience to Malcolm but that wasn't what the Sex Pistols project was about. In retrospect I could see John's side of the argument, I hadn't seen it until I went through a similar thing with Malcolm. All of this is very personal matter, from my own point of view. Malcolm would probably say I am a complete traitor and finished the film for the receivers but I never took any notice of them.

SLASH: Could you clarify this, the "receiver" thing?

JULIAN: Everything went in the hands of the High Court, which decided that the affairs of the company (Glitterbest) were in such a mess — there was no way to know who was owed what — the Court appointed a receiver. They have the same in America, it's someone who is brought from the outside to do the adminis-

tering. Throughout all this Malcolm thought he would win the court case, but as the day came nearer it became obvious that Rotten had spent a long time preparing his case with Virgin's backing, and that he was going to wipe the floor with Malcolm. Malcolm's lawyer was a joke, he nearly got thrown out of the profession for doing illegal things and bending the rules of legal morality. Rotten won hands down. He got McLaren out and the High Court of Justice to appoint one of those guys that assess the real financial situation of the company and report their findings to the court which then decides who gets what from the contracts. Rotten hadn't got any of the money he was entitled to as one fifth of the Pistols or whatever it was, he was suing for mismanagement. I think it was a crazy trumped up case, and it made Malcolm really go to pieces, it made him smash everybody who'd been working for him for years and behave in a very unpleasant manner. Steve and Paul left him at that point when they realized certain things had happened which they didn't know about. During that difficult period Malcolm was trying to sack people and I wasn't prepared to be sacked from a film I had spent too long on and believed I was doing the right thing with.

SLASH: Who paid for the rest of the movie?

JULIAN: Don Boyd was brought in. Just before Malcolm left he did this crazy deal with Don Boyd in which Don Boyd got a huge percentage of the film by just putting in 50 grand, one of the worst deals Malcolm ever did and indicative of how he just didn't have the judgement that he had earlier on. So the reason Don Boyd gets up at Filmex is just because he put 50 grand in.

SLASH: How much did the whole thing cost?

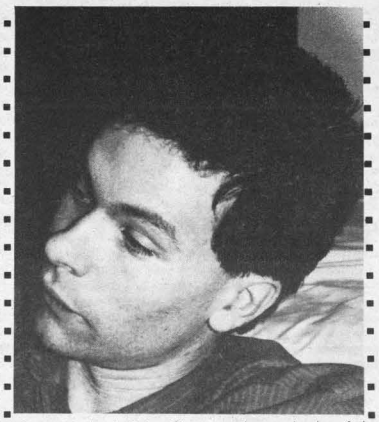
JULIAN: Four fifty. But a lot of that, something like two hundred thousand pounds, was spent on Meyer.

SLASH: And there's absolutely nothing to show for those two hundred thousand . .

JULIAN: Yes, there is. There's one scene. It's not in Swindle because legally we were not allowed to use any footage.

SLASH: Was the film written with the intention to show or teach something?

JULIAN: It was designed for people to perceive it on their own terms, it was against preaching to people. A lot of groups that came out of that whole thing preached to people. The Pistols never preached to anyone, they were far more oblique, more about making people question things for themselves. This is one



lem in their head. If that film was made to make them feel great about being a punk in California it wouldn't serve any purpose at all. Fuck them. The crucial thing is the way MacLaren was portrayed. It was meant to make him more boastful, more arrogant, more cynical than these people would like it to be. On one level the band *was* just a swindle, they were just another rock n roll band and they *did* swindle people. But they were making explicit *how* they swindled people while the Boomtown Rats swindled people and cover it up. We didn't want to cover it up, we wanted to show the grubbiness, the sordidness, the boastfulness, the egos, the shit of being a rock n roll band. If the Sex Pistols didn't understand it maybe the film will preserve some of their ideas that other people can use. It shouldn't be an easy film where you can rub your stomach after Filmex thinking what an entertaining show . .

SLASH: But it was entertaining and funny too . .

JULIAN: You can't say anything without being able to laugh

of the few things Marx and Freud agreed on, it's that you'll never get people to do anything by telling them that's right and that's wrong.

SLASH: The people we talked to that didn't like the movie seemed to resent the treatment of the Pistols as a rock n roll group, they thought it didn't reflect what it was about . . . they wanted a no-nonsense account of their career.

JULIAN: I'd like to talk about that, I think it's crucial. The whole notion of the Swindle is very important. When the Pistols started everyone, except for the few kids who liked them, really hated them. People in the press like Time Out and others went berserk. It's not music, it's awful, they all said. All the trendy media people, even in the liberal media didn't like them at all. But as soon as it became clear after the Grundy show that the Pistols had the power to outrage the establishment — the easiest thing to do in a way but also very hard for an unknown group — it was suddenly seen by these people who had initially been horrified as a wonderful pure naive statement from working class youth and they made it into a kind of cause that they could jerk themselves off on, really. Once that trend had established itself that Johnny Rotten was a saint among men, a wonderful guru just like fuckin' John Lennon or any of these other cunts from the past, we had to come up with other ideas that would disgust and make these people sick, undercut the people who mythologise things, who make everything smug for themselves claiming to be radical, "we love Tom Robinson we love the Sex Pistols" . . . we wanted to make them sick about the Sex Pistols, we wanted the group to stick in their throat. And this applies to all the bourgeois punks in California as well, the ones who go home in their Mercedes. There's no way that film should please those kids. They should feel annoyed by it, they should feel a probhysterically at yourself in the mirror. If you can't do that you got nothing worth saying. What we did was ridiculous, really stupid. On one level you should stand back and laugh at the whole nonsense of the Pistols thing. In fact it does not change a fucking thing and has in fact been used to propagate the thing it was meant to destroy. But in it are the seeds to understanding that rock n roll is not the only way rebellion and anger can be expressed. You can get involved in the media, and using the way events are seen and reported and regurgitated as an art form, you can manipulate that like you do strings on a guitar. That to me is Malcolm's art form. If he claims to be an artist, which I think he does, his art form is what he did with the media. But I'd like to make it clear that I don't think Malcolm was the only individual responsible for all that, that's crazy. In the film we made it totally over the top and ridiculous. You blow up a balloon until it bursts and there's nothing left, and that's what I wanted to do with Malcolm.

SLASH: At the end of the movie Jones is watching the movie we're watching in a cinema with other spectators. Was it suggesting that in fact the last intrinsic part of the great swindle was the film itself?

JULIAN: Yes, that was the idea. Last night at the question and answer thing after the showing at Filmex one guy complained, "you didn't show pogoing". But I don't want to show the Sex Pistols' audience, I leave that to Don Letts or the Sunday Times, that's what they're into. The pogoers should be in the fuckin cinema, not in the film. That's precisely what the thing with Jones at the end when he is in the cinema is meant to say: you are the audience, you've been watching and what have you done during this film? Maybe that's a load I bullshit . . . .

SLASH: It fits with Rotten's last words on the San Francisco stage, "Have you ever felt that you're being taken?"

JULIAN: He kept saying "Have you ever felt . .", that was one of his phrases.

SLASH: Where are all the original followers now?

JULIAN: They've settled I suppose. But I think the lesson is that nihilism is good at a certain point, you can never go far enough with it. If you look at the political situation that is impending in Britain, the experience of being punks for that generation of kids will be very useful, they'll know that they can be extreme in a more important situation. Punk rock is about experiencing extremes, which I think is very good for anybody. I don't think anyone has come near an extreme in California. (Oh yeah? — Extreme Ed.)

SLASH: In the film the battle is portrayed as taking place between the Pistols' camp and the record industry and the media, and you just said you had no interest in dwelling on the Pistols' public. Is it because no matter what anyone looks like or consumes they basically remain passive recipients and have no say in anything?

JULIAN: I have had a lot of time to think about the film because of all these legal problems, and sometimes at night I think of things we should have done, and one of the images I would have liked to get in there was very passive people being given electric shock treatments by a media process. It's true that one of the failures of the film is that it does not analyze the audience of the band. And it's a failure of the Sex Pistols all along. They just provided the shock, they didn't analyze the results. I hope the film gives the chance for people who never saw that band to experience it. They were a very unique band, you had very few people like it in the history of rock n roll. You had Elvis Presley, he was a shock. I don't even consider the Beatles.

SLASH: Do we have to wait twenty more years?

JULIAN: No, I think it's going to be much quicker than that. What is very important now is to understand computers, that's the battle. In five years' time if people haven't made the effort to understand computers like they made the effort to understand rock n roll they're going to be fucked.

SLASH: Can you get as emotionally involved with computers?

JULIAN: They've got to. There's a passion of the intellect as well. If you understand something you enjoy it. Kids have to get into that as well as dancing. You have to know how to build things . . . When someone holds a gun up to you it's an emotional experience, but someone has designed that gun in a very intellectual manner, yet the effect is incredibly emotional. Same with computers, but you have to know how to control them. It's as simple as holding a gun to someone's head, but you have to make sure that weapon is used in the right way. If it's just the cunts who run the record companies . . . . I think Rod Stewart is like a gun to the kids' heads. And every time someone goes in a shop and buys a Virgin record they are being swindled.

SLASH: How do you feel about the film, your film, now being a Virgin product?

JULIAN: Look, emotionally I've been thru the whole thing of hating Virgin as much as anyone else in the Pistols, the only thing that fucked me up is that I could hate Malcolm as much as them because he treated me and treated Rotten as badly as Virgin ever treated anyone else. The only problem with Virgin is that they pretend not to be businessmen, which they are. If you get over that hang-up they're just like any other, they just happened to be the ones who signed the Pistols. Which was the biggest mistake, signing with a record company. Okay it was great to rip off E.M.I. and A&M, it exposed some of the inner workings. Virgin were clever enough to assimilate some of the energy of the Pistols and make it their own. That's disgusting but it's the name of the game. That's why Malcolm is sour grapes, Virgin managed to dilute the Pistols, make them tame. Their money is as good as anyone else's, it's what you do with it, what you do with the power . . .

SLASH: Isn't it still ironic that a company willfully finances what could be seen as propaganda against all companies?

JULIAN: That's right. There is something strange about talking like this on tape because you need to reach a position of some power. If you want to make a film and get it seen you need people to put money into it. There are various people in America who can distribute films, but I am not in favor of going with an

independent company because they all go thru a major one in the end, you are dealing with the same problems whether it's a hippie company or a punk company or a businessmen's company. You are not going to change anything by making films or records, you *will* change things if you overthrow the media, make it obscene or ridiculous and create a crisis of confidence. People believe in the media, their lives are dictated by it, and if you can confuse it enough you create a situation where everyone is forced to think for themselves, and then you got a chance. It's not a matter of preaching a certain political dogma, that's crazy. And you don't need to become a media figure, you're much stronger if you avoid that. Otherwise you're a pawn in the game. I think Malcolm fell for that, like becoming too much like another Andy Warhol star. That's the least important thing to be. And there were people behind Malcolm who were just as important. Malcolm was like a lightning conductor, but there were others who we should talk about and who had given a lot of ideas, like Jamie whom we mentioned, there was Sophie who kept the whole thing together (quoted at length in the Fred and Judy Vermorel "The Sex Pistols" paperback — Ed.), there was Boogie who looked after the sound and looked after the group, took care of Vicious who was a real problem to take care of. The most important thing was *the idea*, not the people behind it, and it wasn't an original idea either, it was a rip off of a lot of ideas. But all these people, myself included, lived the idea, worked very hard for it. You got up in the morning just because you were a Sex Pistol.

SLASH: What would have been the perfect ending to the Pistols story according to "the idea"?

JULIAN: I wish Johnny Rotten was a hairdresser now, I think Steve and Paul should be sewage workers, or they should have been astronauts or something different, but not suck off the corpse of rock n roll like all of them are doing now. That's depressing. Even more depressing is that fucking Malcolm is doing it. I don't believe it.

SLASH: Do you foresee your getting involved with the music again?

JULIAN: Only in a visual sense. I like the idea of attacking it visually.

SLASH: Don't you think Rotten is doing the same with his approach?

JULIAN: But visually you're free, you can make a film with The Carpenters and make them look like the complete cunts that they are, you can do one with Led Zeppelin and have the audience rolling in laughter at how pathetic they are, but if you are actually a rock star trying to peddle something meaningful . . . I think you've got to jump the idea that what you do is important. I don't think what John does is important. I think it's brave in the sense that it's rejecting the conventional way a record company expects its stars to behave. Maybe he should just make sounds, maybe he is doing a good thing. But if he thinks it's worthwhile musical experimentation . . . that's a load of toss.

SLASH: He calls it dance music.

JULIAN: Well I can dance to the Specials, but I know that's prostitution. I can dance to Glenn Miller. If there's a band in this hotel downstairs we can go and dance. What does it mean? Whatever he is doing, he is retreating from the mass audience. To be effective you don't retreat and sell 25 thousand. The world today should be used by everybody. You should think in terms of millions.

SLASH: Which usually involves huge compromises . . .

JULIAN: Usually, yes. But Malcolm had that vision of doing it without compromising. I don't think the people who run this planet compromise. They do it their way and don't take any shit from anybody else. The crucial thing right now is that there is some kind of organization to make sure the technology is used in the right way otherwise the cunts like Thatcher who are running Britain will use it themselves. And you have to control it invisibly. And you can't do something like the Sex Pistols again, there's no point in carrying that on. The enemy knows what the Sex Pistols are all about now, it's been so over exposed. Now they are not looking for the new Beatles, they're looking for the new Sex Pistols.

SLASH: If they still don't know after this they never will.

JULIAN: So you gotta come up with something different. For fuck's sake let's forget rock n roll. How long has it had? Twenty-five years? Thirty years?

SLASH: Hey, you're talking to a music paper.

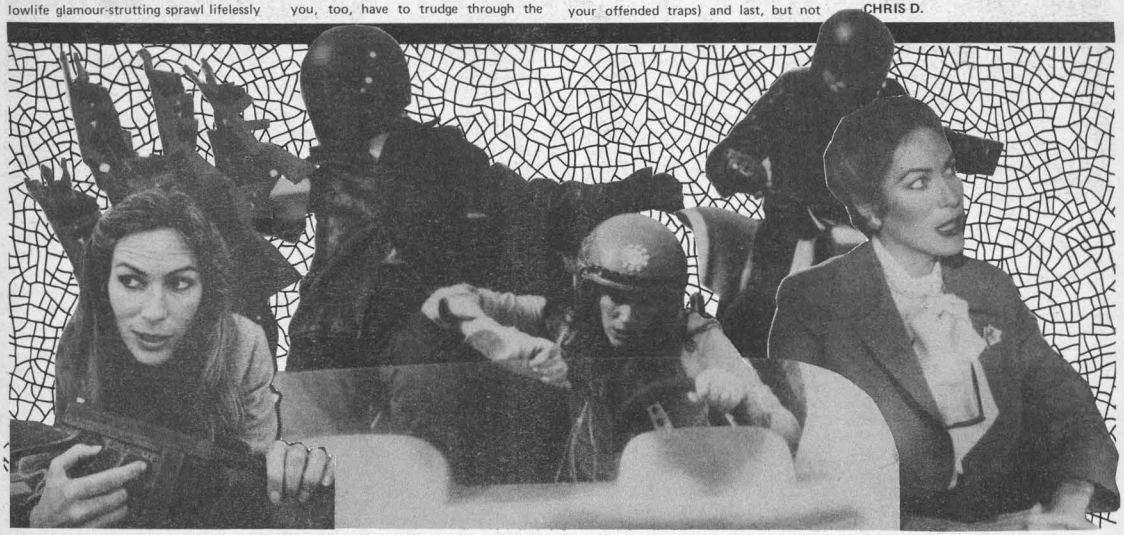
JULIAN: There is a lot of music outside rock n roll . . .

THE END?

THE GREAT ROCK 'N ROLL SWINDLE

If "Never Mind the Bollocks" was one of the "classics" (as New West put it) of 1978 (and it's still one of my favorite records) then the GREAT R 'N'R SWINDLE is one of the worst movies of 1980. If not *the* worst. The simplest of invectives won't do, though, for what is a generally despicable film. I wasn't hoping for much but I got *even less* than I'd expected. What's more, I'd had a few and am a little easier to please in that condition. A botched series of slapstick gags, vile animation, grammar school lessons in situationism, tired double entendres, and frustrated egos engaged in some oh-so trendy, lowlife glamour-strutting sprawl lifelessly across the silver screen. So little was funny, exciting or even mildly interesting that I had to restrain myself from walking out. The few moments that I wanted to stay for: the live Pistols stuff has been reduced to a sawed-off runt. Sorry to disappoint all you true anarchists who want to destroy rock 'n roll but I was and still am a Pistols fan no matter how much Mr. Malcolm "more cynical than thou" Machiavelli says he pulled the puppet strings. But John Lydon, with the aid of the courts, slapped a tidy little injunction on Matrixbest to ban any performances of songs in their entirety (that naturally feature him; who can blame him when you, too, have to trudge through the surrounding quagmire). Secondly, the few brief glimpses of Sid Vicious. These are the *only* flashes of fun and inspiration in the whole mess. And it's not due solely to Sid's innocent, dumb-fuck goon magnetism (which Steve J., Paul C., and Ronnie Biggs have nary a drop). His presence is riveting in an unexplainable way. The scenes themselves ... Sid swivelling his motorcycle down the highway while singing Eddie Cochran songs, Sid strutting through the big Jewish boulevard in Paris with a giant swaztika emblazoned on his T-shirt (just remember Lenny Bruce's theory of the power *you* give words/symbols before any of you open your offended traps) and last, but not least, (in a possible steal from John Waters' FEMALE TROUBLE) Sid murdering the middle-aged millionaire/millionairess audience that have delightedly watched him perform "My Way" on a high-tech night-club stage. That's it. The less said about Malcolm McLaren's appearance in this venture the better. His lack of warmth and "human feeling" while spouting his trite ideas that've helped him perpetrate "the biggest con in music biz" went no distance in charming me. In parting: except for Sid it's a burn. I have better things to waste my money on.

CHRIS D.



Mary Woronov **Mary Woronov** **Mary Woronov interviewed by Chris D.**

Mary Woronov is an actress who's mainly appeared (up until now) in various "avant-garde" and exploitation films. Her credits include the part of Hanoi Hannah in CHELSEA GIRLS, the double-crossing race driver in DEATH RACE 2000, a psychopathic B movie star murderess in HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD, a wisecracking bank robber in JACKSON COUNTY JAIL and Miss Togar, the principal in ROCK 'N ROLL HIGH SCHOOL. Interviewed by Chris D.

MARY: Warhol's CHELSEA GIRLS was the best thing I ever acted in. Mainly because you had a script but if there was something you didn't want to say, you didn't have to. You could do what you liked.

SLASH: WERE YOU IN ANY OF WARHOL'S OTHER MOVIES?

MARY: Yeah, he made a lot of movies beforehand. They weren't really art movies, they were more breaking art. A guy sits down and EATS for four hours. Or you look at the EMPIRE State Building for four hours, or someone gets a BLOWJOB for four hours. I wasn't in any of those but I was in the TWENTY-FOUR HOUR MOVIE and HEDY LAMARR. He did a great one called SCREEN TEST. That was my first movie. He would just put people in front of the camera, then walk away. And everybody else would walk away, too. And you'd be sitting in front of the camera for five minutes until the film ran out. One day I saw Salvador Dali do it and he struck this pose of holding his breath and he couldn't last. One side of his face went down, then the other side. His eyes crossed.

SLASH: WAS THERE SOUND WITH THAT ONE?

MARY: No, it was just someone looking straight at you. Like if I sat and stared at you for about five minutes. Not five minutes, I'd say maybe a minute. It's really interesting what you can see in someone's face when they're just . . . you can almost see the back of their heads. Everybody's dead from that period, though.

Except Ondine. He lives with his mother.

SLASH: WHAT'S HE DOING NOW? SINCE CHELSEA GIRLS?

MARY: Afterwards? Well, he got the title of the Pope . . . from that movie. He made sure that everyone knew he was the Pope. Not exactly running around telling everyone what to do and not exactly passing judgement either . . . but just his presence in a room . . was . . electric. He was like into that scene. And when that whole scene died everything, everyone left. It was sad. He depended alot on amphetamine. Later on he drank. Which wasn't as good to him. It wasn't as good to any of us. Now he takes care of CHELSEA GIRLS. He has a print, travels around and lectures. He's a great lecturer. He loves for people to ask him things. This grin comes over his face. He doesn't write; I wish he did.

SLASH: IT WAS SO FANTASTIC WHEN HE EXPLODED AT THAT GIRL IN ONE SCENE . . .

MARY: That was twenty-four hours a day, that wasn't just that scene! That's why he was called the Pope.

SLASH: INDIGNANT.

MARY: That's right. He wasn't passing judgement, he was indignant. Twenty-four hours a day. He did not sleep. It was like that. Occasionally he'd sit down and read Alice Bailey. It was probably the only time he was quiet. He used to go onstage with me when we would be in plays . . . and just before we would go on, he'd start ripping his costume off! He'd get all dressed up . . . this was in CONQUEST OF THE UNIVERSE . . . he was the Queen of Mars, I was the Conqueror of the Universe. That was the level of the play. And just before we would go on he would stop at this mirror near the edge of the stage and start rearranging his clothes, then pretty soon he's got this big shred. It was the most defeating thing you could do, but then he would go on with half his costume. Everybody would go nuts. Or he wouldn't go on, which was also nuts. That was a different kind of theater in those days. See, alot of these plays you could do what you liked onstage . . . it wasn't really a play. It was a play but unexpected things would happen all the time.

SLASH: WHAT DID YOU DO BEFORE ALL THIS? WHEN DID YOU DECIDE TO ACT?

MARY: I never did. I was an artist. And the school would take you to different studios. You know, you had to go see Rauschenberg's studio . . . and we went to Warhol's studio. This guy Gerard Malanga was there. I think he asked me to be in a movie, then he handed me a nine foot bullwhip. I started commuting from school. He looked so weird I couldn't get over it. He looked great. But before all that . . . the Velvet Underground had this sideshow called the Exploding Plastic Inevitable. Nobody else was doing it except the Mothers of Invention and I think they copied us. Because we did a show with them and all of a sudden, the next time we played with them, they had nine girls on the stage. We had films. We had a loop of Andy's film KISS . . . and then during "Waiting for the Man" Gerard would come out and lift weights . . . each of us had these things that we'd do, I used to do this dance with a whip . . . anyway it got so bad in Provincetown this guy came up and shot some smack onstage right in the middle of everything. It worked so good for the audience that we made these large daylo needles, they were like green and blue. People in the audience would mime shooting up.

SLASH: HOW LONG DID YOU DO THAT?

MARY: Well, I got stuck with them. They asked me if I wanted to go to California and I said yeah. We all ended up living in this castle. Then after L.A. it was San Francisco . . . by that time it was in my blood. It's like something you can't stop doing after awhile. After we got back to New York I didn't feel like doing anything else besides listening to the Velvets REAL LOUD . . . and just wiping my mind out every night. It was like going to war. You know how men go to war and they come back with all these stories to tell afterwards? Amphetamine was like war. Because everyone in New York did it. This is like a typical night, right? We go to this place, this dealer's house, this guy called Rotten Rita. He would sit in this big black chair with a black umbrella over him and all these white lights . . . everyone had white lights . . . when she was in a crisis she would take off all her clothes, wrap a towel around her head, play the piano and sing opera. Another night we were sitting at Stanley Amos' apartment . . . Stanley had papered all his walls with three cent stamps, his entire fucking wall was these tiny blue three cent stamps . . . Stanley wasn't there that night. George was there. Now George is gay, but he has this girlfriend, right . . . she's a grey person. She comes in and she's got black-and-blue marks all over her. I'm telling you there was this whole "victim" circle in New York then. She came in and was complaining and she wanted a little amphetamine or whatever. She was like a person who didn't matter. She would get beaten up all the time but not get hurt. Ondine didn't like her so he decides to shoot her up. Takes her in the other room and shoots her up. I didn't give a shit, man. Later on, she's lying in the bathtub . . . I don't know who put her there. And somebody comes out and says "She's dead. She's overdosed or something." I went in and I looked because I am like a doctor's daughter and I was worried . . . I was going home every night, I'm not here forever. So I go in there and look at her and she's got something coming out of her mouth, this white stuff. Ondine's got this great idea. He says, "I know how to cure her! We'll shoot her up with milk!" So he gets this syringe full of milk and starts shooting her up full of milk. I was lit. I was on a skeet shoot, right? I didn't care. He finishes that and we realize that if the milk did not help her, the fact that her head had been underwater the whole time we'd been shooting her up certainly DIDN'T help her, and that she was dead. Everybody got really crazy. Rita started singing like Maria Callas. And this woman was dead! We were left with a corpse. We figured if we got rid of the corpse Stanley Amos wouldn't be mad and nobody would catch us. We took her outside, dragged her into the hallway. Then we had a problem. If we took her down the elevator, someone would come up the elevator and see us. If we took her down the stairs the same thing would happen. This guy we were with decided she could fit down the mail chute. I want to tell you that by the time these guys figured out that she could fit down the mail chute, they'd drawn pictures on the wall to show how it could be done, she's lyin' in the fuckin' hallway! I was so relieved when I heard she was going down the mail chute . . . it's livid in my mind, everything was fine. She never got down the mail chute. She couldn't fit down the mail chute! The elevator *did* open up and this girl, Deborah, came out, took one look at her, took her to the hospital. And she lived! She did, she wasn't dead. I couldn't believe it. I didn't care whether she lived or died; all I knew was that she was going down the mail chute, and I was saved. That's why I call it war. It just went on like that. Day after day after day. Until one day you go home and go to sleep. You steal one of your mother's placidyls and you go to sleep. Then you go out again. I did that for a while. And I guess I got a reputation because then people started to ask me to do plays. By that time I was a little more serious. I miss the fun of all those days alot. And plays helped me recapture it. Which is one of the reasons I started acting. I really miss all that shit. Don't ask me why, I guess it's just bad taste. Then I started doing plays. And you start doing plays and you get SERIOUS, and you end up on Broadway and get the Theatre World Award. Then you figure out, "Oh my God, I need money." So you come out here. Then you start doing movies. Become "queen of the B's" . . .

SLASH: YOU WERE IN *JACKSON COUNTY JAIL, DEATH RACE 2000, ROCK 'N ROLL HIGH SCHOOL* AND . . . WHAT ELSE? *HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD*? WHERE YOU GET SQUASHED BY ONE OF THE LETTERS FROM THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN? WHICH LETTER, DO YOU REMEMBER?

MARY: I think it was, yeah, it was the H. Do you know they sent me on a publicity tour. And I had to go to Florida, you know, to sign autographs. I was standing in a drive-in to sign all these things. I don't know who told these people to line up, but . . . people are like really dense in Florida. There were thousands of them. Brothers and sisters and cousins. And they didn't know who the fuck I was. I would sign the autographs and go "Here." And I asked this one girl, "Did you like the movie?" and she said, "Yeah, it was really nice," and I said, "I was the one who got squashed by the H," and she goes, "Oh, yeah?" And I went on and on signing these papers. We shot that movie in five days, one week? It's all outtakes from other movies.

SLASH: WHAT WAS THE FIRST ONE YOU WERE IN?

MARY: The first one I was in out here was DEATH RACE 2000.

SLASH: WHAT ABOUT *SILENT NIGHT, BLOODY NIGHT*?

MARY: That was in New York. That's a real weird movie. I don't come into that one for a while. They had a lot of problems on that movie. Ondine's in it, so is Candy Darling. They said they'd hire my friends. So I just brought them in one day. That was the day the electricity went off. And they were real cold and underpaid. I think we all ended up working for nothing. Never do your friends a favor. They'll hate you for it. I did alot of movies in New York.

SLASH: LIKE WHAT?

MARY: Everybody was like doing these side movies. Oh, I don't know. They weren't like big movies, they never got distributed or anything. I did a movie with Jack Smith. He did FLAMING CREATURES. Have you ever tried talking to Jack Smith? The movies he's made are great. The man is maniacal on details. If a spec interests him, you can forget him for a month. You can come back in four years and maybe he's ready to go on. He's real funny, though, very clever. Movies are fun. ROCK 'N ROLL HIGH SCHOOL was great.

SLASH: HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH THAT?

MARY: Alan Arkush, the director had directed me in HOLLYWOOD BLVD. The part of Miss Togar doesn't really call for me. But he put me in it anyway. I remember my agent asked me, "How did you get this? This isn't a role for you." And I said, "What do you mean, I got the role. What do you want from me? Blood?"

SLASH: YOUR CHARACTER REMINDED ME OF BARBARA STEELE IN THAT MOVIE *CAGED HEAT*.

MARY: Was she in that? Barbara and I had to go to Berkeley to lecture on being Queens of the B-Movie. It was a riot.

SLASH: WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW? DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS?

MARY: No. I've been concentrating alot on these L.A. bands, I don't know why. I think I might do . . . I don't know, maybe a performance thing. I'm not sure about that. I'm sort of looking around.

SLASH: WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO STAY HERE IN CALIFORNIA? DID YOU LIKE IT BETTER?

MARY: Not at first. At first, I hated it. You see the problem in New York was you keep doing the same thing. I mean I saw a whole group of us die because they all learned to do the same thing and it was like rats caught in a maze. And you can make it terrific, but you can't change. And when that's over, when that fad is ended, nobody graduates, right? They die, or they go live with their moms, or they retire and get fat. I dunno, it's real weird and I just got sick of it. This place is different. You can't get into a circle like that. I drive all the time here. I love it. It's incredible. I've been out here five years. The Corman movies are the most interesting ones out here. It's true his place New World is like a school. Most people pass through there.

SLASH: YOU LIVED AT HOME PART OF THAT TIME IN NEW YORK. WHAT DID YOUR PARENTS THINK OF *CHELSEA GIRLS*?

MARY: What do they know? My grandmother saw it. And she didn't recognize me. I had my first review in Time magazine. They said Andy Warhol has made a movie in which he uses a sadistic lesbian. My mom read that at the breakfast table and said, "Mary, it doesn't mention acting." I said, "Mom, it's because I did such a good job. Don't worry about it." She says, "Oh, okay." That's Mom at the breakfast table. What does she know? It didn't mention acting. I could've sued them for slander.

SLASH: THAT'S WHAT'S SO WONDERFUL ABOUT THAT MOVIE. EVERYTHING IN IT IS SO REAL BUT IT REALLY ISN'T AT ALL.

MARY: It's not. We dedicated our lives to not being real. Nobody understood it. We used to arrive at parties, man and people would line up. Why?! The Velvets would get out of the car, I would get out of the car, Gerard would get out of the car, Ingrid Superstar would get out of the car . . . and Andy would get out of the car. I, myself, standing around in black leather would have no power whatsoever. The people gave you all this stuff, like you were different, you were this thing. It was crazy in those times. People were really bent.

SLASH: IT'S STILL LIKE THAT.

MARY: We were constantly going to rich people's parties. I remember I was with Ivy at this rich party in Philadelphia . . . Ivy, she would rather go to some sloppy delicatessen and shoot up and eat cheesecake . . . she fell in love with Andy and Andy didn't like her. Who knows why. Who knows about Andy? Anyway she used to leave like pieces of herself around just to be next to him. The only way she clould figure out to do that was go behind some couch and shit. We were all up there standing there right? And Billy Lennick threw Ivy out. Anyway the elevator comes up and I'm ready to take it down. The doors open up and what's there but a turd from Ivy . . . she was nuts, man, she was great. I guess she was bored at the Philly party. And I saw her get up from her chair and sit under the table. Well, this didn't impress me but the people there . . . words started coming out of the kitchen, "She's freaking out! She's freaking out!" Ivy wasn't freaking out. Ivy is a very strong person. She was just sitting under the table. Everybody there went nuts. I couldn't believe they gave US all this . . . this . . .

SLASH: POWER.

MARY: Yeah, all of this power. We would do something and it would mean something different to ten thousand people. It just got that way. And a lot of people really went nuts with it. And they dedicated their lives to it. And that's why they're all dead. It's just not overdosing and stuff like that. Everybody knew how to take drugs. Big deal. It was our way of staying normal . . . when I was growing up everything was so straight. "Good morning, Ma'am." And somebody could've told me I should've busted it up, but I wouldn't have done it. It took that drug. I was born with a brace around my head. I was like an old woman . . . when I was at school. I mean, I looked weird. But I didn't even think that. I was a real rigid kind of person. I had all these judgements: things were good, things were bad. This should be done and that shouldn't be done. It was absolutely no fun. I NEVER had any fun. And this is the way it should be. And this is how you learn. Ha, ha, ha. A wonderful upbringing, right? I took amphetamine, man and it just broke all of that up. I just didn't give a shit. Do you realize what it is not to give a shit? It's real liberating when you come from THAT. You come back. But if you break up that good and bad kind of thing; you know, you're always told you should progress and go through all these front doors . . . but there's lots of back doors. Sometimes if you slide down far enough . . It's true. That's what Warhol's about. I could be doing the worst things in the world and they'd turn out to be just as "meaningful" as the best things. I mean I sat around with all these degenerates . . . instead of having a family with three kids . . . at that stage that was what was right for me. But you got to move. Change is the biggest thing . . . that's . . .

SLASH: THE THING THAT'S WRONG HERE IN L.A. DOESN'T REALLY HAVE TO DO WITH TO CHANGE OR NOT TO CHANGE . . . I'M TALKING ABOUT THE SCENE HERE AND NOW . . . THERE'S A SPIRIT THAT'S IN IT THAT . . .

MARY: I know what you mean . . . it's the same thing we had. There was a spirit that was there, and when that died . . . it was the same as when a "fad" is over. A lot of people didn't have their own spirit, they had THAT spirit to hang onto, and they just sort of dropped . . . you can get spirits en masse . . . like all of a sudden a city will have it, or a group of musicians or artists . . . it's great when it happens but you've got to be very careful with it. It doesn't have around for long, though. It comes and goes . . .

SLASH: IT'S HARD WHEN YOU YOURSELF KNOW YOU'VE STILL GOT IT BUT . . .

MARY: That's all right. You can keep it alive. I went through a real bad "death" period. Forget it, there was absolutely NOTHING. Once again I was on Broadway I think that was the lowest point in my life. And yet that was the most economically affluent I'd been. And the most famous. All the papers wrote about me. .

SLASH: WHAT WAS IT YOU WERE IN?

MARY: I got the Theatre World Award for THE BOOM BOOM ROOM, ha, ha, ha. I was gone. I was dead. That's why I came out here. It was over. And *I* was over. I could sleep and eat but I thought of nothing. What I was doing onstage was a mockery of what I'd been doing onstage before. They gave *me* an award? I should never have done that play . . . anyway I came out here and it flipped me out.

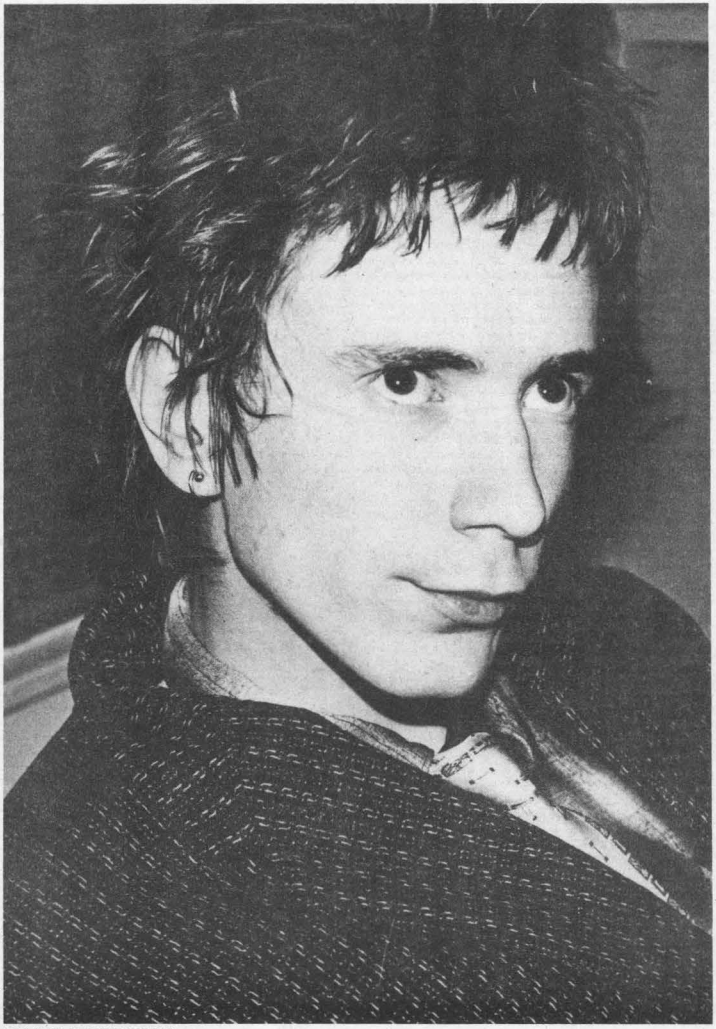
END

CAREERING ACROSS THE BORDER: JOHN LYDON

Many many moons ago the first real journalistic thrill we felt in connection with this rag was the time our then british correspondent Chris Jelly secured a Sex Pistols interview, complete with pictures, exclusive insults and brand new nihilistic twists. Since then so many things have happened to so many people, so many hopes, predictions and justifications have been thrown back and forth and in a way so little has really changed in the glamorous world of popular entertainment it's a wonder none of us have gone insane or prematurely senile. How someone like John Lydon has successfully kept his thinking process in alphabetical order after the unbelievably chaotic ride across media badlands aesthetic minefields and emotional quicksands we all watched him take month after month, phase after phase, is a fuckin' miracle. And although we talked, drank and jived at length with many individuals involved in his adventures we had never spoken to him, quite content to amass contradictory impressions, judgments and praises, listen to the music, the curses, the moaning, and finding more pleasure and vitality in his existence than in most of the rest of the brand new myths and would be myths put together. Old Johnny-Eyes-of-Darkness never ever triggered a dull thought.

But this is a new decade or so they tell us, Lydon's various partners in crime have departed in one way or another, the New York Times suspects the latest Public Image to be a masterpiece and new wave now simply means absence of headbands or mustaches. While the Clash was amongst us for the third or fourth time (such compulsive commuters, I've lost track) playing cowboys or gangsters or whatever film they think they're in now John Lydon and mate Keith Levine were in L.A. doing some reconnaissance work for an upcoming brief series of performances, and checking out the american release of Metal Box's second edition (regular double LP with lyrics). The almost recluse european mystery bunch was stepping in the arena, and everyone plus their kid sister was dying to get a glimpse and a quote. Wet magazine, L.A. Times, Cashbox and the Sentinel wanted their quota of prophecies and bon mots, it was indeed a hot item of everyone's agenda and what a relief that safety pins and vomiting were passe as one wouldn't have to worry about too much abuse at the hands of the creatures. How many of those cultural sluts actually got anything from PIL's music or felt any respect for their uniqueness is debateable, but bitterness is very un-stylish and we won't dwell on the hypocritical double standards of the media, let them eat Poptones for breakfast, analyze others' rebellion while sticking their progeny in private schools. And I know that the wicked shall pay, although sometimes I suspect they will do so with a Bankamericard.

Slash being Slash we of course blew the official interview slot we had been granted, Lydon and Levine had split by the time we arrived. Fortunately we cornered them next evening on the Richard Meltzer weekend radio marathon on KPFK where they spent some 3 hours answering callers and well wishers, snickering at the occasional hostile outburst from lonesome chauvinistic jerks, playing cuts off their latest and exhorting the insomniacs and drug fiends outside to buy the records and leave them alone (an old Dangerhouse motto that was indeed years ahead of its time). Anyway they agreed to visit us the next day and answer some questions. And John showed up as promised although Keith couldn't. By that time all the other press and public confrontations had been taken care of in a most professional manner and on that rain-pissing sunday night neither Lydon nor us felt in the most relevant frame of mind. The prospect of simply repeating another difficult artist-meets-the press performance was depressing to us, and I'm sure Lydon wasn't too keen on playing the parrot either. The only way was to deliberately stay away from precise questions (in the beginning anyway) and compare each other's sock colors or public transport systems. So, between long intervals of small talk, grunts and record spinning (indicated by countless parentheses that boldly connect unrelated topics) we managed to hit upon a few relevant areas without feeling too much pain. Of course Lydon thinks that all the talk is futile, their music stands or falls alone and nothing else matters much. But it only takes one look behind this Public Image to see that there is a rare honesty and solidity there that contrasts rather sharply with what we've been led to expect from the new creative circles of the entertainment world (sometimes referred to as the artistic world by shrewd businessmen). It's nice to know that "uncompromising" can mean a lot more than just shooting your mouth off and overusing the word "never" when your band is totally ignored anyway and there hasn't been a trace of a challenge to your standards and most likely never will. Lydon has already dodged more fatal blows than almost any man his age and in his position, and practice makes perfect. It looks like they haven't even invented the industry that will enslave him.



pics by Philomena

(TALKING ABOUT REGGAE)

SLASH: Do you think it's reached a peak?

JOHN: Right, it's over. They've got to reevaluate their scheme . . . By the way, your record player, I had one almost exactly the same. It was my first ever record player.

SLASH: It cost a hundred dollars.

JOHN: You were conned. Do you have a record cleaner?

SLASH: No.

JOHN: I hate the sound of dust.

SLASH: All this hi-fi . . .

JOHN: Hi fi nothing, I just hate the sound of dust. I want to hear the song, not the dust, the cracks, the hisses . . . (a Barrington Levy record starts playing)

(THE KPFK RADIO SHOW)

JOHN: Wasn't that a laugh, some of those phone calls? Some were more into hearing their own voice on radio. But that's important anyway, it does break down the star trip.

(THE STAR SYNDROME IN HOLLYWOOD)

STACY: It's very diffused, it's like the smog . . .

JOHN: Says Stacy, who works for Warner Brothers records. (leaning into the tape recorder) Remember that, Warner Brothers. She lives in New York, she comes from Queens.

STACY: Ssshhhh.

JOHN: She loves it really, I know that.

SLASH: Stacy, what do you do with them? Babysit?

STACY: They don't need a baby sitter, they're grown up.

JOHN: If she was working with a normal rock n roll band, yes, she would be a baby sitter. But we're responsible young human beings.

STACY: They haven't let me down at all. Or themselves down.

JOHN: Thank you Stacy.

SLASH: You don't have a manager, do you?

JOHN: No, no manager, we manage ourselves.

SLASH: Wasn't there someone called Jock something in the beginning . . . ?

JOHN: No, you misunderstood. Our connection with Jock was that when we played the Rainbow, Virgin records refused to help us with the finances. We had to upfront like 3000 pounds, and draw an insurance policy as a guarantee that the venue would not be destroyed, and Virgin wouldn't help us with that. At that time we had no advance, we hadn't officially signed the contract, it was a debatable situation. So Jock borrowed money from some rich bird he knew from Las Vegas and lent it to us. He put up half the money, and that was his only connection. It will always

be his only connection, cos he is not a very good human being. I am really disgusted you led me into that, 'cos he is a loser. Let's forget rock n roll.

(HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE)

JOHN: Some of us are still living in stoneage flats. Have you seen the GLC (Greater London Council) flats in Great Britain? Isn't it wonderful? If they ain't stoneage creations, nothing is!

(THE GRAMMYS, AND BOB DYLAN'S APPEARANCE)

JOHN: Now he's got religion. What a joke!!

SLASH : It was a scary performance.

JOHN: Scary? Bob Dylan, scary??

SLASH: It was like a morgue.

JOHN: My life, where is your sense of humor? He's joined the middle aged. You got a good mag in the bog, on top of the water closet.

SLASH: ???????

JOHN: Have a look. There's a thing with Dylan on it. (referring to a Prairie Fire – a communist R.A.R. band – pamphlet with a cartoon of Dylan singing)

JOHN: (sneeringly reading the caption) "Oh, God forgive me for all those terrible things I said about your government in the sixties" . . . How true.

SLASH : How do you get labeled these days as far as which side of the barricades you're on?

JOHN: Don't you know?

SLASH: No.

JOHN: Neither do I! Serious.

(THE MUSIC THAT WILL FOLLOW METAL BOX)

JOHN: You must be aware that whatever we come up with next is going to be slated, slagged, condemned. It's going to go along the lines of . . "not as good as the Metal Box" . .

SLASH : Even if they hated the Metal Box . .

JOHN: Of course, everybody knows that. A good or a bad review does not matter a tough shit in England, it affects nothing, and it's probably the same here. But there is one contradiction to what I just said: usually, if the british press is totally against a new album, people will go out of their way to listen to it out of sheer curiosity. That's how a lot of new bands make it, when they're so hated. But you have also to bear in mind that the record industry is at an all time low. Record sales are phenomenally low. I mean 60 thousand records in England is a big sale, two hundred and fifty thousand is waaaoo, superstars! There's 56 million people in Great Britain, and two hundred and fifty thousand records is, to me, nothing. Point 001 of the population. It's ridiculous how few people are really into music. That's something the british press doesn't seem to be aware of, how they are dealing with a very minimal culture.

SLASH: But the market is so fractured. There's rock, there's reggae . . .

JOHN: Reggae runs independent charts. Actually reggae does very big sales right now, but since they don't get to the chart return shops it's not featured in the charts. So you can be incredibly popular with lots of people and never see your record in the charts.

SLASH: Does airplay come into the charts?

JOHN: Airplay amounts to nothing. There's the BBC, and then every town with its own radio station which is usually worse. The BBC are quite progressive, compared to the alternatives. Only two radio stations in England (raising his voice), only three tv channels that end at twelve midnight. Imagine that, folks . . . Send your food parcels to . . . . . .

SLASH: The way britih tv ends every night is so paternalistic, they almost tuck you into bed . . . They're saying good night, have a nice sleep so you can get up bright and early for the factory.

JOHN: That's right. Late at night when the channel closes down it shows you the next day program from 6 in the evening onwards, not what's going to be on in the daytime, just in case you might stay off work. You're patronized like that almost continuously.

(IRAN)

JOHN: (humming a tune) . . There's an aircraft carrier, in the Gulf of Persia . .

SLASH: What's that?

JOHN: Some headlines just pieced together to rhyme. I've managed to piece a book together with that entire boring situation. Just rhyming headlines, it's a bit of fun. The Ayatollah, the oil of Arabia, aircraft carrier, Gulf of Persia . . .

(THE FIRST LP)

JOHN: It's a shame Warners wouldn't release that album, really is. And on top of that the most nauseating fact is that for America we re-recorded it, it's completely different in every way, and they got the tapes out there in Burbank, and they're not doing fuck all with them, and they should. It deserves a listen, it can only be the worst record ever made.

SLASH: I believe it has been influential anyway . .

JOHN: Yea, for what that's worth.

SLASH: Don't you like knowing there are clone bands around?

JOHN: No, it's disgusting. . . . . You must be aware of the position I appear to put myself in. I'm watching all these clone imitations trying to make it commercially viable, so to me what's happening is incredibly disgusting. They missed the point. Seriously, you have to blame no one but the audience. They are buying the trash, they have no discretion, generally.

SLASH: Do you think 95% of people are stupid?

JOHN: I wouldn't say that. It's a question of choices. They're not allowed choices, they're only offered one product, one way of thinking.

(DRUMMERS AND PIL'S DIFFICULTIES IN FINDING A PERMANENT ONE)

JOHN: Most of them were not very honest as people. They should tell us right away how they see the band, their ideas, rather than just looking for security, which is what was happening in most cases. I mean I couldn't remember the names of about half the drummers we've had so far, they just bored me that much. All we were looking for is a personality, more so than technical ability. We've all had to gain our technical abilities. But if you work well as people, you work well in the studio and you work very well live. That's just the reality of it. Our latest drummer Martin Atkins appears to be jolly good. He used to do social workers clubs, I can't think of an equivalent here, they're working men's clubs, like say the truck drivers' union gets a club, that's where the drivers hang out, and he used to play in those kind of places, real cheap third rate working class british cabaret, which is really appalling. And that's where he comes from, and he wasn't ashamed of it. Good luck to him. It cannot not be brilliant, it's very difficult for us to be otherwise.

(LONG PARENTHESIS ABOUT JAPANESE SHO-GUN WARRIORS, THE PRICE OF BROTHELCREEPERS AND OTHER NON MUSICAL TOPICS)

SLASH: Let's be relevant. How much of a success do you envision PIL could possibly be in America?

JOHN: I don't know. How much of a success do you think we can be?

SLASH: I don't know.

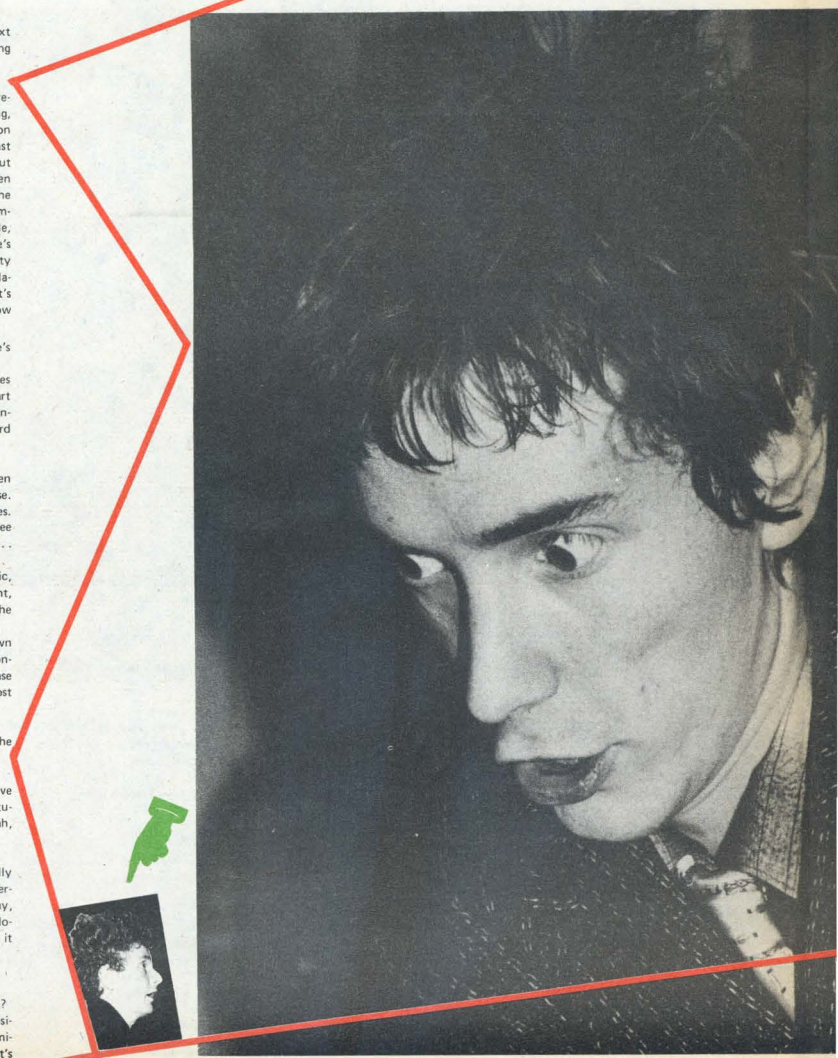
JOHN: What do you mean by success?

SLASH: Don't know that either. How many records did they press?

JOHN: This is a major argument with Warner Brothers records. So far they have pressed 50 thousand, I don't think it's no way near enough. To me it does not look financially viable. It's not good for us as a band or for them as a company 'cos they can't be making money, it's just shit. They really got to put so much more fuckin' faith in us than that. That's just life, innit?

SLASH: Well musically you're a bit of the oddballs for Warners aren't you?

JOHN: Well alright, so we're a bit different from the norm. But



how long have the record companies been moaning for something different?

SLASH: Well there's different and different . . .

JOHN: Hmmm, I see. In other words . . . (drifts of getting hopelessly involved with a robot mechanism). . .

(LATER, AS WE TRY TO INJECT SOME HALF-ASSED JOURNALISTIC TONE OF MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE TO THE RAPIDLY DISINTEGRATING FORMAL INTERVIEW)

JOHN: Look. Understand, with PIL we are not throwing any image at you, there is no set way to like, wear clothes, have your hair and all that. You either like the fuckin' records or you don't, it's all down to that. So if we had more airplay it would make life very much simpler. Just let people decide for themselves, and it's my job to make sure that as many people as possible are allowed that privilege.

(USUAL RADIO SLAGGING ON OUR PART, THE JOHN PEEL BBC SHOW IS MENTIONED)

JOHN: . . . I don't think John Peel has any discretion whatsoever. He just plays . . . stuff; country & western to traditional folk to heavy metal to punk to new wave to god knows what else, all squashed into two hours, and there does not seem to be any style or taste to it. That I don't like. A jack of all trades is a master of none. As a DJ you've gotta play what you like.

SLASH: Do you know I was always sure you were one of the few bands that would never ever try to break the american market. .

JOHN: Try? Oh if you mean slavishly follow the tactics. . .

SLASH: Not slavishly, just any old way. I didn't think you cared at all about audiences here. . .

JOHN: I always made my position very clear. I am not just someone who lives in Britain for the british. I refuse to accept fucking international codes or any of that crap. I was born on this planet, I am a member of it and I am perfectly entitled to be whatever I want when I want. I do not like passports or any kind of limitations whatsoever. Do you appreciate that?

SLASH: Totally.

JOHN: Play to people, regardless . . . Except Australia, because it's 24 fucking hours away from where I am. That's a joke.

SLASH: The reason I didn't think you'd come here is that I didn't see any possibility of PIL gaining a huge following from their live performances.

JOHN: We don't want a following. An appreciation society is a better term. We don't want fans who slavishly adore everything we do, we want people with discretion. But we do not want intellectuals. We see ourselves as a dance band, dance music is what we're up to. If you can't dance to it don't listen, it's a waste of time. You can get muZAK in any elevator in any hotel. We're looking for people who don't slavishly follow set trends or patterns, who do not depend totally on the uniform or the muzak that goes with it. We are not musicians by the way, understand that also. It's more the attitude, and feeling, and fun of it that matter.

SLASH: Good luck in the search for the perfect public!

JOHN: I can only fail, as I keep saying to everyone. Friends, as I keep saying to everyone, *that* is not such a bad thing. Imagine the smug satisfaction of saying: Well, at least I tried. (laughs at the noble vision) But like with those phone calls last night on the radio show, that's exactly what we want: feedback. It helps us understand America. When these phone-in programs happen in England you really will know what extreme is. They can really be just over the top. I used to listen when Capitol radio use to run their spot, like night after night of this voice "and now I am going to murder my wife" nd you hear screaming, the geezer is holding the phone and like he's got a knife . . . continuously, never used to finish. Night after night of it, just people desperate for the publicity. I don't think it's as mad here as in England. You're not stifled as a nation, you have outlets.

SLASH: You're stifled here culturally.

JOHN: You have no culture, so how can you be stifled?

SLASH: That's pretty stifling.

JOHN: You're not told what to think, it's not like a dictatorship here. Life does appear to be a lot more freer. It's probably just as stiff as everywhere else, but in England you're made aware of how stiff it is. In England, if you're not born in the right class system, you don't stand a fucking chance, you're fucked from then on in. So when you get your phone-ins on the radio can you imagine what happens?

SLASH: Perhaps you get a whole social class that doesn't even dare to phone in . . . .

JOHN: Come to Britain and be bored.

SLASH: So when are you coming back?

JOHN: About four weeks, and this time to play.

SLASH: Crates of instruments, roadies, road manager. .

JOHN: Very funny. Here are the facts, right? Warner said they'd arrange some gigs, right? Now we took the itinerary that they proposed, and on every level they are just not viable. Economically, practically, whatever. Now just by being here me and Keith have managed to secure quite a few venues where we would actually be making money but keeping the price down to an all time low and managing to survive at the same time, very very sensible. How can we be better than Warner at such a thing? It's not our country. (To Stacy) Did you see that itinerary? It read something like sixty days non-stop gigging in very very small clubs and it just about covered every single possible part of America. I'm sure Warner got our best interests at heart, but on this minor technicality we begged to differ, 'cos what we consider our best interests and what they do is quite certainly different. But this was the first time we were actually talking to people at Warner records, other than over a phone at four o'clock in the morning english time with 3 thousand miles separating you.

SLASH: How different is it dealing with Warner as opposed to Virgin?

JOHN: From my point of view it's easier dealing with Warners. Virgin have this habit of trying to bring it down to a personal level, "Oh hi man, everything is wonderful. .", and that amounts to one hell of a lot of confusion, Lcos no two people at Virgin know what the fuck is happening. Confusion city.

SLASH: Is Virgin part of a bigger corporation like most companies are here?

JOHN: Virgin is a company unto itself, and they do have their own distribution as well, although they don't use it as a permanent thing. They distribute thru whoever they feel like, they are very very flexible, there are no set ways of doing anything, which is probably the key to their success. Bear in mind I said the key to THEIR success. Some bands suffer, most definitely.

SLASH: Are you still sort of black sheep at Virgin?

JOHN: I don't see us like that at all. I see us as their tour de force. If they're not aware of that, that's up to them. But seriously, without meaning to sound like a bit conceited cunt, all our schemes and plans of operation work, and work incredibly well. We don't lose money, we make money. We are a very very commercial product, if they were arare of it, just because we are honest and do what we want on our own terms. Virgin resent that because if we succeed ultimately, quite a few bands might decide to change their viewpoint, and that would definitely start an avalanche. Do you understand the threat we pose? Isn't it wonderful?

SLASH: Using Virgin to prove Virgin isn't needed?

JOHN: No, we're using them to distribute our records. They have to be distributed by someone. We see them as working for us, and not the other way around. That's where most of the problems begin and end. If they can make money working for us, that's fine and appreciated. Right? That's business. After

all, we're not in Russia. When they see it in any other way, that's definitely trouble.

SLASH: Trouble as when you had this conflict about the publicity campaign for the first LP, when only your face was used for the posters that were all over the London underground?

JOHN: That's sick, that. Very very sick. That was actually *our* plan, to have each of us dotted about London. But that's all they could bother to come up with. They said it wasn't economically viable, and we proved it was. Each of our faces was to be dotted about various stations so you wouldn't see the same face twice. Oh what fun, uh?? And that green band across the poster, what a load of shit! Our greatest threat at Virgin is what they jokingly refer to as their "art department". That really is just not one. But at the same time there are some good people working at Virgin that we get on incredibly well with.

SLASH: How long is your contract for?

JOHN: As long as it suits us, really. There are options between albums, which we found out very recently, on an amendment that accidently wasn't shown.

SLASH: Realize we've been talking consistently in a significant manner there for a while?

JOHN: Sorry, didn't mean to be. I'm not going into it heavy, just skimping over. If you want to talk real heavy serious business I'd quite happily do it. But quite frankly it's very boring for a person out there to hear me with my tales of woe. It doesn't mean shit to anyone. Life is poxy all over, right? The fact that I have problems is not very interesting, I am well aware of that.

(SOMEONE LATER MENTIONS CANADA – DON'T ASK WHY)

JOHN: Canada! That place should be sunk.

SLASH: Canada and Australia, uh?

JOHN: No, I don't accept that Australia exists. It's a nightmare. I know that Canada does because I have been there.

SLASH: I wonder how Australia feels about your existence. . .

JOHN: Well, to be quite frank . . . . Anyway, I'll probably love Canada tomorrow, emigrate there . . .

SLASH: I know you hate going back to the past, but I want to ask one question: when you were breaking up in S.F. from the Pistols, were you already thinking of this band?

JOHN: No. I was thinking pure hate and malice. I was treated cruel and wicked, and I am a very vengeful person. I won't have anyone walk over me.

SLASH: What do you mean when you sing "getting rid of the Albatross"? What is it a symbol of?

JOHN: A dead thing, a dead duck hanging around the neck . . . The past, maybe . . . (especially funny voice) and I got rid of it . . . (even funnier quavering voice) . . but I still had a guilt complex, but I worked it out.

SLASH: Do you think about what you do a lot?

JOHN: ????????

SLASH: I mean do you ponder your music and your lyrics long before it's recorded or do you just do it when you get there?

JOHN: We do it.

SLASH: What kind of artist are you?

JOHN: I am a tempermental brat, and we just do it. A lot of thought goes into it probably in each of our own separate heads but we don't talk about it.

SLASH: Very decent.

JOHN: No it's not decent, it's just we can't be bothered because we are asleep most of the time.

SLASH: Sometime between the 1st and the last step in doing a record are you ever asked by Virgin to justify whatever you're doing in the studio and planning to release?

JOHN: Look, the idea is, either they buy the tape off us or they don't. We make the record beforehand, we pay for it ourselves and then we sell them the tapes. And if they don't want to buy the tape well, ha ha ha, that's just too bad because we'll move on to the next label. We have no singles deal by the way. That really annoys me, because I see singles as being very important, I like the idea of singles. So when we release singles that's on our own backs. It goes on the company's label but there is no advance, no "here's the money lads for recording this wonderful song. ."

SLASH: Why couldn't you get a singles deal?

JOHN: Because neither Warners nor Virgin are interested in that for us. I don't know how they see us or hear us but they definitely miss the point. We see ourselves as a singles band.

SLASH: Is there a new one coming out soon?

JOHN: There WILL be a single released, we are determined to release one. Whether it's a new one or one off the album is up to us, we have not decided yet . . . (breaks into music hall crooning) "There's a hole in my heart, where the love comes shining thru, just for youuuuuu. . ."

SLASH: Shall we wrap up the interview?

JOHN: Come on, one killer question, something so devious you've got me stumped for ten minutes . . . Are you really a businessman? Are you an arrrtist? What do you think of Neil Young's song? Are you a poet? There's the best of all the people I've talked to so far, the best of every interview. .

SLASH: Hey, I got one. Are you still a punk? That's a new one.

JOHN: Oh yeah, great. (puts on real moron voice) Uh, don't know man. (giggles). ■

MONITOR

LAURIE: BASS. MICHAEL: GUITAR
STEVE: KEYBOARDS
KEITH: DRUMS

INTERVIEWED BY CRAIG LEE

LAURIE: Where's your question list?

SLASH: I don't use one.

LAURIE: God, he doesn't even need a list, what a pro.

STEVE: We need a list.

LAURIE: Yeah, give us a list of answers.

SLASH: O.K., we start at the beginning –

MICHAEL: I was born in Idaho.

LAURIE: (thick accent) Pocatella – no, Moscow.

SLASH: How does Northridge fit into it?

LAURIE: We might have to move out. They're selling both our houses, doubled Michael's rent.

MICHAEL: We'll probably wind up in some godawful place like Hollywood ...

SLASH: Where did you meet each other?

LAURIE: High School.

MICHAEL: Us three did – (Michael, Steve, Laurie)

SLASH: Where was that?

LAURIE: Suburban Sepulveda. It could be the eastern equivalent to Northridge.

STEVE: It's the same ...

LAURIE: A little sleazier ...

STEVE: Same different name, same different place.

MICHAEL: With a whole long street named after it ... claim to fame.

LAURIE: We all went to Monroe High School.

MICHAEL: I went to Catholic school.

SLASH: How did you relate to the other kids? Were you outside the social norm?

LAURIE: We were hippies anti-war activists.

SLASH: Are you kidding? How old are you?

MICHAEL: We came in at the tail end of that whole thing – so we were outsiders to that too. It was a period where it was hard to be in anything.

LAURIE: For us.

MICHAEL: The real outsiders were jesus freaks.

SLASH: The beginning of the seventies, right? Pretty grey period.

LAURIE: Actually later ...

MICHAEL: Boring. Rebirth of the fifties.

LAURIE: We got this paraplegic vet to come and talk to us. He was real nuts. Pretty interesting guy.

SLASH: Michael stop it!

LAURIE: He'll fiddle with anything. Things just fall apart at his grasp. You don't even have to ...

(Michael is given a toy)

LAURIE: Good, unbreakable plastic!

STEVE: That's small enough to be swallowed by a baby.

LAURIE: "Toys that don't care" – Have you seen that book? It's great!

SLASH: Did you go to college?

LAURIE: Cal State Northridge. Got my degree in English Literature.

KEITH: Long Beach City.

MICHAEL: Everything we do is Northridge, except Keith here.

SLASH: What happened to your first drummer?

STEVE: He didn't want to play live.

SLASH: Why? Shy?

LAURIE: It was a hassle.

SLASH: I saw a picture of you in Search and Destroy a long time ago. You all had black shirts on – looked like crypto-Nazis. (laughter)

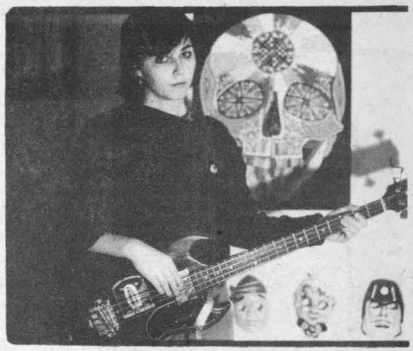
LAURIE: That was an art show we did – we were posed in front of a mural of the circulatory system.

MICHAEL: It was a World Imitation display thing, we just showed all of our crap.

SLASH: You were a band then?

LAURIE: We only played once, in '78.

pic by Suzan Seager



SLASH: Steve, you seem to be the most technically accomplished musician — have you been playing long?
STEVE: No.
MICHAEL: I used to be in a band. Called "Canon".
LAURIE: Folk band.
MICHAEL: (sarcastic tone) A folk rock band.
SLASH: What a liar! You told me you just started playing guitar.
MICHAEL: Well, all I did was strummed backwards.
LAURIE: And played a recorder solo.
SLASH: Was your first performance in Skid Row?
LAURIE: That was the second. The first was at Lace Gallery. With the Young Nazis, Non, and Airway. Subsequently two of the young Nazis, Girardo and Michael, found Nervous Gender, and members of Airway formed Human Hands. We didn't know any of those folks then.
MICHAEL: All these pre-bands.
LAURIE: We used to go to concerts years ago and see all these people, and no one ever talked to us. Now we go to all these concerts and see all these people and no one ever talks to us.
SLASH: Does it bother you if people label you "art rock"?
LAURIE: We wouldn't choose that name.
MICHAEL: People hate art bands — people look real disparagingly on that.
LAURIE: I would. If someone described a band as art rock I wouldn't be interested.
MICHAEL: We wanna be a joke band.
SLASH: You kidding?
STEVE: We're striving for that.
MICHAEL: Since they call us an 'art' band, if they call us a joke band we can do what we want, it's not gonna matter anymore.
LAURIE: We want to put a laugh track on after each song, like those real vulgar ones on Lucy.
MICHAEL: What do you think we should be labeled?
SLASH: That's up to you to decide.
MICHAEL: (sneering laugh) Well, 'art' and 'joke' is *out*. That's not *cool* ... so what should we call ourselves? Gladiator! I like that one!
SLASH: I called you that in my review because some of your music reminds me of Italian sound tracks.
MICHAEL: Nino Rota?
SLASH: Not even that but ...
KEITH: Sphaghetti westerns.
SLASH: Like at the beginning of your song "Amphibians" it sounds like a Roman march.
STEVE: That's how it should sound ...
LAURIE: We have a bit debt to Bernard Herrman. He pretty much said it all.
SLASH: It's a real cinematic sound.
MICHAEL: We originally wanted to do some sort of movie thing to our songs.
SLASH: When I asked you about that amphibian song I thought it was about evolution and you got real upset —
MICHAEL: That's another uncool word! So we'll be a joke evolution art band.
STEVE: Disco band.
SLASH: Anybody shouted 'Devo' at you?
LAURIE: Mostly no one heckles us. No one does anything — they just give us this look, usually they look ...
KEITH: Quizzical.
MICHAEL: I mean we're not *that weird*. We're doing real normal juvenile music.
SLASH: You have a strange pop song called "Junie". What's that about?
LAURIE: A little girl who causes spontaneous combustion. Adolescent girls are often connected to fortean events, spontaneous phenomena like explosions, fires.
SLASH: You said you were sick of it.
LAURIE: We just get sick of our songs because we have so few.
SLASH: How come?
LAURIE: We're slow learners.
MICHAEL: We have to have someone to copy. We ran out of Bernard Herrman and Annette.
SLASH: Why do you like Annette?
LAURIE: Ohhh ... how can I even begin.
MICHAEL: She has big hair.
LAURIE: She's beyond ... anybody! You look at the lyrics, the musical structures, basically it's the Sherman Brothers who wrote lots of the Disney music.
SLASH: Yeah, but what's neat about it?
MICHAEL: Re-juvenile, as Boyd Rice would say.
SLASH: But why are people going for things that in their time were considered pretty stupid?
LAURIE: Well it *is* stupid. That's the thing. I listen to it, I can't even stand to listen to some of her songs, they're just so bad, but we hate what we like and Annette ... her singing, ohhh it gives me the chills, she *enunciates each word so clearly*, and the things ... oh boy, the lyrics, "Tall Paul".
KEITH: "Dog Faced Boy"
SLASH: Dog faced boy?!!?
LAURIE: "He nearly shook himself in half and the girls lined up for an autograph." "Crazy place from Outer Space." They actually have the words in that going backwards at the same time as they are going forwards.
MICHAEL: Innovative! Pre-Beatles!
LAURIE: I also like some of the junkier things like Paul + Paula, Little Peggy March and Joanie Sommers. No redeeming social value at all.
SLASH: I heard you were playing some of that stuff at a party and some woman from the L.A. Weekly was getting offended —
LAURIE: People were getting violent. "TAKE THAT SHIT OFF!"
MICHAEL: The thing about it is that it's much weirder than anything that people think is weird. It's so ultra-regular. People really think that guts and stuff are real weird, and sex, and drugs. I mean listen to Annette! That's got to be the weirdest crap on earth.
LAURIE: "Baa-loo-a"
MICHAEL: They think they're talking Polynesian! That's the kind of music we want to do!
KEITH: "We Get Messages" is kind of a primal, African sort of thing.
SLASH: A lot of songs sound like primitive chants — "Beak", "Be as We".
MICHAEL: It real simple, two chords.
SLASH: It's not the chords, it's the way everybody sings in unison.
MICHAEL: We're afraid to sing by ourselves ... (laughter)
LAURIE: I hate to sing. I don't like doing two things at once, it's like patting your head and rubbing your stomach at the same time.
SLASH: Is it because the rhythms are eccentric?
LAURIE: I can do it — it's just annoying.
STEVE: Too much trouble.
LAURIE: We're not exactly high energy.
SLASH: Is "Surfadelic" a cover song?
LAURIE: Michael wrote it. Inspired by the spirit of Dick Dale.
SLASH: You once told me it was a cover song.
LAURIE: Don't believe anything Michael says —
MICHAEL: Actually it sounds more like the Challengers than Dick Dale.
SLASH: A lot of your songs have real scarce lyrics . .
MICHAEL: Because I have such a bad memory.
SLASH: You repeat the same phrases over and over . .
LAURIE: Can't think of anything else.
SLASH: Was it a conscious effort?
MICHAEL: We want to avoid giving too much information, too much of a message.
STEVE: Everything that is necessary is there.
LAURIE: Why belabor the point? That's what so many bands do, have some message and pound it into your head.
SLASH: How do you relate to playing 'punk rock' nightclubs with the hip elite anarchy set sizing you up?
MICHAEL: It's out of place.
LAURIE: I usually don't like the audience (laughs) the feeling is pretty mutual. Actually punks don't usually come — I'd like punks to come. I like them.
MICHAEL: They *might* like us! ... but then again, they might not. The thing is our music may not be a lot different, it's more that the feeling of what we're trying to do is different than that — we shouldn't be allowed to — we should be forced to start our own scene.
SLASH: You said you like the Germs.
MICHAEL: Yeah, they are great.
SLASH: How do you reconcile what you're doing with that kind of thing?
MICHAEL: They're great. I like all that crash, bang nervous music. I love it. Why do you think I like the Bags?
SLASH: You have a punk rock guitar intro to "Human Hairs".
LAURIE: Yeah she's beyond any of that stuff.
MICHAEL: Beyond help.
SLASH: You're not into it for the, excuse the stupid expression, the 'camp' of it?
LAURIE: I never think of it that way.
SLASH: Why do you like tikis so much?
STEVE: Primal.
MICHAEL: Another normal but ...
SLASH: Looking at your World Imitation books, listening to your songs, it seems that you like to take symbols that people take for granted, that are really twisted, and rearrange them —
LAURIE: Yeah, I like bogus versions of eccentric things. Like people like Martin Denny are a good example of people who are totally normal, totally American, striving for that elusive quality — the exotic — and making a total mess of it. You can tell, by listening to his records that he is totally sincere and that he thinks he's got that exotic feeling down, and it's just so, so wrong. It's great.
MICHAEL: What was that song we were listening to? They're going 'umma buuma'.
MICHAEL: Oh, is that punk rock?
LAURIE: Crossover, great!
KEITH: Maybe we should call ourselves punk rock?
MICHAEL: That's 'joke'. Puke rock!
SLASH: Are you desperate for gigs?
LAURIE: We gotta sweat to play with people. We want to play with lots of different types of bands.
KEITH: Ask me about Long Beach. It's a great, happening city!
SLASH: You used to play in a disco band?
KEITH: Disco, hard rock, country band for five months.
LAURIE: He's a pro!
MICHAEL: Everything ...
LAURIE: How did he get in with the likes of us?
SLASH: So how is it playing with a lizard lounge disco band?
KEITH: It's different . . a lot more fun. Lot more intense because you have to put all your efforts into twenty minutes instead of spreading it out over five hours. We were playing four or five hours a nite, five nites a week.
LAURIE: Are you kidding? That's nauseating.
KEITH: This is so much more creative than that stuff, where we just repeated stuff, told jokes between songs ...
LAURIE: What do you think "Beak" is but utter repetition?
SLASH: So what are some of the other pet fave objects in the Monitor —
LAURIE: Pantheon?
SLASH: The Monitor symbol parade.
LAURIE: Religious symbols.
MICHAEL: I have heavy religious brainwash.
KEITH: I am too, confirmed.
LAURIE: I never had apa problem.
STEVE: Non.
MICHAEL: Punk rock.
SLASH: That's a sick religion!
LAURIE: White slavers.
MICHAEL: There's got to be something better around.
LAURIE: We should remember to say something half way intelligent.
SLASH: I've heard you're non-sexual.
LAURIE: We're married ... hell!
MICHAEL: That doesn't mean anything nowadays.
SLASH: Why did you get married?
LAURIE: We wanted to make it legal.
STEVE: For money.
LAURIE: We got five, six hundred dollars.
SLASH: From who?!
LAURIE: Stupid people! (giggles)
SLASH: Wedding gifts?
LAURIE: Yeah! We got a piano, all sorts of shit!
STEVE: They have to do that if you get married ...
LAURIE: Then we were gonna get divorced and get married again, but we figured they weren't gonna fall for it.
MICHAEL: I'm not married and Keith isn't either. We're anti-sex.
SLASH: That's what I heard.
MICHAEL: Where'd you hear that rumour? I love how things get around.
SLASH: You're not big science fiction fans.
MICHAEL: I like science fiction.
KEITH: I don't.
SLASH: That's a general assumption people make — oh look at them they must be into science fiction.
(everybody laughs)
STEVE: Oh yeah, outer space, that's right.
LAURIE: Today we were rehearsing and this guy came up and said "Oh, are you rockabilly or space music?"
SLASH: I heard somebody shot at your house?
LAURIE: Yeah and we have this lady who pounds on our door and screams "I've been listening to this shit all summer!
MICHAEL: They hate us!
LAURIE: I think she was the one who shot at us. And our car's always being vandalized.
MICHAEL: We're remaining in Northridge under the worst conditions. It's like — the enemy is after us!
SLASH: Do you like it or did you just wind up there?
LAURIE: Oh, I like it!
MICHAEL: We sort of wound up there. But it's kind of neat.
LAURIE: I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.
STEVE: We're trying to make amends. We mowed our lawn for the first time in years to make amends and the lady's new car was parked there and all the grass started to fly on it and they drove it across the street and hosed it down. And we were trying ...
LAURIE: All they do is clean and wax their cars . . eight hours a day.
STEVE: They sit out in their yard with a little fork and pick things out of their lawns.
MICHAEL: Frankly, by now, I wouldn't mind getting out of Northridge.
LAURIE: How dare you!!

END

ANDY PARTRIDGE OF XTC Interviewed by Gary Panter

SLASH: They sent me because I'm the guy who has the XTC records.

ANDY: (laughs) Oh, you sort of know what you're talking about.

SLASH: Right. The main thing is I really like the records, but I don't know much about you.

ANDY: There's four of us, we come from a town in the west country of England called Swindham and it's just a very quiet industrial town with a Victorian morality. I got together with the drummer and bass player in '73, we didn't play too well, we just had a mutual desire to be rich and famous. We went through a selection of glammy looks — we had great inspiration from people like the Stooges and the N.Y. Dolls, who didn't play too good either, but looked great. We learned to play a lot better and got fed up with the glam thing so we decided in '75 that we needed a corporate image, we started wearing boiler suits and cut our hair off, real short, and started wearing garage suits — one piece suits.

SLASH: Pre-Devo.

ANDY: Yeah, it was. So we wanted a corporate image and we messed around with that for a while, got ourselves a keyboard player and decided that we would keep all our songs down to three, four minutes at the most and we changed the name to XTC.

SLASH: What was the name before?

ANDY: It was the Helium Kids. We changed our name to XTC because it was short and the music was short and scribbly. Barry Andrews joined late in '76, we got ourselves a record deal with Virgin after toting around our demos.

SLASH: What was the audience response then?

ANDY: They smiled a lot, they didn't dance, they stood and scratched their chins.

SLASH: Did they hate it?

ANDY: No, they never hated it. They were interested from an outside point of view — like looking into a box with a little glass window — peering in. We found all different sorts of people coming to our gigs, not just one particular kind. Look at all this sand!

SLASH: Did you go to the beach?

ANDY: No, we did a photo session on some sand dunes. Well at least we know it's not dandruff, my dandruff takes longer to hit the floor. Where was I? Oh yes, they smiled a lot because we weren't straight down the middle 1234 wall of sound. It was more interlocking than that.

SLASH: I wondered about that because initially it wasn't received that well here. It was more musical than straightforward punk.

ANDY: Well, I like to make people think a little more. We don't go out of our way to make complicated music, in fact, we go out of our way to simplify what we have in the first place.

SLASH: It seems what you've done has been a forerunner to a whole lot of sophisticated pop that has come out, like Joy Division and stuff like that, slower things.

ANDY: Being immodest, people were probably sparked into doing something in that style by what we were doing in '77. We've moved on and are doing something even simpler, like Drums and Wires is. I consider that to be very simple after the first two albums. Hopefully, the fourth one I can simplify things even more.

SLASH: Does simplification mean moving away from effects in a way? Because there seem to be more effects on the earlier things.

ANDY: Yeah, there was more of that kind of thing. I have a real admiration for oriental things. They always do things more effectively and simpler.

SLASH: You just went to Japan, didn't you?

ANDY: Australia too — we had to stay there for a month to break even because we were playing a lot of small clubs and pubs.

SLASH: How was that? What kind of audience are Australians?

ANDY: Very unusual — they've reached about 1975. They're really willing to be entertained and they just want something badly because the bands that they have over there are just out and out boogie bands — just drinking rhythm and blues. It was like they needed a change of diet desperately. We were received like some exotic rum sundae after a steady diet of fish and chips.

SLASH: What other bands do you like?

ANDY: I haven't really liked anything in the past couple of years. Recently, Cowboys International — excellent, in a vain sort of way, because I can hear some of what we were doing. Captain Beefheart — he's a real romantic and a true hero, knight in shining armor of the music business. Kinks, Stones, Monkees. The group groups. Can, a German band. They've influenced a hell of a lot of people. They were making what's considered popularly adventurous music now, back then. Have you heard "Monster Movie" and "Future Days"? On those albums you hear them and it's like what Public Image and Talking Heads are trying for now and Can were just knocking them off the cuff. They were amazing. Also I think Captain Beefheart's influence went deeper than people thought. A lot of bands now are sounding like plastic packaged versions of the Magic Band from "Safe as Milk". Jazz, Charlie Parker — the fluidity of his sax playing i absolutely stunning.

SLASH: Do you play sax?

ANDY: I'd love to. I have dabbled on sax. We have an album of electronically altered music coming out in London next week and there's a bit of my sax playing on that. I don't really play sax though.

SLASH: Tell me about Japan.

ANDY: We saw quite a bit of Tokyo because we were there for 8 or 9 days and only did 4 gigs. It was summer and it was phenomenally hot. You'd leave the air conditioner on in the hotel room and when you'd leave the room — boom, it was like having a hot wet towel thrown on your face. Can't breathe, and sweat all over the place. The Japanese all wear amazingly clean clothes and everything's so washed. Americans have a creased flowery-polyestery way of wearing things whereas the Japanese wear things that are fluffy but well scrubbed. Tokyo is like science fiction city.

SLASH: Did you see any technical things?

ANDY: Just toys, electrical toys that are light years ahead of anything in the west. 99% of all toys, children's books, are science fiction based. They still have a great respect for the hero.

SLASH: In Japan, what you do is called techno-pop. It seems to be a better term than new wave.

ANDY: That's exactly what they call it. They're very strange — they have these magazines that are like guitar-pornography, excellent glossy paper, they come out once a month and well, about 20 of them will storm into the dressing room, arrange your guitar and get real close and photograph it and then print it up in these books. You could have the most trashy guitar and they'll adore it. Because *you've* touched it and *you've* worn the frets down. They go into real pornographic detail. Japan was very tempting as far as going there to live. Since I've seen America, I don't want to live here.

SLASH: Why would you not want to live in the U.S.?

ANDY: I just find a general tastelessness and media bludgeoning here. I can't listen to American radio, it's a terrible thing. It's like utopia gone sour here. You have so much choice that there is no choice. So much T.V., so much radio, so much advertising, in the streets, everywhere. It's like walking into a department store where they have a million things and all of a sudden you're not sure whether you really want what you came in for, or something else, or something else.

SLASH: What would have happened if you'd been trying to grow your band up here?

ANDY: Oh, no, it never would have, we had to start in Swindon, we couldn't have started in London — we'd have ended up sounding like the Sex Pistols or The Ramones. Over here, we just wouldn't have started at all. Like now, people are finding it difficult to take us and we're straighter than we've ever been. Which is not a conscious effort. It's just that Barry's not in the band any more so there's a different sound.

SLASH: Who replaced him?

ANDY: Dave Bricker on guitar. Barry left. We didn't like his songs much and he felt frustrated. He left and took his style with him. Dave came in and it would have been wrong to say, now look, don't play guitar, play keyboards, play like Barry. So he plays guitar just as he wants to, it's a real straight forward style. A little rooted in R&B, and jazz. It's good, it gives a bottom to the band that we never had before. Like Colin's writing is a lot straighter these days, more balladry, poppy stuff like "Life Begins at the Hop" and "Ten Feet Tall". I think my writing has gotten more unusual, if anything. It's just like two pendulums at opposite points in terms of writing.

SLASH: You haven't played in L.A. yet.

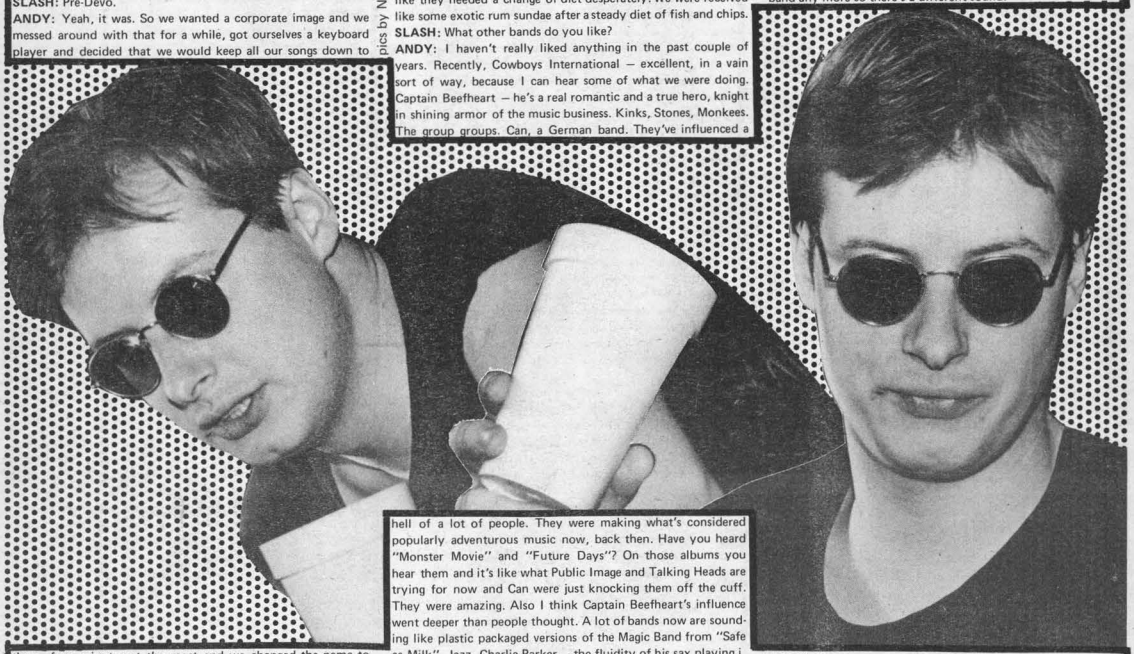
ANDY: No, but all six shows are sold out, I can't believe it. I don't like doing 2 shows a night, you can never give your best twice in one night. One, or both shows has to suffer. The first one, you think — relax, cause I've gotta do this again in 2 hours, so you relax and don't put enough edge into it, and later you've already done it once, you're sweaty and tired and you walk on and feel like you can't get the energy up. The first is too tame and the second is too tired. What do you think the audience will be like here? Because last night we played to a crowd that wanted to strangle and hit each other.

SLASH: Where did you play last night?

ANDY: Costa Mesa.

SLASH: Oh, Huntington Beach punks. Tonight everyone will probably stand still and clap.

ANDY: I don't mind that, but last night I felt like we were in competition with the audience, like they were busy trying to be seen strangling each other. I wanted to say, you paid your money to see us, now look at us. It's a shame, they just get the wrong idea about something that really wasn't like that in England in 1976.



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interviewed by Helene Bessy

Marquis de Sade

A MUSIC AND MOOD YOU'RE NOT EXPECTED TO
RELATE TO, A NAME YOU CAN'T PRONOUNCE AND
A TOWN YOU'LL NEVER GO TO:
MARQUIS DE SADE, THE GROUP.

"Europe yearns for euthanasia . . " (Marquis de Sade lyrics)

France's contribution to the new directions in sound have up to now been rather limited: A few interesting 45's, occasional outbursts of gimmicky scams, a faceless background of interchangeable rock bands more concerned with looks and image appeal than with creating a distinctive noise. Everyone has always looked the part while sounding like everything they have ever listened to. METAL URBAIN, apparently together again after a lengthy disappearance are one of the impressive exceptions. So was MARIE ET LES GARCONS, the closest thing France ever came to possessing a true innovative group of real international quality. Now Les Garcons have chosen disco, style once again won over creativity.

One of the problems for french kids aching to succeed where everyone has failed has to be Paris and its relentless drive to play with fads and poses. Fashion dictates and commitment to anything is boring. Punk two days ago, mod yesterday, rockabilly today and rude boy next morning, who wants to be like those politicized kids with their endless meetings, pamphleting and dialecticing or on the other end like those pathetic "rockers" in the concrete suburbs all trying to look like Vince Taylor or Gene Vincent, all hopelessly stuck in their factories and their local cafes, all so out of it. Having no fierce scene of its own Paris is always ready to try something else which plays havoc with all the growing bands' originality.

But, in spite of every travelling frog's insistence that of course he is from Paris, the rest of France is far from being deserted. Some of the most important cities have even developed their own little scenes that most of the time last until its major bands get signed and move to Paris. Sometimes these provincial bastions of modern music have more to offer than the capital, the bands are stronger, and the audiences more loyal. Just as in England, where Manchester, Edinburgh, Liverpool are beginning to eclipse London, some French cities like Lyon have occasionally looked as if the real action came from there.

Rennes is not and most likely never will be one of those. Buried somewhere in Brittany, the town is about as attractive as a drafty jail cell, and as picturesque as a tombstone. Its young population of students and army recruits relish whatever momentary fun survives the atmosphere, the occasional concert (still talking about the time Patti Smith played in town) in the gloomy municipal hall. MARQUIS DE SADE, a local group in existence for two and a half years, are quite aware of the town's limited appeal and possibilities, yet have no intention of moving out to where the lights are brighter and living is tastier.

We didn't focus on Marquis de Sade because of their untrendy determination to stick to hicksville or because of their picturesque name. What caught our attention was their music, which can be heard on their recent debut LP released by french label Pathe Marconi (EMI) and is probably available in a couple of import bins throughout California. "Dantzig Twist" is the title, and it does convey a definite northern european feeling of pervading greyness and lack of joy. It may not be what you're aching to get your teeth into right now, but whether you like it or not England and Europe are full of kids getting a charge from the likes of Joy Division, Wire, PIL (talk about european greyness!) and now Marquis De Sade. A sort of defiant dive in the surrounding oppression, very modern and still quite unexplored. M.D.S. makes up in elegance and musical richness what it sometimes lacks in pure originality, there are numerous traces of influences (most obvious Television and some Lou Reed) throughout the album but somehow the focus remains intact, the music works and the mood sticks to you, which already puts them miles ahead of the majority of the french contingent.

The french Slash reader that became our correspondent for the occasion and volunteered to nag the group in the name of international understanding cornered most of them (Frank, guitar, Renaud, guitar, Eric, drums) in a fan's apartment in Rennes and asked them to define their approach. Not present were Philippe (singer), who is a school teacher and bass player Eric.

SLASH – Your group almost changed names and became The Europeans, and the record's promo material defines you as "five europeans in electric outfits". What is this about Europe?

M.D.S. – Europe is an entity, a whole. It's also a way to separate ourselves from all these american groups with their carnival, all their infrastructures, all their equipment, the ones that play for 30 thousand people or more in places where you can't see a thing. Europe is more modest, it's also more human and at the same time it's harder. It's a definite image, a look. If we want to define ourselves, we must search for our roots here. We are not about to dwell on super highways or drive in movies when the roads here are shitty and no one has ever seen a drive in. We talk about what we know."

The problem here is I'm not exactly certain I understand what it is their songs really talk about. The french rock press has offered some very poetic explanations in their live and vinyl reviews of the group, expressionism has been mentioned more than once, our french connection talks about " . . rainy sunday towns . . . . anguish . . . . the sum of human suffering . . ", which mainly

Translation by Kick

shows that obviously the Marquis de Sade atmosphere triggers their fans' imagination and lyricism, in spite of the group's choice to do most of their material in english, or perhaps because of it. As more and more french and other european groups are giving up the stifling practice of producing original tunes with english lyrics, more often than not with awful results full of cliches and misinterpretations of the language Marquis de Sade were asked their reasons for this uneuropean stand. After all some popular rock outfits like Extraballe, Minuit-Boulevard or Telephone (see record reviews) have successfully adapted the french language to rock rhythms, and De Sade's music is less choppy than most (early rockers had always claimed rhythm was the problem). Why then?

"Why not? That's the way it is, no precise reasons. Anyway the album does have stuff in french, and german. When we're practicing with a new riff that we like Philippe just sings whatever comes to his head, and usually what he is improvising comes out in english . . . Later he works on the lyrics on his own. It's rarely in a narrative form, it's more like a transcribing of emotions, of moods. We trust him with the words, he does what he wants."

And only Philippe could have given his reasons for this english fixation. Perhaps it has to do with this distance the band apparently maintains in live situations. They were asked about this coldness of theirs, this holding back feel they communicate:

"There are 2 reasons for it. One is because we must boost ourselves just to compensate for the fear, the stage fright, we act contemptuous towards the audience before they can feel the same towards us, it's a kind of power struggle between them and us, we always worry about their reactions, we certainly don't want to have some guys climb up on stage and pat you on the shoulder while we're playing. Once it rained beer bottles all over us during a concert and that certainly cooled us down. The second one has to do with our concept of a performance, which is a bit theatrical, the aesthetic role of clothes, hair, this stiff slightly frozen image. We don't and won't feel complacent towards the audience. (Either the audience is in charge or we are, adds Renaud). And it's better if we do. What's more, if people in the hall are not moving, it's because that's not the point of our music . . We let them long for more . . "

First there was Bowie, then there was Devoto. And Wire and others. Non-communication as a new way to communicate. Widen the gap between them and you to trigger something more lasting. Accentuate the audience passivity, twist the medium around, force the music out of its accepted format. The punks begged its public to take control, mash down the barriers, now some want to reverse the trend. The eighties are the perfect time to figure out the inner mechanisms of collective fun, crowd control, ritualistic games, the things you and I participate in or devote a major portion of our conscious time to. Are fans destined to become guinea pigs? Will they even have a choice?

Unlike some of the neo-punk outfits intent on boosting their individuality, De Sade don't deny the relationship:

– "What do you think of punks?"

– "Punks? Oh, punks! Seriously though, they are at the origin of the group. It gave us the courage and the urge to play. It served as a catalyst for the music we wanted to do. But now, in France as well as England, the punk movement has totally degenerated and dimmed out. The energy remains, because of it all the doors opened, it enabled loads of people to come thru."

Any other forms of music that play a part in your life? What about reggae, which is such a big deal right now in France?

STEPHANE – It's folk music.

FRANK – Not being black, we don't feel really concerned. No doubt there is more to it than the rasta jive . . . .

RENAUD – It's more like mood music . . . The rastafarian movement? No way! It's retarded!

Marquis de Sade has kept its musical influences relatively grouped together: The Velvet Underground and the subsequent activities of Nico, Cale and Lou Reed (Berline phase), Tom Verlaine (no surprise this), the Bowie/Eno school, and "even the guys in Kraftwerk". All quite sophisticated, elegant, cool. Fortunately there are slight hints of a more contemporary edge under the stylish surface of the record, some Cabaret Voltaire type of multi-level chaos that leads into the ominous riff of "Set in Motion Memories", an opening cut closer to Joy Division than to Eno. The occasional saxophone takes no liberties, but the piano thrown in the recording stuff has been dispensed with for good they said, a good sign of necessary tightening on their part. The french sung "Conrad Veidt" ventures into aggressive and atonal directions and eventually goes over the edge into a great minute of noise called Nacht Und Nebel. And side 2 ends with a song fluctuating between ballad format and psychotic lunatic screams, full of nasty hints at painful physical transformations most certainly removed from the norm of socially accepted french experiences. Could such nice looking young men have hidden demons trying to get out?

As most groups still in the initial phase of their development the music preserved on the 1st album has already been altered or partially put aside and the constant evaluation and revisions continue. They already have material for another record, but otherwise won't play any predicting games concerning their future. "It depends on people who are too flaky" is how they perceive the solidity of their commercial career. And although they mean the industry people it equally applies to their public. Their only immediate projects were some tv appearances (impossible in France without a record contract and almost unavoidable with one) and a tour in Czechoslavakia, the most accessible eastern european nation to the new waves.

Our part time reporter in Rennes swears that MARQUIS DE SADE will prove to all the cynics that french beat music is to be reckoned with, even after an admittedly overextended period of infancy that many mistook for a permanent growth stunt. Ironically she also points out that a paper from a neighboring town once described the group as "a new wave that is not about to become a tidal one." Even provincial rags have poisonous pens in France, and so little youth music to use it against. If MARQUIS DE SADE succeed in imposing their intelligent and uncompromising presence in THAT country, they will already deserve all your admiration whether other parts of the world are seduced or not.

PS: Rumors have just reached us that Seymour Stein of Sire records has shown a serious interest in the group's live activities. How such a european minded outfit would fare under the pressures of american intervention would be nteresting to watch. Sire may be hipper than most, but this De Sade business ain't no mass market dream package by a long shot. Then again I guess Talking Heads weren't either.

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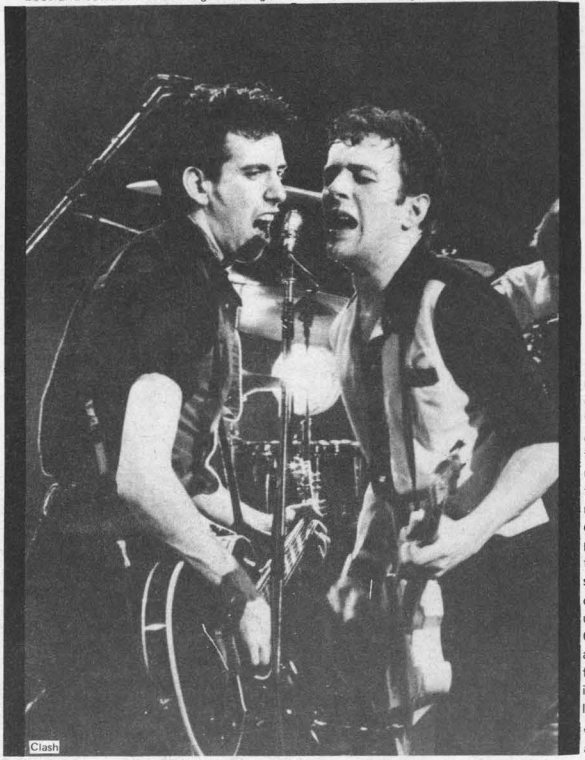
LIVE

THE CLASH, LEE DORSEY and MIKE DREAD at the Santa Monica Civic

I still hate the Santa Monica Civic, always did and always will, even if the loathsome unfinished (in the upper region) creatures that police the place were forced to wear tutus and kiss everyone's ass as they tore your ticket at the gate. Once I saw a pedigree cat show there (don't ask) and even the animals look depressed and offended by the surroundings. Maybe the atmosphere is hopelessly saturated with the astral dandruff left by countless heavy metal boogie soirees, maybe the proximity of all these senior citizens mellow death-training centers (bring your old ma to the Golden Shores, next to the Blue Pacific, with special discounts at Joe's Mortuary, also next to the Blue Pacific) does nothing for your reserve of natural joie de vivre, maybe the guys who mixed the concrete were full of bad vibes and the stuff went sour, whatever, I hate the place. But nothing stops duty. The Clash comes to town as every other week, you go there, if you don't keep wondering if you should have and there's always one jerk telling you you should have been there. Old myths never die, they just tour themselves to death. Anyway that ain't true, and the Clash ain't no old myth yet, they're a brand new myth in a brand new Cadillac. Later we'll check out the discrepancies between myth and reality but first things first. There is no doubt that in that area the Clash repeatedly keep trying to do things differently. They have the last word concerning who gets the privilege to warm up the spikey crowds and no one is going to shove the Beat (the american Beat) on *them* as someone did on the Jam a few days later). When it's bad or pointless it's the Clash you should curse, but when it's good and unusual as it was this time around it's the Clash you should praise. Remember when in some past live review we bitched about their token rhythm & blues tip of the hat with ol' man Diddley who was asleep at the guitar and ruined his image along with that portion of the evening and said something to the effect that if they wanted to do the multi racial bit they should look at the musical present and bring us the jamaican masters instead. The Clash took our advice (no, we're not that presumptuous – just a way to start the sentence) and brought a dub artist, producer/toaster Mikey Dread for the american kids to puzzle over. A good move, and a brave one. What Mikey Dread does maybe commonplace in London town where they've been skanking and hurting themselves on jutting bass lines for ages but in God's favorite stretch of land a black crazie with a funny accent and a funny hat shouting and mumbling incomprehensible stuff to a backing of tape recorded echoing riffs is not what you'd call a regular starter. Like, where's the action, man? Perhaps to palliate to that problem Dr. Dread was flanked by two red scarfed and hatted rude boyos who did cool stepping and swaying to the beat throughout, but this still didn't make it quite standard for rock n roll crazed yanks. I could visualize a gigantic question mark floating above the sea of staring heads. What the fuck??? . . . . I loved every second of it (being more sophistico than most and slightly sadistic), them tracks on the reel to reel were thick and solid and the bass was bouncing about the concrete structure like it was going to shake Santa Monica right into the blue waters. I mean it almost made you feel good when you stepped in while the stuff was being flung about every which way along the acoustical paths and you don't normally feel good stepping in the Civic's main hall, *ever*. Dub music is righteous everywhere anytime on any drug, but I didn't think it would work there. And I wasn't the only one feeling that tingling in my ding a ling. Besides the expected boos and catcalls from the "get down get



Clash

pic by Bob Gruen

funky" contingent which has been trained to only salivate and pant if guitars are in sight and don't know music from police sirens there was some sizable areas of the crowd that could feel the music and its power. Next time there would be more, and eventually the stuff will be recognized (how generous from the big public) and we don't have to whine no more. [illegible] points to El Clashero [illegible] for bringing this to us. And ten more for scoring again with the second segment of the evening, Lee Dorsey. I ain't no expert or fanatic, I only knew a few tunes from way yonder but this guy was hot, no nostalgia tears are blinding me no blind respect for history Mr. Lee Dorsey worked his set real fine and got everyone but the professional skeptics in the groove, as they did say once before the shake up. I still don't know the tune titles 'cept for that "Working in a Coal Mine" one but there were songs in there that moved real deep and true, the backing band was super competent and did some nifty supporting vocals in spite of looking like studio nurds who just stepped out of the freezer (nobody has to look like that – it's distracting) but it was that Lee Dorsey fellow that made it as riveting as it was. He looked real short and wore some smooth shiny looking suit with ample room around the calves, miles and ages away from the black fellows you see on the hipper tv programs with the leotards knee high suede boots and beaded page boy haircuts and zillion times more interesting and real, he had soul and he didn't use the word once, he had guts and I would have punched the first zit bag that would have dared bark too loud for "punk rock, man!" Respect ain't a commodity I'm super generous with these days (even when I really like someone or something someone does or did) but mister [illegible] all sir and listen to when Lee Dorsey [illegible] he talks. When he sings I move and I feel okay, and I curse my mother for not falling for a black G.I. so I could have a voice half as good. If you think I'm being flippant and irrelevant with the color bit introduce me to a geezer with my skin color that can reach me as good and true as Dorsey or a few other soul and funk giants do although they are older than just about anyone I know and talk about many things I know zilch about and I'll tatoo "blue-eyed soul" on my chest and rub salt in the wound every time their song plays on the radio. I don't know what seedy circuit the Clash located Lee Dorsey on, how much the dude was working and how many bucks he could still demand for an appearance (appearance ain't the word: Chuck Berry *appears* clowns about and heads for the payroll counter. Lee squeezed everything he had out of each song, no medley no Vegas histrionics no jive, obviously he would also have danced the fuckers into the ground if he hadn't recently suffered a leg accident, and you *knew* that was no lie) but I sure hope they paid him real well. Young fuckers on the go should regularly give ten per cent of what they make to the less lucky pioneers of the music is what I think, a sort of Hall of Fame Bank Account, or do we *really* like to see yesterday's glories eat shit? I'm digressing I know nothing of mister Dorsey's financial condition, I hope it is as good as he wishes. I know little of the Clash's own financial horizons but I suspect it is not as hot as all that, although this may change soon as their London Calling double thing has entered the national american charts in a respectable spot some thirty notches away from the big glimmering numero uno in the tinsel sky. You see the Clash are travelling real heavy these days (as opposed to light), there are roadies sound people light people marketing people (badges t-shirts bla bla) a whole little community rock n roll on the road the ups the downs I tell you I swear I have seen that film before or read the story somewhere . . . . (By the way, the Rude Boy movie you'll soon start hearing about is *not* a Clash movie or a ska movie, it's about being a roadie for the Clash, a roadie for any old band actually – one reason why the Clash themselves apparently don't like it too much – and according to reliable connections is something to see, a hard unsentimental look at the crap we worship or create). Some cynical section of me suspects that the financial gamble they are taking is part of a long range plan to secure a reliable market in case the future of their music in the old world becomes uncertain but what do I know? Now that Columbia/Epic the whole Cashbox staff and half the clerks of Tower records have fallen in love with the four rocking rebels it is inevitable that early supporters/believers would start feeling a hangover and wonder what the hell they are doing here anyway. Elitism is the life spark of the underground, anti-elitism just being one of its numerous manifestations. And if you genuinely hate seeing your music on the supermarket shelves and on everyone's lips it is fine by me but you better get used to it, there isn't one record company in the world that would refrain from selling everything in its warehouses, janitor equipment and employees' water cooler included if it saw a chance to do so. At least be grateful that some of the stuff [illegible] potential (see March 15 Cashbox issue) is more listenable today than it used to be. Well, I did try to see the bright side didn't I? But all this industry/consumerism bla bla takes us further away from the Clash, which isn't fair or especially appropriate. So far the night had been quite exciting and a real good Clash set (and I swear I have seen a

couple of incredible Clash sets in the past – none in America although the first o one was quite good) would have gone down a treat, as one limey I know used to say. This particular show from the boys went down like a lead doughnut. According to some witnesses the second night was far superior, so you'll have to decide for yourselves if you saw either, or take what I say with a grain of salt and a chunk of lime if you didn't. What I saw was real directionless, uneven and extremely frustrating moments of rock n roll noise performed by impatient, indifferent or burnt out guys, this is no way being meant to analyze it simply thrown here as a temporary grasp on a complicated situation. The Clash look very tired as if they hadn't slept in ages, the set was overtly stretched out, trying to include elements from every phase although I could have done without the unfelt routine renditions of the early anthems – magnificent then but they didn't know any better hence put everything they had in it, sounding like the judgment days put to garage music – some of the newer tunes were fine by themselves (Clampdown/London Calling) but got lost in the melee, even Jimmy Jazz that vinyl turd did okay live as long as they forgot to do it laid back style, the guitars were so-so where I was cept when Simonon goes bass crazy on the jamaican flavored numbers and almost straightens out everything by himself, the drums were once again superb, no dragging behind for this Clash, the new permanent keyboards was frantically plugging up the melodic leaks but sounded oddly out of tune or something to me, I don't know music but there was some unkosher noise stuck to some familiar tunes I swear, unless that was an avant guard bit and I didn't get it, Jones sang well but thinly, Strummer was not thin in the least but couldn't keep his hoarse shattered throat in working condition after the first 15 minutes and was forced into a drill sergeant vocalizing style for the rest of the night, miraculously snapping out of it in time for the Armagideon Time/Justice tonight reggaeoid spot with the Dread Mikey on guest co-vocals. I know some 1977 purists hate that reggae direction and want to pogo a go go to the classics and I say bug off idiots that's about the only way the Clash get to me these days the music is simple enough they don't feel they have to show melodic credentials they really wham it across like they used to with the 1 2 3 4 white noise and if their reggae is to the real thing what their white riot rock was to real rock n roll no one is going to convince me that that isn't admirable in itself. There must be a reason for their sudden increase in enthusiasm and solidity when they perform it following the dubious set described above (forget Police and Thieves which they cruelly butchered).

Want to know what I think? (say please) The Clash were great (and are great) when they forget about competing with the rock n roll heritage and bang away for all their hearts' worth, knowing that you hear the perfect tune in your head anyway and what the crowd and the tape recorders pick up is approximate noise and your noise must hit them harder and deeper than other noises. When the rock n roll heritage takes over and fucks up their perspectives they go half assed stylized, they start quoting the past, muttering the future and fucking up the only thing that made them great even when they were terrible: immediacy and absoluteness. In the rock n roll hall of fame they don't stand a chance, the place is crowded with pros and wizards. I just thought they wanted to blow up the place, once.

–Kick

X, THE CHIEFS (Honky Tonk Cafe)

I tried real hard not to feel alienated by the long snake line of people outside the Hong Kong Cafe. "I want this," I told myself, "I want to see them at the top of the world," and I do. They're the only group playing honest music I've ever come across who were able to reach growing numbers of people and still retain their "soul". The Clash lost theirs. The Sex Pistols traded theirs for comedy. Iggy had his denied too often to accept his long-deserved recognition. So far, X is as close as anyone has gotten to being in touch with the people, both in quantity and quality.

However, I can't deny the feeling that I'm now among people who are very different from me. They may have the same feeling and understanding for the music that I do, but there's a difference of experience. It separates us and it's an unavoidable fact. I do welcome them, but I realize that I'm different from them, like I'm different from the people on Pepsi Cola commercials.

So, I go to Chinatown anyway. Despite the loss of familiar faces and the escalating prices. Here's the hooker's trick; the bands are just as good, just as exciting, and I enjoy them as much as I did when they first played. There's more people and they're all crammed together writhing on the floor like some big orgy at the end of the world. Group sex with X setting the beat. The sexual part of their music coming out as strong as a fertility dance in the Central American jungle. I can see all those wet-brown Latin girls doing the fire ritual . . . . .

The Chiefs (one of L.A.'s best new bands), were finally put in front of a responsive audience for once, and were great. The wilder the audience got, the wilder they got. They played just basic punk, (the L.A. sound?) but were much better at it than most established acts like Middle Class or the Crowd or even the late Controllers. Certainly a band that serves its purpose, when the purpose is needed.

X, on the other hand, have moved into the 3rd dimension of punk rock. With new songs like "Slippin' Round Some Universal Corner" and "Unheard Music", they've hit a sound somewhat close to "L.A. Woman" by the Doors or "Down On the Street" by the Stooges. Influences we always knew they had, but only recently have they been done justice to. More Billy Zoom leads and more singing than shouting. X are now worthy of being called a rock & roll band as much as being called "punk". Their development into it has in no way denied their roots. They still play with the same affection and passion they started with back in 1977. . .

It's hard to deal with them here. In this organization that will be putting out their first album and pushing to the maximum. The credibility of this review stops here, if you wish. In fact, the credibility of the whole magazine can stop here, if you wish. But *only* if you wish . . . I, Ranking Jeffrey, am not going to be making a cent off X's album (Nobody at Slash gets paid, ya know), and I am not just being nice to old friends. (I'm honest to my friends. I insult them when they're assholes and buy them drinks when they're cool.) If this was just a hustle, I would probably be the only one to expose it as another big con job. There's been a few in here before and I'd be happy to tell you exactly where.

The simple truth is that X are still the most passionate rock and roll around. This magazine has ignored them recently, because everyone is afraid to write about Slash recording artists. The Germs have been ignored too. (And they also are still great.) Since I'm not going to get anything out of this, I'm sure as hell going to write about whoever I damn well please. I don't care if it's my own mother's rock and roll group. I intend to express as I wish, whether it blows my credibility or not, and if you still think I'm hustling my own ass, then fuck you . . . Someday you'll learn that things are sometimes just as they look. And that some people try not to lie to everyone. . . . . .

–Uptown Top Ranking Jeffrey

B-PEOPLE, WEIRDOS, Club 88

What can I tell you about this? Half-a-dozen other places vying for the discerning punk dollar tonight so Club 88 is not exactly bursting at the seams. If it had been, maybe the bands on display would've been energized to a higher degree of musical hubris than the boogie-woogie Pathos that we got. Plus your on-the-ball reviewer was somewhat ragged at the edges by the time the Weirdos were into their fifth number which, as I dimly remember, was about the time someone found out how to work the mixing board. As one door opens, another door closes. .

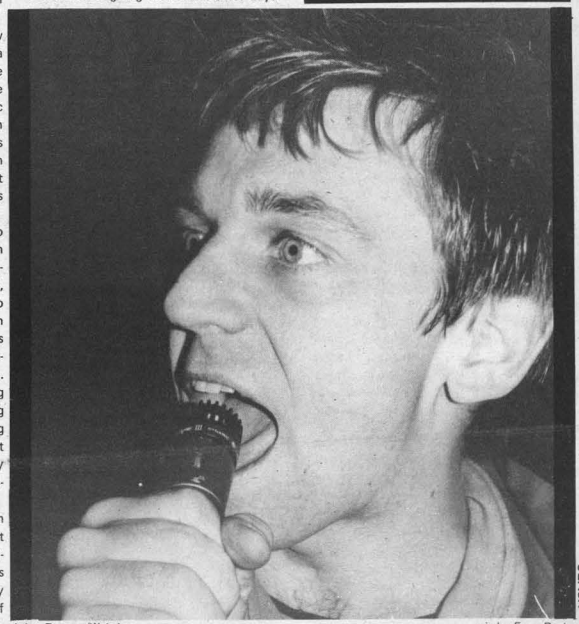
The B-People have an impressive cassette which is going the rounds these days and on the basis of a casual airing of same in the vicinity of these sober earoles, I expected the Ramones-meet-Ultravox when I saw them live. This was not the case. Instead the sound of amplified mud came at me from all angles, the lyrical wit buried beneath a sonic glop that, properly mixed and amplified, might've approached the textured menace which their instrumental abilities and arrangements promised. People stood inert in front of the stage and seemed to be waiting for the B-People to take off; the only thing that hovered above the morass was Pat Delaney's engaging histrionics on alto sax.

Within five minute of the Weirdos arriving on the boards, folk were at least pogo-ing in that curiously anti-social fashion beloved of Los Angelenos – battering-ram-rhumba. This, at least was an improvement and evidently a direct response to singer John Denny's antagonistic coercion, you know; "If in doubt, insult the audience."

From what I'm able to lucidly remember of their set, it was fractious, full-throttle 2/4-time punk with simple but not ineffectual melody lines fighting for survival in the midst of it all. The relatively spartan construction of the Weirdos' material kept them on the right side of the aural mincer that was the p.a. system and the boys in the band, having achieved the "legendary" status that brought me to see them in the first place, are obviously familiar to the point of numb efficiency with how to play it . . . neither of which was true of the B-People.

However at the point where the sound seemed to enjoy a little spring cleaning and my critical faculties finally succumbed to the grape, it was at least in the Weirdos' favor that they'd got fully half of the punters up on their feet. I, too, enjoyed myself more after that, but I'm not exactly sure why.

–Mark Williams



John Denney/Weirdos pic by Evan Rude

WHY BOTHER WITH THE LINES, THE COST, THE UNCERTAINTIES OF LIVE MUSIC WHEN YOU CAN CATCH THE DRIFT OF THE LATEST WAVES SIMPLY BY READING OUR NEW CONVENIENT . . .

FOUR WEEKS OF WILD AND WACKY NEW WAVE MUSIC AS PERFORMED ON THE NUMEROUS STAGES OF HOLLYWOOD'S HIPPEST NIGHT SPOTS, a zany zaweee report by Kick Pretty Boy Face, author of "New Wave is for mums and dads too" and co-publisher of "Micro-wave and New Wave: A vibrant cookbook for twerps on the go, or Treat your body as you would your Telecaster".

PART ONE, READY OR NOT HERE WE GO (Welcome to the representatives of good old eccentric England. May your ingenuity always match our gullibility.) Many visiting bands, artists, personalities, styles and foreign posing lately, Los Angeles has made up its sluggish mind and the new wave is okay, everybody's welcome, come on over boys and girls we love you all. Not so much an "invasion" as the media now likes to label it, more a series of raids on the bewildered anxious to belong/understand/feel greater public. The poor beast (the public in question) was repeatedly told to "relax, there ain't nothing happening, this new music is jive, stick to the product you're familiar with" for the past two or three years by the industry but suddenly it's "surprize, there *is* something going on, where you been stupid? get hip man, check out them new crazes!!!" Now you should see them grabbing the last overpriced tickets for sold out shows, dressing the way they think it's required, fixing that new wave junk up every weekend whether the stuff is genuine or not. I don't know what the crowds in (drooling) attendance saw in Lene Lovitch that I didn't see, I sure envy their ability to feel great and happy for hardly any reason at all. Lene Lovitch has come up with one of the last theatrical gimmicks that wasn't yet copyrighted according to the pop music gimmicks ledger (for obvious reasons) and before you can say "ha ha, nobody would go for that" suddenly there are girls outside the Whisky flaunting their slavic braids and old world maiden auras as if this was the most natural look in the world, this is *me* it's just a coincidence if I am in line for this show. I bet they also have a real operatic crystal-glass-shattering voice and play the saxophone between making cups of tea. Well, all this revealed eccentricity warms the heart. Miss Lovitch sang, loud and well I suppose, and her band was competent and quirky, I just couldn't find a trace of a little something to grab onto and jump aboard the fun, I have never liked cabaret, spotlight dramatics and slick show biz craftsmanship and don't see no reason to start now when everybody around me that I respect and keep an eye on just in case they pull it off is still busy disconnecting the old entertainment machinery and scribbling all over the how-to manuals. I left feeling very disconnected myself.

Another foreign raid on our natives' indiscriminate thirst for kicks was performed at the Whisky around that same time by England's favorite pop wizards, XTC. And once again I failed to ignite although I was dutifully impressed by the nifty optical frills consisting of abstract film projections all over darkened stage and occupants, flickering abstract patterns for flickering abstract pop songs, I was being bombarded by tiny effects but felt little besides a skin deep irritation. XTC has serious fans in Slash circles (see Panter's interview with Andy Partridge in these very pages) and I have nothing against what people keep referring to as "intelligent pop," I *can* take some pop and I ain't retarded but I was left out of this particular cleverness convention. I guess when you've been trailing behind the hard-core wrecking crews like Germs and co you need something as coy as Hiroshima to get a feeling thru to you, o god the subtleties I am missing because of my past death-bent musical acquaintances!

But, shot musical taste buds or not, I feel rejuvenated and perfectly on top of it with Madness' brand of music and general whoopee when as every other week (or so it seems) the night time became the ska time in southern Skalifornia.

One step beyond, once more, don't watch this, watch that, it was more fun than getting drunk at home with your closest friends and blasting your ultimate top ten choices until a SWAT team positions itself outside your building. Madness didn't lay it on as heavy this time around with the pork pie hats the shades and the knuckle attitude, they giggled a lot bullied each other on stage and deliberately stressed the informality and the lack of show biz facade I already liked them for, they didn't seem one bit concerned about their impact image-wise, and I guess musically they know what they can do and hope the fun is mutual. A few spectators reportedly rated them lower than the Specials or felt unfulfilled after, personally I was glad the band sort of deflated the hype and sincerely appeared to be going along with all this strictly for fun and adventure. On the walkway left of the stage the band's girlfriends bopped and hopped, well I think it's nice to know that instead of swelling up in the head or falling for cliche decadence they bring their steadies for the trip, "enjoy it luv as long as this madness lasts." Everybody's been bending my ear with the Specials and their message, their opinions and their commitment and I know Madness don't strain themselves on the manifesto level but the honesty and openness of everything they do is a bit of a lesson in itself, or do we have to get condescending the second we ain't being patronized?

Light years away from all this the regulation punkers and street bad asses had a jamboree with 999 in the regulation rock-rally Civic in Santa Monica 'cept 999 has less clout than the Clash or they care less because the easily removable rows of hemorrhoid-inducing seats were left cluttering the pogo floor and the resulting absurdity of having to fuckin' sit on your bum like at the opera for a 999 music brawl short-circuited whatever potential enthusiasm I had in store. Headbanging stuff like that bunch prides itself on being experts in, easily becomes a plodding heavy aluminum mess if toetapping is as wild as you're allowed to get. Most of the kids were not as choosey and demanding, they generated all the wild behavior the set up, the gym-damaged security ballerinas would permit but I felt taken, 999 looked like they were hamming it up real thick from where I was and I decided I really didn't know what the fuck they were yelling and banging about anyway. "Emergency"? What emergency? What rebellion? What changes? The beach kids and now some of the valley kids really believe in the early propaganda and the superiority of their type of fun, I hope they know they shouldn't count on anyone but their own kind. I also hope they all have older brothers or sisters into phony bullshit rock that daily remind them what a sucker is and what road not to take. Finally I hope they keep disrupting the concerts, invading the stage, grabbing microphones and playing bull dodging with the security 'cos there still ain't nothing else to do and for eight or nine bucks they owe you at least your very own minute of Civil War rampage. But I exited before anything quite as good had developed.

Before you draw negative conclusions you'll be pleased to know ... that there was one quite excellent concert connected with the mainstream new music we used to so heavily depend on, and that was the night the Jam played in the ever so busy same Civic, and surprize, the seats had

been removed! Is this some sort of game, and what's the prize for guessing in advance? Reviewing duties or not there was no way we would submit to the loathsome Beat, so with superb timing we walked in as the Jam started their assault. I had forgotten how good they could be, their importance had diminished so long ago when my tastes took a sharp left (or was it when splinter groups started challenging the brand new establishment) and it was quite a shock to realize that at least *this* band had kept its principles clean and its music growing, they now sounded like twenty of them and launched their interlocked rhythm salvos with the precision of James Brown veterans and the energy of an early, now forgotten, Clash. I don't even care for musicianship but this was stunning. Some of the new songs shook me up pretty good, I must have stood there, mouth open, from the 1st chord to the last drum beat. Watching and feeling such concentrated series of successive rhythmic explosions made you feel like an overloaded generator yourself. The people that weren't leaping about were glued to their spot like I was, just twitching with the force field. Much less physical and compulsive was the other style this trio always had a serious weakness for: the post-Who opera/pretty rock ballad with the dramatic atmosphere, thank god Paul Weller's voice is a lot more attractive and real than that other blond ham. Also this time I detected budding musical histrionics that have no room in the Jam's (or any other new group) world. One especially embarrassing slip up occurred as one of the new tunes shifted tempos with a brief drum transition: the way floodlights enhanced the drum set as if it were a fuckin' altar while Rick Butler solemnly tapped out crescendos or grandiosos or whatever that jive is called made me a bit ill (as did the nouveau rock riche subtlety of the bloody percussion center itself – gleaming chrome galore, a forest of esoteric appliances criss-crossed by support beams with a human somewhere inside. Please, let's not bring back the silly pseudo-symphonic posing every time there's a faint structural twist in a song, it's not good at all for the players/audience relationships and it's also the most boring and stupid thing to do to rock n roll. Especially when you're the Jam and your dedication to the soul of the music is as obvious as it is. Before we turn our inquisitive glare towards native talents and *their* justifications for bogarting the city's stages to the detriment of magicians and racist comedians I should mention a very odd show, it will do just fine as humoresque transition: If you ever end up on some rainy week-night at Madame Wong West (the place where the new wave meets the surf – don't metaphors like that make you feel you're sneaking in a porno joint or a leather bar?) you'll either have to decide *everything* is humoresque, or you will nonchalantly get the fuck out and shudder all the way home. Let's just say the place is a morgue, the "elegant" (L.A. Weekly uncanny description!) decor is second-hand Ramada Inn breakfast room that doubles as convention hall, the stage is such an afterthought you can stand right on it while looking for it, the help is stupid and the drinks unaffordable. I had no intention to evaluate this twilight zone of a club where everything begs for an end to its misery, from furniture to gloomy patrons, I had come for Fingerprintz, a Virgin records band that had obviously taken a wrong turn along the itinerary but were putting up a brave front. Musically competent in a punky craftsman sort of way, they succeeded in getting the odd twenty or twenty-five customers on the dance floor in no time at all. Couples formed and performed inspired versions of the frug, the bump and the hitchhiker while a few aging surfers whirled solo, too marinated in beer to locate a female partner or even notice that the contents of their bottle was rhythmically emptying over the rest of the sophisticos. Earlier the same crowd (then *twice* the size!) had granted a simply triumphant reception to the stars of the bill, the Naughty Sweeties. These so-called "contenders" to fabulous industry rewards and a legendary career (local predictions) grinded thru what must have been their famous vibrant-pop-material-crammed -with -humor -insulence -and -refreshing -rock -n -roll -enthusiasm. None of which I spotted anywhere, but I wasn't born in this country. I did detect a perfunctory "good time" beat, a leader type of guy who rocked out on the mike like he remembered Liverpool, and a sputter of musical dingleberries from the other wild fellows. On the floor the new wave connaisseurs put up with the dingleberries and clung to the thump-thump while undulating their young limbs to the provocative pulse of today's music. I mentally puked on some big idiot's shoes, tried to fuck around with my brain waves, but only managed to amplify an irresistible craving for the feel of a machine gun. So unpredictable, this new wave life! Ups and downs and states with no name yet, good bands bad bands and bands beyond or beneath all that. Like Castration Squad, who one night finally brought out the goods and confused everyone with their confusion. Like all good little Squads it's all girls, Alice Bag holds the bass, there's also a new drummer lady, macho Phranc is the musical anchor who can't find the bottom and so they drift, the two Vampirella-goes-to-third-Reich-Germany fetish dolls on vocals and facial emotions stomp and shriek and repeatedly miss each other's clues, they sound potentially scary in a classic punk gothic and bad speed format, but right now most likely scare themselves more than they do their audience. And the bats they pulled out of the baby coffin looked like rolled up socks when they threw them at the giggly standerbys. When it was over I kept waiting for a public debate, official "sanction of existence" ... Thing is, they did it and will most do it more. They may not know what the fuck they're doing (the only structured moment is Phranc's solo singing of "I like Charlotte" – the rest of the Squad ain't ready for folk songs) but only insecure weaklings worry about small details. They grabbed their fate with both hands while the sheep worry about failure or dirt on the only suit. You know who you are. And this is why, dear colleagues and loyal employees, I am honored to present the "I did it my way" Sid award to Castration Squad.

The last two bands in this very incomplete panoramic view have so far escaped pigeonholing by whatever media or audience attention they've attracted. For besides their obvious new music/punkish roots nobody has come up with anything very precise about either Wall of Voodoo or the Bpeople, they are the type of bands that pop up continually in footnotes but rarely end up in a comprehensive feature. At one point Wall of Voodoo looked bound for glory but that fizzled and they're back in the middle slot of secondary shows (if their refusal to play the Whisky is still part of their policy they have certainly kissed goodbye to the much-dreamt-about instant discovery fantasy – the Go Gos didn't win their tickets to England by sticking to Blackie's). Bpeople never looked like they were due for mass recognition anyway so no surprize there. The irony in all this is that both bands are the leaders of the loose experimental section of the new scene, and musically speaking among the leaders of the scene in general. Anyone disagreeing ought to check the two next time they're doing their thankless task somewhere. And take the earmuffs off your head. Any other town would have paid more respect and possibly got them recorded. In L.A. it's got to be strict rock n roll, punk or pop, the mutated offshoots don't get to play the Starwood or patted on the head by the Times. All the dilettante "observers" and similar parasites can rave about and hail is "energy", energy this and energy that, the Bpeople's energy could pulverize ten Zippers or Textones but it does not announce itself as such or become the sole consideration. And Wall of Voodoo has more hostility and negative luggage than twenty protest punk units but they also get kind of complex and structure-conscious so there goes the gutter credibility. I saw both groups recently, on separate occasions, and the importance of what they're doing revitalized my faith in this town's music. Wall of Voodoo reluctantly played to some thirty people for Brendan Mullen's Myron Ballroom disastrous pow wow, the acoustics of the place were the best ever in any club and the sounds the group effortlessly conjured from their portable kitchen was equal to the smartest techno pop the progressive british industry ever released, plus the message that night was embellished by constant jabs and pokes at Brendan's capacities in between the more regular offbeat obscure sarcasms I've come to expect from Stan Ridgeway, the crooner with the Daffy Duck enunciation. And the latest Bpeople set at Blackie's was relevation time 'cept I already knew, though not with as much certainty. Their roughly textured wall of avant-funk and beyond-the-pain-threshold-rock is admittedly a bit demanding and difficult of access, there ain't much room to catch your breath or order your beer, you kind of submit or you go for a walk. Submission will bring you rewards of an aesthetic nature (while moving your feet to the beat of course-no ethereal porridge here) you simply won't ever find by chatting with the spikey panhandlers on the sidewalk. I ain't recruiting mind you, the less pressure on certain bands the more room for fancy risks. It's not fusion music as someone proudly told me, it's pop discovering freedom, or is it rock being wind-tunnel test for eventual black hole missions? Anyway it ain't Chicago or Jean Luc Ponty so all you U.C.L.A. normal youth better think twice. Simple entertainment is out of the question (as with Wall of Voodoo who are more sly and devious about it), the least you can expect from close contact with the music I have been praising for the past ten minutes is a righteous rash on the scalp and indefinite interruptions of bowel movements. As the Bpeople song says, "the world is an arrow, the arrow is pointing down". You realize that, whichever way you take it, this mainly means trouble, bad times and generalized breakdown. Just take it as training music for the coming nightmare. Speaking of which, this concise report on some of the recent noise everybody is flinging at everybody else in our foul but fair metropolis must come to an end, the memory banks are closing and the new batch of musical morons, trend-tossing twats and sincere sods is tuning up, or down, depending on the politics, wrecking each other's amplifiers and raiding each other's guest lists in anticipation of another month of meaningful clatter; as usual we'll end up again in front of the stage learning to like temporary deafness, we'll cross two more bands off the list but add three others, we'll find one little speck of meaning late one night but will lose it before the end of the month, still dumb, still expecting the *real* stuff all at once, not just these hints and traces. But at least no one will entrust me with another "brief and concise" reviewing mission!

—Long Shot Kick

Madness
pics by Suzan Seager

NERVOUS GENDER & GEZA X & MOMMYMEN
at the Whisky

Nervous Gender's primary virtue is that they exist at all. They're condemned to languish out this existence in an awkward and haltering position – but they persevere with a peculiar, near reverant integrity toward it. If one can transform a dolorous fate into a poetic vision then harrowing monsters may be born. Ner-

vous Gender's visions came with birth, not invention. They stand out by their fading away, like a stranger in a dark corner who needn't show his face.

Like this stranger, they stand little chance of acceptance by the crowd. Their estrangement takes the form of an alluring aloofness — a decisive emotional distance from goings-on. Theirs is not the way of cleverness — if they remain "unapproachable", it's not by an elaborately modeled persona (like the Pistols or Screamers), but by their grim nakedness, their ability to show scars.

Surprisingly, Phranc's departure left them collectively stronger and more cohesive than before. Her personal magnetism made them top heavy and unbalanced, like an idea in need of a vehicle or passion without a body to experience itself. Now, Paul Roessler's discreet percussive effects lend a spine and solidity to the music — a will to live ... if you will. Punctuated thus, their sound becomes integrated into muscle tissue. Relax goes to reflex.

Gerardo Edward Mike and Paul are all powerful vocalists, and the rotation between them's real good. Gerardo is the most disturbing presence, (silently) pulsating with some kind of psychological gravity. The lowlight of this show was seeing Paul, who is usually stuck behind the keyboards with The Screamers, belting out vocal blisters on Carly Simon's "The Slave". For his efforts, the little angel blew the guts out of the sound system. Bravo, Paul.

Nervous Gender's only comic relief is Sven, the drummer, who's about eight years old. But even then you wonder what the little fellow's seen to make him look forty. Nervous Gender is not for lightweights, but neither is this life.

Last time I saw Geza's band they played after the Germs, this time after Nervous Gender. It's like dancing with a lampshade during an air strike, the incongruity makes for great spiritual relief. If we should assassinate the Pope, Geza would be the Patron Saint of something-or-other. That something is quite intangible, but seems fucking essential to a sane life.

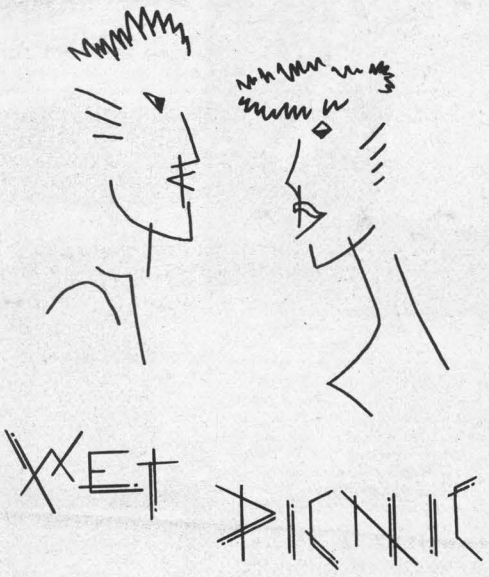
The new Mommymen are a way better band than the old Mommymen. Time is one factor of improvement certainly, they're more familiar with each other and the material. Also a new bassist, who's not as visually pleasing as Kitra, but is real good aurally, and the addition of Don Bonebrake on vibes, who gives the songs a loopy, polka-like feel. I need not elucidate on the merits of Paul Roessler, Geza or Pat Delany's musical eccentrese, but Brendan Mullen is actually a great skinsman (not to be discounted by the various deficits that he doesn't really have, but everyone thinks he does anyway).

Mr. Geza has, shall we say, a slightly slanted view of life, and his art merges right into it. His imagination is the water well that the sponge-beaked bird dips into, a closed system that runs on to infinity. The set starts out with a "doggie made a doo doo on the carpet so Mommy used the butt pliers on me" monologue on tape, mixed up like eggs and organ meat. This trademark Gezaism is absurd, but its absurdity masks the little kid tension that starts to snap between 15 and 25, if not at 50. "Not the butt pliers" over and over and over again.

And so on throughout each song. Extenuating the weirdness in everyday relationships by elevating their absurdity on out the window. One day they may indeed come out with "isotope soap" which will clean the face off the dirt. A Hungarian can hate Hungarians if he refuses to be Hungarian anymore.

The best two songs were "I Hate Punk" (or love punk, but don't know why for either) and "Paranoias", a relentless jagged over-the-shoulder chant. Geza confesses "I don't like it when you read my mind!". I confess: Oh shit, I wish I could, but I don't know why.

—Will L'Amato



SUN. (EASTER) APRIL 6 PIPPIN'S PUB
SUN. APRIL 13 MADAME WONG'S WEST
SUN. APRIL 20 CLUB 88

THE WEIRDOS at the Grammy Party

One night each year, those coke snorting, porsche driving idiots, collectively known as the record industry, get together to pat each other on the back and award little statues to those they've voted best in their respective recording fields. Best, ostensibly referring to quality, but more realistically giving the O.K. and thanks nod to those who are best sellers (Ronstadt, Eagles, Mangione, ad nauseum).

Thankfully, I didn't have to attend the awards segment of the Grammies, but did get to go to the party at the Biltmore Hotel after the ceremony (thanks H. and H.). Although I will admit to some morbid curiosity as to how the record industry gets down and boogies when all together, had the Weirdos not been playing the party, it would have taken a hefty bribe to get me anywhere near the place.

The party was held on the floor of the Biltmore, usually reserved for conventions and merchandising exhibitions, as we entered we were told that there was a country & western room, a disco room, and a new wave room. Hearing a big noise we headed for the new wave room where a huge crowd had gathered outside the door, dressed to the teeth and almost all wearing horrified looks on their faces. Inside the Weirdos had started their set to a room half full of people, all of whom were sitting at tables bearing the remains of dinner. Since I hadn't been there for dinner, I can only assume that said dinner had been so sumptuous and filling that no one could bring themselves to get up and dance. I mean it couldn't have been the Weirdos, they were great.

I've only seen the band once since the new line up and at the Grammy party, despite nightmarish baroque/rococo surroundings and a lousy audience, they were the best I've seen them yet, ever. John Denney's maniac moron/lunatic is a perfect and real characterization, no longer relying on funny clothes to be convincing — by the middle of the set, those few brave souls who had ventured onto the dance floor would run for cover when he'd step off the stage to dance among them. The band sounded big, full, and very tight: Far superior to any band that the audience had come out to honor with those silly statues. The whole thing was a real travesty. The Weirdos exhibited more wit, talent and fun in their guitar player's fucking foot than some of those multi-millionaire quasi-desperado guys have in their entire bands with half million dollar recording budgets, and yet, by the end of the Weirdos set maybe fifteen people remained in the room — ten of whom were friends and girlfriends of the band .. I figured at that point that everyone at the party had gone home, the record industry being so industrious, early to bed and all that, but a quick stroll down to the disco room proved me wrong. The place was packed and those who weren't dancing were watching a spot-lighted hetero-couple fake-fucking/dancing on a balcony inside the room. I also noticed a huge ice sculpture of the grammy award, melting like crazy (a sign from god or something), *that* made me feel better.

It's like this — I keep reading how the record industry is sick (financially) and in trouble. Well it's no wonder. The Weirdos play their hearts out to these philistines, outshining anything the grammy clique has come up with thus far and what do they do? Sit and listen? Get up and dance? Pull out the contracts? Hell no, they walk out and listen to homogenized, canned music and play at being decadent down the hall. That's why the record companies suck.

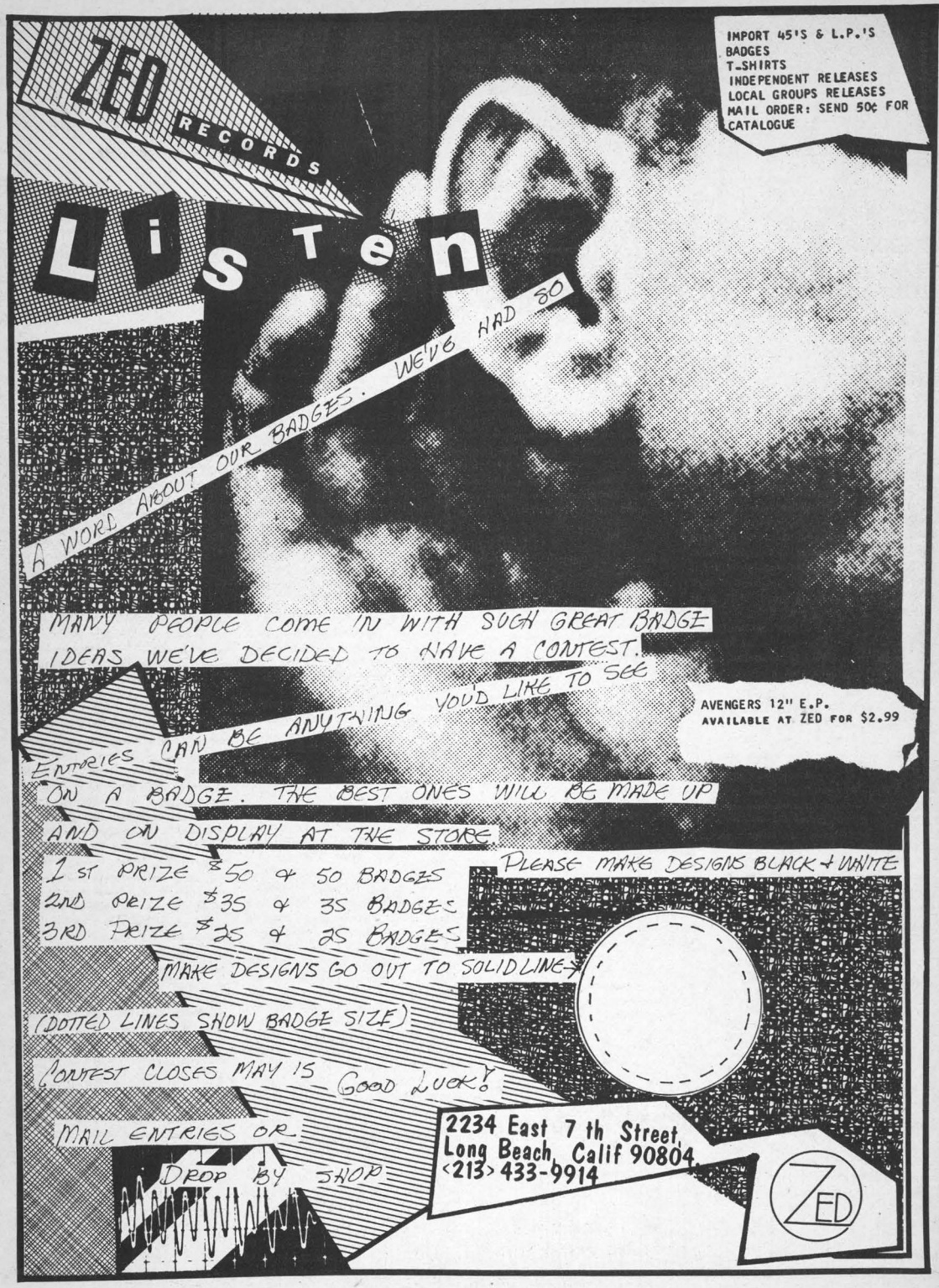
—Nicole

THE CIRCLE JERKS
THE URINALS
at Blackie's

The Urinals suffer from almost total non-exposure, (possibly because of an uninteresting name) and simple lack of socializing their way into better gigs. They are, unquestionably, one of the best new bands on the L.A. circuit. Their sound being one with hints of Syd Barrett, John Cale, or the Doors, (I drop those names only if you need them) but filtered through a good solid nihilistic punk sound and ending up in some unique territory between Wire and Middle Class. Their playing is more crude than anyone around, but the songs are stronger than 90% of any new music being written in this town. The detachment of the melodies emotes feelings of loneliness, anger, jadedness, chaos and despair. (The whole urban spectrum.) Easily the most moving new material in years. The only thing holding them back now is that they must execute the songs with the same emotion it took to write them. Should their performances also be able to inspire on like their music does, then they will be one of the best in the west. No lie . . . . . .

The Circle Jerks, however, have not been around that long. Keith (once of Black Flag) and Gregg (once of Red Cross) are familiar faces, but everything else about them is basically new. They've had a lot of technical problems and have been unable to get bigger gigs, but they easily stand a chance of being the hardest of the hardcore bands in L.A. Keith assaults the mike on every song with a passion not unlike jungle cat pounding on its kill. He twists and twirls around the stage, often failing to sing into the mike at all. His intensity is the complete maximum that punk singing can hit, or any kind of singing for that matter. When people come around and say that L.A. is behind the times, let them take a look at Keith and realize that such extreme expression as this goes far beyond time and current trends. This band could be playing polka music and still be the most effective group around . . . .

—Ranking Jeffrey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LP's

"SKA AUTHENTIC"
THE (original) SKATALITES
Studio One import

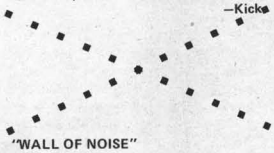
Yea, the brand new beat Sire and Chrysalis launched a few months back. However this particular collection preceded it by some slight fifteen years, may be more (no dates, naturally – no nothing, in fact, definitely authentic of that period), this still pops up now and then in a forgotten bin at some square record store in the section labelled "Music from exotic places", it's probably the tacky-looking thing stuck between two calypso anthologies. Grab it and run. You are now someone with culture. The instrumental outfit known as the Skatalites was the training ground for a load of major jamaican musicians, from Rico Rodriguez (now moonlighting with the Specials) to Tommy McCook (credited with horn contributions on one jamaican record out of two) to the late Don Drummond, legendary trombone player and rum drinker. Drummond even gets a special spot on the record cover, an unlikely generous gesture from the Studio One boss Sir Coxson Dodd, a ruthless tyrant better known for ripping off credits, fees, royalties and original ideas from absolutely everyone. More typical of his style is the absence of musicians' names, songwriting credits and whatever from this album. Instead you get a priceless definition of ska courtesy of some anonymous musicologist. Check: Of course Sir Coxson is the one who "started experimenting with the new beat" (not Chrysalis/Sire as it is universally believed). Know why old C.S. felt a new beat was what the world needed? Because it was time for "music which his followers (fuck the others) could dance to with ease, as well as listen to with pleasure". Hate on: "it was not as easy as it sounds. It took years of study and research to perfect the beat that we now are all enjoying. In 1957 Mr. Dodd variated the then existing beat with emphasis on the off beat produced by the guitar with strumming the rhythm, suitably backed up by the rest of the band. Our jamaican hep steppers showed how much they enjoyed the music, thereby giving it the shot in the arm it really deserved." End of history class. So my trendies play the record, ignore the snap crackle and pop of Mr. Dodd's impure vinyl and groove to tunes like "Lee Oswald", "President Kennedy", "Christine Keiler", "Royal Flush" and others. Now you're ready to form your very own nutty ska combo and be the talk of the town. Next month: how to improve your shitty music with basic dub trickery. And remember our motto: "Losers respect culture, winners respectfully use it."

–Kick

"ENGLISHMAN"
BARRINGTON LEVY
Greensleeves import

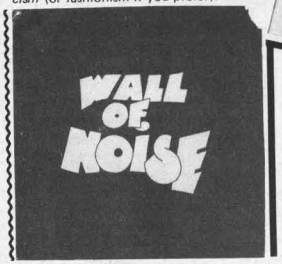
Super smooth and tasty collection of songs from the very cool Barrington Levy, hot property of the jamaican vocal set. Barrington favors wide bad boy tweed caps and short hair over dreadlocks and wooly hats, and on the cover photo is seen posing next to the gleaming hood of a Rolls Royce, not sitting by a shack puffing away. From this I dare to deduct Barrington hasn't totally given up on getting the most out of this world and just might even do his shopping in Babylon when his pockets are full. Hats off to the guy, he obviously has more than fine vocal chords going for him. Most tunes carry this worldly consciousness even further, girl matters and currency matters share the billing with the normal black man matter fussing and fighting matter and jah jah matter. The supporting music by the Roots Radics Band elegantly envelopes the sinuous vocals, the archetypal beat somehow much more muted than in the prolific Revolutionaries output of contributions to the Virgin sound. Even the unavoidable electronic indulgences remain unobtrusive. Prince Jammy and Scientists are the credited engineers who must be partly responsible for the first rate standards all throughout. As a label Greensleeves makes up for their relatively small output by releasing some of the very best product to ever come out of England *and* Jamaica. So far they have miraculously avoided the most flagrant weaknesses both centers of reggae production are famous for, and they should get the support they deserve. (Still abnormally grateful for the recent Augustus Pablo compilation. See last issue).

–Kick



"WALL OF NOISE"
DOCTOR MIX AND THE REMIX
Rough Trade records

In these days of Synthetic Life Forms, the recording studio is getting increasingly cocky. And why not? Among the agents of aggregation, the studio holds quite a privileged position – the ultimate nerve center of the zillion musico-modulators used by modern kids all over the world. The question posed here is whether "Studs" Recordo can go it alone in a solo career – with those pesky humans and the music they compose acting as mere technicians and back-up elements. Indeed, the oddballs who put this out have taken steps to remain as anonymous as possible – their name and the album title refer to studs, every vocal and instrumental act takes backseat to the fact of its pre-allegiance to studs career – even the memory you may have of the original versions (human type) are expurged right out of context. (One may notice the slightly devious choice of material – all the demi-god antecedents to punk are here.) Since the word is used so coyingly now, one *might* say that this album represents some sort of techno-aesthetic *Fascism* (or fashionism if you prefer).



Now that I've neatly backed myself into a dark metaphorical corner, I guess I should address just how successful Generalissimo Recordo's dictatorship has been – at least as far as we can tell from this vinyl document leaked out to the "free world". Well, Loadies and Genitalmen, it looks Pretty Grim in there. The first thing that struck us about Life Behind the Wall was the *uniformity*. Like a big grey blanket was laid over everything, you can perceive lumpy shapes underneath going through their functions, but can't exactly tell what they are – or what they would be outside the damper. For instance, in document A189 we see what appears to be a guitar, but it might also be a disfigured organ or a bag of kittens on the freeway. Likewise, in exhibits U81 through RU6, it clearly looks like a voice – but is it human, and if not then what devilish experiment are they subjecting people to? Secondly, and this is even less surprising than the first conclusion, we notice an intense *business*. Everything goes and goes, popping in and disappearing again, turning this and twisting that, running here or jogging in place– *layers* upon *layers* of simultaneous activity. We can assume from the grating and whining of it all that this relentless barrage of praxis is towards munition supply and war preparation. I suppose they object to "specialists', certainly to "artists", so the functions become blurred and dehumanized – "No Fun" sounds like "Supermen" with a different set of instructions to perform. No personality seems expressed, save for a certain degree of despair leaking out like factory smoke. By God, they can't quash despair from the human spirit, can they?!

To be frank, it would be unwise to make any sweeping generalities about it at this point. New information and investigation is needed, but one thing's for sure: Recordo is mad and powerful and ruthless. We can't tell his intentions at this date, maybe they are friendly, but until that point I recommend you acquire and study the documents smuggled out by Dr. Mix. The implications are, to say the least, quite disconcerting.

O.K. that's it, meeting over. Anyone wanna see my xerox copies of Max Beckmann paintings?

–Will L'Amato

"MUTANT POP 78/79"
FAST PRODUCT COMPILATION
(with the Mekons, Human League, Gang of Four, Scars and the Flowers)
PVC/JEM records

As they say among experts, "essential" package, it's now put out domestically by Jem's label PVC, a most worthy reissue if ever there was one, at least there are still some organizations that have more in mind than quantity and profit margins. Most likely many of you will already have one or more of the singles this compilation was based on, which is also a good reason to get the rest in one swoop, as far as I know Fast has never released any shit and every cut here is worthwhile. Besides the Mekons and the Gang of Four (now respectively immersed in Virgin and EMI) there are two tracks by the fantastic Scars (both from the 45), their material is harder and more straightforward than the usual oblique Fast stuff and what they sound like now (over a year later) should be rather interesting, remember to keep an eye out. In another genre you'll also get the first Human League single, it may be over two years old but certainly doesn't sound like it, in fact it's as advanced as most new techno 45's reviewed in this issue, later these true pioneers also moved on to Virgin's greener pastures and eventually released a disappointing LP. I think some of the more experimental groups are better off with an independent pressure-free label and Human League appear to support this claim. The rest of the fourteen tracks come from the more obscure 2-3 (the name is derived from the "average number of children in the nuclear family"), a trio that whips up some mean pop outbursts, and the incredible Flowers, a neo-something combo that produces classic modern noise with more instant appeal than all the pop craftsmen could ever wish for. The single off which these 2 songs come from is also reviewed in the 45's section of this *Slash*. remember the band with the ultra punk name,they'll go far I'll bet my headband on it. As some jamaican liner notes to a record said: if this record ain't in your stock your stock ain't saying nothing.

–Kick

"SOLDIER"
IGGY POP
Arista Records

It really is recording career time, isn't it? I said as much last time that I reviewed an Iggy record. But while there's still life there's hope, isn't there? Life? Iggy, *Funhouse* just went gold, though. It may have taken ten years, sure, but you found an audience. An audience that'll by no means dig this predominantly sorry excuse for excitement. Here and there memorable hooks, breaks, melodies, etc., pop up. In fact almost every song has some small idea or twist going for it. Then there's the lame "tongue & cheek" lyrics and the dismal production. Producer James Williamson got fired from this record by Iggy because he was trying to go for that easy-listening rock sound. Well, Iggy didn't do too bad himself in that direction. Doctor, where are those pills for low blood pressure, fatigue, and dulling of the imagination? These kiddie cats need some on the hurry-up side.

—MR. NOT-OK

"PROTECT THE INNOCENT"
RACHEL SWEET
Stiff/Columbia

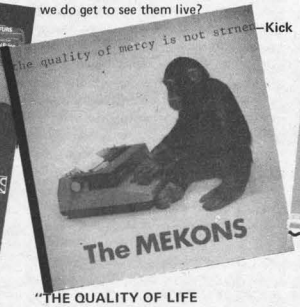
This is a pop record. It contains no ska, no dub, no ominous electronics or apocalyptic artistic visions, but that doesn't make it any less vital. Rachel Sweet has the values needed to make great music, any kind of great music: vision, conviction, intensity, ambition, lack of pretense. She does "New Rose" not because it's trendy to do a punk cover but because it's a great song; she does "New Age" because it has some very pretty lines (Lou Reed is like that sometimes) which she makes even more attractive. "Tonight" is "power pop" the way it was meant to be and once was (long before the term was invented); "Baby Let's Play House" stands up to the King's original. There's more, but hear it for yourself.

—Mikel

"THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS"
THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS
CBS import

If this album kept going at the pace and the tension of the opening cut, "INDIA", I would right now loudly proclaim the emergence of one of the most satisfying and accessible post-punk sounds to come out since Joy Division and the Fall (no other relationship mind you between those 3). Anyone that can take ½ a song just insidiously gathering energy at a near unaudible level before slowly bursting into an awesome punk wall of sound that features an overlapping wealth of whirling guitar hooks, darting saxophone team work, big beat drum thumping and shady smoky raspy vocals full of mysterious emotions sure has you convinced their world is more complex and fascinating than yours, why, such blending of unlikely elements you never dreamt could exist. The bad news is that the Furs can't keep the pretense throughout the rest of their collection. Nothing is unlistenable or even so-so but too many reference points start littering the path and the roots start showing pretty bad. Main stumbling block is the Bowie syndrome, singer Rep Butler just falls for it every time he has no particular framework to stick to. The bitchy critics in England's music papers have also criticized what they see as Rotten poses, which has to be real bullshit; It ain't easy to snarl and spit out your words without being called a Rotten clone. So what is anyone gifted with a decent snarl supposed to do? Whatever lyrics I caught in there are quite intriguing, like a hesitant romantic attitude that invariably turns ugly and cynical. In "Fall" it starts with "You will have a dress of white/you will have a ring of gold" naive cliches to end later on with a "We will make ourselves a scene/we will live our stupid dream" sobering slap. I like songs that evolve throughout their duration, it makes you feel less of a passive target, you know. "Flowers" is another great tune, not for the music which is mostly a lush Pistols take-off (could be lots worse), but for the amazing visionary quality of the lyrics, I'd quote the whole thing if I thought I could get away with it ("too wordy, cut the crap Kickface"). I'm not certain who or what it is about: "We cut his eyes with razor blades/and out of him comes foul white light" but I sense my nihilistic circuits shoot off sparks everytime the line is sung. Well, enough hints and aesthetic justifications, I'm all in all still disappointed ('cept for the sharpest moodiest sleeve cover of the year), but in no way convinced this was just a hype that fell short of its bluff. CBS or not, there's a lot of original strength in this band and I'm still a fan. Wonder how all my theoretical appraisal will fare when we do get to see them live?

—Kick



"THE QUALITY OF LIFE IS NOT STRNEN"
THE MEKONS
Virgin import

The Mekons are close buddies of the Gang of Four, and while their pals deal with ideological dilemmas and political 50 dollar questions they are content to handle the more intimate human problems, they don't attempt to find solutions, stating the state of affairs of the human heart is a big enough project, especially when you're a Mekon and confusion is an integral part of your survival kit. Sometimes you'd swear their only task is to restore nobility to wimpiness: They beg, they expose their innards, they wave their vulnerability like a banner and if their friends happened to be a less solid musical source they'd most likely wrap their point of view in the corniest melodic outbursts. Of course I'm just pushing some initial observations to their unacceptable conclusions, I'm certain the Mekons ain't the snivelling shadows of the Gang of Four, in a way they actually can be considered as the more mature of the two gangs, at least they don't set themselves up for target practice the way the militant Four do. Let's drop the comparisons as we used that game for all it was worth. What the Mekons do is not on the menu, Cashbox hasn't digested it yet and the rock masses haven't been tempted to shake their booties in unison. Offbeat and uncondescending, occasionally catchy but don't count on it for too long, they play irrational outbursts of sound that may have an inner logical progression but pay no heed to hooks and effects. Performed acoustically by one performer some of it would be awfully close to a lunatic ward form of talking blues. Maybe most emotions are, when taken out of context, mild forms of lunacy anyway. Fortunately the raw untrimmed guitar and drum banging used by the band minimizes the suggestions of spaced-outness while forcing you to identify with the awkward statements. And there is still enough aggressivity throughout for everyone to rely on in case of doubt. There'll always be some upturned nose twat to proclaim that they can't really play or sing and are turning their imperfections into a style. Just tell him they play as competently as they feel, they refuse to separate the two and rock music has had more than its fill of technical virtuosos that doubled as emotional cretins. I'm all for a reversal of that trend, and if it kills rock n roll as a respectable musical genre that's too bad. Just cherish your collectors' series and get out of the way. These fumblers are all right.

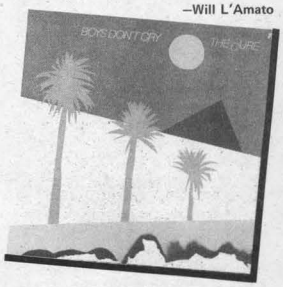
—Kick

"DAYS IN EUROPA"
THE SKIDS
Virgin import

This is a very good album, but equally disturbing. Overtly political, but politics shrouded in death and decadence imagery, steeped in pan-Germanic/pseudo-Nietzschean tradition, obscured as far as possible into mythic inevitability. If a band presents a concrete political stance they at least give you the grace of reaction, leave you free to agree, refute, or ignore it as you will — but a band turning politics and war into poetics tends to set off a panic in the guts. Panic because their vision is uniformly grim and passionless, starting at the point where the political process turns to butchery and the individual into wood chords tossed into nationalistic bonfires. But they don't sound concerned with naziistic madness, they seem to see some sort of splendor and grace, some sort of transcendental artistry in the Aryan Dream: "Hail to the mighty, the ritual begins/Hail to Apollo, the cleanser of sins/Hail to Europa, she always wins."

There's undoubtedly a degree of brilliance in this music. But even its twisted sincerity is confounded by the ultra-cheesy packaging it comes in: a cover showing a supermanesque Olympian being crowned, old English-German typography, 18 pictures of the band in the latest decadent fashion designer clothes, like they picked up on the European nightmare because it's an opportunity to play "exquisite boys". Playing little nazis because of Hitler's "taste and etiquette" shows the most disgusting kind of numbness — worse than a lynch mob because the skids are hardly some ignorant shitbrains. "Me? I don't know anymore if *any* of anything means anything, maybe it's all a good joke on those who try to figure it out. Better play it safe and listen to Burl Ives for my ideology lessons. I have a headache boys, so strike fast.

—Will L'Amato



"BOYS DON'T CRY"
THE CURE
PVC/JEM records

This is new territory to me, I only knew the "Killing an Arab" (included) single which left a mark on my mind for a good couple of days. Okay but too sketchy, no meat, just a framework. Which after listening to this collection seems to be a Cure trademark, sorry I didn't know it was a style, everyone can make mistakes. This is a domestic release, it combines all the british singles (latest one, "Jumping on someone else's train" is a small masterpiece, taut and precise and over before the full effect sets in — a proof pop music can be as proud as any other form) with cuts from their "Three Imaginary Boys" british LP. Some songs work immediately, the total lack of self-indulgence in the musical structure sometimes emphasizes the weary naivete of what sounds like mood vignettes for precocious teenagers, it's less lyrical or exuberant than Buzzcocks but it's as emotionally strung out. Other times it's kind of coy and bratty and a bit too important for its own loafers. Forgivable but must not pull that number too often. In a category all by itself the Cure is, too snotty and simpy for street credibility (no surf punks for you guys — they draw the line at the Buzzcocks) but too cool and individualistic for the new wave pop wasteland. Come on all you sensitive loners on the fringe of the melee, this is the band for you. Beats staring wistfully at every fuckin sunset you know.

—Kick

"TOO MUCH PRESSURE"
THE SELECTER
2 Tone import

Round three. The new ska hits again, get ready to put out the bucks and put on them dancing shoes. For whatever it's worth this to me is undoubtedly the best out of the Madness/Specials/Selecter triumvirate (look it up and use it at the first occasion – be somebody). This album is in fact so good and so real it has already entered my very own "Classics of All Time" sweepstakes, and I ain't jiving. There is so much in there, so many little masterpeices you gotta take it easy at first or you might get indigestion. All thirteen songs pack so much punch, so many hooks you just risk being incapacitated, unable to relate to all that vinyl you keep on your shelves collecting dust and wishing it was wine cept most records don't taste better with age don't believe all the anal retentive wimp collectors. A few do, most simply remind us how simple everything was then, and that goes for 1977 masterpeices as well. Thing is the Selecter bypass all this by niftily bringing back such simplicity without really giving the game away. No revival or faithful copying in here, they somehow reinvent the straightforwardness that has almost disappeared in popular music (the stupidity is still doing very well, thank you) without once coming off as good time advocates. Ska may be their launching pad but there never was so many twists, crisp guitar outbursts or challenging lyrics to the original stuff. You don't have to know shit about Prince Buster or the Skatalites to tingle all over when this noise blasts out, it is strictly now and the tortured writing elitists in some of the british press who have recently started the official ska backlash ought to get their instinctive response circuits back in working condition or their mental fluff is going to weigh less and less until ridicule eventually forces them into a more sensible line of employment. *This is not escapism,* and fuckin stop bringing out PIL to justify your destructive pigeonholing and dramatize the issues. You throw Selecter and others into the everburning fires for sending the nation's youth into a dancing frenzy, praise Lydon and co for keeping the edge to pop noise but conveniently ignore the latter's statements about PIL being nothing more than a dance band. Do you want your rock n roll bypassed or don't you? The Selecter are doing as much in that direction as Scritti Politti, cept there's too much obvious fun involved and that has always bugged the shit ouf of failed theology students.

But back to the real world where thank god we don't have to have a crisis of faith every time something bright and sharp comes out of a pair of speakers. Enjoy this record my brethren, the Good Lord and Slash Magazine want you too. Go ahead my children, skank and bop and sweat the badness out. The Selecter have achieved what Madness and Specials only suggested as a goal, and their upcoming May visit should confirm it once and for all: in the eighties rock n roll lost its monopoly on youth fun. I'll dance to that.

–KICK

"THE BRIDGE"
THOMAS LEER & ROBERT RENTAL
Industrial records import

This has been out for some time now but what's a few months with timeless classics? Two mad technologists combine forces and produce the ultimate background music LP, with a few upbeat slices thrown in for variety's sake. If you've heard Wall of Voodoo live you'll have a pretty good idea of what some of it can sound like, tunes like Monochrome Day's and Day Breaks, Night Heals have the same bopping light-circuited feeling Stan and his gang have been developing for months in the midst of overwhelming general indifference, but Los Angeles is light years away from London town and dabbling with the slightly unusual don't get you no respect in this pathetic pueblo. Like man, are you new wave, what or fuck??? Anyway, to get back to the bridge, there is also a substantial amount of total spaciness that will or will not go down an (electric) storm in your part of town. Just depends what side of the river you're standing on, and what prejudices you forgot to dump when packing your survival kit and whether you'd rather cross the bridge or blow it up. In other words, it's everyone for himself with this stuff, you like it you hate it you get something from it or you don't, do what you think is best it's most likely the wrong move anyway. Welcome to the eighties, where yesterday's rules only apply on odd or even days, you figure out which (unless it's an exception and everything is different – forget it, you haven't got a clue. Trust your instincts, it's still the only way to bite the dust with dignity).

–Kick

CRUISING – Soundtrack
by Various Artists
(Lorimar records)

Most of the bands of this soundtrack, I don't even want to mention. There's no point in attacking groups that have nothing in common with your own musical beliefs. People like John Hiatt play a different kind of New Wave than the one I listen to, so I refuse to comment.

The local interest here is the Germs, who have let loose one of their best songs ever. More daring than much of their album, "Lion's Share" separates punk music miles from rock music while at the same time being equally as effective. A feat only previously accomplished by the Damned or some early L.A. groups like the Skulls. The lyrics are unintelligible, the guitar grinding, the chord melody strong, and the pace furious. All of which meets the requirements for an official "punk classic". When you hear the Germs alongside of all this other New Wave jive, you'll be proud they're from L.A. where the music stays honest and means more than just fashion and trends.

The biggest letdown, for me personally, is the Willy DeVille songs. I never associated him with new music, but rather filed him beside the Drifters and Little Willie John in my R&B collection. Sure, he did lots of funky/boogie garbage, but his slow ballads like "Guardian Angel" and "Party Girls" were the best lonelycity R&B songs to ever have to suffer the soul-less seventies. Certainly the most New York sounding material to come out of New York's scene. However, Willy got too fucked and too disappointed at being lumped in with Elvis Costello and Nick Lowe garbage, to carry it on, so he disappeared. On this soundtrack, he tries to bounce back, but instead limps back like a wounded soldier. Too much funk, too much boogie, too much jive, and not enough conviction. There's not even a trace of R&B influence and the songs evoke images of West Hollywood better than that of Union Square. Willy's disappointment is now my disappointment too.

So, anyway, if you're into buying albums for one song, then this is made for you. I always thought combination L.P.'s were full of shit anyway. This one is headed straight for Aarons.

–Uptown Ranking J.

"DANTZIG TWIST"
MARQUIS DE SADE
Pathe/EMI import

A fair amount gets said about this in this issue's article on the group so I'll just say that once you get past the initial "Who does that sound like?" games some songs will undoubtedly invite, you might find this record extremely insidious and lasting. Sometimes as structurally satisfying as the best of Magazine, sharp and catchy, elusive in meaning, affected and naive, this music has class and guts. What it lacks they will have to find in themselves cause their selective borrowing must have sent the rest of the french bands rushing like pigeons after bread crumbs for the remaining sources of past inspiration. Marquis de Sade is almost there where it counts. They're too good to fail.

–Kick

"GET HAPPY"
ELVIS COSTELLO
Columbia records

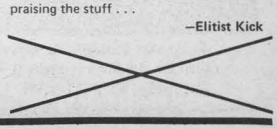
One big point in their favor is there are an awful lot of songs: twenty tunes, most being under two minutes long. One big point not in their favor is that fourteen or fifteen aren't complete. Even after the fifth or sixth listen, I kept looking for something to grab onto. That's speaking as objectively as I can manage. Because, frankly, I've finally figured out one of the things that's always bothered me about Elvis: his voice. He doesn't sing badly, I'm just not that crazy about all the little tricks he's unconsciously picked up along the way from the likes of Bob Dylan. It sounds wrong alot of the time and is not to my taste. Another bone I have to pick is that album by album (even as the songs themselves have been getting better) the guitars have been mixed down to nothing. Everything floats along on a sea of organ, bass and drums which is only occasionally inspiring. Holes in songs that could be plugged to their advantage by more dynamic guitar are left floundering by the wayside and, as a result, run out of steam. Funny that the few exceptions come awfully close to being great. I liked "King Horse" the best, then others "New Amsterdam", "Can't Stand Up For Falling Down" and "I Stand Accused". As usual Elvis' words are the best thing about him but this time around there isn't the same crystalline focus or concentration at work.

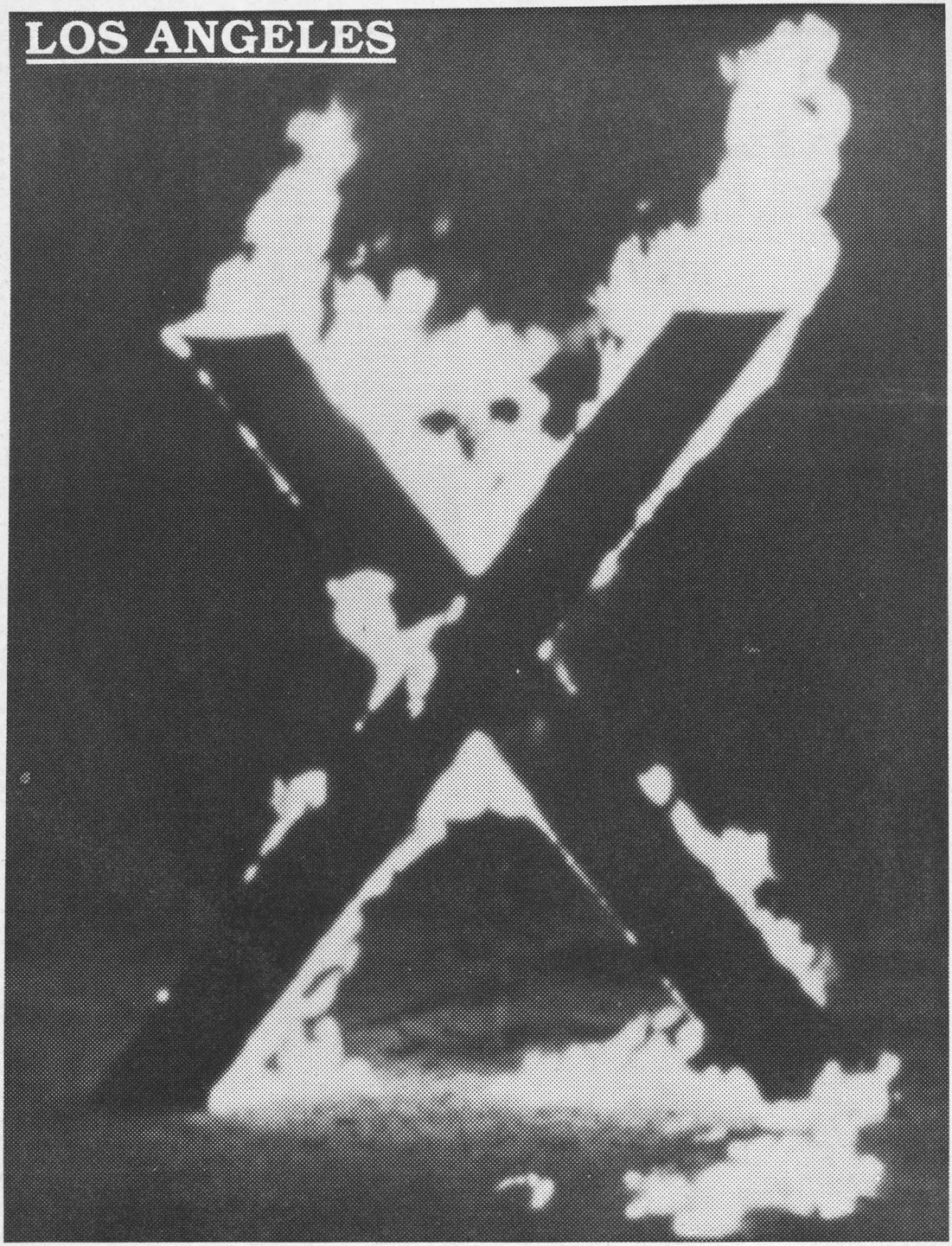
–Chris D.

ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVERS
IN THE DARK
Dindisc import

I know there are a few here at Slash/Punk Headquarters-West Coast Territory that truly think I have finally disconnected something grand and final – a good mind now cracked beyond repair. Imagine, I proudly admit to thoroughly liking and admiring this LP. More, I blast it to whoever is around and even hum it to myself in the bathroom. What some of my partners regard as wimp schlock slick chic muzak I consider moving, honest and complex music. Anyone who has a heart ... So what if there's only two of them behind the sound and they're a bit low on the rage level? So what if the cover is too "design" and the titles a bit precious. It's finally no more packaged and calculated than Crass, just the other end of the spectrum. Packaging and imaging are vile when they hide a profund vacancy of product (take a bow, Gary Newman) – whether it's with punk puke lettering, embossed elegance or supermarket sci-fi pseudo atmosphere. Still, everyone in these subcultures reacts like Pavlov dogs after a crash course in populism and roots credibility. Me I'm just after emotions, ideas, surprizes and challenges. And I'm afraid, dear purist comrades, that I have found all this and more in this record. I won't display evidence or produce examples, it's all closely entwined anyway and a bit too intimate for auditorium rethorics. But believe me, these guys sing better than anyone else in the techno world and they have more moods available in their circuits than you've been scheduled to live thru meaningful relationships. Now what I fear is a sudden "discovery" by the media and the mass public, I fear an overkill that would force me to find rarer kicks and harder-to-reach retreat spots. Being "recognized" by the network of fat jocks, meaningless new wave charts, trendy status-granting decadence circles can truly be lethal for originality. The punks and chaos connaisseurs won't come near this (too Eno, too civilized), bless their finnicky appetites, but I hope the living dead of the new wave set don't smell fresh meat and slobber on everything. Yet here I go, praising the stuff . . .

–Elitist Kick





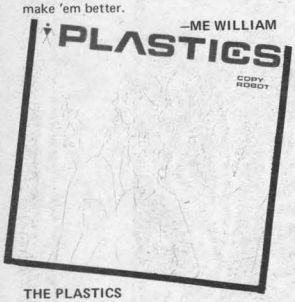
X lp on Slash Records will be out soon. Produced by Ray Manzarek. Distributed in the US by JEM Records East, 3619 Kennedy Rd., S. Plainfield, NJ 07080/JEM Records West, 18629 Topham Ave., Reseda, CA 91335. Direct mail order send $6 to Slash Records, P.O. BOX 48888, L.A., CA 90048.

45's

THE SUBHUMANS EP
Quintessence Records

Loud, brazen, anti-intellectual stuff reminiscent of those times when the Germs recorded on cassettes. "Slave to My Dick" is a nice expose of the *real* seat of a man's intellect, "Fuck You" condenses communication skills to the bare essentials. Good music to skin your knees to, especially if there's no mom to make 'em better.

—ME WILLIAM



THE PLASTICS
(COPY/ROBOT)
Rough Trade import

Yet another addition to the modern pop chaos, jerky mechanical miniature Shogun warriors squeaking on a background of perky rhythm boxes and flashing synthesizers. Pop music for Speedracer and his pals. Must immediately erase the early Devo references or self-destruct.

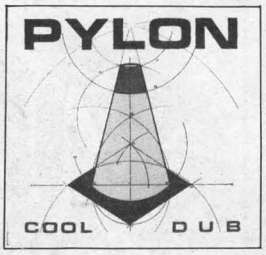
—Kick

▽ ▽ ▽ ▽ ▽ ▽ ▽ ▽

BARRINGTON LEVY/TRINITY
(LOSE RESPECT/
SINCE YOU'RE GONE)

A Trinity giant "disco" 45 package, on the other side it's a singer named Roman Stewart (?) that replaces Barrington in the opening singing slot before Trinity steps in and breathlessly continues the job in talking fashion. I don't know how this formula came about but that's all you'll see on the racks of specialized stores: piles of "disco" 45's with usually one singer and one talker taking credits and each side consisting of the major part of a regular song suddenly turning into a d.j. track. This team work is even occasionally improved upon with the addition of a related dub track either after the talking or throughout the B side. So in one disc you have all three major treatments of a tune. Obviously reggae in Britain and Jamaica can boast of having some pretty serious consumers looking after its financial health. But sometimes the combination of top artists or artist and producer (whenever he is a big enough shot to feel entitled to joint credits along with half or a whole side showcasing his abilities) is irresistible to a connaisseur even though it might sound somehow redundant and indulgent to an impatient outsider. Anyway this particular one here on roots british label Greensleeves is one of the real primo ones, singer supreme Barrington Levy is in fine wailing form and Trinity handles his part like a master of the bopping tongue as well as producing both sides. On side B Roman Stewart croons and la-las okay but real middle of the road until Trinity tiptoes in and grabs the microphone, turning the pretty ballad upside down, the melody steps back the rhythm intensifies and here it goes again. Check one of those combination records out sometime, it will possibly influence other styles of popular music, and meanwhile you can lose yourself in some bizarre vinyl you didn't know existed.

—Kick



PYLON
(Cool/Dub)
Caution Records

Athens, Georgia? So what gives? Why is this obscure southern college town producing some of the most unique new dance music around? First the B-52s and now this. Pylon has nothing to do with the B's campy cute kitsch cut-ups (thank god, some of you mutter) – their sounds are more straight forward, yet the guitarist approaches things from the same oblique angles that many of the more modern english bands delve in. The singler is a warbly, growly intense voice, she may render most of the lyrics unintelligible, but the intensity more than communicates the feeling of what she's going on about. "Cool" is a modern torch song, while "Dub" is the real knock out, single repeating bass note as the guitar works itself into a proper frenzy and duets with Miss Guttural. An attempt to create a constant hypnotic dance music that is quite successful. A good new american group for once and it's about time.

—C.L.

GLORIA BALSAM
(Fluffy/Rockin High Hopes)
Richmond Records

"Bring the next idiot in!" shouted the magistrate of the Revolutionary Tribunal. Two swarthy guards dragged in a somewhat strange looking American girl, "What crimes has this ugly dork of a slut faced pig committed?!" demanded the judge. The prosecutor held the evidence. "Your honor, this useless nerd had the nerve to put out counter revolutionary music at a time when it was essential to reeducate the masses and smash the status quo. Just listen to this puerile garbage!" As the evidence was played the judge winced in pain, "My God, what simpering, inane crap! This girl's lousey voice is beyond redemption, and her cohorts in sin are capitalizing on her lack of talent to create a very inefficient parody. This shit eschews a bourgeois mentality – bad camp is no laughing matter. Give this wretch the fate she deserves!" The petite Miss was dragged screaming from the room and savagely thrown into a chamber where two female guards grabbed her and smeared various brands of dog food on her. She had once sung about cute little dogs named Fluffy, but now, as she was thrown into a room with several of them, her eyes widened in horror as the mongrels, half crazed with starvation, attacked her with a ravenous appetite. "It's a dog eat dog world," laughed one of the guards as the girl's last scream was muffled by the blood coagulating in her useless throat.

—C.M. Lee

THE HATES EP
Faceless records

Yet more minimal headbanging from Texas. In the grand 1 2 3 4 purist tradition (shades of Middle Class), very approximate recording job no douby for strict ideological reasons. No new wave limp shit around here, no neo nothing, you drink your punk straight or you don't come bugging us. Get the message? Beats the surrounding college crap any day.

—Kick

SKY JUICE
COJACK & LIZA
Joe Gibbs records

I don't know why nobody thought of this before. It's such a simple idea that works & works & works. Coy little flirting and pillow talk to the reggae beat. Charming record full of humor & bounce. Sort of like cats playing on the carpet. Coolness.

—Ranking J.

GETTING FROM BAD TO WORSE
BURNING SPEAR
Tuff Gong records

Spear's first single in a long time. He can explain why himself. Distributed by Bob Marley's own label. It lives up to all expectations of new Spear music, as I see it, a lighter sound, but no less passionate. Which is right, 'cause if you spent a long enough time trudging through the jungle, you eventually reach a clearing. Apparently Spear has hit one musically, which works just as well, but let's not talk about it until the album comes out. .

—Ranking Jeffrey Lea

SWELL MAPS
(LET'S BUILD A CAR/BIG MAZ
IN THE COUTRY)
Rather/Rough Trade import

This gang I had started to think of as self-indulgent little twats that wouldn't hesitate to release all the cute doo-doos they could think of but this restores their credibility (bet they were scared for a second there!) and most certainly deserves a hearty hug. "Let's build a car" is a nervous stripped-down punkoid banging ballad with a dubious piano thrown in, I'm still working on the metaphor and the message in the lyrics but I'm sure it's not religious. B side strictly instruments separated by layers of magnetic fields – experimental break for the junior set. And it does not wallow or burst into giggles as I thought it was bound to any second. Nevertheless, Swell Maps should not be trusted.

—Kick

DEUTSCH-AMERIKANISHE
FREUNDSCHAFT
(Gewalt/Kebabtraume)
Mute Records import

There is a fuckin' tidal wave of electronic pop exercises flooding the market recently, wherever you turn they're pluggin' the machinery in, scrambling your tv reception and flexing their silicon chips muscles from the Walls of Voodoo to the Bridges in the Dark. Since the current output offers as much variety as the more traditional fields there's nothing to get suspicious about, and yes some of it is quite dancable. I get the odd feeling this particular outfit has certain ties with Germany, the techno motherland par excellence. One side is a variation of the archetypal jerky robot tune that changed the life of four Akron geeks – it's good but sung in German which somewhat obscures the message – other side certainly is another cup of poison, like an incredible hallucinatory aggression that can pin you to its cold surface like an insect to the wall. Blast it while your roommate is tripping and take notes. You too can contribute to the advancement of general knowledge!

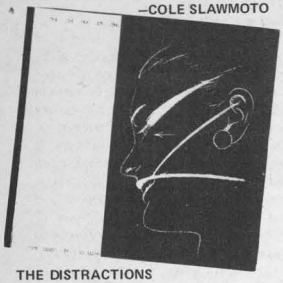
—Kick

THE MONOCHROME SET
"DISQUE BLEU" EP
Rough Trade

Fairly lightweight droll urbanismo that sounds even less fun to play than to listen to. I can't figure out their influences, but that doesn't mean they're original. On the way to the stereo to turn it off

my left foot got tangled up in thread. I couldn't tell where that came from either, so I just broke it.

—COLE SLAWMOTO



THE DISTRACTIONS
(TIME GOES BY SO SLOW/ PILLOW FIGHT)
Factory import

Most unlike what we've started to expect from Factory. Terminal pop, most catchy, big stainless steel hook under treacherous appearances. Bound to move on to bigger things. B side more immediately accessible. A real beat combo.

—Kick

A.K.A.
(Sharp/Two Territories/Mark of Cain)

Nebraska avant rock? O what a glorious renaissance we are in the midst of. Murky, jazzy, with occasional moments of instrumental worth. Overall boring impact. Pompous crap actually. And is that one, two, three, yes, THREE beards I spot on the negative pic on the sleeve? Busted!

—Kick

THE URINALS
(Dead Flowers + 2/Surfin with the Shas)
Happy Squid records

Big Urinals fan Ranking Jeffrey warned me this was in fact rather old and not very representative of the present Urinals art. Whatever, this undoubtedly wins the "Forming" trophy of the month. Must have been recorded and mastered in a one track Tijuana studio. The music is ... worthy of the award, you know exactly what I mean. There are two ways to experiment with music, and this is the other one. The band's name did not prepare me for such sophistication. Still, no New West profile for you, scum. What a relief eh?

—Kick

NO JOE EP
Round Raoul records

This No Joe outfit (what a name!) was apparently part of the 30 seconds over D.C. compilation package which my lieutenants advised me to stay away from. Hey I like this band quite a bit, it's not really this or that or even that other style, it's not shiny new and it's not old weathered tired shit it's cool I think it's cool. Rock n roll no doubt with fringe traces, smart garage aesthetics and a funky delivery, I'll take more I'm convinced. Includes a live version of the Sonics' Strychnine that bubbles nicely.

—Kick

THE HUNS
(GLAD HE'S DEAD/BUSY KIDS)
God Records (Austin)

The band that got busted because their lead singer kissed a cop onstage. Subsequent press coverage of their abuse was far out of proportion to the Huns' slight and nearly negligible merits. They've got a great drillpress of a guitar sound but not much else. Singer Phil Tolstead is a cross between Russel Mael and Tweetie Pie with a lot of glitter problems to boot. "Glad He's Dead" about JFK and "Busy Kids" have stupid words that fail to be redeemed even by their stupidity. Who knows what these guys are really like, though. Take a look at the wonderfully tasteful STM porn color shot on the back of the pic sleeve and you'll wonder where Dean Corll went wrong.

—MR. OK

PROJECT 197 EP
Independent Project records

I'm no big supporter of avant noise and tape recorder worship but occasionally I can be as lofty as the next wimp and appreciate lab music. I like this record very much, which makes me quite impressed with myself. 5 or 6 very brief (brevity's always nice when you're dabbling with the aural outer limits) tracks of percussion guitar and bass, good oppressive atmosphere a la Industrial records and a real driving rhythm to keep you on the subterranean tracks throughout the ride. Includes a giant explosion of screeching intensity, like a stretched out amphetamine overamp behind the forehead. Last but not least is the graphic packaging, painted innersleeve blending in with the vinyl, mysterious snapshot insert, a miniature multi media little thing like this keeps me interested for minutes. Some people really know how to overcome art's bad reputation. Very very devious.

—Kick

DISTURBED
(I DON'T BELIEVE/BETRAYED)
Parole records import

More pop with an edge a la Pretenders. Like Pretenders in the synthesis between driving pop and wacky punk girl singing but edgier and sharper and less immediately derivative. A side actually first rate regardless of categories. Don't snub this stuff.

—Kick

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THE CHUMPS EP
Round Raoul records
Funked out white urban crap hesitating between cool and hot (actually stated on label – cool side and hot side replacing the A and B bit), not bad when being cool but truly great when going for the hot approach, one brief thing called "Go Go God" wakes me up faster than anything this side of James Chance. Music as a combat weapon, hyperaggressivity on a bed of delirious saxophones, we are gettin better equipped for merciless survival every day. This Round Raoul label sure gained my attention in no time. Anymore goodies?

–Kick

MAGAZINE
(A song from under the floorboards/ Twenty years ago)
Virgin import
After a relatively lengthy period of silence Devoto and company come back with a vengeance. Not at all like the theatrical and meticulous sounds of before, this is evenly divided between accessible pop and experimental pop, a double attack that brilliantly contradicts early rumors of artistic death and irrelevance. The albums didn't do too much for me with some exceptions here and there but this is as exciting as the most exciting stuff of the day from Orchestral Manoeuvers to Joy Division to the rest of the Fast/ Factory/Object/Rough Trade elements of wild inventiveness that are reshaping the musical future. And for once I even prefer the more commercial tune, "floorboards" knocked me silly first time I heard it and has not let go yet. One of these pop monsters that seem innocent enough but something in there hits the target dead center and your emotional center liquifies within ten seconds. Other side nowhere as pretty more in a Pop group vein with the steel understructure exposed and the tissues brought to the surface, of course it never goes nowhere near as close the edge of the precipice as the Pop group constantly does but it's still tasty and nicely exotic. You've guessed right, I play this single an awful lot.

–Kick

THE ENEMY
(BANG BANG YOU'RE DEAD/ TRENDY VIOLENCE)
King Tut records
There aren't words for how much I despise this. It has very little to do with the musical aspect; that is certainly the least of the evils. It's the phoniness and bragging, self-important hype that's gotten so under my skin that I'm seeing a particularly hot shade of red at the moment. Singing is empty posturing and the subject matter vacuously superficial. And as for Side 2 look what pot is calling the kettle black. To really raise some hackles try searching out their insult-to-the-intelligence promo poster describing a band that's – hey, watch out now – pretty damn dangerous! And to wrap things up, put another nail in the coffin, etc., they're still exploiting that bust that happened to them up in Seattle over a year ago. Gross.

–CHRIS D.

SCRITTI POLITTI
THE JOHN PEEL SESSION EP
THE 12 INCH 45 "4 A SIDES" EP
St Pancras records/Rough Trade import
So out of the mainstream as to be unapproachable unless you put away all the notions you ever had on music, industry, entertainments, the role of the artist, the duty of the audience ... What, you have no specific point of view on any of the above? Scritti Politti stays up all night pondering dialectical dilemmas and moral issues and you just mindlessly go on consuming? Do you think it's easy to be a musician and a recording artist when you know what your association with such an industry implies? Anyway, you dumb lumpen punk, even music on a political quest can have some charms, and here Scritti Politti reluctantly produces some challenging noise structures and vocal adventures, just keep alert because they constantly pull the rug from under the songs – a treacherous path thru a maze of potentiality, if you get my drift. All right, Madness they ain't. If you just want to skank to syncopated stories of underwear thieves don't botherwith this. But remember there will always be someone coming up to you in the middle of the party muttering something about conspiracies and how there's more to this than meets the eye and do you know what really hides behind all these good times obsessions. Well it's true. But relax, knowing the choices and making a choice are two distinct processes. Literally, One step beyond! Well, fuck me, I even have confused myself now. That's Scritti Politti for you.

PS: Whatever happened to Desperate Bicycles, another bunch slightly obsessed with revealing production costs and financial breakdowns of every breakfast or guitar restringing they indulged in??

–Kick

TUXEDO MOON
(What Use?/Crash)
Ralph records
Technology in the service of unashamed romanticism. The warmest of all the synthesizer bands, will most likely end up writing movie scores for outer space love stories. "What's the use" is very pleasant, innocent. I want new toys, I want new dimensions, the most polite expression of dissatisfaction I have ever heard (on the other side of town the Mutants are screaming we need a new drug in a much less refined manner). Crash is a lush instrumental with perpetual motion ambitions. Never thought I'd use the adjective "lovely" in connection with Ralph records.

–Kick

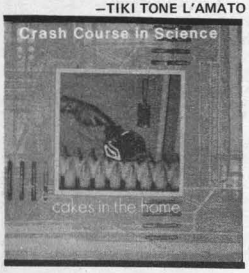
EAZYTEETHEAZYTEETHEAZYTEETHE

THE FUNKTIONARIES
(DEUTSCHLAND UBER DISCO/ REPLACABLE PARTS)
Modern Fetish records

This would have been swell just by itself. The music and lyrical content are competent and witty all by themselves, even skirting around the large issues that keep us coughing up bile.

But the dopes had to include an unbelievably pretentious press release with it, just so us dense critics could get it. For instance, I had no way of knowing that this "political cabaret" "echoes the spirit of Brecht and Weill", or that it is a "unique fusion of elements" (Industrial Funk unique? I'm doing it myself and lord knows I'm not 'unique') "ready to be unleashed upon the world". It's instructive to know that this is part of a "Job Like Any Other Review", but not that leader Maldoror Funktion (aka Tom Ward) "has a multi-faceted career" including "being asked to contribute to the L.A. Times". Big shit. Delineating their strategy for converting dehumanization, nazism, consumerism, disco and purposelessness into one big absurd joke full of reflexive ironies takes away the punch line in favor of a testy slap. When the review rolls in, I'll go see it. In the meantime, I should like to thank "Mal" for unwittingly exposing my own pretentious stupidity about the State of the World. Nervous laughter may relieve tension, but it won't get us anywhere.

—TIKI TONE L'AMATO



CRASH COURSE IN SCIENCE
(Kitchen Motors/Mechanical Breakdown/Cakes in the Home)

Unbearably cute. College idiots' idea of modern satire. Rich fuckers too, fancy pic sleeve, flash package, what a waste. Are we not hip? Kitchen motors putdown, o what an indictment of modern life and family values! Go stick your fingers in a meat-grinder.

—Kick

HUMAN SWITCHBOARD
(Prime of My Life/In My Room)
Square Records

Things are picking up around here! From Ohio, I know we all got sick of the Akron hype, but this would stand up no matter where it was from. "Prime of My Life" is one of the most joyful sounds I've heard in months – rhythm and blues horns ride on top of no wave guitar and a runaway train drum beat, clocking in at two minutes plus, it's a great thing to run around the house to. B side is sort of Pearls Before Swine meet Jonathan Richman, well, not that precious, thank you, but it has one of those slow dramatic buildups you have to be a little patient with. The rewards, however, are obvious.

—C.I.

PRAIRIE FIRE
(TURN UP THE HEAT/NO MERCY)

This is the real stuff, it jumps out the speakers with machine guns blaring. This band calls for Action, not contemplation, and its message is clear as a razor: smash capitalism, imperialism and all forms of political oppression; overthrow America, Russia and all other present governments practicing inter-class slavery; question, move, break out, shoot to kill, re-evolve, Revolt.

If you think this is poo-poo hippie time you're a dumbfuck zombie who takes image as spirit, and it would be best for you to bury your head in Rockaway Beach with your punk duds and kiss dolls, and listen to the gurgling of the next new wave. No time for self-conscious abstractions or waiting for developments. At least wake up long enough to hate them, because even if you don't agree with Prairie Fire's Marxist-Maoist doctrine (and I'm not sure if I do), even if you think that "protest music" is old hat (safe, fun "punk music" is more in) even if you have such a neat life and bosso imagination that you're totally absolved from "politics", this band is addressing you with a hard slap to the face. There's far more to man than politics, wages and culture, but unless certain cows are slain we may never get to it ... just more hamburger meat.

—Will L'Amato

CABARET VOLTAIRE
(SILENT COMMAND/ CHANCE VS CAUSALITY)
Rough Trade import

More techno noise, cept these guys are without a doubt among the heavyweights of the field. No pop in there. More I listen to them (and I do – it's a sound for all occasions, believe it or not) more I think they may be directly connected to the constant bummer that lurks behind the reassuring facades of reality. (you sure about that? – Ed.) A sort of pipeline to chaos and horror. Of course there may be nothing horrible about it 'cept for its unfamiliarity. You know, I used to think they made up all that stuff, some kinds of aesthetic preverts (stage before being a vert), but now I don't know. Their sound is still full of recognizable bits of musical snatches, words (french stuff is a favorite), normal rhythms, but all these familiar elements are just about as reassuring as a human limb or a chopped head all by itself on your living room floor. And calling one track "chance versus causality" does not do much good as comic relief. For more useless info and insights see the review of their "live at YMCA" album either in this ish or the next one depending on conditions beyond your control.

—Silicon Kick

SYMPTOMS
(Be on top/Anorexia Nervosa)
Early Warning records

Another case of the aftereffects of pointless education. No doubt the darlings of some college crowd in their neighborhood. Keep on creaming on your Zappa collection and stay off the streets friends, your wit's redundant, what you're poking "fun" at nobody worth their modern weight gives a flying fuck about anyway.

—Kick

SPECIAL AFFECTS EP
"MOOD MUSIC"

Vaguely interesting in spite of wimpy vocals and tendencies to shlock rock. Like so many of these new independent offbeat american releases everyone involved has had too much useless education. The sound of comfortable youth.

—Kick

U.S. APE
(THE WAY WE ARE/ALL WASHED UP/ IGNORANCE IS BLISS)
US APE records

Ignorance of this record is bliss. These people are all washed up before they've even started. Absolutely undistinguishable everything, a masterpiece of non existence.

—Kick

THE P-15's
(YOU'RE NOT THAT GIRL/ ELEVATOR BOYS)
Spitzfield records

Bright and cheery shit. Ought to be introduced immediately to Madame Wong. Long and lasting friendship guaranteed. "I'm not really crazy just a little insane" sings one fellow. Only insane thing you ever accomplished my little ones was mailing us the sad vinyl artefact expecting something good to come out of it. I know, ain't no such thing as bad publicity. Fuck, I been had. Oh McLaren, you've ruined the game you evil situationist dabbler!

—KICK

NAZIS AGAINST FASCISM
(SID DID IT/ SID DID IT RADIO VERSION)
Truth Records import

Sid didn't do it. But who gives a shit when you can crack a joke about the whole sad mess. And not even a good joke. No good puns, clever repartee (tut, tut) or thrashing chords. Unadulterated garbage. May whatever befell poor Nancy Spungen befall these brainless, soulless twirps.

MR. OK

THE CUNTS
(CHEMICALS IN THE MAIL/ WHY DO YOU LIVE ON MY BLOCK)
Disturbing records

This was released in 78 but came to our attention one month ago. How many other masterpieces have similarly escaped our attention so far? What brilliant unique vinyl gems are still rotting in someone's garage for lack of proper channels? This ain't one of them, but it could be. This *is* garage stuff, aesthetically speaking, "Chemicals" is a variation on the old "Fortune Teller" thing, not bad but nothing to quiver about, and "Why do you live. ." is similarly oriented but more so, using the Germs' recording style of "Forming" minus the know-how. Yep, real garage with a zing, and that beats the bland garbage coming out today from all the little suburban shits with page-boy haircuts. There.

—Kick

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FLOWERS
(CONFESSIONS/LIFE AFTER DARK)
Pop Aural import

I don't see why I have to tell you *why* it's great every time a little masterpiece comes my way, some of this neo punk pop noise bursting out of obscure places simply defies definitions and labellings altogether anyway and the best you could expect would be some circumvoluted (hey hey) approximation that would not do justice to the little fucker. Like here how could I show you why such two relatively simple wiry guitar hooks (one to each song — very economical bunch) simplistic drum banging unusual chord bashing and constricted girl singing combine to create a perfect ... something. By constricted I don't mean constricted I mean . . well, you know these feline in heat sounds Bruce Lee would spit out while slow motion tiptoeing around his adversary and his mouth wouldn't move ... well not like that but somehow similar . . This music makes you feel like clenching your fists and shadowboxing from one end of the apartment to the other. I know it will do other remarkable things for *your* own mental balance as well, today the physical aspects of Flowers music is the dominant one, you don't want me to keep a fuckin' diary on one bloody single's various effects now do you??

—KICK

LAST WORDS
(TODAY'S KIDS/SOMETHING WRONG)
Remand records import

What? No rhythm machines? No tape recorders? No dialectical dilemmas? Hey, what kind of an english 45 is this? Just because we're based in El Lay don't mean we're stoopid, we know the (electronic) score! We ain't uncouth. Ha, I get it. Last Words are australian exiles living in Britain. That explains the unabashed punk anthems. To tell you the truth we were starting to think the art was dead. Cept in the beach garages of course. Side one is neo-Gen X before that bunch disappeared up their own collective navel, the other a sort of Sham rousing solidarity chant. Quite good, musically better than the mentioned ancestors (Jimmy Pursey, ancestor? Ha ha). But I dread the appearance of the first "Keep on Punkin' " bumper stickers.

—Kick

THE WICKED
(SPIDER AND THE FLY/ THIS DIAMOND RING)
Isabelle records

My kinda stupid record. A bunch of jungle noises with some guy moaning "Spider!" over the soundtrack. A shrill voice squeaks "Help Me!" and the moaning continues with "Creeping! Closer! Spiders!" This is undoubtedly one of the finest records ever made by human beings. B-movie thrills like the Cramps could only dream of. When I first heard it, I woke up in some strange bed with some strange girl going wild to it in the other room. Needless to say, I wasn't sure I was awake.....

—Ranking J.

THE KLAN
(PUSHIN' TOO HARD/COVER GIRLS)
Posh Boy records

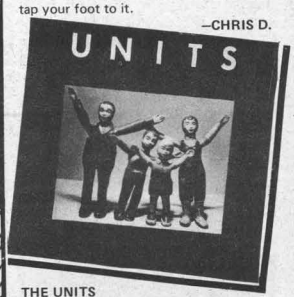
From the wine cellars of Posh Boy Records comes a dusty, nondescript demo that now warrants the star treatment. Ouch! those kleig lights sure are bright. Don't look for the Sky Saxon & Seeds charm, they won't be making it to the premiere. The Klan opt, maybe unintentionally, for the single-minded approach. Fighting and scratching their Huntington Beach eyes out, here they are now rolling down the red carpet. Microphones are busted, cameras smashed, Army Archerd is knocked unconscious and Zsa Zsa's dress rips down the middle. Oh, well even if it is totally monotonous, a bit off-key, and basically BAD, I'd say that this bit o' wax is sure to do boffo biz.

—MR. OK

NUNS
(WORLD WAR III/COCK IN MY POCKET)
Rosco Records

A live pair that sound nowhere near as tired as the last batch from these N.Y.-California transplants. The singing still has that pretentious, self-serving whine in it that makes me twiddle with the volume knob but otherwise that teeth-grinding wired feeling so hard to find these days prevails. The Velvets influence is more noticeable than ever. However it's not so much a derivative robbery as just second nature to the Nuns. Put away the laurel wreaths, it's not that great. But you can tap your foot to it.

—CHRIS D.



THE UNITS
(WARM MOVING BODIES/I-NIGHT)

I hate synthesizers but both sides of this make me eat my words. Listen to "I-Night" and re-evaluate the bloated crap that comes out of most electronic groups. Once the singing starts, though, on "Warm Moving Bodies" I throw in the towel. It's some of the lamest vocal arranging ever to be found anywhere and the words are the standard science-art jokes that've gotten as sickly cute as leopardskin on Saturday Night Live. "I-Night" doesn't fall victim to this syndrome, instead letting loose with one of the wildest riffs this side of Metal Urbain. The words are shuddery and bleak, and the vocals tolerable.

—CHRIS D.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

DAVID FINNERTY AND THE JACKALS
(HOLD ON/DON'T TURN OUT THE LIGHT)
Deli Platters records

"I've got a minimum for myself of six songs a month. If I get up to six I feel o.k. ... if I get below six I feel guilty ... and if I get above six I feel good," singer/songwriter David Finnerty explains. "Some days you just wake up and wonder if what you're writing is any good and just hope it is, but I'm hoping this thing will build."

Yes David, sometimes I wake up wondering things like that too. I can relate. It's tough. (Does anyone out there want to break the bad news to David, or must I?)

—Shucks L'Amato

AFTERNOMEN UNLIMITED
(Facade/Connections)
Object Music import

Yet another bad case of sleepless music. All these british youngsters must survive on a pretty radical diet judging by what they apparently believe to be normal directions for anyone with songwriting urges. I suppose National Health deals with physical matters, and there are less shrinks or councelors ever ready to mold your teenage dreams to assembly line specifications. There, it's either the factory, the bank (or whatever salt mine) or it's the other side of the chain link fence and insecurities galore. What America needs (don't kick me out) is many, many more maladjusted kids if we want to go beyond the Blietzkrieg Bop Jocko Homo teenage consciousness. Figuring out you world does not result in worse acne, kid dos, this is propaganda invented by you friendly rulers. Look at England, such dissatisfaction, such musical output Which brings us back to Afternomen who are just one more shriek in the emotional wilderness. No, I haven't got any clue as to what dance steps go with it Be like them and keep away from al that therapy, you could use a good shriek yourself. And I don't mean that Beverly Hills-by-appointments-only primal mumbo jumbo, either.

—Kick

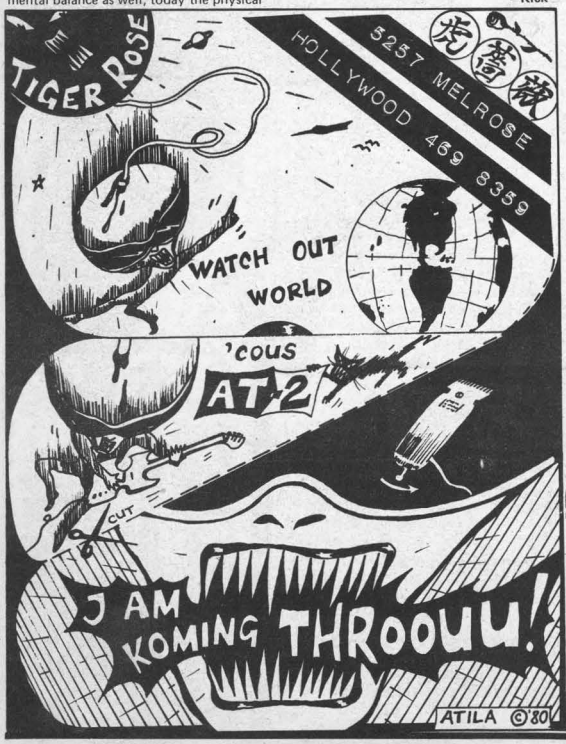
SNAKEFINGER
(THE MODEL/TALKIN IN THE TOWN)
Ralph records

More bewilderment from the company with the lumpy headed logo.

The A side is written by Kraftwerk and is a slow, moody, somewhat delirious pop song. The B side is written by Snakefinger and Kraftwerk, moves at a faster and more interesting pace.

These guys seem to have a trademarked production technique that keeps things soft edged and submerged into the tape itself, like a mafia snitch into the Hudson River.

—WLA



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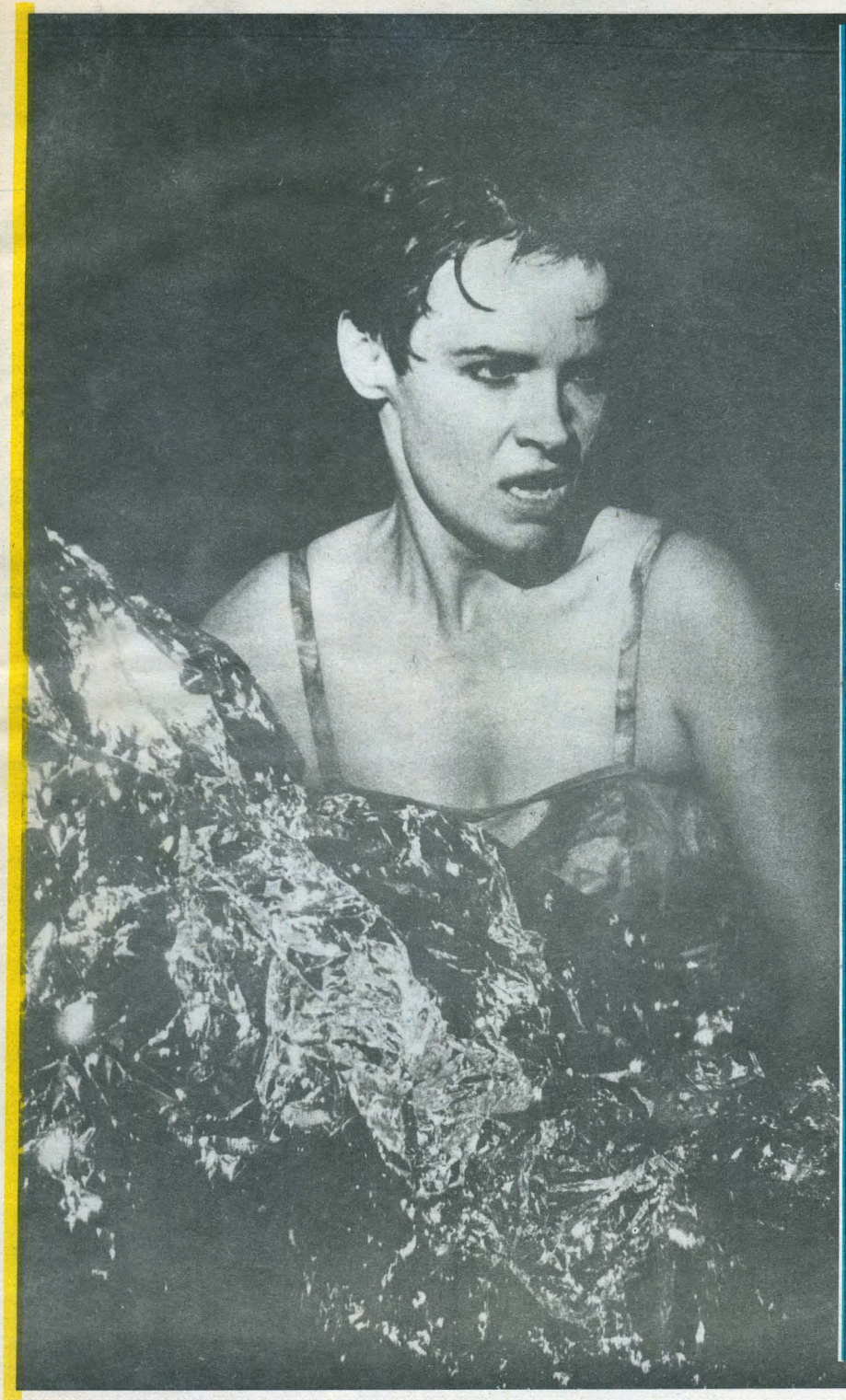

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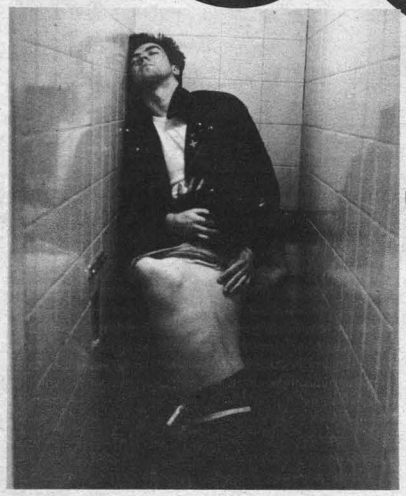
Special gratefulness and a candy bar to Mark Vallen

LOCAL SHIT



SADLY FAMOUS SEEDY MASQUE MASTERMIND AND PART TIME SLASH GUTTER INFORMER BRENDAN MULLEN FINDS HIMSELF BEING FEVERISHLY FONDLED BY SAN FRANCISCO POLICE MEMBER AND WISHES SOMEONE HAD TOLD HIM BEFOREHAND ABOUT THE CITY'S DESPERATE NEED FOR HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

pic: Michael Yampolsky

LOS ANGELES' FAVORITE PUNK ROCKER, CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY EIGHT

pic: Sue Brisk

CLASH CITY ROCKER RAY GANGE, ANTI STAR OF THE RUDE BOY FLICK, BEING HARRASSED FOR HIS LACK OF POLITICAL COMMITTMENT

pic: Phillomena

EX BERLIN BRAT SHOWS WHAT EUROPE WAS DYING TO SEE –

pic: Phillomena

EX BERLIN BRAT SHOWS WHAT REDONDO BEACH THOUGHT IT WANTED TO SEE UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE

LOCAL SHIT

Hullo deh, all you punk and post modern petty boo$hwah skum, NOT FORGETTING all the noo(dle) waveroos, from condo world and dorm city, are you ready to skank thru the ruins of what was once a lovely self sufficient self-respecting scene, now newly redecorated as a regulation social swamp where Perrier water piranhas are nibbling at your tired zipper pants and your friends are all redoing their living rooms into perfect life size reproductions of famous backstage rooms and toilets of rock n roll history? Bitch bitch bitch, how uncouth when this scene is reaching such unhoped for levels of glory, like its very own cable tv spot on some sunday nights, the staggering New Wave Theater, which on the very night Public Image was tasting the flavor of southern california phlegm featured out of focus theatrics from Nervous Gender (whose eight year old boy drumming wonder unless it's 40 year old left-over from pre world war II nazi scientists experiments with gene control and methedrine side effects has been unceremoniously deported back to the Mutterland) and other new wave artisss about town. Coming shows include guest appearances by the Marina Swingers, Human Hands, Monitor, man I tell you it's like . . . really happening now . . . Waaaoooohhh . . . . . .

Now to keep your sweet little intellect working inspite of the numbing quality of urban 1980 living we've devised a little contest that will either kindle recent memories of high moments or test your inner knowledge of the jungle and its inhabitants' peculiar habits: The rules are very simple (hey, we know your computing capacities). Simply connect each witty or would be witty caption to its proper picture. Note: to spice things up a bit there are extra captions under some of the pics that, although the facts or incidents they allude to are real, swear to god cross my heart hope to die, do not have any corresponding visuals to be attached to, either because our photographer was passed out in the back of a squad car or simply because the creatures captured on film were too ugly or deranged looking for a magazine of our standing.

pic: Belle Journee en Perspective

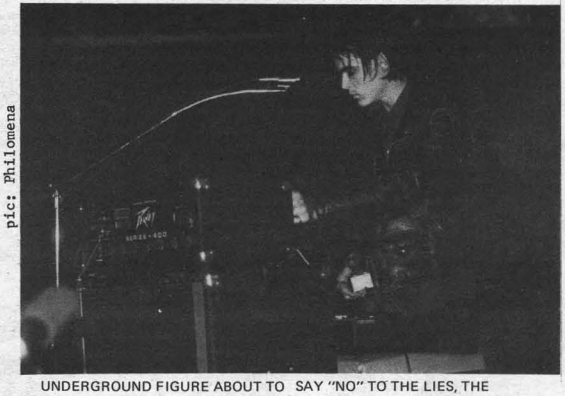
PAT, GUITAR EXTRAORDINAIRE FOR THE ELUSIVE GERMS, BEING PUMMELED INTO SUBMISSION BY BIG DUDE OUTSIDE THE LOATHSOME FLIPPER'S EMPORIUM

pic: Jenny Lens

FAMOUS LOCAL COMBO MEMBERS WAITING TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED

pic: Ann Summa

PUBLIC IMAGE GETTING IT ON WITH THE PUBLIC AT THE FOREVER STREET ORIENTED ROXY



pic: Philomena

UNDERGROUND FIGURE ABOUT TO SAY "NO" TO THE LIES, THE PRETENSE AND THE JIVE AND PUSH THE BUTTON TO BLOW IT ALL SKY HIGH

pic: Jenny Lens

THE CLASH PROVES THAT NOT ONLY THE REVOLUTION WILL BE TELEVISED, BUT ITS ANTHEMS WILL GET TEENAGE DANCE RATINGS ON THE AMERICAN PEOPLE'S BANDSTAND

pic: Jenny Lens

FAMOUS LOCAL COMBO MEMBERS BEING PHOTOGRAPHED

pic: Melanie

LOS ANGELES FAVORITE FEMALE FREE LANCE BASS PLAYER, MINUS BASS BUT THAT'S FREE LANCE FOR YOU, YOU SPEND MORE TIME GOING BACK AND FORTH TO THE PAWN SHOP THAN YOU DO PLAYING MUSIC, AND THE ONLY RUNS YOU END UP WITH ARE NOT ON YOUR BASS BUT IN YOUR STOCKINGS. .

The Richard Meltzer Show (KPFK, 90.7 on your FM dial, 2 - 6 a.m. Saturday nites) is in great danger of being removed from its semi-obscure slot because of some unfortunate use of on-the-air obscenities a couple of weeks ago. Jim Berland, program director, does not want this to occur, and has asked for backup from the listening audience in keeping the station from nixxing Meltzer outright. While it is the station's license, not the artistic content of the show, which is in question, calls directed to Jim Berland (877-2711) are requested (he has received only 4 to date), and letters would be even more helpful, as he can use them as tangible proof of the show's popularity. Letters should be addressed to: Jim Berland, KPFK, Box 8639, Universal City, CA 91608.

AN OPEN LETTER TO A CERTAIN "MATT THE RAT", CHICKEN SHIT R.A.R. GOON, FROM KICKBOY, NO AFFILIATIONS BRAGGART

Okay pusbag, this is a once in a lifetime favor: I'm gonna make your little name a household word by condescending to answer to the trembling school-boy curses and accusations you aimed at Slash and my divine person in the 1st issue of a printed piece of Rock Against Racism (Southern California Chapter) scab that calls itself "FOE". Too bad you didn't have the required reproductive equipment to actually use your real name, you'd be the star of the chicken-coop!

Although the whole matter does not deserve such glorification and should probably remain a private skirmish between your clique and I (this being best accomplished by keeping it inside the pages of FOE, a xerox cow pie I doubt even your mother would read) I have a feeling that what comes out of that sewer pit mouth of yours reflects a rather common ignorance of what we are, who we are and why we do it. You just manage to combine all the bile and the poison into one mouthful and ought to be congratulated (but not french kissed) for it.

So what really gets up your sniffer is seeing Jimbo on the New West "new wave" cover then reading our next issue in which we deny any ties with that project and new wave in general. Then there's the New West page in which you indignantly and triumphantly spotted some of us Slash cliquees, shamelessly strutting at the Slash office for a ridiculous photo spread in the same "new wave" issue. What hypocrisy, what treachery! Let's point our scorching finger of righteousness at this center of iniquity! Listen, you tumor ridden mouse, don't you think that if surface contradictions, dogmatic flaws or shameful private conduct were enough to deflate us, defang us and destroy us it would have been done a long time ago by smarter, more vicious and more admirable enemies than you could ever be? 3 years of open activity in the most gossipy rumor-starved city in the world can be real demanding on whatever double standards you feel like nurturing. In other words, if we had something to hide we wouldn't be where we are. And if we thought it was simply fab to have our ugly mugs (and I suppose you're the spitting portrait of George Hamilton!) in the midst of this low, superficial, pretentious and generally evil "feature" by some conservative establishment media machine it's because our sense of humor couldn't resist it. In between glossy spreads of Melrose-clad faggots and androids out new-waving each other with unwearable unaffordable garbage we yearned to be the cockroach in the caviar, and leave the New West bunch with the slightest bad taste in their mouth. That we bothered you as well is a bonus I didn't expect, having temporarily forgotten that bigots are as tiresome as snobs. Drinking beer and whisky one afternoon while someone takes pics and consenting to let the results disgrace an otherwise smooth fantasy for the well to do was not a bad way to kill time, and does not in any way obligate us to admit guilt by association or any shit like that, closet comrade. Fuck your leftist liberal pseudo integrity, fart brain. You got that old puritan streak of all the communist queens, you're not a rat you're an anal retentive weasel. What's more it really bothers you that after appearing in them pages we turn around and put it down and condemn it. You say . . "they want it (us scum) but when they get it they spit it back . . . they want everything "their way". That's right dildo, and we won't say thank you if we get it either. Shatters your concepts of proper civilized behavior, "punk"?? Your mommy wouldn't like such arrogance now would she? "People in the media should be fair play, ratso . ." is that what she taught you? Don't ever go see the Rock N Roll Swindle my baby, you'll hate it. Better to stick to the little R.A.R. world, no blacks or Mex there to worry about, we can tell each other we're punks and act like them unless we're dealing with our professors or the police and we can exchange meeting minutes with other national chapters when we feel lonely. We are outlaws and we belong all at once, what a life! I envy you you brave little urban guerrilla. Us at Slash have to invent our own cliches, deal with other races at a bus stop instead of meeting rooms, listen to the music we support and try to explain what we mean month after month instead of putting it all on a lapel badge. Two more things (no, three) before you run back to the big warm mothership. Please do not call me a . . 40 year old hypocrite, an old burn out and so on, it is not nice, and inaccurate. I am not that old and it is a pathetic proof of arguing power. What's next in your lethal arsenal? My height? length of my cock? (Sorry, I forgot I was with a youngster.) Hypocrit we took care of: I say, write and live what I mean more than your meek spirit would ever want to, sometimes it changes, sometimes it's absurd, but it was never meant to have any value or interest to worms like you, be they teenage or senior citizens. If the little amount of "public" life I have gives you heartburn I must be doing something right. Too bad I don't make money out of it and REALLY bug you. Burnout? I doubt it, I've spilled more poisons than you'll ever take and I understand and analyze things better than ever, one of them being the sad psychological basis for your resentment . . You claim to be unable to go thru my "98 word sentences" or make sense out of that particular editorial and I apologize for my lack of clarity. I hope I made up for it in this letter.

Finally (you are a privileged one, aren't you?) what Gary Panter does with his Jimbo creature is his business, we do not impose restrictions on our collaborators, we don't have a monopoly on anything as you guys do on non racist progressive thinking for instance. WE ARE NOT SCARED OF BEING CO-OPTED, BOUGHT OR BUTTFUCKED like the insecure rabble you represent. Do you think your organization would object to say, Newsweek using the R.A.R. logo (and Jimbo ain't even that) on its cover if there was a topic that made it desirable? Do you think they would object to their propaganda being reprinted for millions to ponder on? I am glad Panter is making some kind of living with his art, he can use Jimbo to sell new wave Kotex as far as I care. This does not mean I feel the same about my writing, dumb sphincter muscle. So whether it hurts your tits or not Slash is here, it means what it says because I do and they do, it's going to say a lot more, some the same, some different, much you won't get, like or remember, you're always welcome to come over for enlightenment when you eventually realize you ain't nowhere, you're going nowhere, never been anywhere and are having no fun. We'll greet you with a kick in the polish sausage that will make you wish you'd been born the girl your mommy always wanted. Then, if you promise never to use this cheap credibility gimmick you employed in the Kickboy slander exercise, that "handwriting" and intentional misspelling, no doubt to come on like, "heavy punk man", when we all know your crowd is college city, failed law students and history majors, and if you then *show* some honesty and *individuality* instead of demanding it from others in the most disgraceful snivelling manner we will let some of our glory and immortality rub on you, you will get glimpses of the high and the mighty, perhaps be allowed to proofread local shit, and one day we might decide it's time to try to remember your name. I'm afraid that by that time you will be a very very old burnt out, but at least you'll be redeemed. I suppose I am dreaming here, from the way things look you are most certainly heading for that side of the fence where being caught with an original thought or goal in your possession is a taboo. Give our regards to the cattle.

LETTERS

SLASH, AND THE L.A. PUNKS,
FORGET IT YOU IDIOTS. IT'S OVER
AND PAST OVER -MORE THAN OVER- EVEN
LYDON SAID IT. SO WHAT ARE YOU TAL
TING FOR-GROW UP YOU RETARDS-IT IS
TRUE MOST OF YOU NOW ARE FROM THE
SUBURBS AND IT IS NORMAL THAN THREE
YEARS LATER YOU WAKE UP AND REALIZE
WHAT WAS GOING ON. BUT IT ALL SOU
NDS SO BORING NOW-WHAT STARTED OUT
AS A FIGHT AGAINST BOREDOM BECAME
BOREDOM ITSELF. IT ALL SOUNDS LIKE
WHAT HIPPIES' MUSIC USED TO SOUND
LIKE IN 1977, WELL AT LEAST TO PEO-
PLE WHO LIVED THRU PUNK MUSIC IN
ITS YEAR (WITHOUT THE SNOBBISH INTO
NATION PLEASE). THE ONLY REASON I
AM WRITING THIS IS BECAUSE I GOT MY
HEAD CRASHED AGAINST A WALL AT A PA
RTY LAST WEEKEND FOR SAYING ALL THE
SE THINGS - AND IT STILL HURTS - I
NEVER FIGHT. THE WORST PART IS
THAT HE DIDN'T EVEN LOOK PUNK, THE
GUY WAS ABOUT A FOOT ½ TALLER, I
DON'T KNOW WHY, I GUESS SOONER OR
LATER IT HAD TO HAPPEN, AFTER ALL .
WE'RE NOT ALL WISE MEN. IT'S TOO
BAD L.A. THINKS IT'S GREAT WHEN
THEY ARE SUCH RETARDS. IN N.Y. IN
PARIS THEY MIX DISCO AND PUNK AND
SKA AND WHAT NOT TURNS THEM ON WITH
OUT BEING SO FUCKIN' CLIQUE - GEE
WHIZ WE ARE PUNK AND NOTHING ELSE -
THERE ARE ONLY REMARKS, I DON'T
HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE OR EVEN LESS A
SOLUTION, BUT I GUESS YOU DO. IT'S
YOUR PROBLEM AFTER ALL. WHATEVER
HAPPENED THOSE GREAT SLASH BENE-
FIT CONCERTS, TO THE MASQUE, TO THE
CANTERBURY... IT'S ALL GONE, LIKE
EVERYTHING ELSE. THE BEST THINGS
DON'T LAST TOO LONG. SO ONCE AGAIN
FORGET IT. CHANGE.
(LOOK: GANG OF FOUR, B52'S, ORCHES
TRAL MANOEUVERS, PLASTICS, JAMES
WHITE, MICHAEL JACKSON, SILICON
TEENS, POP GROUP, LIPS INC, JOHN
FOXX, CRISTINA, THE AURAL EXCITERS,
ETC..)

KYRRET OSE
MANHATTAN BEACH

HEY,
HOW MODERN, WITH IT, IN THE FLOW
YOU IS. LISTEN DUMB COW WE"VE AL
WAYS CONDEMNED THE MORE REACTIONARY
ELEMENTS OF THE TROOPS (SEE PIL LIVE
REVIEW THIS ISSUE FOR INSTANCE) BUT
YOU MAKE ME LAUGH WHEN YOU BRING
PARIS OR NEW YORK IN THERE AS EXAM
PLES OF TRUE UNCLIQUY PROGRESSIVE
SCENE MAKING! JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE
WORKED YOUR FACE AT A FUCKIN PARTY
IS NO EXCUSE TO LAY YOUR RESENTMENT
ON US, I'M AFRAID YOUR THINKING
CAPACITIES GOT JARRED IN THE PROCES-
S. SHAME, NOW YOUR BRAIN IS GONE,
JUST LIKE THE MASQUE, THE BENEFITS,
THE CANTERBURY.... KICK

SLASH,
THANKS FOR REVEALING IN PRINT WHAT
A BUNCH OF TWO-BIT, SLEAZE BALL
"PORN MONGERS", THE FOLKS AT BLACK-
IES ARE. HAVING HAD A MAJOR RUN-IN
WITH THEM (AT WHICH TIME THEY THREA
TENED TO "KILL" ME, AND BREAK MY
LEGS), IT DOES ME GOOD TO SEE SOME
TRUTH. HOWEVER I FEEL THAT YOU'VE
ONLY TOUCHED THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG
ON THIS THING, AS THERE MUST BE A
GOOD REASON WHY THESE BOYS ARE GET-
TING OUT OF THE PORN BUSINESS AND
INTO THE ROCK BUSINESS BY CONVERTIN
SOME OF THEIR GAY BARS (NOW BLACKIE
CON BLACKIES WEST) INTO MUSIC JOINTS
THAT ARE ALLEGEDLY OPERATING AT A
LOSS, THEY ARE NOT MUCH INTERESTED
VENTURES, THATS FOR CERTAIN.

PAUL GREENSTEIN

PS: HELLO JAN BALLARD. NEXT TIME
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I'M GOING TO DO
BEFORE I DO IT, AND YOU CAN BEAT ME
TO IT, THEREBY ELIMINATING THE MID-
DLE MAN, AND THE WASTAGE OF VALUABLE
TIME AND ENERGY ON MY PART.

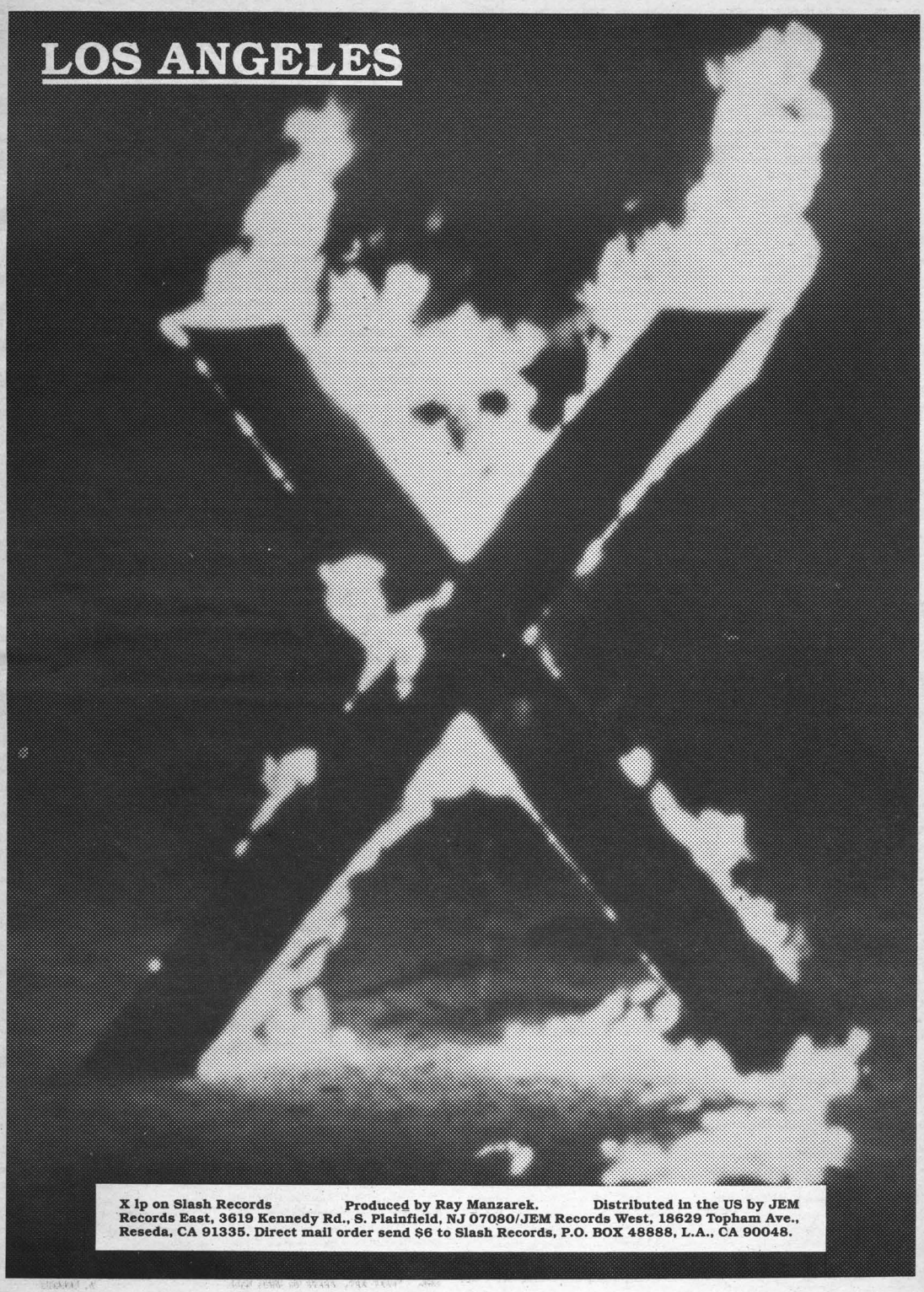
DEAR SLASH,
WHAT THE HELL IS IT WITH SLASH?
$ 1.25 FOR SHIT, NOTHING WORTH A
FUCK LOOKING AT. I MEAN SKA, SELE-
CTER AND SPECIALS BULLSHIT, I GOD-
DAM DON'T CARE ABOUT IT, OR ANY
FUCKIN' REGGAE IT'S FOR HIPPIES TO
GET HIGH TO. I HAVE BEEN READING
YOUR PAPER SINCE # 1. NOW AFTER 2
YEARS, WOW, WE'RE BIG WE DON'T GIVE
A SHIT. ALL THE SHIT COMES BACK.
I GOT SOME GOOD VINAL OFF THE PAPER,
SCARS, RATER, DARNED, ETC, AND NOW
IT'S SHIT. YOUR INTERVIEWS TOO,
FUCKING MONITOR, SPECIALS, MADNESS,
GODDAM, HOW ABOUT "FLESHEATERS",
URINALS, FEAR, RIK L RIK, ETC ? NOT
THE SAME BULLSHIT.
RODNEY TOO, FUCK! HIS 2 HOURS SHOW
GREAT, GOOD PUNK, NOW 4 HOURS 2 DAYS
BULLSHIT AND GOOD STUFF, AND ALL THE
FUCKING DISCO DIPSHITS LISTEN. FUCK
THE MEXICANS THAT THINK THE B-52'S
ARE PUNK, FUCK THEM. WHY DON'T THE
SURF PUNKS GO AND WRECK THE PUNK-DIS
CO PARTIES? FUCK IT, NO MORE PUNK,
NO MORE PUNK, NO MORE SHIT, PUNK IS
DYING. GOD SAVE THE GEMS AND BLACK
FLAG, THE ONLY THING WORTH LISTENIN
TO WITH FEAR WHOSE SINGLE SHOULD BE
AN ALBUM. I'M SICK OF BEING THE
ONLY ONE WITH A PUNK BRAIN AND ATTI
TUDE BESIDES DANNY B. SLASH, PLEASE
BE THE PUNK MAGAZINE YOUR FAMOUS FOR
YOU GOT THE NAME DON'T LET FLIPSIDE
TAKE OVER, OR BULLSHIT LIKE "FULL
PAGE". FUCK IT, KILL EVERYBODY WHO
WORKED ON IT. COME ON SLASH, YOUR
GETTING THE MONEY. PUNK IS NOT DEVO
OR THE KNACK, FUCK JE'S, FUCK DRUGS
FUCK HIPPIES FUCK YOU (WHOEVER READS
THIS AND THINKS I'M WRONG). LET'S
HAVE MORE GERMS, FEAR, WEIRDOS,
BLACK FLAG NOT SHIT LIKE QUIET RIOT
AND SMILE. PLEASE PRINT THIS BECA-
USE IT MUST BE FELT BY OTHER LASTING
HARD CORE PUNK. THANX

MELLISA BERT
TUJUNGA

DEAR PUNK BRAIN AND ATTITUDE,
YOU GUYS ARE OUTTA YOUR SKULLS: FIRS
SOME MEATHEAD SAYS GET OFF IT SLASE
WITH YOUR PUNK JIVE NOW YOU SAY COME
ON SLASH GET BACK TO THE ROOTS WE
ARE TOO PUNK AND WE ARE NOT PUNK
ANY MORE JESUS CHRIST YOU DESPERATE
HORONS ARE SUCH A PATHETIC SIGHT
I MEAN REALLY WHAT A BLOODY DISGRACE
OF A READERSHIP WHINE WHINE. I WANT
THIS I DON'T WANT THAT WE WILL WRITE
OF THE MUSIC AND THE LIFE WE KNOW &
LIVE THAT GOES FROM CIRCLE JERKS AND
FEAR AND WHATEVER PISS ON YOUR MOM
COMBO YOU DECIDE IS THE NEW GODHEAD
TO SELECTER MONITOR MANOEUVERS MORE
INCLINED TO OTHER STATEMENTS IT'S
ALL PART OF THE EXPLOSION BETTER
GO TO WAR WITH A SUBMACHINE GUN THAN
A MUSKET I SAY DIG IT OR HEAD FOR
THE LA BREA TAR PITS OKAY? OKAY
KICK

GREETINGS,
WELL YOUR EDITORIAL MANIFESTO IN
THE APRIL ISSUE DID IT FOR ME.
HERE'S $$ TO YOUR FINE RAG FOR A
SUB. "WHAT ART, DEATH OR DRUG WILL
LEBERATE US ALL?" I ASK AUTISTICAL-
LY. YOU PEOPLE SEEM TO BE, IN SOME
VAGUELY POST-MODERN WAY, ON THE
ROADS TO FIND OUT, AS IT WERE.
BUT I WAS APPALLED AFTER READING
YOUR ANALYSIS OF NEW WAVE TO TURN
THE PAGES AND READ SOME BLITHERING
NEW WAVER TRYING TO SPEAK FOR AND
ABOUT SEATTLE.
THE SO-CALLED BEAUTIFUL RADIO STAT
ION KZAN, IS SHIT. ITS THE LEADING
LOCAL FORCE IN MAKING "MARKETABLE"
MUSIC AND CULTURE AROUND HERE. WHEN
THEY DECIDED TO CASH IN AND CALL
THEMSELVES "THE ROCK OF THE 80'S"
THEY GOT IN WITH MODERN PRODUCTIONS
AND SHOWBOX CONERT TICKETS ARE NOW
7 TO 9 DOLLARS FOR ONLY ONE OR TWO
BANDS, AND IN SEATTLE WE DON'T
STAND FOR SUCH CAPITALIST HORSE-
SHIT (FIREBOMBS ARE A-OKAY BY US).
THEIR "ROCK OF THE 80'S" IS AN OPT
EN GROSS MIX OF BAD NOSTALGIA AND
NEW WAVE WITH A SHATTERING OF POST
MODERN REAL 80'S MUSIC.
N. AVERROES JUST HAPPENED TO NOT
MENTION THE DEBBIES, DR. ALBERT
SCHWEIZER, THE DECAY, FRED AND THE
NACS BAND, ALL LOCAL BANDS OF EXCEL
LENCE AND NEW-NESS. NOR DOES N. AVE
RROES MENTION ROSCOE LOUIES A SPLEN
DID GALLERY AND CLUB OR U-I-FACTS
THE LOCAL CAMPAIGN TO RESURRECT AND
ELECT HUMPHREY PRESIDENT IN 1980,
NOR THE TORN-COLLAR ACTIONS, TEARING
OFF OUR SHIRT COLLARS IS ELIMINATING
A TRADITION AND STYLE, WE ARE TORN
COLLARS ONE AND ALL. OR THE RECENT
CREATION OF AN INDIGENOUS, URBAN,
MUSHROOM CULT AND THE ST. HELEN'S
SUICIDE SOCIETY FOR MASS AUTO-EUTHA
NASIA. WHY NOT?
SEATTLE IS STILL HORRIBLY LACKING
(ALTHOUGH IN EVERETT 26 MILES NORTH
OF SEATTLE THERE IS A 24 HOUR PLACE
CALLED THE SPORTS CENTER CAFE THAT
IS SO POST-MODERN AS TO BE BREATH-
TAKING) BUT THE POST-MODERN PERIOD
HAS HIT SEATTLE AND WE POST MODS'
WILL BE OPENING THE POST-MODERN CUL
TURAL CENTER IN LATE SUMMER-EARLY
AUTOMN OF THIS YEAR. IT WILL BE A
24 HOUR CLUB, COFFEE HOUSE CHURCH
AND ARMORY.
OBEDIENCE IS SUICIDE IN SEATTLE.
NEW AGE CREEPS STAY FREE
NON SERVIAM
D. MORRIS

LOS ANGELES



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FASTER THAN YOU

Phast Phreddie presents the secret to life:

Faster Horses
Younger Women
Older Whiskey
More Money.

Ha! You probably thought that you had gotten rid of me since this column did not appear in the last ish of this mag. Wrong! Why no FASTER THAN YOU in SLASH number 3 volume 3? Like an old record by the Cadillacs says, "Let me explain." Yours truly, a notorious alcoholic, drank loads of gin the night I wrote the last column and wound up typing the entire piece in some sort of alien code. No kidding. By the time I sobered up the editor of this 'zine, in his infinite wisdom, decided to nix my effort. I think it was because he thought it was beyond the grasp of the average SLASH reader's mind. (Editor's note: Let's face it, Phast, it was pure donkey shit.) (Note from the typesetter: Really, Phast, we expect much better from you.) (Note from janitor: I quite liked it.) Whatever, it is now doomed to oblivion, never to be read by human eyes.

All of this, naturally, brings us to the inevitable question of 'What does the Fast Man listen to these days?' Right? Well, anyway, the wild and wonderful sound of Archie Shepp's *Mama Too Tight* album blankets the silence with enough screachin' saxophone riffs to make a dead man walk. Really a gas. Said noise is being ear-fed via portable cassette player due to the unfortunate and unjustified theft of my home entertainment system ($200.00 at the Treasury.) Really pissed me off. So all I can listen to are the cassettes I've been stock-piling and a bunch of scratchy 78 rpm discs on an old Victrola. Not even a real Victrola – it's a Sears Victrola. So I can't really report on much new vinyl 'cept, perhaps, Public Image's fab *Metal Box* which I was able to get on a cassette (actually *Second Image*, the U.S. unreasonable facsimile thereof) and played it a couple of times. I was all ready to write the whole thing off when my good pal Lester Bangs (right, THE Lester Bangs) told me to listen again in that it's a real great album – as good as any two-record set, anyway. So I listened again. Yeah, it's cool, and all, but Lou Reed's *Metal Machine Music* and Captain Beefheart's *Trout Mask Replica* are both tons better.

Speaking of the good Captain, his artwork (for which he is quite famous) graces the cover of a single by Easy Teeth. The music contained within the picturesque sleeve is of the sort that Rodney Bingenheimer refers to as "tin-can music" (sounds like a bunch of tin-cans rattling around, kinda like Eno). Plugz fans take note: Tito Larriva exercises his vocal chords on one side. Hey, I kinda dig it.

If anyone out there is still even mildly interested in Rockabilly music I suggest strongly that they pick up a copy of the Blaster's debut LP called *American Music* on Rollin' Rock Records. Not only do the Blasters prove to be the greatest living Rockabilly band but they also prove to be very groovy when tackling such ethnic musics as Hillbilly, Blues and Cajun. The album is full of fine original compositions as well as good cover material. Don't make a mistake and pass on this album because of the hype Rockabilly received a while back. The Blasters transcend the hype. *American Music* is a good, solid Rock'n'Roll album. Can you name many other recent releases that are?

ON THE CONCERT SCENE: The Clash really brought down the curtain at a surprise appearance at the Roxy theatre recently. I mean the curtain was literally torn down by admiring fanatics while demanding an encore. Nothing was left but a few ropes that were once attached to a spiffy velvetty sort of curtain. The Clash put on a terrific display of Rock'n' Roll, also, and anyone who says otherwise is a communist.

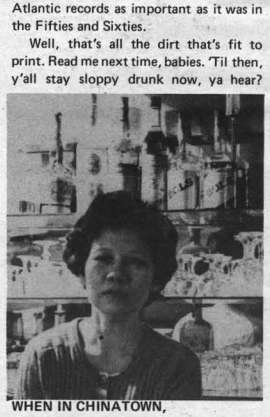
TWO CULTURES CLASH: Somehow I think the Rastas must really know something that no one else does. If you listen close to the Rasta oriented Reggae music you will notice quite a few references to an ancient civilization called Babylonia. To the Rastas Babylon is a simile for the corrupt establishment. Everything evil and wicked is of Babylonian origin. But if you take titles like "Babylon Makes the Rules," "Babylon System," "Babylon Trap Them" and "Leaving Babylon," it all makes some sort of sense when you consider that the ancient empire of Babylonia was once at a place in the Mid East that we know today as Iraq and Iran. And all this time I just thought the Rastas were a bunch of far-out Black dudes who sat around all day smokin' ganja. You no see it, Mon?

OH? THOSE JAPANESE: Local record stores have recently been picking up on Japanese imports. Among the releases available are at least two different series of Rhythm & Blues re-issues – one from United Artists and the other from Atlantic Records. The U.A. series includes LPs by Smiley Lewis, Shirly & Lee, the Spiders, Garnet Mimms and the Enchanters, and the later works of the Clovers, plus many others. Each and every one is an exact duplication of an actual album by each artist, at least as far as cover graphics and song sequencing goes. The only trouble is that the apparently extensive liner notes were written in Japanese, including notes concerning discographies. However, the lyrics of each song have all been written in English. The Atlantic packages, from what I can tell, also contain the original artwork of actual albums that were once released years ago. Albums by Big Joe Turner, Ruth Brown, LaVerna Baker, the Clovers and Chuck Willis are therefore once again made available. I cannot emphasize how important these records are to the evolution of Rock'n'Roll without going into great detail about each artist. Take my word for it and check these discs out if ya get the chance, not to mention the loot.

When John Cale recently played at the Whisky A Go-Go, Keith Morris, lead singer and everybody's fave local band the Circle Jerks, almost got his head beat in by J.C. fans. It seems that little Keith, in his usual state of alcoholic euphoria, was flinging cigarette butts at the ex-Velvet man. I don't know why Keith didn't enjoy the show. Everyone I talked to thought it was a first-rate performance.

In other news, an executive at Atlantic Records, in fact the guy who's head of West Coast A&R, I believe, announced in a couple of industry magazines that he will quit his job if New Wave "makes it." This is the kind of thinking (if you can call it that) that not only stifles The Movement, but creative thinking in general. You see, here's a guy in a position where he can be daring and innovative by signing a hot new band (like Miles Copeland of IRS when he signed on the Cramps). Instead he chooses to give the world more of the same old garbage that makes listening to the radio so monotonous these days. Granted, a record company is supposed to sell records, and lots of them, and by putting out more of the same the company can be sure of its financial standing. But if this is the case, the Atlantic executive in question would be just as well off if he were selling cans of beans – although, I admit, a red silk jacket with the name of a vegetable on the back of it is not as prestigious as one that reads "Foreigner" (on *my* block it would be). If the sole reason for a record company's existence is to see how many millions and millions of records they can dupe the public into thinking they need, then it should not refer to its acts as artists. The term 'products' fits much better. I would be ashamed and embarrassed if I were in a band that was on the Atlantic label and a top executive made such an assenine statement like, "New Wave will never make it . . . I'll quit my job if it does." It's obvious that the man cannot accept new ideas in his field. If he were an astronomer he would probably think that the sun revolves around the earth. Anyway, the Clash are storming up the charts. Also, the B-52's are selling quite a bit, as are the Pretenders and Elvis Costello, so perhaps this guy will quit his job soon. I'd love to have it. I'd make Atlantic records as important as it was in the Fifties and Sixties.

Well, that's all the dirt that's fit to print. Read me next time, babies. 'Til then, y'all stay sloppy drunk now, ya hear?



WHEN IN CHINATOWN,
DO AS THE NEW BREED DO.
by Phast Phreddie and Johnny Walker

Well I gotta get drunk and I sure do
dread it
'Cause I know just what I'm going to do
Start to spend my money, call
everybody honey
And wind up singing the blues
I'll spend my whole paycheck on some
old wreck
And brother, I can name you a few
Well, I gotta get drunk and I sure do
dread it
'Cause I know just what I'm going
to do*

The above verse was not written by me. Nope, it was written by a swell Country & Western singer by the name of Willie Nelson (he's written many a fine C&W hit such as "Hello Walls," "Mr. Record Man," and "Night Life" – but that's another story). But quite often this famed author has felt exactly like the above verse. Like everytime I get more than 5 bucks in my pocket, but not quite ten. Ya see, with ten bucks I can go somewhere and catch a swell band at a club and get drunk. But admission being as steep as it is at many clubs, the well-drinks as watered down as they are, it'll take at least ten bucks for a man of the world such as myself to even begin to feel a buzz.

OK, so I got more than five bucks and I feel like the above verse. Let's say I got eight dollars and twenty-five cents (American money, please) and the above verse swims in my head. Well, here's how I would spend my loot. I would proceed to Chinatown where I would head in the general direction of the Hong Kong Cafe. Will I go into the HKC? Not on yer life, buddy. Not with eight dollars and a quarter. And Madame Wong's is also out of the question – even with twenty bucks in the old pocket I wouldn't enter that place; they just seem to be real square over there these days.

However, about a door or two east of the HKC is a fabulous little nightery known to its loving clientele as the Hong Kong Bar. I think it has a real name, perhaps the Snap Dragon or the Rockin' Pagota or maybe the Kung Fu A'Go-go. Whatever it's really called, the name is clearly spelled out on the front of the building – that is, it's clear if you can read authentic Chinese. Directly under this sign is another that spells out one of my all time fave words: COCKTAILS. Beyond the glass doors of this humble edifice lies the endeared Hong Kong Bar.

Once inside it becomes perfectly clear that this is no sleaze joint. On the contrary, it is a clean well-lighted place. It is quickly noted that the Hong Kong Bar is neatly divided into two distinct rooms: a small kind of intimate dining room and an even smaller kind of intimate drinking room. It is in the drinking room I will sit, order a Zombie and slide my quarter into the well stocked juke-box. To start off with I like to listen to "There Goes My Baby" by the Drifters because it kind of reminds me why I drink to begin with. Then there's "In the Still of the Night" by the Five Satins and Earl Bostie's wonderful rendition of the old standard "Temptation".

On a good night (like when X, the Plugz, the Go-Go's or Alley Cats are playing at the Hong Kong Cafe), the Hong Kong Bar can get quite jumpin'. I notice many folks like to warm-up for a good gig at the Bar before heading into the Cafe. They also like to wind-down at the Bar after the Cafe. I also note many of Madame Wong's regulars walk in and feel out of place. Yes, it's a great little bar, and very functional, too.

Ironically, the fabulous Hong Kong Bar is run by a Mrs. Wong. Yes, related to the famous, and may I add also fabulous Madame E. Wong of place down Sun Mun Way, although I am unsure how. Also of note is Mrs. Wong's lovely daughter whose name I remember but will not attempt to spell.

This spot, the Hong Kong Bar, is in fact quite a favorite meeting place of the writers of this magazine. It's true. Rank-

ing Jeff, Chris D., X, Y and Z all part-take in the sport of elbow bending at the Bar. Also, there's a rumor that the Bar is a favorite place to pass out at by people as noteworthy as Kickboy Face—who has been on a liquid diet as long as I have known him. I could even go on all night about all of the groovy groups that make this place a "must see" when in Chinatown. Why, every Punk/Knew Waive/Rock'n'Roll band worth its weight in Fender equipment is cool enough to hang out at the Hong Kong Bar.

Anyway, back to the rest of my loot. So I spend a quarter on noise, two-seventy-five for the Zombie (and well worth it) and another two-seventy-five for another Zombie when that one's gone. That leaves me with enough cash to buy two beers (a buck a piece) and a pair of coins for the wonderful juke-box—tonight we'll press Bullmoose Jackson singing "I Want a Bow-Legged Women," "Honkey Tonk" by Bill Dogget, the Dionne Warwick tune, there's Bill Haley there somewhere, too, I think and gee, "There Goes my Baby" a few more times.

Hey, and get this, Mrs. Wong even likes it when the spikey-haired crowd come into her establishment. As the Ranking One once heard her announce; "I don't mind you guys coming in here, but you never have any money."

Another rumor about the place is that they may soon take out all the swell tunes we've been groovin' high to and replace them with more Gnu Wayve oriented noise. This would be very unappropriate, indeed. The late Seventies and the early part of this year has yet to make a record that induces drinking the way the juke-box is already set up. Well, perhaps they should get a copy of the above mentioned Willie Nelson song. Meanwhile, pardon me, 'cause I gotta get drunk . . .

*"I Gotta Get Drunk" written by Willie Nelson. Lyrics re-printed without permission.

PHOENIX REVISITED

Dear Slash,

I hate to see boring shit like last month's lopsided and irrelevent (how do "razor-sharp melodies" relate to your audience anyway?) Phoenix column get printed in an otherwise quite wonderful and interesting magazine. So, I am prepared to testify before any authority you wish that I am not now nor have I ever managed any of the bands I am about to discuss, now have I fucked any of their members. You'll just have to trust me.

On April 20, 21, 22, there was a benefit for a local guitarist who recently underwent heart surgery at the Star System in Tempe (that's right – his operation was part of the show. It nearly paid for itself). Horrible $3 a night, but four bands a night, and I hadn't seen any of them. Bonus: bands from Tucson made the show as well, dragging along plenty of cronies for support. I made the scene Sunday and Monday evenings.

We arrived late Sunday nite and missed Nervous, a local combo who have a synthesizer (I'm afraid that my need for relevence forces me to go real easy describing and especially JUDGING these groups made up of total and near total strangers for you. I'm sure somebody recorded it. I will say that the sound was good throughout.)

Each group used all their own instruments and so it took ½ an hour to set up between groups. Next on was a group dubiously called Mene-Ge (sorry I can't spell it – it's french for three people having sex): One blonde guy on guitar and two girls on bass and drums. It was your standard earnest-if-inept musically, with profound lyrics (the only message I can remember is that the singer felt that discos weren't such bad places because "at least someone takes you home"). Not fast enough for me to dance to. (I also cannot afford liquor and hate finding myself surrounded by drunk people.)

The next group was a bunch of fellows I'd waited a long time to see. The Serfers have been called the best by some people I know, indeed, they had some guy announce them as the "hardest fucking band in Arizona". I was certainly disappointed. Visually they were Flyboy and early Controller clones up the ass. Musically, I recall wondering if this is what recent Iggy Pop albums sound like. After their set I watched their keyboardist lapping up praise from some chick I can only assume was the band's manager. It was a vile sight anyway. Also not fast enough for me to dance to.

The Spiffs were last up. They were dancable at least and hard and all that. But they all had Bowie haircuts, and it was too late, so we left after a while. I would like to say that even though the other three groups were much more "authentic," and looked like real swell folks to boot, the leopard-skinned, high heeled flash of the Spiffs came as a relief after the rest, if only because a professional group is often easier on the ears and I'm not used to tiny little bars with low ceilings (I wouldn't go near a fucking bar if there wasn't something going on inside. Musically that is, but more about that later).

The next evening we learned that the lead guitarist from local group Billy Clone and the Same junked out! He O.D.ed! Christ! Now I remember why I came! 'Cause the $3.00 admission price is *cheap*!

First on were the Ties from Phoenix, who I thought were good. They had a female drummer (I always wonder about groups with women in them. Male dominance is so all encompassing in our society) who didn't play fast. But the guitarist did, and the singer was entertaining and quite pleasant. They did a song called I'm Glad To Be A Boy.

Then came the Roll-Ons, who I'd never seen before. According to those who did, this newly revamped version was inferior. Their bass player tried to puke by sticking his finger down his throat during one number but hardly anything came out. The band was equally divided up between girls and boys. The boys were taller, but the girls looked like they could hold their own against them if they had to. Roll-ons have a large clique following. Their guitarist is in Nervous. The drummer plays without cymbals. They had obviously heard of the Bags. The guitarist imitated Steve Jones. They did a song called I Wanna Be A Boy.

Then came my other long awaited group from Tucson, The Pils. Entertainingly enough, it was Dolls, not LTD. (Of course it wasn't original) but at least their imitations were more consistent and polished (they recently came out of a recording studio), there were 2 guitars but almost no leads, the singer was handsome, friendly and engaging. They did Pretty Vacant. They also did a song called I Wanna Be A Girl (definitely the best of the three). I liked the Pils.

Nervous came on after them, but I couldn't stand the bar any longer.

What about my conclusion? Well for one thing, the meat situation in bars is hard for me to stomach. *Every*body wants it! It's crawly and loathesome and I hoped I wasn't rude to anyone because I sure was disgusted.

Another thing that bugs me is that for some reason everyone tells me that you've gotta do your own material. But the groups I saw (except for the Pils, who will sign with a major any day) all but tripped on their originals. It's like when you're learning something, it can be anything, but when you're writing it's hard to write outside of your own ability and it's not nearly as fun. Screw critics and audiences. Music belongs in bedrooms and living rooms. When you write something, immediately your own ego gets into it. I'd rather play something fun like Incendiary Device into the ground than become a quivering pile of self conscious posturing. What do lead singers do during slow songs anyway? I'd buy myself a front row seat so I could relax.

I saved the worst for last. Tucsonians only danced for their own groups, the Serfers were insulting (they put us down as a bunch of conceptualists) and otherwise the arrogant snobs that you would expect would come from a scum pit like Tucson. I'll admit that they play Slits and Fast product in Tucson where in Phoenix you're lucky if you get a little Specials, Tucson is known as a more "liberal" community. But that's only because there's a mountain on the outskirts of town, so the hippies flock to it and put down Phoenix as a "big city". But it's ill-planned. At least in Phoenix the streets are all in right angles and you can find your way around.

The Pils weren't snotty though. They even pointed out that we were all sitting in cliques, and that we never talked to anyone. (Rest Village Metropolis that it is, Phoenix folks like to be left alone.) Posing is more rampant. Tucsonians just dress like machos and leave it at that. Phoenicians dye their hair and go for quaint props like mannequin heads and rolls of black plastic.

What can I say? Tucson groups *are* more satisfying conceptually. They're all teenagers, earnest as hell, tough as nails. The Stooges still rule. Phoenix scene-makers are trendy, older, and not nearly as overwhelmed by the novelty of the *stage*! Most of us claim to be artists. Most like Specials or B52, or reggae (a few of the richer ones), but Phoenix will never see The Graveyard & the Ballroom tape. (I'll pay for a copy, someone send me one!). (Done! – Ed.)

There you have it. Read it and weep. If I wrote only for self gratification I would have hopefully hanged myself long ago. I might add that I wouldn't think of signing anything but my real name. (thunderous applause from rest of staff. – Ed.)

–DERRICK BOSTROM

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SAN FRANCISCO

pic by Sue Briak - The Zeros

THE ABSURD COURTS THE VULGAR

by Caitlin

Last month, shows, this month, records. The Tuxedomoon and MX-80 Sound LPs (*One-Half Mute* and *Out of the Tunnel*, respectively, on Ralph) are out and doing nicely, as are the concurrently-released singles from those albums; the infamous *Live at the Deaf Club* LP (starring the Mutants, Offs, Pink Section, now-defunct KGB, Dead Kennedys and Tuxedomoon) is finally being unleashed upon the unsuspecting public, courtesy of Systematic Records, who are rereleasing the Dead Kennedys and Pink Section singles and putting out the new Voice Farm single; Subterranean has a *Live at Target* LP in the works, featuring Flipper, Nervous Gender, Factrix, and Uns (aka Zev, aka Yoel), which is certain to be accompanied by some sort of video release or presentation, as well as a No Alternative EP ("Make Guns not Love for America") and an X-iles single; Search and Destroy Productions present a new Sleepers single, "Mirror"/"Theory", which is really Ricky and Michael with Steven Brown and Steve from Pink Section; Crime has a new single which ought to be out as you read this; and there will most likely be some form of Dead Kennedys record, though probably not their already recorded "Holiday in Cambodia" single.

Already on the shelves and in the charts are the Units' "Warm Moving Bodies," the Symptoms' "Be on Top," the Offs' "Everyone's A Bigot," the Pushups' debut, the Zeros' "Getting Nowhere Fast," and, on 415, Jo Allen & the Shapes and the Imposters, not to mention the Fast *Earcom 4* EP with the since disbanded Noh Mercy. As if all that weren't enough, Rough Trade is opening an SF office/store this summer and will be releasing the Pop Group LP and Cabaret Voltaire's *Live at the YMCA, 27/10/79* domestically, in addition to acting as a retailer, wholesaler, and distributor.

Not that shows or new clubs have ceased. The short-lived Savoy Tivoli is back in action on a Sunday-afternoons-only basis, just in time to take the place of the financially unsuccessful Roosevelt Sunday shows; Berkeley Square, despite its location (Berkeley) and tiny stage, flourishes; the Goodman Building is trying a few low-key shows and hoping to avoid the boys in blue this time around (in which I wish them more luck than Brendan Mullen had on his recent trip to our fair city); and Folsom Studios has reopened and promptly re-closed since last we spoke, following the usual disagreements about money and who owed or did not owe whom what. Target is beginning a series of low-profile Saturday afternoon gigs for filming purposes, and once again let me cordially wish Joe all the best in *his* efforts to escape police detection. A sad footnote to the illustrious history of the Geary Theater: the final shows, planned as an all-out extravaganza, were abruptly called off when the new owners assumed possession of the building a week earlier than anticipated; hundreds of disgruntled would-be patrons flocked to the Roosevelt, (which had a special 50 cents admission) in an attempt to lure concert-goers away from what would probably have been the biggest show this city's seen since the Dils/Avengers/Mutants gig a year ago (which drew over 800 paid). Former Geary promoter and bon vivant Paul Rat is not, however, giving up quite that easily, and is planning an even-larger one day show for next month ("the Temple's Choice"), which will undoubtedly feature Paul's favorite band, Impatient Youth.

Ho-Ho-Ho Chi Minh Dept.: KPFA radio and Rock Against Racism recently sponsored an anti-draft teach-in at the Berkeley Community Theatre with musical accompaniment (broadcast live) by the Dead Kennedys, No Alternative, Factrix, Tools, and Contractions, while KPFA's Maximum Rock'n'Roll (for those of you who don't live in the Bay Area, far and away our best local radio show) was given 14 consecutive hours all to itself in the KPFA station's annual fund raising drive, and for one day punk took over the airwaves — a taste of what's to come? Gimme more . . .

And now it's time for — Local Shit North (rumors, facts, fabrications, and sundry): the Offs are moving to NY . . . X's is being sold . . . Zeros and Mutants heading separately East . . . Mondellos have broken up and Pink Section has reformed . . . Ras Michael played at — of all places — the Back D.O.R. . . . ex-Dil Tony Kinman going to law school (!) . . . the Dead Kennedys and the Mutants played at the Bammies and got lousy press, so they must have done something right . . . Flipper, everyone's darlings, played the College of Marin with the Mutants & turned more than a few heads (not to mention stomachs), since that erudite institute of Higher Levels of Consciousness has in the past played host only to such aging twits as the purportedly "new wave" Tazmanian Devils . . . Dead Kennedys and Zeros getting medium-label interest . . . Target's "California New Wave" documentary is travelling to Paris this summer, and then to Hungary and Czechoslovakia . . . Public Image will be playing San Francisco in addition to L.A., though the exact location is, at the time of this writing, in question, following a confrontation between CD Presents and Bill Graham Presents (Uncle Bill apparently does not want to let PIL escape his clutches) . . . the City disco, subject of much rantings and ravings on my part last month, is rumored to be losing money at an astronomical rate, while its downstairs neighbor, the Back D.O.R., has 86'ed all "punk" bands such as No Alternative and is getting a lot of flak for their rumored slimy financial dealings . . . and, last and definitely least, yours truly has been nominated for "most prejudiced rock journalist" in the 2nd annual Dummies (named after Dirk's dog). I ask you, since when am I a rock journalist? This is just a letter from home, a postcard synopsis of current events, a possible explanation, a biased viewpoint. But anyway, I'm flattered to be included, and gosh, I hope I win.

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Lots of record reviews

VANCOUVER

Tunnel Canary - pic by Bev Davis

by Phil Smith

The last month has, in many ways, put the nails in the coffin of our little scene . . . the polarization of the different facets of what was once punk has resulted in a strong of lonely islands, each one struggling for a place in the sun . . . an anti nuclear benefit at the Oddfellow's hall featured the cream of the city's no wave bands . . . after decent sets by Tin Twist and Braineaters the oddly mixed audience was subjected to Tunnel Canary, guitar noise over a predictable neo-funk rhythm section and fronted by a shrieking woman (Yoko Ono ten years late) who consistently asked herself "What am I doing here?" . . . a good question which many of the listeners were also pondering . . . but wait, I just heard the answer . . . in hushed reverent tones one patron explains to another "Tunnel Canary wants you to hate them" . . . now I see — how revolutionary! . . . well it took them just 5 minutes to accomplish their task, the next 40 were merely a bore . . . of course the other members of this little scene were totally entranced, standing at the side of the stage and nodding their heads as they marvelled at their communal visions and pitied the poor rabble insufficiently enlightened so as to bask in their genius . . .

The final act of the evening was AKA, a group who fancy themselves leaders of the Vancouver brave new musick by virtue of guitarist Alex Varty's weekly propaganda in the Free Press . . . of course they secured the leadline slot (some heirarchies are sacred) but AKA's bark is worse than their bite as despite their tiresome aesthetic fascism, they are evolving into an enjoyable unit, interesting rhythms, some great sax work and an increasing number of good songs including one dedicated to this humble correspondent entitled "Dreck Talk" . . . well, needless to say, my confidence hasn't yet recovered from such a stinging blow, but you'd better watch those commercial tendencies, boys . . . pretty soon you're even going to appeal to ignorant peasants like me and you wouldn't be very good rebels then, would you?

On the other hand, the Subhumans have realized that for a real band a purist retreat into cult status is the quickest and cheapest death imaginable . . . last month the Subs played their first ever high school gig, under the watchful eye of the principal and his staff (suitably attired in new wave ties and runners) . . . warned in advance that any obscenity would result in an instant ban from any further school dates, the band dropped two of their strongest songs "Slave to My Dick" and "Fuck You" . . . words or no words the band got through to a hungry and neglected audience . . . the kids either loved or hated it but it got them going and since popular music has moved back into a state of art for entertainment's sake, I'd rather see good bands than bad ones playing for our young.

One of the major effects of punk was to stimulate an almost patriotic belief in the strength of a local scene . . everyone had a part to play, common concerns were shared by all and every city knew that their bands were better than anyone else's . . . but local legends die a quick death and bands became impatient to test themselves on the world marketplace . . . and so a popular phrase around Vancouver is "Whatever happened to the Pointed Sticks?" . . . well, they went to England, played a few unevenly received gigs, blew a month in the studio with nothing to show for it and returned home poorer and wiser . . .

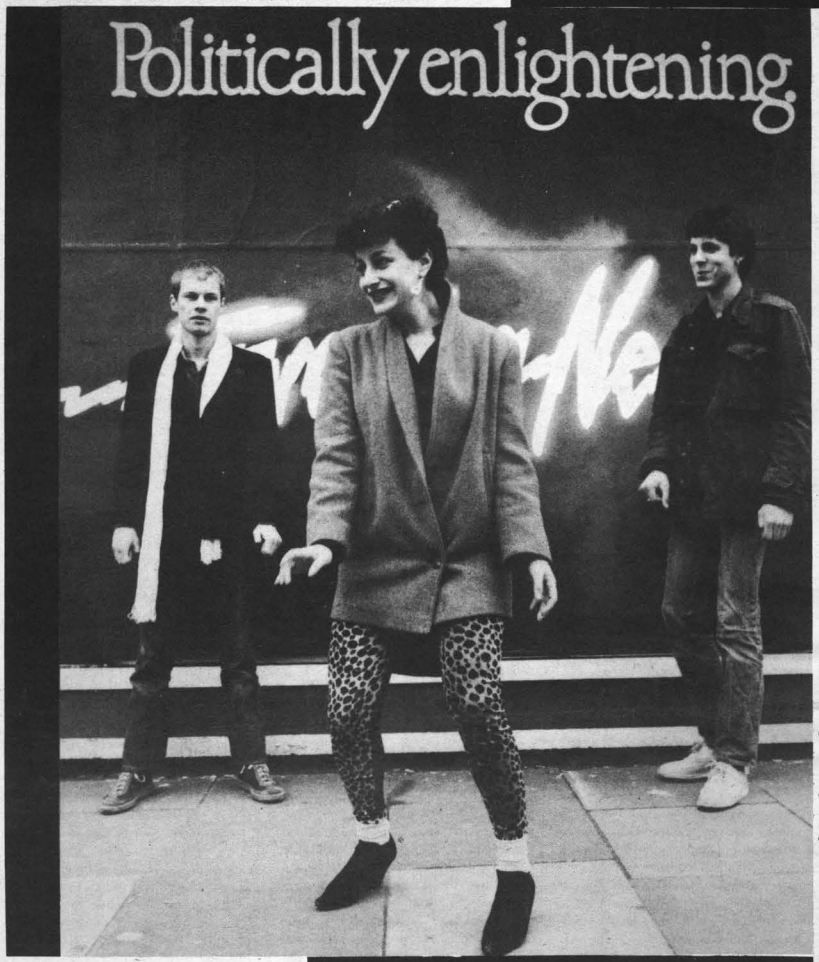
Vancouverites don't take kindly to local boys letting down the hometown and faster than flies off a stinking shit, both the media and the fickle fans gave the Sticks the back of their hand and stamped them "Return to Sender" . . . subsequently the homecoming Commodore gig was only 3/4 full and seemed more like a closed party than a triumphant concert, but the people who were there wanted to be there and the band played with spirit, great songs, bad songs, half the audience onstage singing and dancing for the final numbers . .

Of course, no one, least of all the Sticks, expected consistency from their unfaithful lovers but the band's "failure" has had widespread effects on the scene itself . . . though the Sticks may not be the best band in the city, they were certainly the "most likely to succeed" so their recent experiences have sparked off new feelings of futility in the older bands . . . everyone has been starving for two years and there is an increasing weariness and confusion . . . groups break up and reform daily, going around in tired circles, the same people exhausting every possible line-up in an obsolescent search for the winning combination — "hey man, you should hear my new band" — there is just not enough new money coming into the scene to keep groups going . . . every gig has 10 paying customers and 500 guests . . . the opening up of time warp markets like Calgary and Edmonton will prolong the death warrant, but ultimately it is a stop gap measure . . . some groups will go on to become solid working bands (the Dishrags and Modernettes are still operating at a fraction of their potential) and the rest will break up.

Fine. Time marches on, seasons change etc., but what has happened to the kids, the people who keep the banner high? . . . no new ideas, no originality, just a blind mimicking of four year old styles like the 15 year old who tells me to "Watch out for the Abortions, mate, cause we fucking rule." . . . everyone is in a garage band (the equipment stores are having a field day) and young punk groups like No Exit and Bludgeoned Pig swarm the Bhudda, as redundant and tedious as any disco drone . . . fanzines like Dolt and Law and Order are churned out like clockwork, only the names change, the dogma is untouched . . . meanwhile the girls who strut around the Bhudda with their Sid badges and "Destroy Society" t-shirts bleach their hair and shake their tits for minimum wages in Lou Adler's "punk" movie "All Washed Up" . . . I don't expect stunning originality, but there is a bitter seriousness in the younger bands, a cooler than you attitude which is the sickest sort of elitism imaginable . . .

And so after Black Flag's final gig at the Bhudda, a group of the original punks decided to stage a commando raid on Adler's hotel . . . it wasn't just drunken property damage (a universal delight) but a religious mission . . . it's an awful fucking feeling when someone takes something you've made away from you, but it's even worse when you still fight for broken empty promises . . . the world doesn't need more zealots . . . like all human activities the complexity of the reality eventually becomes the simplisticness of the cliche . . . punk rock, in Vancouver, is dead.

RANDOM STOATS



The Space Virgins - pic by Tom Sheehan

HIGH PRICED TRIVIA FOR BUDGET MINDS

By Mark Williams

I must say it's reassuring to know that today's young moderns still have an abundance of disposable income to tempt the ingenuity of leisure industries I had confidently expected to slide down the toilet shortly after gas rose above 1.00 a gallon (that's about $2.20 in real money). Once those smirking Arabs really started putting the frighteners on what are euphemistically referred to as "the developed nations", dour doom-mongers such as I foresaw the demise of the Fiorucci generation almost at a stroke and a wholesale return to patched denim and tie-dyed granny vests. For light entertainment the most spiritually uplifting music we could expect would be a constant recycling of cheaply recorded new-wave albums ('The Golden Hour of Punk Rock' on K-Tel, perhaps?) and the grim repetition of electro-synthetic minimalism. Now that everyone has a tacit acceptance of the inevitability of a nuclear holocaust — you can almost hear the chant on the sun-strewn, hippie-littered Venice Boardwalk, "Radiation in our time" — I'm reasonably sure that the only really new music in the next decade will be mutant rock; body music played by and for the limbless and mentally deceased . . . roll over Beethoven and pass Tchaikofsky the crutch.

Anyway, as of April 1980 there are still sufficient numbers of happy-go-lucky youngsters to fritter away their money on gaudy apparel and a thousand or so of them could be found crammed into London's Notre Dame Hall to witness a remarkable display of musical and visual excess. The occasion was something called "Seams Like A Dream", a sort of high school exposition mounted by Swanky Modes, my interest in which revolved squarely around the pit orchestra, a band called The Spectres. This rather mundane moniker provides a modest cloak for one Glen Matlock (late of The Rich Kids and Pistols) and Danny Kustow (who guitared for the Tom Robinson Band before its leader's crises of conscience). Matlock had last year confided that the new band would feature a brass section and "be fuckin' different", but in its role as a provider of backing muzak for haughty stick insects to prance about in assemblages of vinyl and pastel cheesecloth whose prices seemed indirectly proportional to their skimpiness, it was hard to imagine The Spectres as anything more than a rather coarse Boomtown Rats . . . or older, mail Raincoats.

"Seams Like A Dream" (witty, huh?) also provided the preposterous visions of tubby 'sixties soul singer Cliff Bennett fetchingly draped in a pink plastic tuxedo croaking out "I Can't Stand The Rain" and Bette Bright falling out of her strapless rubber creation as she uncertainly performed her minor UK hit, "Hello, This Is Your Heart". (Ms. Bright ekes out a living as part of the four girl Swanky design collective when she isn't being a pop singer. The less fortunate Bennett was plying his trade as a fabric salesman when he was "re-discovered" by Les Modes and offered another chance of fame . . .)

An alternative to the comeback attempts of Messrs. Matlock, Kustow and Bennett is simply to rush headlong into the arms of the nation's singles buyers, or what you'd call the AM-radio market. Such tactics presuppose a willingness to ineffectually simper the current emotional platitudes and/or underscore your vocals with heavily layered instrumental predictability and it is this direction that Siouxsie & The Banshees have taken to haul them out of the doldrums. Before their split last year, the band made interesting records, but with her latest single, Ms. Banshee has made the transition to the singing Vogue mannikin her worst excesses often suggested. And The Clash have all but erased their thin veneer of street credibility (doncha just *love* that quaint aphorism?) with their appearance on the cover of *Rolling Stone* headlined as "Rebels with a cause". Hysterical. The Greatest Rock n'Roll Band In The World have evidently let the cheap slogan go to their head and are now spending more money on their stage clothes than most new wave bands can afford to pay for a back-line, and their arrogance has so offended tour manager Johnny Green (who was with them since the 101-ers) that he quit to work with Joe Ely, the uptown rockabilly singer who toured with the Clash in England recently. Green reckons that Paul Simonon is the only member of the group relatively unaffected by fame and avarice, a situation which he opines could split the band if unchecked. Is it merely cynical coincidence, therefore, that Simonon is working on a film with ex-Pistols Paul Cook and Steve Jones in Vancouver and that the three have apparently laid down some tracks together? Whatever, C & J have a single, with an as yet undisclosed bassist, due for imminent release under the title of The Swindle Brothers.

And talking of the flogged horse's carcass, Tenpole Tudor's next single will probably be the crazed, scatalogical version of "Rock Around The Clock" he performed in "The Great Rock n'Roll Swindle". I mentioned Eddie Tenpole at the end of last month's "Stoats", failing to elaborate on the disarming originality of what we will henceforth refer to as heavy metal punk with power mumbling vocals. Eddie himself stands to become a showman of considerable stature, managing to offend and amuse his audiences with all the sneering, acerbic wit of, say, Lee Ving, but a chummy Britishness more sophisticated than, say, Suggs or Jimmy Pursey. Looking like you've just escaped from a maximum security mental hospital is enough to accelerate the career of any aspiring rockster and thus, providing he can overcome his slight reluctance to gig, Tenpole's band of supremely competent refugees from the class of '76 could become the left-field hit of 1980.

Having spent the past ten days in your beautiful city (with smog-poisoning to prove it), I am unaware which new multi-

racial ska band has ascended charts from out of nowhere, but I feel sure that by the time I return The Basement Five will have been signed (probably by Island Records), completed their first album and beaten Lena Martell to the top ten. The Basement Five, of whom there are only four, have the dubious advantage of being fronted by one of England's top (and almost only black) rock photographer Dennis Morris. Considering his associations with the Pistols and Lydon, it's not entirely a cosmic revelation to discover that Brown steers the band close to the Public Imagery of his white pals from Fulham, the essential difference being that the Five are quite the loudest band I've heard in years, actively using p.a. distortion as a rhythmic appendage. Whether they will be able to reproduce the sound of a gradually disintegrating p.a. cabinet on record is another matter, but if they weren't quite so intent on shattering ear-drums, their dub yowlings and acrimonious social commentaries might cast a subtler impact.

The second time I saw The Basement Five was at a 100th Issue Celebration for Zig-Zag magazine at the Music Machine. This is a large-ish venue which has become one of the last outposts of punk excess in London. On any given night scattered coveys of blue rinsed porcupine-tops can be seen reeling pathetically from an over-indulgence of aircraft glue and tuenol in the dimly-lit corridors of this old theatre . . . so *that's* what the revolution was all about; twitching in a pool of your own vomit and hustling for spare change to score downers? The Zig-Zag bash was a must primarily because Killing Joke (see last issue), rockabilly graduates Whirwind, Dylan look-a-like John Cooper Clark and the aforementioned Basement Five threatened to make this the most interesting London bill for some weeks. In the event it was a glum, low energy exercise in applied semantics – and I'm not just talking about Cooper Clark's inaudible metaphors. Killing Joke seemed to suffer from the damage Basement Five must've done to the p.a., Whirlwind were a travesty and the high-point of the evening was someone called (I think) Coement Fish who climbed on stage unannounced and began a long, accoustic tirade against the police-state which ended with him being bundled off-stage to the massed vocal displeasure of the young, free-thinking audience.

Now that Routh Trade have spread their empire to San Francisco and started pressing and distributing their wares in the continental US of A, you can look forward to an abundance of esoterica at realistic, non-import prices. Apart from The Fall's excellent live album reviewed elsewhere, you can imminently expect some American Rough Trade product, including a Pere Ubu/Mayo Thompson collaboration recorded in Ohio this past winter. Vinyl fetishists can also anticipate an e.p. by last month's token Anglo-American female fronted trio, Margo Random & The Space Virgins. I incorrectly assumed Oval would be the label, but it now looks like being Din-Disc, who may indeed wait until the band add a fourth member which should relieve Margo of lead guitar playing responsibilities which she is clearly uncomfortable with. The player in question is as yet unknown due to the usual "contractural difficulties".

Also suffering from the wiles of the legal profession is The Go-Go's fourth or fifth manager in two years, John Ingham. Mr. Ingham made the mistake of eschewing paperwork in favour of trust (a word evidently foreign to the Hollywood business community) and found himself relieved of his post by the group's lawyer a few hours prior to the group's departure for the British tour he had set up.

One also wonders about the propriety, legal or otherwise, of Island Records who were rumoured to've "lost" the masters for several cuts on the recent "Club Ska" compilation album, and overcame this deficit by simply re-mastering from somewhat scratched original copies of the respective singles! They couldn't find the artwork for the cover, either, so they had to borrow a copy of the album, which they also didn't have, from a well known rock journalist and shoot it from that! Real pros, those British record companies. And when they're not being lame, they're being sharp: Stiff have just resurrected Desmond Dekker from anonymity and had him re-record a version of his seminal ska hit, "The Israelites", expect it soon via CBS.

It is sometimes hard to reconcile the sharp Anglophile focus (ha!) this column is supposed to have with the fact that during the past two months its author has made two trips to L.A. It therefore comes as some relief to a man expecting couvert editorial recimination that some of the more interesting (at least to me, bimbo) rumours about limey artistes emerged from ex-patriate sources in So. Cal. Fr'instance, just a moment ago I learnt from a Mr. P. Farndon that Tenpole Tudor will be playing some surprise American dates at the end of The Pretenders' U.S. tour, and may well schlep across to the West Coast afterwards on their own. I also discovered the reason why Public Image's tickets are costing so much is because their American label, Warners, is giving them only perfunctory tour support and that John Lydon hasn't lost his talent for upsetting vinyl moguls; he was "asked to leave" the company president's office in Burbank for his surly behaviour. It is also worth mentioning that The Gang of Four, due to play L.A. this month, seem to be the subject of high level shenanigans over at Capitol Records where EMI's London A&R department are evidently locked into negotiations concerning the ailing company's future. Watch out for a new label.

FILMS

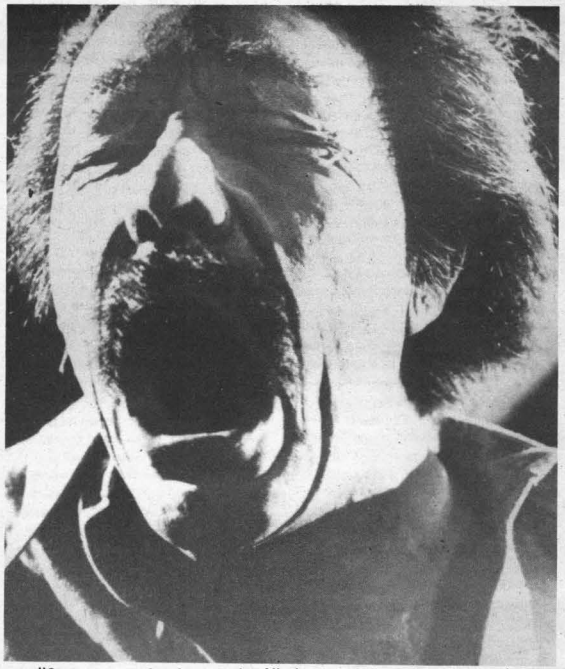
HUMANOIDS FROM THE DEEP
directed by Barbara Peeters

Don't know when this will be unleashed on the drive-in circuit but this is real summer entertainment, too bad it was edited in order to escape the X rating (R now) but then again they don't have adult drive-ins, or do they? The poster of the movie shows some voluptuous young thing (human) lying on a moonlit beach, a pair of cat-like eyes hovering above and the teasing caption: "They're not human. But they hunt human women. Not for killing, for mating." Eh eh, sounds tasty doesn't it? Definitely a very unexplored territory, the question of alien sex, intraspecies sex, furry scaly and tentacly (?) eroticism. Imagine the possibilities. 'Cept in this particular venture the accent is on the horror, and the sexy bits consist of a few tit shots scattered at random. The couple of times the creatures (all sea-weeds, gills, bulgy skulls and dangling feelers but otherwise humanoid) find an attractive teenager to fondle and fertilize the scene is cut before they have even started any kind of foreplay. But what this flick loses in educational value it makes up in nonsensical mayhem. The writer or the director have this obsession with fire, everything burns, blows up, ignites, blazes, carbonizes, even the humanoids, and by the end of the story you almost can smell the odor of barbecued fish that clings to what's left of the little fishing village. You should be warned that this ain't no subtle psychological thriller, every effect that makes your heart jump is ripped off from some other film, it's like an anthology ranging from Creature of the Black Lagoon to Alien with its bulk seriously rooted in the quickies and cheapos a la Horror of Party Beach and other Twist and Scream masterpieces of the past. Stupid, tasteless, predictable and worth every penny. Unabashed exploitation, no redeeming qualities, it is as necessary to these days of significant films, art films, thought provoking films, as the music of the Misfits or the Mad is to a world of Cabaret Voltaires and Robert Fripps. And it features one of the most endearingly gross endings I have ever sank my fangs into. Made for the little creature that lurks within most of us. I was told that the full uncut version would be the one distributed in some other countries. This kind of news makes me feel culturally deprived.

—KICK

RUDE BOY
featuring the Clash and Ray Gange
directed by Jack Hazan

Like "Humanoids" this film was seen at a limited screening and has not (yet) reached the public. Even if its release takes place I doubt that it does reach anyone beyond the hard core Clash fanatics and a few film students in search of a thesis. Emotionally speaking it leaves you feeling as involved as after watching a japanese soap opera with no subtitles, musically it is undoubtedly honest and precise (and well recorded), and concentrating as it does on live stuff, ranges from the very raw and very awful to the very raw and very powerful, but suffers enormously from a lack of variety. It's



"One more pain down below!" (Humanoids from the Deep)

the Clash, the Clash again, still the Clash, and you soon start craving for a change of noise, but the occasional snatches of roots reggae are, besides being awkwardly fitted in and only justified in the context of a sloppily sketched "story line" (we'll get back to that obstacle), sadistically chopped after a few seconds. This disturbing butchering of the rest of the soundtrack denotes an odd disregard for what after all the movie professes to support. Which apparently seems to be a greater understanding between the youth of different races and a unity in the face of repression. When I say "apparently" I'm being generous 'cos I'll eat my entire collection of two-tone badges if anyone can show me where the movie stops its catalogue of live gigs, haphazard political rallies, mysterious street confrontations, mindless conversations and obscure segments of some parallel fiction story to actually begin to depict or expose or even suggest something as important and vital as that. It's as if the shooting was interrupted halfway thru for mysterious reasons and someone frantically gathered all the available footage and strung the whole mess together while keeping their fingers crossed. An additional problem is the refusal to choose between the human/psychological aspects of the kind of life being shown or its sociological/political implications, the main character (nowhere coming close to even being an anti hero of sorts) aimlessly shuffles thru from beginning to end without showing any kind of intensity in his feelings or his beliefs, and although you believe in his existence and you have heard of the race situation of contemporary England, it all remains far away and frankly you couldn't give a shit if he changes, learns or bites the dust. All the allusions to racism add up to nothing and leave you feeling as unconcerned about the problem as you do about Rude Boy's fate (an ironic choice of name for this character, as rude boys were supposedly very big on style and pride and this aimless kid shows neither). If the few obscure segments depicting black street youth being monitored by plainclothesmen while doing some routine petty thieving or being councelled by an attorney during a jail visit are supposed to document or illustrate the effects of a racist political atmosphere it missed its purpose totally and only made me wonder what the fuck was going on and if someone had got two reels mixed up.

As we said before the only sure thing in there is that we see a fuckin' lot of El Clash, circa street guerrilla on its way to radical rock flash period, right around the time they had giant pics of War World Two airplanes as a stage backdrop, Jones dressed like Keith Richards and Simonon was evolving from spikey top to truckdriver greaser sweep. As the young white yobbo this film focuses on gets a brief roadying job for our heroes we get to witness much backstage and hotel rooms intimacy stuff besides the lengthily documented stage action. Not surprisingly the behind-the-scene scene is as drab, dull and demeaning as we've been told it is in the more established rock world and even the Clash, advocates of "change" and destroyers of the evil past that they are (well, were) have obviously been unable to humanize that part of the rock n roll life, in fact they all come across as resigned victims of a system they choose to perpetrate. Hey I'm not shedding no compassionate tears, the misery-of-life-on-the-road leaves me cold and contemptuous if it ain't fun don't do it, the rest is hypocritical bullshit. Speaking of which (hypocrisy) there's a fair amount of it exposed throughout this long long movie, glimpses of young kids ruthlessly stomped and kicked by security while the four musical rebel rousers are popping vocal chords and guitar strings urging to white riot, attention and mike grabbing on the part of a certain Jimmy Pursey during a Rock Against Racism or Anti Nazi outdoor jamboree, ugly ego outbursts from Mick Jones like when Rude Boyo inadvertently remains on stage longer than proper etiquette allows for, smug and satisfied behavior of Jones Simonon and Headon as they go in and out of the pigeon-shooting trial, in tow behind spokesperson of the moment Ms. Caroline Coon, but even all this hero-deflating material does little to raise your interest, all the silly pointlessness in evidence starts to apply to the film itself, and when it's over you are sure to feel more empty than when it started, a feeling I can cultivate on my own if the need be thanks all the same. In the midst of it all there are a few enjoyable or moving moments, and you wonder why the same standards were not kept throughout (replying that documentaries of this sort are like real life, most of it is grey the good parts are rare and short is bull—there are no actors everyone plays their part but the action is staged half the time and the lines painfully learned so writing a few more scenes with some life and focus would have done wonders). One of these highlights occurs when Rude Boy (Ray's the name) spends a few last minutes with boss Strummer before going on his own directionless way (which in reality led him to become a construction worker in . . . are you ready for it? Los Angeles, home of the brave, the poor and the disturbed. Welcome to the most spacious ward in the world, kid, and stay out of Compton.): Strummer (the most vulnerable and likeable throughout) is in no mood for speeches or chit chat that night but his impromptu version of "Let the Good Times Roll" on a basement piano communicates more to the rootless roadie than all the moral lectures of rally speakers ever could. But this nice awkward moment is soon replaced by more lifeless nonsense and you're free to fidget in your seat again. I can see why the Clash were none too happy about this thing being released in England. Their first film venture and its lack of impact beats an all time record. Forget the politics, don't you know what it can do to the "image"?? Meanwhile England is about to be subjected to the "Swindle" epic, and unless they've got their heads screwed on backwards over there they'll discover that there can be more truth in that flipped out surrealistic farce than in the "realistic" and "objective" ramblings of "Rude Boy". Were the Pistols always more fun and on target than the Clash, or is it the way history is rearranging things now that the heat of the moment is no longer confusing our senses?

—KICK

COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER

Before y'all start huffin' 'n puffin' about what the hell a movie like this is being written about in Slash, let me get this off my chest: there's wonderful,

straightforward country music and there's the honky-ass, lame shit; not to speak of the ever-increasing supply of newfangled, sexless, loveless, pasteurized song arrangements a la Las Vegas. You'll find this true (bear with me, ye brethren who're already enlightened) just as you'll find it true with early rock 'n roll, blues, R&B (soul), reggae and punk rock. Open up your steel heart and let some fresh air in or else you're going to smother yourself. And death by self-suffocation is one of the less admirable ways to go. The other thing is: look very closely and you'll find "Coal Miner's Daughter" twice as "punk" as a movie like "Great Rock 'n Roll Swindle". For those of you who don't know what this movie is about: Loretta Lynn is born in Butcher's Holler, a microscopic place too small to even be called a town. No paved roads, no plumbing, and no electricity. The first leisure appliance the family picks up is an old battery-operated radio that enables 12 year old Loretta to listen to the Grand Ole Opry on Saturday nights. Her coal miner pa, half-Cherokee ma, and umpteen brothers and sisters have saved up for months for this luxury. Before long, Doolittle, a smart-ass kid just out of the army, knocks 13 year old Loretta off her feet and marries her. They move all the way across country to Seattle. Suddenly Loretta finds her "singing around the house" has turned into a full-blown "career". Her hubby's convinced her she can make it because she's too good not to. He sets everything up for the shy bewildered Loretta and before she knows it, she's pressing her first 45. They do everything themselves: mailing records to DJs, press kits to newspapers and their own homely photography. But it doesn't do any good. They leave their kids with Grandma and drive until they drop, hitting every radio station in the southern U.S. Their nose-to-the-grindstone persistence makes the single number 1 in country charts. Wide-eyed, innocent Loretta starts up the long ladder. You can see the movie for what happens next. Workaholism, deaths of best friends, and nervous breakdowns follow, but never any self-defeat or self-pity. It's amazing that a movie like this coming out of one of the major Hollywood shit factories could be made at all. I can just hear what the flesh-peddling moguls had to say when the script landed on their desks (try to make out the garbled voice through the dildo-shaped cigar hanging out of mouth) "Nah, never sell. Too corny and not enough tits." "Coal Miner's Daughter" isn't perfect. As it is the whole story gets too sketchy from about the middle to the end. You find yourself wanting more details. Tommy Lee Jones, Sissy Spacek as Loretta and Beverly D'Angelo as Patsy Cline pull off a delicate tightrope stretch of acting. They have fun, but there aren't any cutie-pie bits of business that usually clot this kind of film.

—CHRIS D.

MORE ROCK N ROLL ON FILM

On some recent saturday the Fox in Venice showed a bunch of short films ranging from some Devo art spurts to an early documentary of the N.Y. punk scene round 76 and there were a few good giggles to be had from this "new wave" mishmash although I seemed to disagree with the rest of the audience as to where the giggles belonged. The first half of the show was a chaotic collection of what I guess are promo films for particular songs, the kind of stuff big record companies are always flashing on their office video systems to important visitors (not you buster). Most of the time it's sync studio stuff of a new song (gotta be a potential hit to spend that kind of dough) and occasionally it ends up being shown on the likes of Don Kirschner's shlock concert when the group itself is unavailable, or refuses to submit but still have a song to push up the chart ladder. The key to appreciate these soft core loops is in accepting their irreality and stage-ness (one of the trademarks of a good one is if the guitars are not plugged to anything and the singer's voice has an echo chamber quality although he is standing in a field of daisies on top of a cliff) and seeing how far they go in ridiculing the pretense of "performing". In this batch Elvis Costello and the Attractions undoubtedly walked away with the awards. They're shown miming some of their better known songs in various locations in the South of France with total disregard for any kind of credibility, Costello stands out amidst the pretty scenery like a dildo in a religious supplies store and his delivery is ludicrously and aggressively stylized, he contemptuously spits out the words while the Attractions fill the background with home movie slapstick and school boy antics. Pretty funny stuff, it made most other attempts look stiff and dull. 'Cept for a filmed rendition of Contort Yourself by James White and the Blacks that felt and looked like a living dead version of a Las Vegas act, real sinister and murky and offensive to the Devo damaged spectators who hissed and booed and complained like the spuds they were. The Devo stuff was the usual soulless flash designed to hypnotize, big applause and foot stomping from the fans. Most memorable segments of the remaining presentation were the already mentioned New York film and a brave short produced by Search & Destroy (now into visual documentation and multi media explorations). The New York black and white document featured the near legendary grime of Richard Hell and the Void Oids, early Dead Boys (also caught backstage in all their scummy splendor) the Ramones (eternally themselves—they came out of their moms that way) and many CBGB's regular patrons in various stages of inebriation (including a babyish Lydia Lunch bragging about her sexual activities). The film (called "The Blank Generation" I believe) is rather dated but still enjoyable for other reasons besides its historical value. The much more recent San Francisco document covers some of the bands that participated in the Coal Miners' Benefit like the Mutants, the Avengers, the Dils and an earlier incarnation of U.X.A. It's raw, wild and as exciting as punk can ever hope to still be after transfer to another medium. From this old timer's point of view the most intense performance is given by U.X.A., with Dee Dee snarling and singing as if conviction were all it took to detonate entire blocks of Beverly Hills. See this film if you get a chance, especially now that neither the Dils, the Avengers or U.X.A. are around awaiting your support.

—KICK

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Dred Scott

DRED SCOTT, OR
"DESPAIR HAS A LOT GOING FOR IT"

"Dred Scott and your cat's health.
First thing you have to do is pretend that your cat is America. Your cat, anybody's cat, they're everywhere. This cat is sick. You've got a pill for this cat, the pill is called "Dred Scott". You can be sure the cat is not going to want to take this pill, even if you've got on a white lab coat and wire rim glasses and a reassuring manner like those stiffs on TV who want "otte" will certainly struggle. But you press on against the pain because you want to help the cat, and the cat doesn't know what's good for it. The cat doesn't know whether the pill might get rid of its worms, or dissolve its hairballs, or just put it quickly out of its misery. And neither do you, doc."

(recent Dred Scott gig flyer)

We talked to the pill, I mean Dred Scott over two months ago when things looked almost as bleak as they do now. The drummer was not present, and is now permanently out of a job as Dred Scott's drummer (not as punishment). Present and willing to talk were Chris (bass and keyboards), Jay (guitar) and Greg ("I mostly sing and play some guitar").

SLASH: Who was Dred Scott?

GREG: (pointing to a flyer) This is Dred. An actual black man.

CHRIS: Our patron saint.

GREG: He was part of the american history, during the Civil War, just before the Civil War actually, this guy was sort of used as a tool of the Abolitionists. This Mr. Scott was apparently a dimwitted fellow, so he had been brought into free territory and lived there for a while – you know this country was divided down the middle – and then his master wanted to take him back – so they saw they had a case there, took it to court, and eventually it was decided that he had to stay a slave, which naturally incensed the abolitionists even more, and event led to event . . .

SLASH: What does old Dred symbolically mean to you then?

GREG: You know, the general idea of people thinking they are free when they're not.

CHRIS: He is sort of a martyr too.

JAY: It's kind of known as one of the worst decisions a Court ever made . . . They were trying to prevent a civil war by that decision. Obviously they didn't do a good job.

SLASH: Even without reading your lyrics or listening to your music it's obvious, either from your posters and flyers advertising your gigs or from the bills you play on or the places you play in that you don't exactly fit in with the rest of the local underground scene, or what's left of it. What's making you tick differently?? Do you enjoy being out of the circuit, harder to find?

GREG: We don't enjoy it so much actually. It's sort of a situation we're born into, in a way. We started from a different point of view in the first place. Chris and I didn't start out as being musicians exactly, so we don't come from the same direction as all those power pop bands or all those leftovers from the seventies, but neither do we come from the punk position cept in certain ideological ways, I think we want our music to be more accessible, we do want that was one of the failings of punk – also one of the essentials of it – was that it set itself deliverately outside of everything. But we were **born** outside of everything, so we have the values going in both directions, which essentially has left us . . . nowhere.

CHRIS: Being ignored by what you'd call the punk crowd for being too . . . "something", then ignored by the new wave crowd and the clubs 'cos we were too . . . "punk" or something . . . it felt like we were in some . . middle . .

GREG: Real middle of the road, after all.

CHRIS: I think we developed something that was unique, challenging, and we left it up to people whether to support it or not.

GREG: We probably tended to overestimate the intelligence of the consuming market . . .

JAY: Everytime we play at least one person comes to us to say something like: "you guys are doing something really tasty". That's enough for me. But that's not enough for my landlord.

SLASH: What are you going to do about that? I mean if you get one genuine fan every time you play, you'll have a nice group of friends in another . . . twenty years?

GREG: If everybody had some consciousness of what we're doing, it seems to me it would be very close to what they say they want. It's got the musicality, the committment, the intensity, it just doesn't have the name.

SLASH: You're saying it's what we're all looking for cept we don't know it? (general laughter) Maybe what's lacking is something . . exotic? I'm thinking of Costello, who managed to break thru using the same combination of accessible music and less accessible feelings . . or Holly & the Italians, a band nobody looked at twice when they were here and that is attracting a lot of interest in England now . . .

JAY: But who's getting signed these days in L.A.? Middle of the road, old style rock groups who maybe cut their hair short like Somner. Somner is a good band, they play okay, but they're not doing anything "new wavish", cept for playing in "new wave" clubs and dressing "new wave". But they are not experimental in the slightest. But everybody here knows that the companies are at least five years behind their times. What do you do cept keep doing it and try to eat.

GREG: What we need is a natural disaster of some kind, or an unnatural disaster, any kind of disaster would be really good to radicalize people's thoughts. . .

SLASH: Like a war?

GREG: Yea, even a war. War would be wonderful for punk rock. As Fear says, it would be good for everybody.

CHRIS: Don't tell the capitalists.

GREG: I think they're too mellow.

GREG: They're making a good living out of maintaining the status quo. It's been said so many times over the past 50 years, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, and it's more and more true. That's what I mean sometimes by insect consciousness, this general evolution of people in the direction of being . . . receptors of their culture, rather than having anything to do with it themselves.

SLASH: This "insect consciousness" theory does not sound likd an appealing idea for a major recording company to want to spread around.

GREG: It's not.

SLASH: Your first EP didn't seem to go very far commercially. How was it financed and all that?

GREG: Essentially Dusty (their manager) put up the bucks. And he got a minimum return on his money.

CHRIS: And we didn't do it the cheapest way we could have. I think it's possible to release something and at least break even, but the way the distribution thing is set up you are going to get screwed. The whole way these distributors make their money is by increasing their sales over a period of time and trying to spread out what they owe.

JAY: Which is why the country is in such bad shape. There's no room to grow. The american dream of more and more is dead and dead. People should learn to do with a reasonable amount of [illegible] of more things.

GREG: Which just means sucking off somebody else, the second you have to have more every year.

JAY: Rock n roll sucks, it's in such a bad state. The business sucks. In a ten billion dollars business the record companies have to control the tastes of the masses with an iron hand. Occasionally there is a trace of some better taste evident in some small group or some weird city, but it gets snuffed out. It's better for them to have one group that can put out a million records than ten groups that can put out the same amount, it's an economic law.

SLASH: Where does that leave Dred Scott?

GREG: Well, I've always thought, even before Elvis Costello was doing it, that somehow you can "sugarcoat" the pill, you can tell them that things suck in terms they will accept, you don't necessarily have to beat them over the head with it.

SLASH: Let them know in a nice manner?

GREG: Not that nice. There's certain a jolt required. But it seems to me that, at least to the extent of the Talking Heads, we have material that would be able to reach a mass audience. But what Talking Heads are doing, as far as I see it, is maintaining thd status quo. They do that by exuding an air of helplessness, it's saying "I am in a scary time, and I am scared", instead of saying "I am in a scary time and I am going to do something about it". I think that's why they are allowed to get some kind of response. They are not defiant.

SLASH: Allowed to spread the wimp philosophy to the masses?

GREG: Yea. But I think it's good that they are here, at least they're telling people that the fear is there. But more than that is needed for people to feel they can have some control over their own lives.

SLASH: Are you saying forget about the aesthetics and let's try a real revolutionary approach?

GREG: I think the aesthetic approach hasn't been carried far enough. Maybe if there was something between reggae and what the Talking Heads are doing . . . To me reggae has a lot of political awareness about it, its problem is that the music is so laid back, I don't think it can incite anybody to revolution, no matter how right it may be. The music just does not motivate me. I think you need something that you can't just tune out. That's what we're trying to do, the noise and the content . . .

SLASH: You just want everything!

GREG: That's right, I want everything. I think it's an advantage to be naive in a way. When they finally kill you you die happy.

SLASH: Any band you can think of that is getting everything it wants?

CHRIS: Public Image?

GREG: They're never going to get on the top 40. I wanted to think that the Clash were doing it, but they probably aren't. On their latest maybe 30 per cent of the songs still have a strong social content . .

SLASH: When it used to be 100 per cent.

GREG: But when it was in every song it was too hard-hitting, there wasn't enough variety for your average Joe to pick it up on the radio, as excellent as that 1st album was . .

JAY: The radio is different, you shouldn't include it here. I listen to it at work sometimes. I watch tv for the same reason, before I say something is shit I want to observe it. So I listen sometimes for four hours in a row, and it's the same beat. Sometimes the voices change, or the choruses. But it's just background music to people's lives, that's what it's for. You turn the radio on, and then you go about your life. Now no one turns the radio on to LISTEN.

GREG: They don't buy albums to listen either.

JAY: When I was a kid it was great to turn the radio on. You'd get in the car to be away from your parents and listen to music that MEANT something.

GREG: I just listen to the news stations.

SLASH: I can only take the mexican stations. It's less painful because you don't understand.

CHRIS: We may be painting a pretty grim picture of our prospects, but there is not that much time.

JAY: It would be very nice not to have to think about accessibility. We'd like to make a statement every time we play, not to think about record companies, not to make any concessions music wise. That would be really nice.

SLASH: What's preventing you?

GREG: The way things are.

JAY: It's not a realistic way to see things.

SLASH: What about the clubs?

GREG: Everybody just wants to go out and get entertained. It's like tv. I really don't see why most of the club audience doesn' t just stay home and watch tv.

CHRIS: Maybe they're bored with tv and would do anything but watch it.

GREG: That may be the only mistake the people controlling the media have done, they've just made it too boring. Imagine, people would rather go and take risks with our music . . .

SLASH: Such optimism . . .

GREG: Despair has a lot going for it.

SLASH: Should I ask about future projects?

GREG: Actually I would like to reach just a few more people. I don't think we've had a chance, we had so many hiatuses in our career, it's been over two years and people still don't know who we are.

SLASH: Perhaps you are simply too low-key in your approach.

JAY: We are in disagreement, but I think so . .

GREG: I've made the mistake of thinking everybody is like me, that they know something is different when they see it.

SLASH: You need the ska hype for something to get across nowadays . . .

JAY: What scars?

(follows a crash course in modern trends, Jay being the only person in Los Angeles that hasn't been two-toned yet. Then we turn to other music trends, what makes some take off, usual predicting and theorizing)

JAY: I've always hated disco more than power pop or whatever because it totally replaced live people. Everywhere, just records. That's really bad.

GREG: I think people should stay in their rooms and turn on metronomes (points to his). It has a soothing effect on me.

JAY: I have a different point of view than these guys, I like to reach people. I used to play in bar bands, and I liked it. I liked getting up in front of people, having them get up and dance. I still do.

CHRIS: Making a living playing any music is no trick. We could play the Holiday Inns, but that would be worse than working as a chauffeur.

SLASH: Do you have any faith in the future, in your future as a group?

GREG: Well it's been encouraging, at least we still can say we're different, in a way. People eventually do come around to what's different, they do get tired of what they have a lot of. So if anybody does come around to us, maybe they will in a big way. May be.

A DRED SCOTT SERMON:

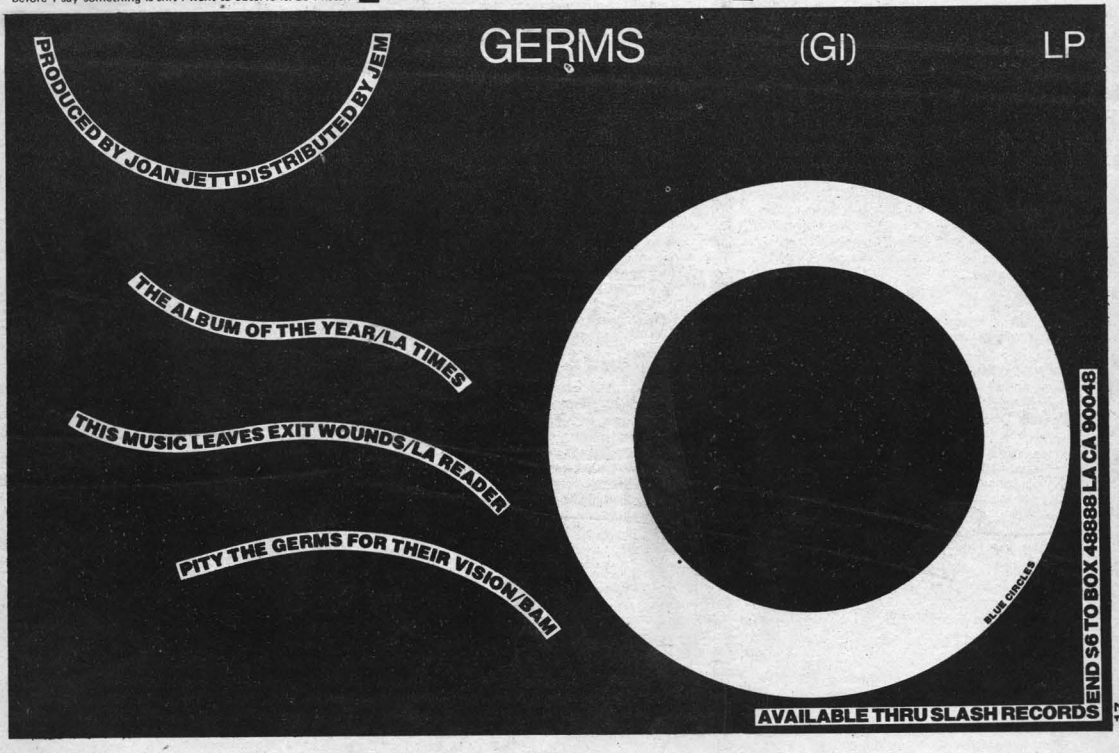
". . . shut up, fall in line, take what you're given, and keep your hands to yourself unless you're reaching for that brightly designed package, or your wallet, or the sky, punk.

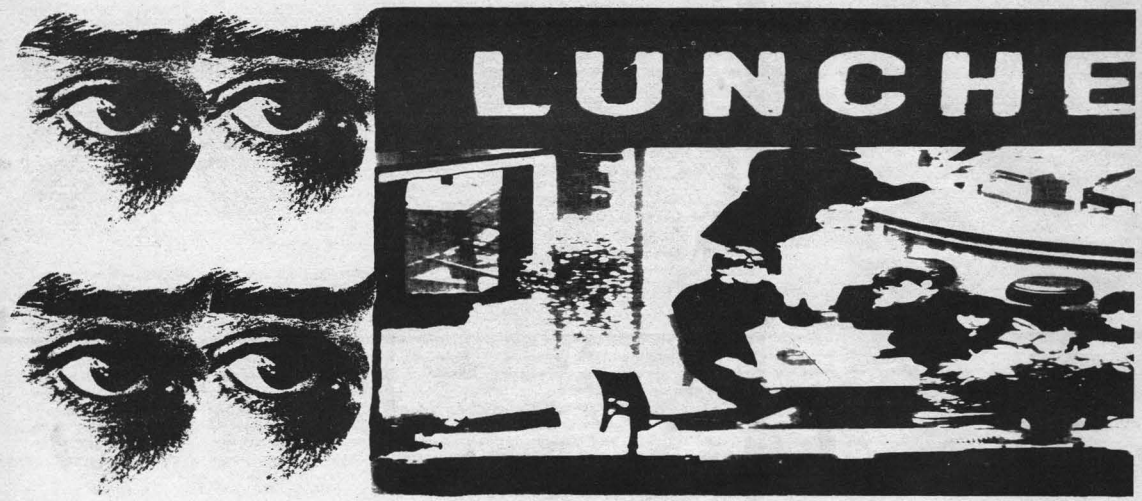
You can't have complete control. But how about a little? We here at the Baptized in the Blood Church of Dred think you should have some. Starting in small ways, of course, like breaking habits. Habits . . . can also help you avoid troublesome thinking. The nice folks who control your life count on your habits.

. . . One way to have almost complete control of your life, for a few minutes anyway, is to get a gun and go out on the street and open fire on anything and anyone that represents the factors that have made modern life such a steaming load of shit. But if you want complete control, be sure to turn the gun on yourself just before the cops get you. Of course, it's been done.

. . . The members of the group Dred Scott do not have complete control of their lives . . . Some members have used the same brand of toothpaste since they were kids because their parents used it. Some continue to read Rolling Stone . . . . But they try."

(extracts from another Dred Scott gig flyer)





THE 8-EYED SPY FILE

"In Pearl Harbor, a German family of four went sight-seeing, took snapshots, made out timetables, and relayed all information ahead to the Japanese warlords . . ."

The first time I saw Lydia Lunch, her hair was shorter than it is now, and she was wearing a yellow & green polka-dot bikini, sitting languid in a small boat bobbing on the waves off the central Jersey coast. It was midnight and, luscious dish that she is, she was rubbing some kind of wax all over her babydoll limbs and down along her hot little bikini-line where, tastefully, not a single curling hair was visible. I was just about creaming my rubber pants, watching the glistening of her voluptuousness in the ghostly light of the full moon.

When after an hour of this breath-taking exhibition, she finally took off her sunglasses and the green straw hat with two daisies sticking in the side, and started rowing for the shore, I knew it was my big chance. I adjusted my scuba gear, sank beneath the surface, and threw my flippers into sixth, making a beeline for the inlet where I knew she would have to dock.

When she came, I was ready for her. Dropping my voice into its Marlowe-most mode, I said, "It's a little late for a little girl like you to be out, all by your lonesome and daring Davy Jones' locker-room." She gave me a look of utter contempt and was about to pass me by, when I added: "Any time you need the sewage and oil-slick scraped off the underside of your lifeboat, give me a try." That broke the ice: she sort of paused, gave me a sly cock of her head, and come the next day, we were chasing butterflies together in matching khaki safari outfits, the wind in our helmets, two happy-go-lucky kids gamboling and cavorting in the midday scorch. We went on picnics together on isolated beaches, and you could often see us fishing in that little boat that had brought us together. Lydia was a great little fisher, she really knew how to bait a hook, and never once did she lose a single worm to the voracious digestive tracts of the many eel, skate, or baby sharks she caught. And, well, to put it succinctly, this is all just a pack of lies Lydia and I cooked up. And seeing as how reality is more often than than fiction. . .

The real story starts three or four years ago, downstairs at the Village Gate, where two unknown bands were playing on the same bill: Teenage Jesus & the Jerks, and Jack Ruby. Come to think of it, I was wearing a scuba-mask there that night. George Scott was in Jack Ruby and liked Lydia's band to a degree; and Lydia, as you all know by now, was the Teenage Jesus and she liked Jack Ruby to a degree. It was mutual admiration at first sight, a devout admiration which, these several projects and seasons later has now culminated in 8-Eyed Spy. Says Scott: "The reason Lydia for so long seemed so appealing to form a band with was: (a) she was a nubile teenager, and (b) we didn't have to say much to get along. It's a compatible set-up: I don't give her no lip, and she don't give me none."

Scott grew up in Iowa and moved to Florida with his family when 10. "I used to surf the Gulf Coast, which is actually only surfable in a hurricane. It was pretty neat."

He came to New York in '74 "when there was nary a club for a working band to play."

The move was for purposes of fucking off, but he wound up working like a mule on the aphoristic canal. It was here he first played bass, and cites his origins as an amalgam of the Rockaway's "Top-Down Time", the Hollywood Persuaders, the Unrelated Segments, and Vito & the Salutations.

His over-all musical outlook came from studying the records of the Wildcats ("365 Groovy St."), the Arcades, Goodies, Osmonds, Bobby Rio & the Revels, Chicory Tip, Keane Bros., Mustwangs, Lively Ones, Teen Beats, and last but not least, Hari Kari & the Saki Sippers.

" 'Love Split With Blood', one of the numbers in our repertoire, was largely stolen from an obscure Del Shannon record. And anybody who wonders what Duane Eddy I've heard, can just call me Desert Rat."

Lydia, who happened to be loitering listlessly near our parkside bench as George rattled off this list, put in (in that voice that launched 1000 turntables): "Keeping in mind that we don't want to be derivative. We only want to be erased."

A delinquent black soggy leaf fell from a Thompkin Sq. tree and landed splat at our feet as George added, "Yeah. See, when we do covers, we don't do them to recreate the same buzz the originals did, or to pose as the original artists. We do them as a tribute."

Lydia: "Except when we do 'Run Through The Jungle'."

George: "And speaking of Cardinal Rules, another we employ (seeing as how we're all white), is that no band member is allowed to act, speak, or think as if they were black. I saw how thin a line that was when I was in the Contortions. With this band, it's strictly White & Still Alright."

Pat Irwin, who is on the other end of Lydia's walkie-talkie and listening in, adds, "But Steve, you also gotta remind all those sinking ships out there ther we're no worshippers of The Great White Power Chord either." Roger, over and out.

Jim Sclavunos, who was Jerk bassman, was pulled in to drum on this jaunt. His name means Bastard Slave in Greek. Jim: "They used to be a proud culture, the Greeks. Now they're all in the Merchant Marine and they come over here to open up coffee shops. Or become florists. I guess you could say I'm in the lowest possible caste of a vanished civilization."

I asked about his musical background, to which he described at length his youth with "the worm-burner kids at Mill Basin" and a mutant frog he saw at a polluted inlet there. "Valuable experiences, to be sure; but all I really learned was the meaning of the verb 'to be trapped', which may not be an actual verb. It's verbage anyway, and proves the point."

"So you ran away from Mill Basin at 18 to come to the core of the apple where you'd no longer feel trapped," I ventured, "where everything would even out."

Jim: "Not at all. Are you kidding? I don't let any of that even-steven stuff fool me, Steve. I know it just means that all the walls are the same size."

I opened my mouth, but shut it again. No point driving a good axiom into the ground.

For Michael Paumgardhen, 8-Eyed Spy is his first group of compatible musicians. He got to know George as a customer in the record store where George worked. Says George: "He used to come in and buy the oddest assortment of 45s. Like 'Theme from a Summer's Place', Throbbing Gristle, Cityboy, and old Kinks stuff, all at one go."

Michael likes to stay at home and play pretty combinations of diminished minor-seventh chords on his guitar all day. It's true. I've heard him do it. He showed me a picture of himself from when he was 8, sitting on the couch with his first rock & roll record: 'England's Hitmakers, the Rolling Stones'. But he claims it was three years before that when the really crucial incident occurred: little Michael was changing channels on the TV when he happened across the Outer Limits where EKK! was splayed across the screen in all its electrical six-armed, two-dimensional glory, announcing (bass vibrato): I AM EKK . . .

"I stood staring a moment, I screamed my lungs out, spun the dial five stations into the future, and ran off bawling. I don't think I've been the same since."

Pat Irwin came in from Iowa. He insists that he and George never met before N.Y., but I have my doubts. Anyway, here's his side of it: "Most kids in Iowa go to Cleveland or Detroit. Places worse than Iowa. I felt a need to out-do them, so I came to N.Y. Well, that doesn't sound right; I actually like both Iowa and N.Y., though not Detroit or Cleveland. What I mean is, there are a lot of boneheads in the midwest, for whom CBGBs serves as a mecca, and well, why don't you serve up another question?"

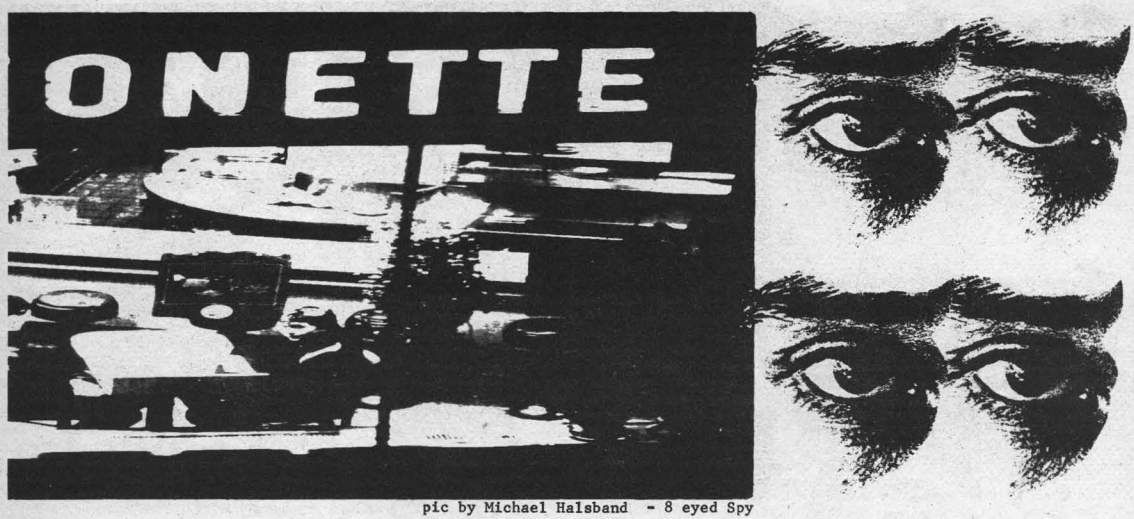
According to George, he and Pat met through a fluke and a mutual friend who told George that nobody could drink Pat under the table and, the race was on!

"At one point," says George, "Pat just said 'I have to leave now' and headed for the door. Halfway out, he started throwing up, but he didn't stop, not Pat, he just kept walking, leaving a trail of puke behind him."

I asked Pat about this and he said "Ah, but you see, I had the flu that night, or else it never would have happened." Cars are one of Pat's fave topics of discourse; he'll go on for hours about how one night he lost a friend's car because he dreamed he parked it someplace other than in front of his building, where he really had, and all about his adventures in all the tow-away compounds he went to the next day looking for it. Or he'll tell you how a GTO is his idea of The Real Car.

"We rented a Cougar in California and was it a dreamboat! . . . The first car I ever drove was a Firebird, but that's a trash Camaro from the word go."

He says the reason people find their 8-eyed music so interesting is because of things like the fact that he and Michael play straightforward guitar riffs, but not in straightforward combinations. "We may sound frayed at first, but it becomes smooth after you get through the initial layers, which is where you find a depth that won't wear thin, because there are so many strands that you can pick one out and chew on it for a while and still be able to come back for more."



pic by Michael Halsband - 8 eyed Spy

I happened to intrude recently on an 8-Eyed Spy song-construction session, where I saw some of this philosophism in action: George and Pat facing each other, plying out fast notes and chords while first one, and then the other would call out signals and affirmations, both working through and then back again through a pattern with an intensity that would leave the layman at a loss; Jim meanwhile tapping out a morse code on an empty Millers' can. "Boy, is this one gonna be something," said Pat when they took a breather. It was at this moment that Hilary Jaeger, the band's road manager called George up, saying that Slash was interested in an interview with the whole band. It was arranged that they all meet in a dressing room at TR3 in an off hour, the one we were sitting in as a matter of fact. So off we went to find a taxi.

Upon arrival, Magic, a funk band was in the middle of soundcheck. Its line-up featured jazzmen Frank Lowe and Philip Wilson, and Pat, recognizing them, had to stop and stare: "I wonder why these guys are playing a club like TR3. They oughts be touring the midwest; that's where their real draw is, that's where they'd be making money. I guess they think it'd be cooler getting their name spread across the face of the Soho Weekly." When Magic started songwriting in the middle of the sound-check, Pat just shook his head and turned away, muttering, "Boy, real pros they've become."

Lydia then came click-clicking her spikes in through the door, accompanied by Marty Arnold (or Marnold, as she introduced him to me), the Spy's friend and roadie. He sat down to a furious knee-slapping Drummer-of-the-Year Contest with Jim, Lydia turning to me and grabbing my eyes in the vice-grip of her own, saying: "I had a dream about you the other night; you came up to me talking like, 'You think you're tough? So you really think you're so tough? Well THIS is tough,' and you showed me the pencil-arm." Which was weird, considering that when I was 15, somebody attacked me with a pencil and stuck it in my arm. I drifted off, wondering about telepathy and how your memories are supposedly recorded in the nucleus of your every cell.

And now Hilary coming in, a cassette recorder under her arm and the keys to the upstairs room where the official 8-Eyed Spy Yap-Fest was to take place. Drinks in hand, we all ascended, but when we got to the door, the key wouldn't turn in the cylinder. Hilary struggled with it a few minutes and Marnold started fixing a ripped pay-phone line as if nothing at all were happening. The other band members tried their hand at twisting the key and kicking down the door, but to no avail. But once Marnold got the telephone working, he concentrated on the door, and I'll be damned if it didn't open for him of its own accord. Lydia: "That's why we have Marnold as our roadie."

The floor of the room was on a seven degree cant, a slope which, says Hilary: "When Mick Jagger came to the club, we gave him this room for his personal use, and he kept complaining about how the place was crooked."

Several of the party then stopped midway in the process of sitting down, asking, "He didn't sit here did he?"

Lydia to Hilary: "You shoulda gave him Eddie's room," (a closet across the hall), George singing, "I wanna be Eddie's room, I wanna be in Eddie's room, that's the most important etc."

We now turn to George Scott, who recently made the drastic fashion move from his 20-year preference (Pro-Keds) to the on-stage wearing of track-shoes with cleats. George? "That's a more important point than you realize. It is psychovisually very important that we have the tallest rhythm section possible looming up there in the spotlight." Pat: "And the shiftiest personalities setting up time-shifts in the tempo." Michael: "And the least self-repetition giving the most longevity for a final musical product." George: "What – ? 'Longevity'? 'Final musical product'? Where'd you learn words like that, kid?" Lydia: "Clive! He's been talking to Clive Davis!"

Pat: "Marnold, you were with us. What in your opinion was one of the more exciting moments of the California tour? For the record." Marnold: "Well; I was moseying us along Coastal Route 1, and Lydia kept sticking her foot on the pedal, so we were doing about a hundred –" Lydia: "Lies! It was never over 75." Jim: "Mother Jugs and Speed." (Lydia giggles.) Marnold: ". . . and I look in my rear-view mirror and what do I see?" Lydia: "Uh-Oh! Babs!" Marnold: "It was Johnny Law! Coming down on me, flashing his red light. They pulled me over and Babs (I didn't catch the other officer's name), she sidled up to the window (she was a blonde) –" Jim: "More a strawberry blonde, actually." Marnold: "And in the greatest little cop-voice I ever heard, she said, 'Listen pretty boy, if you don't stop littering up the highway, I'm going to have to haul you in. . .' And I was never more ready to go, I'll tell you."

Pat now turns the questioning on me: "Steve, you saw 8-Eyed Spy before and after California, didn't you?" The Blonde Man had put me in the hot-seat and I had to act fast, so I said, "Yeah. . ." Pat: "Did you notice any difference? Before and after?" I braced myself for the long haul and plunged in, feet first: "Well, it's hard to say, beccause I'm usually drunk when I hear you guys, and when you're listening in sensurround it's hard to get a clear definition of the overall sound. But I guess I could say that before you left, I was hearing the Inner Sanctum goes to Goodge St.; but upon your return, it seemed to have crystallized into, well. . . just highly evolved rock & roll." Lydia: "Hey, we're a fucking rock & roll band, I mean whadda you expect? We are THE Rock & Roll Band of the '80's. We are pure." Jim: "We are basically a good-hearted band." Lydia: "What does that have to do with anything?" George: "Pure. Friendly. Well-mannered. That's us." Pat: "Getting back to the question at hand, I just wanted to know if we had become a fixation yet, or if our total sound had a shape that you could put your hand on." The simile threw me, so I inquired, "Put my hand on?" Pat: "Or put your mouth on." A soundlessness hung in the room as I let that one pass, Pat eventually continuing: "You see, I think that taste is determined by familiarity. So if someone hears us, and we're not exactly familiar –" Lydia: "Or tasteful." Pat: "– you know, we might not taste good at first." Michael: "We're an acquired taste. Like did you like bittersweet chocolate the first time?"

Lydia pulling some darts from a bullseye on the wall and starting to throw them: "This is good. (!) Now we're really getting some relevance (!) squirted (!) into this (!) interview. (She's scored 75.) 'Put your mouth on bittersweet chocolate, 'Eat it all the time!' " Jim: "Yes. We're really shooting our loads now, aren't we? But seriously, Lydia, that's the major part of your appeal, don't you think? The fact that you don't masticate on the words you throw into your mouth before spitting them back out at people. That's why it all comes so raw." Lydia: "Oh; Well! I just don't know what to say to all this flattery. How about if we get a snapshot for this interview? Of me lounging, feeling my tit and sucking on a lollipop. Like this." She poses: "That's our philosophy. Aural intimidation and oral intimidation." George: "Oh boy, it's Miss White Trash & her Swinging Boys." Lydia: "MS. White Trash, if you please. Watch and see, there'll be an L.A. band called that any minute now."

Hilary: "You know, I think we oughta ask the band what their favorite antisocial acts are." Lydia (still posing, more or less): "Mine is pulling on my breast and/or various other parts of my body." Jim: "Antisocial Acts III, Antisocial Verse 7 . . ." Lydia: "Yes, we interrupt tonight's feature, The Apocalypse & Second Coming, in order that we may bring you this latest report from the habitats of N.Y. underworld denizens . . ." George: "(Peter Gunn music)"

Hilary: "Speaking of Pacific types of things, what was your favorite date on the California tour?" George: "San Diego at The Skeleton Club. It was a real throwback. Sort of like The Web in Burlington Iowa." Pat: "It was like The Cellar in Arlington Heights." Lydia: "Like the penny arcade in Rochester N.Y. Like hey, it made us feel at home for once." Jim: "Yeah, like the Seaview Diner in Sheepshead Bay." Pat: "I'd like to be the house band at The Skeleton Club." Lydia: "I'd like to be the house band at every club, actually." Pat: "There's a band in Holland called The House Band. They used to be called The Opening Act. They used to open with . . . now, what did they open with?" Jim (who by now is sitting upside down in his chair, pushing his PF Flyers through some curtains and trying to fit a plastic hanger over his head): "They used to open with the Cat in the Hat." Michael: "Sometimes with the Fiend Without A Face." George: "The Face Without A Brain." Jim: "The Brain Without A Cause." Lydia: "A Connecticutt Yankee Without A TV Set!" Jim: "Go Native!" Pat: "I think we oughta take this opportunity to slam ZE records. I didn't like the way East Village Eye gave Jeffery Vogol a chance to spout more lies about why he cancelled the California tour halfway through." George: "Nor the way they stuck the ZE taxi across our picture on the cover." Hilary: "They can read about all ZE's lamenesses in the Eye though." Lydia: "Yeah, let's not bother with ZE here. Or the Eye for that matter." George: "O.K. then. But let's at least make the official statement." Pat: "Go, George." George: "Alright . . . 'ZE? Who's ZE? Never heard of 'em, and I doubt whether I'd care to.' "

NINA HAGEN

pic by Philomena

An interview with Nina Hagen and Ferdinand.

Nina Hagen has released two very popular albums in Europe, has been somewhat involved with the English music scene, made a lot of headlines and has left it all to try to start a new band in America with her Dutch boyfriend and musical partner Ferdinand. Nina now has 'pinkissimo' dreadlocks and wears black capes. We talked to the two of them in a friend's motel room a week after they arrived in Los Angeles.

SLASH: Nina, where were you born?

NINA: East Berlin.

SLASH: Even though you're well known in Europe and have had a lot of press written about you hardly anyone had heard about you and your music in America. It's strange that someone who has sold so many records has remained unknown over here, don't you think?

NINA: I don't know how many I sold. I sold a lot in Germany. I think in England I am better known because of my australian television thing than because of music.

SLASH: Can you tell us about this australian television "thing"?

NINA: There was a kind of a talk show where five people were sitting together, all from different professions and with different ages, some of them rather conservative, and at one point we were speaking of young people, sex, things like that, and some fat old man started to say he wasn't interested in women's orgasms. I said to him "But you only fuck women don't you?" and he said "Of course I only fuck women, what do you think? I am not a homosexual" and I said "Well you discriminate against women as much as you do against homosexuals, and you are a very fat fascist. I will show how god planned the woman's orgasm, it's very easy. You have to do this, and this" (Nina starts demonstrating what she did on the show) ". . . and this. . ." and the camera was following my moves and I was showing how if you fuck women from the backside you have to push at one point, it's true you know, and we were speaking about the bible too . .

SLASH: And this show was live?

NINA: Oh yes, it was live.

SLASH: What was the fat fascist's profession?

NINA: He was a writer who wrote about what's wrong with the youth of today.

SLASH: I can imagine the publicity uproar that followed.

NINA: But I didn't do it in the name of publicity, I did it in the name of . . . the Holy Spirit. Heterosexual relations are so fucked up, girls are stupid, boys are stupid, everything is so stupid.

SLASH: This is your first time in this country, right? (nods in reply) Do you think certain things are perhaps better than Europe here?

NINA: I think it's the same. I am a singer and I hope we (pointing to Ferdinand) can build a band quickly here and start to play again and do something with the music. I want to play in China.

SLASH: Were you living in England up to the time you came here?

NINA: No. After I came from the East I went to England for the 1st time to see all the new groups, and I met the Slits. The singer, Ari Up, became my very best girl friend. She already had dreadlocks when I met her in 77 — now I have dreadlocks too — and we made songs together, and lyrics. She taught me a lot. Then I went back, started this german band, then split from them, went to Holland to put a band together with Ferdinand, he plays guitar and writes most of the new songs — then we came here.

SLASH: The first band you split from later on is the band that recorded both albums, right?

NINA: Yes. I made the 2nd album because I was still under contract, but I didn't like making it. We had split apart half a year before. The stuff on that album is as old as the first one. I want people to know that this is not my kind of music. It was a terrible time for me, we had a manager that was very clever and had me in a contract I couldn't get out of, it was my first big mistake in the West.

FERDINAND: There was so much pressure from all sides, from her mother calling me, saying "Hey when are you gonna talk to Nina . ."

NINA: The lawyers said I would have to pay two and a half million marks if I didn't want to make it. That's why I did, otherwise I would have had to pay, and pay, and pay, and I don't want to pay assholes. If I have money I want to do something better with it.

SLASH: In that album you have a song called African Reggae in which you admit that Africa is not the best place for a woman who wants freedom, whether it's the African of the rastas or not, yet you talk about your friend Ari and her dreadlocks, now *you* have dreadlocks . . .

NINA: Of course there are rastafarians who are very dogmatic, just like in other churches, they say things like homosexual relationships are not allowed, they live for their dogma and they can't see anymore. In London I met some very dogmatic rastafarian guys who said to me "Why do you look so crazy, you are a woman and should dress in a female manner, like these girls" and they were showing me some black girls with long skirts. God said you have to give love but they don't give love, they hate white people, they want to go back, back to African and worship Hailie Selassie and it's very sad. Ari Up is upset about it, she could cry because of these things with the rastas, and now she uses skirts too, and puts her dreadlocks under a hat cept when she's dancing sometimes she pulls them out . .

SLASH: Well I love reggae music but I don't see why one should put up with their prejudices . .

FERDINAND: Can I say something? A lot of people spend far too much time checking out the differences when actually a lot of people are going in the right direction, rastas and others. People should concentrate more on what they agree on.

SLASH: I still can't take some of the righteousness . .

FERDINAND: Sometimes they miss the point. Rasta was useful to them in the way Jesus or Moses was useful at one time and up to a point where people grow beyond it after they have a sense of their own identity.

NINA: And some rastas are also very open . .

FERDINAND: They would be that way even if they were not rastas.

SLASH: You have lived under various political regimes in Europe. Do you have any particular feelings about any of them?

NINA: There is so much political confusion, now I don't know. I think the only way out of the confusion would be to have a kind of clinic where politicians would go for an LSD cure.

FERDINAND: And fuck up their heads more . . .

NINA: Well it's the only way I can think of. But it's useless to talk about it now because the world will end very soon.

SLASH: It does seem to be the prevalent feeling these days. I don't know how the rumor started . . .

NINA: My instinct says so.

FERDINAND: Do you mind dying? I don't mind dying.

SLASH: I don't want to miss some of the excitement at the end . .

NINA: I am Nina, and I am not Nina.

SLASH: ????? . . . you're not?

NINA: No. I mean I have a body and I have to find out things, but also I have to forget myself, and think in another direction. I have to forget, and blink blink, I have to make my music, reflect the world around me in my lyrics and things, and follow my instincts 'cos I am thousands and thousands of years old and I should be very wise.

SLASH: You're going to be busy until the end of the world. Nina, where is the rest of your family?

NINA: My family are my friends, it's Ari, and Ferdinand . . . If you mean my "real" family, my father is in East Berlin, hooked on sleeping pills since forever, my mother came out to the West, she's an actress and a singer, she made a record singing russian gypsy songs in german, my grandmother lives in Hamburg alone in a one room apartment with a black and white television, my mother is buying her a telephone. I have a half brother in East Berlin, and some aunts and uncles.

SLASH: Did you get your religious feelings from your east german childhood, or is it a result of moving to the West?

NINA: When I took my first LSD in East Berlin I met an angel from whom I could ask very many questions until he

was gone again. What I was told then I now find again in books, the same answers . . .

(BOTH SLASH CONTRIBUTORS SIMPLY REGISTER UTTER PUZZLEMENT. FERDINAND NOTICES AND COMES TO THE RESCUE)

FERDINAND: Let me tell you something about god. I just came out of this clinic . . . I was there for smack, heroin. I was a junkie for about 4 years. It's a really remarkable place, it's called Farmacon and it's run by a Mrs. Mick Patterson somewhere in Sussex, England. Beautiful mansion surrounded by grounds, there are swans, all that. It's also the only clinic I've seen that has a cure to get absolutely everybody off smack.

NINA: In ten days, with a machine.

FERDINAND: And painlessly. No substitutes, pills, nothing. No cold turkey.

SLASH: No methadone?

FERDINAND: Methadone? You're crazy? Methadone is ten times worse than smack.

SLASH: What is the machine?

FERDINAND: It works on the principles of acupuncture. It has two little things that attach behind the ears, and a little black machine you can carry in your pocket. And it breaks the effects of cold turkey down to about 20%. After 3 or 4 days you feel better than you've felt in years.

NINA: We want to talk about it because it's very important. There are so many junkies around who are okay in the head and because of their hard times know a lot and they want to get off . . .

FERDINAND: Nina ran around Europe with me for a year trying to make me come off, we tried cold turkey, methadone cures, nothing would work. You just stay weak and fall back into junk again. Anyway in this clinic you have meditation, and they have these long discussions with the staff three or four afternoons a week, and everybody eventually comes to it, after the initial 5 to 8 days where everybody is going "fuck I don't want anything to do with this god bullshit, what's this guy reading out of a fuckin' bible? . ." but after a few days they come and start voicing their opinions and what's funny is that everybody believes in god, one way or another.

SLASH: It looks to me like this staff member who is reading out of a bible to help people just coming off junk is slightly taking advantage of their helplessness and confusion and general weakness.

FERDINAND: It's not like that. This place covers such a wide variety of people and beliefs, all with different religious feelings, but they all agree. You can't describe the god they feel, it's the sum of humanity and more.

NINA: When I first read the story of Adam and Eve I thought it was crazy, but now I know it means something. God made man, woman, everything, but he also made the apple, which to me reflects heroin. They were told not to take it, took it anyway, and what happened? The whole confusion. It was for us to make a choice. We still have to choose.

FERDINAND: Just because at one time we push ourselves away from the church because we realize it's bullshit, just money, manipulation, we also cut ourselves off from our own soul, our own piece of god, we suppress it.

SLASH: Let me untangle myself here. Here I was thinking that, if one was to believe the european press, Nina Hagen represented solid old world decadence, when instead we are being talked to as by another batch of believing rastas . . .

FERDINAND: For some we are decadent. And what we will do in the future may appear totally decadent to others. They just won't understand it.

SLASH: You'll find that god has gotten a real bad reputation here because of all the cults and spiritual scams . . .

FERDINAND: He should be worshipped within yourself, not in a church, or a communal setting . . . .

SLASH: And in silence . . . Nina, why are you a singer, make records, perform? You said earlier money didn't mean a thing to you . .

NINA: When I was young I was already leading this existence, when I was this high I was painting myself and going on the street, dancing and singing, then I found out I had this opera voice when I was eleven or so, so I would go in the shops singing (in an earth rattling true opera voice that carries a good half mile) "Can you give me breaaaaadddd?" and they would freak out. I had a good time, I was free, I had this power to act on the street. I didn't think: I can be an actress, I can be a star, I just thought: I can make it everywhere, every day. I think in the beginning, before showbiz was invented, before money came in it people had their fun. Now it's business, the whole punk movement has got there too, everybody constantly wondering is this band good? Is this one no good? instead of dancing. Yesterday I saw a black group at the Whisky playing rock n roll, I couldn't even dance seeing them dealing with Babylon, losing their roots like that, they were going . . (she does an amazing series of funky phony facial gestures) and the audience was going (another series of typical audience expressions). That band had lost everything by going like that for the money, for the money, for the money . . .

SLASH: Ever thought that maybe you just moved closer to the heart of Babylon?

NINA: I know, but I'm not Babylon. I don't want to win over Babylon, I want to show them. I tell you . . people don't believe in that kind of thing, but when I go on stage I am so strong because I always think about the same thing, I think of the key of love, and why we are living, and god, I think of the music, the songs, my voice, I make the whole thing one, and I try to get to the point where we all understand it, like we go on a holy trip together. I get so good on stage that the people feel it, they go (makes beatific face), and they think of god from that day on. At one time when I was using drugs I couldn't have that effect. When I was taking too much hashish, marijuana or cocaine I didn't make it anymore. I don't even smoke marijuana, now that he is cleaning up, starting a new life, and I think we have to start again together without even marijuana. Of course I will use it again, but not every day, as a drug.

FERDINAND: Like when you wake up and start rolling, and go on all day. You should see them in Amsterdam!

(LATER)

SLASH: Nina, how did you leave East Berlin? Not hopping over the wall like those people the news were always full of some years ago?

NINA: No, they shoot you or put you in jail. Last year some man that used to be working on balloons in the army took two years building his own and flew over the wall with his whole family that way. But I was in a better position than these other people. My mother was together with a famous songwriter called Wolf Bierman whose songs were forbidden to be published in the East and he had to have a company in the West to publish his records, and he was always asking permission to have concerts in the West and they always said no but one day they said yes and he had this big concert in West Germany. It was on all the television stations and he sang about living conditions in the East and things and the next day the East German government announced he couldn't come back in. Then I wrote letters to the government saying that he was my father, I believed in him, and that if they didn't let us out I would become the new Wolf Bierman. So they let us out. Me and my friend were always making plans to get out.

FERDINAND: Everyone there does. I have friends that escaped from Russia, musicians, and the things they have to go thru to be even allowed to touch an instrument, like 6 years of training, every song has to be checked, it's unbelievable.

NINA: I had a good time in Poland, it has the best underground music scene of all the communist countries. And the best grass. It grows in cemeteries.

SLASH: Will the music you'll be doing next still retain all that european cabaret influence?

NINA: It will be very very different. And the kind of singing I can create now in the studio works now, it couldn't with the old group, they'd cut everything. As soon as we find the right musicians who can stick with us and who will love us we will feel it by instinct when it's right, and then we can start. I was losing so much time because of Ferdinand, before I met him I knew everything about heroin, that there is no way out, but now I was thinking there IS a way out. And he IS out now.

SLASH: You did train that voice of yours in a professional manner didn't you?

NINA: I could sing like that before the training. I only had the training because when you are in East Germany and you want a tour, have a band, all that, you have to have a document and to have that document you need one year of lessons, learn the notes, everything. And when you're not a professional singer, when you don't have that document, you get nearly nothing for one evening of concert.

SLASH: How many languages do you speak?

NINA: Only german. (we must point out that the entire interview was conducted in english. I studied russian for 6 years. I only speak one language, the language of telepathic love.

SLASH: (feeling ignorant) Ferdinand, you speak german and what else?

FERDINAND: A little french, I picked it up in the clinic from all these millionaires' kids, I also picked up a little bit of Hebrew. I grew up in Australia.

SLASH: Nina, there's a song on the "unbehagen" LP called Bow Wow that goes ". . I'm your doggie, I'm your doggie/ bite you in the leg/bite you in the balls/Piss all over ya/shit on ya too/crap in your bed/and lick you off/bite cha in the ear/like ya never been bit before/shaddap! . ."

NINA: That's because I love dogs. .

SLASH: I thought it was a song about a special sort of love. .

NINA: No, sometimes I am afraid of dogs, I had a dog that bit me in the nose, you can see the . . . (pointing to her nose) thing here, the nose went very big after the bite and the mouth too, I had a thing from the hospital around my face, that's why I am afraid of dogs. The most terrible thing I can think of is if a dog bites you in the balls, I mean I have no balls but . . .

SLASH: I got confused because the song is sung in the first person . .

NINA: That's because I was a dog before. I think that dogs are the existence you live before that of a human being. And before a dog you are a cat, and before that you are a . . beeeehhh (sheep? . . . reincarnation – Ed.), and before that you are a tiger, and before that you are a . .

SLASH: You are a sheep after a tiger?

NINA: (impatiently) I don't know, I don't know . . . but I believe we were everything.

SLASH: I read something about the human foetus going thru a tadpole type of stage . .

FERDINAND: Life came out of the sea. You feel it most strongly on full moons. That's because life crawled out to the beach on full moons looking for food. That's why you get that excitement, the feeling that something has to be done when the full moon is out. It's just the instinct of coming out looking for food. The first life that came on the land came out on full moons when there was enough light to see.

SLASH: And here I was thinking it was only a werewolf transformation that threatened to take place . . .

NINA: And you know what? I had a meeting with real . . bitches on an island in Formenterra (somewhere on the spanish coast – Ed.).

FERDINAND: Witches, not bitches.

NINA: Yes, witches. I wasn't on drugs or nothing. Me and my girl friend Sacha we were alone in a house on this island at night, and the wind was going around the house and we were laying in the bed and suddenly something was knocking on the wall very very loud, ping ping ping ping ping, very loud, and the house was made of wood and it was so loud, and (makes scared faces) it was really something and we went out of the house looking but nothing was there and you could see for miles around, we went in again and I tell you it was a full moon too and (more terrified expressions, everyone cracks up) and suddenly after more ping ping ping the window went . . . off?

SLASH: Opened?

NINA: Yea, and it came such . . . horror vibration my girl friend went . . (shrieks with much conviction) like in a horror movie and there was really something in the air, it was so terrible, like really the end, we thought we were finished, all alone, where was god? nowhere, and then we were laying in the bed together and we heard steps from a horse outside, then somebody put something in the earth by the window, pang, then another pang, then some steps from a horse again, then another . . bang and then the steps went away (makes the sound of a horse galloping away) and then it was quiet, no knocks anymore. In the morning we got up to leave the island very soon, and we went to see what happened by the window and there was a tree, not a tree only the wood from the tree, very long . .

SLASH: Branch?

NINA: Yea, very long, ten meters, and on that thing there was a big stone, a four corner stone, and it was broken, and there was a sign on it like an epsilon and it looked like a woman's (indicates shape of crotch) . . thing. We read that on that island in Spain they were burning witches in the old times. And there is a woman on that island she is really something special, she don't speak and she is blond and she's very . . . She was looking in my eyes once for an hour and I was looking too because I wanted to know – I always want to know – and I think she knows very much about the island.

SLASH: Do you suppose all these encounters are more common in the old world?

NINA: I think so because there are so many ghosts that are not free. Human beings that were pigs and after they die are still pigs and don't know what to do, when you die there are so many dimensions one day they will be free but before that they go around for a long time, really fucked up ghosts, and sometimes you meet them. But that's nature, and you shouldn't be afraid about it.

SLASH: All these beliefs are not what one would expect from an east german education . .

NINA: Well I was very much into Bertold Brecht theater, when I was eleven years old my mother met Bierman and my life changed, I was thinking about the system in another way. Before that I believed what the teachers were saying about the Soviet Union and I was very naive. But I became interested in Bertold Brecht. They don't tell you in school what Brecht is like, they just handle him like any other writer, but he is really something special. I went to the Theater in East Berlin to see all his plays and to the opera when they were playing Brecht-Weill opera and it was great. Very . . . special. You could say this kind of singing influenced me. I just pick up everything I like and take it.

JOHANNA

Interviewed by Laurie O'Connell and Craig Lee

Johanna Went is a woman who loves to play with unusual toys.

Johanna Went is a nun with a yard-long dildo.

Johanna Went is the priestess of plain wrap.

Johanna Went is a huge eye that sings and dances.

Johanna Went is a shaman wearing a mask of blue baby dolls.

Johanna Went is a performer.

SLASH: How long have you been involved in performance art of any kind?

JOHANNA: I didn't know what performance art was when I started performing. I started doing free-form performances in '74, with a friend of mine named Tom Murrin. We used to do balloon theatre, blow up all these balloons, tie them together, take them out in the streets . . It was just silly . . . we didn't have anything else to do. Then a guy named Billy King had a space up in Seattle, and we decided to do a performance there. A lot of people left during the show; they didn't particularly like it.

SLASH: Was it the kind of performance you are doing now?

JOHANNA: Yeah, pretty much do what you want. I liked it — I didn't want to do anything else again. I didn't want anyone to tell me what to do. I had done small theatre work before and I didn't like it because they tell you what to do — tell you how to move, they tell you how to walk, they tell you what to say, they tell you how to say it.

SLASH: How much of your performance is spontaneous?

JOHANNA: I never know what I'm going to do exactly. I pick up stuff off the street, take it home, and start looking at it, and start putting it together, and then I just throw it in a box, and go and do my show. My shows have some kind of structure in my mind about what's going to come . . If you're going to make a mess, make it towards the end, so you don't step in it . . . certain things like that . . . little things that you just figure out naturally. Every show is differe.t Sometimes I have no idea what my shows are about; sometimes they have a story line.

SLASH: Logical intuition . . .

JOHANNA: Yeah, it's common sense. It has to do with the stuff, too. You find something on the street . . . I was helping my friend Tom take out the trash after his performance last night and I found all these strawberry cartons, a MILLION strawberry cartons . . . A lot of anything is good.

SLASH: Some performers sort of lose themselves . . . go into a trance state. Does this ever happen to you?

JOHANNA: I think I most always go into a trance state.

SLASH: In that state, are you removed from yourself . . . watching yourself, or is it just like ritual?

JOHANNA: It's different. I've always felt that my performances were really primitive . . . I never think of them as ceremonies or rituals. You flip into the trance . . .

SLASH: I'm talking about trance ceremonies . . . like in Bali there is a ceremony where these guys take daggers and push them with all their force into their stomachs, and they do not go into the skin . . .

JOHANNA: I can't do that yet. (Laughs) To make this state that I get into — I started doing it a long time ago when I used to do shows with my friend Tom. We'd do shows all the time on the street. We started doing a lot of shows when we were in Baltimore . . . and we did shows every day, and then pretty soon we got crazy and we started doing two shows a day . . . three shows a day; doing it all the time. We'd sit down and look at each other and we'd do this thing we called "taking in," looking at each others' eyes like that (penetrating gaze) for just a couple of seconds, and then we'd start performing. Sometimes I'll look at my hands like this (gazes at palms) before I perform . . . That stuff just makes something click, inside.

SLASH: Do you do something to prepare psychologically for your shows?

JOHANNA: No, I'm too busy. I gotta pack all that stuff. . .

SLASH: Drugs?

JOHANNA: I never do drugs before I perform. I'm not particularly excited about hurting myself. I've hurt myself a few times, I've had accidents, but I know that I get sloppy if I . . . especially if I drink too much, I get too sloppy. . .

SLASH: When I saw you at the Hong Kong on New Year's Eve, Zev was playing the tubes, and the combination of the chanting, singing, the masks and costumes, with the rhythms, seemed like some primitive African rituals I'd read about . . .

JOHANNA: That's why I like percussion.

SLASH: When you work with Zev you never work out things beforehand?

JOHANNA: No . .

SLASH: What about the things you say?

JOHANNA: I don't know where those come from.

SLASH: When I first saw you I thought you had made up a whole language of your own . . . Speaking in tongues . .

JOHANNA: I never plan anything I say, ever. I always trust that something will come out . . . It always has.

SLASH: What are you thinking about while you're performing?

JOHANNA: Everything! Sometimes I'll see someone I know and don't recognize them . . and then afterwards I'll realize it was someone I knew all the time. Sometimes I really have a lot of affection for some of my props . . . some of the things I have to play with.

SLASH: What have been some of your favorite ones?

JOHANNA: My favorite ones, sometimes I think that people don't particularly notice or particularly like . . . they're usually kind of silly things, you know, sometimes trash that I've picked up. I don't know, I throw them away. I get rid of my stuff a lot . . .

SLASH: At your last performance I noticed that big black sheet with white styrofoam shapes on it. — David and Juan from Human Hands have it up in their apartment now . . .

JOHANNA: That was my favorite thing in the show! I like it when people take things home. When I found those pieces of styrofoam, I knew I was going to glue them on something. The next day I was digging round the trash over on Beverly and I found this big sheet of photographers paper and I just put them together and then I was happy. It was the nun's black and white television set. That's what I thought it was.

SLASH: What kind of reception have you gotten from the art world?

JOHANNA: I never seem to fit in any of those groups. Some people are really insulted by my work and some people like it. It depends on the individual person. I'm always surprised at people that like it or don't like it . . . usually surprised.

SLASH: What kind of response do you expect?

JOHANNA: I always expect people to understand . . . to just figure it out for themselves and be satisfied or else not be satisfied with whatever it was they saw. I don't understand why they want me to tell them what it was about.

SLASH: What about playing in rock n' roll clubs?

JOHANNA: That's where I want to play. I want to play for people who don't go to art shows. Those (art) people aren't very interesting . . not as interesting to me because . . . they have money and they can go see lots of things. (laughs) I'm more interested in reaching people who aren't . . . I mean, I'm going to play the *May Company*, in the window, on the 31st of May, I'm *so happy*, because I really love regular people to see . . . This is going to be downtown, all the little children get to see, and old people . . When I used to perform on the streets, the *strangest* people would come up to me and tell me how good it was or how important it was . . . and sometimes it would be some real old person who — It seemed like they always knew exactly what was going on.

SLASH: Someone was bitching about you, saying, "Well, that's not rock n' roll," and I said, "Oh, yes, it is!"

JOHANNA: I always thought of myself as very musical . . . always thought of it as a musical act.

SLASH: The different elements in your shows are both horrible and funny. What do you think of the humor in your performance?

JOHANNA: I think that's one of the most important elements, besides the rhythm. I would say first, the rhythm is important, and second the humor is important, and I would say third, the color is important. I feel that all three are really valuable forms of communication.

SLASH: Did you suck that eyeball? (From a lamb's head used in one of her shows.) Did you put it in your mouth?

JOHANNA: Yeah, I had little blood clots in my mouth afterwards. (Laughs) . . . I don't see objects as those kind of things. I mean, when I put my shows together and think about things everything changes to something else. That lamb's head I never thought of as a lamb's head when I was putting the show together. I remember thinking of it as a container of cottage cheese. I thought the inside of the lamb's head was cottage cheese. I was thinking about cottage

WENT

cheese a lot when I was putting my show together, and then when I was doing my show I thought of it completely as cottage cheese. I wanted to get to the cottage cheese *so bad*, and I was afraid I wasn't going to be able to get the head open because it was frozen.

SLASH: So you transform your materials?

JOHANNA: Don't you ever look at something and maybe think something different?

SLASH: Why do you perform?

JOHANNA: I can't *not*. I can't *not* perform. When I go between performances sometimes I'll do things in my house.

SLASH: Just for yourself?

JOHANNA: Yeah, or in the park. I do some things in the park.

SLASH: Have you done a lot of street performing?

JOHANNA: Yeah, I used to do a lot of street stuff, stuff like I do now. But I can't make any money, I'm real poor right now, I can't afford to do that.

SLASH: What does a performance give you? What makes it so essential to you?

JOHANNA: I know that I'm a performer . . . I've always known I was a performer. Even when I was a kid and didn't perform I knew I was a performer. I never fit into anything . . . people would tell me that I couldn't sing, and I couldn't dance . . . I think I'm a great dancer, but I never fit into those structures.

SLASH: So you had to create your own?

JOHANNA: When I figured it out, then after that I knew that was what I wanted to do. It does have to do with more than just the audience, although I like people to see my shows and I think it's important, but it has to do with the movement, it has to do with making those sounds, it has to do with making those contacts with whatever I make those contacts with whatever it is . . . whatever talks through my head, and speaks out of my mouth.

SLASH: Do you think there are external forces working through you?

JOHANNA: No, I don't think it's external. I don't think there are any sources that anyone else can't tap. I can't explain it. It has something to do with not being embarrassed . . . I'm not embarrassed; I'm not ashamed, I never apologise for my work. It has to do with some kind of trust . . . When I do it I feel like I can do anything . . . I did it all my life, but I was always cautioned about it, you know, crazy people. People are crazy if they do silly things. I used to think about being crazy . . .

SLASH: Have you made any decisions about it?

JOHANNA: Yeah, I think I'm crazy, I think I'm a crazy person.

SLASH: Is there anything you'd like to do that you haven't?

JOHANNA: I've always wanted to perform for blind people . . . I think about color a lot, about how important a form of communication it is. I think that color must affect people that can't see, just as sound affects deaf people. I like any person who has any kind of special quality like that.

SLASH: Things that are supposed to be impairments but —

JOHANNA: But actually just make them interesting. I like anything . . . scars . . .

SLASH: Have any good scars?

JOHANNA: I have some great scars . . . I'll show you my toes . . . (takes off shoes and socks to reveal connected second and third toes . . .) I went up to a person and said something like "I bet you don't have two toes that are stuck together" because I was going to make conversation . . . and sometimes I have problems meeting people and I thought that was a good opener. Turns out he had the same two toes on both feet like that!

SLASH: Are there any artists whose work you enjoy?

JOHANNA: Mark Pauline. That's the most exciting thing I've seen in a long time. I'm *really* impressed with him.

SLASH: Are you interested in working with other people?

JOHANNA: Yeah, to some degree. I'm interested in working with people that offer me freedom. I'm not interested in anybody laying any structure down or any rules or telling me what to do. I guess that's always been a problem with working with people, I have my own ideas.

SLASH: It seems like with Zev you both know just what to do together.

JOHANNA: Yeah, that's what I want. I want somebody who just comes and doesn't ever worry about nothin', just shows up, does their best performance, and then goes home. You don't have to worry and you don't have to say, "Oh, what do you think about that, or this is awful or . . ."

SLASH: Do you have plans for films?

JOHANNA: I want to be in the movies. (Laughs) I want people to see me . . . I want people to see me doing what I want to do. That's what's always kept me from doing other things is that I'm just not interested in having a director, I'm not interested in having somebody make my props. People always tell me, that always pisses me off, because that's the most basic complaint . . . Even my *father* . . when I first started performing, he knew I was a performer after he saw me, and then he said, "You ought to just get yourself a little song and dance and just practice it over and over again and then do it . . . all the time. (Laughs) So I just laughed. I always laugh whenever people tell me that . . . People NOW even tell me that. They think that it would be smoother, more correct.

SLASH: People who come and see you in "punk rock" nightclubs have never seen anything like that before. They haven't had any experience at all with art, which is good —

JOHANNA: I think that that's important. I don't have any experience with art. I didn't know what dada was. I was on the street performing and some old man told me that it was like dada, like in the '20's, in Paris. I said, "Oh, that's nice," and then I went and asked somebody what it was. It sounded curious to me; I wanted to know what it was. So my friend said, "Well, go look it up in the library" so I went to the library and looked it up and I thought, "Oh, that makes sense, I can see how he would say that."

SLASH: People tend to define new things in terms of something they already know.

JOHANNA: I don't have no name for it. No name . . . 'cause I don't know what it is. That's always been a problem; people always ask me that. When they talk about promoting and doing things like that they say, "Well, what is it? What are you going to call this?" and I just say, "Shit, I don't know." (Laughs)

SLASH: The art performances I've seen all have self-consciousness in common. The performance itself is like a means to an end — your performance seems to exist on its own, for its own reasons.

JOHANNA: That's 'cause I'm just *playing*, like children play. That was the first thing — when I used to do the shows in Baltimore I would start doing it, and I knew what I was, I knew that I was playing, and I can play with anything; I can play with *any* kind of toy. I like *anything* to play with. That was where it came from; it came from playing, from giving myself pleasure, from scaring myself, making myself sick to my stomach, making myself angry. What is that word people use when people do things for themselves? What do they say . . . .

SLASH: Masturbation?

JOHANNA: Oh, yeah, it's like that! (Giggles) It's more like that, but what's the word . . . what's the word that they say. .

SLASH: You do more work than most bands, in creating and preparing all your materials. Is that always fun for you?

JOHANNA: (Rapt) Oh, *yeah!!* There's a lot goes on that you don't see. *Lots* of things happen that you don't see. That's why I can't say "Oh, that show's better than that show," sometimes I go and do my performance and I know that the performance is not . . . maybe people didn't even like it, but I . . there are lots of things that I did that I felt to be important. Maybe it's just like . . . I was digging in the trash that day and I liked something . . . (Laughs), or maybe I cut my finger or something, and it was fun.

SLASH: I thought you didn't like to hurt yourself.

JOHANNA: No, I don't, but I'm curious about things. I'm very curious about any kind of experience. Any kind of physical experience that I feel.

SLASH: Tell us about the tour you've planned with Zev and Non.

JOHANNA: I know that I'm going to go to New York and I'm going to play at Hurrah's, on the 22nd of April. And I'm going to play at the Massachusetts Institute of Art, in Boston, in a festival called Eventworks. After that I have no idea what's going on. I plan to stay in New York for a month, and if I have shows I'll do shows, but I don't know what I'm doing. (Laughs)

SLASH: Any dreams of what you'd like to be doing in the future?

JOHANNA: Hmmm . . . There's lots of things I'd like to do . . . Well . . . . . I'll think of something. (Laughter)

END

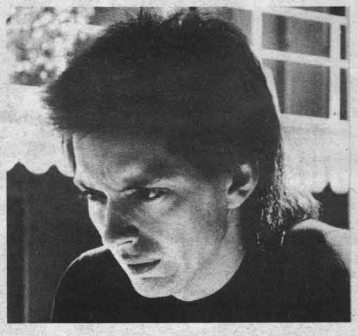
THE JAM SPILL THE BEANS

Ric, Paul, Bruce, pics Scott Lindgren

"What we have here is a failure to communicate."
—chain gang warden in "Cool Hane Luke"

We had talked to the Jam once or twice before, and every time had had some difficulties in extracting more than five words in a row form any of them. Not that they were hostile or anything like that, they just didn't seem to feel they should lay a manifesto on us, the music speaks for itself, we're just like everyone was what came across the rare sentences they would stingily let trinkle into the mike. Fair enough, although there always was an above-average "message" aspect in Weller's lyrics that suggested some kind of personal coherent "philosophy" and beliefs and it would have been nice and certainly not pretentious to indulge in a bit of clarifying. We always liked a good exchange of ideas or even anecdotes ourselves, which is probably why we're doing what we're doing and they're not. The matter would have been put to rest right there and we would have been content to keep checking them out at a distance if I hadn't bumped into a recent N.M.E. piece where Mister Weller was all explanations and opinions, talking away like a blabbermouth 'bout everything under the sun, the state of the music, the political climate of the world, you name it it was mentioned, I felt like a right reject, and a fumbler in the reportage race, there was a challenge in there if I cared to pick it up, so after seeing the band at the Civic and being dutifully impressed by their tightness and solidity I just had to give it one more try, and try to make them come as alive in these pages as they had been that night on stage. "FINALLY, THE JAM REVEAL ALL" was the only headline banner I would settle for.

SLASH: Shit! Why do you come here so often?
(this should get their defensive glands flowing)
RICK: We want to play as much as we can, all over the world. Not concentrate on one particular market.
(this ain't concentrating on one market?)
SLASH: Is there any noticeable difference in the reactions to each tour? (puzzled silence) I mean are the crowds getting more enthusiastic, are they different crowds, that sort of thing?
RICH: Well, in other places besides L.A. we hadn't played there before, and they'd never heard of us.
BRUCE: And like the first two albums are deleted already, so . . .
(mumbles away)
SLASH: What about the radio (yeah, what about the radio?), are you going to try to break thru there as well?
BRUCE: It's very difficult . . .
(no further suggestions come forth)
SLASH: Do you think all this touring, all this work is worth it?
RICH: I think when you do a gig like we did last night or S.F., it makes it worth it. Good reaction, good crowd.
BRUCE: Right. When you feel you're achieving something, it makes it all worthwhile.
(Suppose so. Makes terrible copy though. Come on guys . . .)
SLASH: You're dressing pretty sharp these days (real fancy mohair suits, elegantly conservative, not my cup of tea but the inner subtleties of limey sartorial codes have always intrigued me) Do you get questions from american fans about your sober dressed up look?
RICK: Not really.
BRUCE: Very well. Got to number 4 in the charts.
(This interview, on the other hand, is not going anywhere with a bullet)
SLASH: Do you have the same audience as in the beginning? Have they changed?
(They should have answered "yes, some of them now have to shave" to such unimaginative crap)
BRUCE: It's expanded.
SLASH: I suppose you play much larger halls now over there?
BRUCE: You can only go so far. We've played just a couple of really big halls.
(Intense stuff, uh? Information like that is what makes Slash the leader it is)
SLASH: What about the so called mod revival of a while back, do you think you were helped by it? You were the first ones to be so labelled after all — Do you also get the new mods in your audience now?
RICK: Yeah, some.
SLASH: Do you find all these instant revival fads a bit ridiculous, having stuck to your type of music since you started?
BRUCE: I suppose it is a bit. But there are still some good things to come out of it.
RICK: The ska thing I think has been good, the fact that it's opened up to a lot of black people. They're more inclined to come to a band like us now.
SLASH: Paul, I asked Bruce and Rick earlier if all this touring and playing (and constant talking with nitwits) is worth it. What do you feel?
PAUL: That's the only way you can do it, innit? But at the moment we're only sort of playing once a year . . . . .
RICK: But I can't see the point of like playing these little tiny cowboy towns until you've actually established your-



So one morning I headed for the Sunset Marquee, home away from home to all the visiting royalties and crown princes of the entertaining world (the rabble sticks to the Tropicana, special pop dignitaries on secret missions favor the Hyatt House) with the determination of a secret service interrogator. No electrodes or pliers in my bag but (I thought) rather pointed questions pertaining to their new stuff (most listenable to on occasion) their new hopes and their renewed status in the eyes of the british music intelligentsia (a fickle bunch if ever there was one).

Introductions were made, although not needed as we had met before, and after looking all around the pool side (most common in california dear brits do not draw any class-conscious conclusions — fuck we all have pools; the slash office has two, every punk band has one behind the garage, it's all true, eat your hearts out) for a wall outlet in which to plug my fifty foot extension cord I sat down in the one available reclining deck chair to quiz Bruce (Foxton) and Rick (Butler) while waiting for chatty chatty Paul (Weller) to join us and interrupt our heated conversation. But I didn't know yet what masters of evasiveness I was dealing with. All the while a bunch of admiring youngsters with Jam badges and power pop wholesomeness was hovering behind, half deferent, half giggly, clicking away their instamatics and lovingly staring with their mouths open. I suppose that after five minutes I should have handed the interrogation over to them.

SLASH: Good show last night. How did it feel from your end?
BRUCE: It's good to get a reaction. San Francisco was good as well. We're getting thru here more than anywhere else.
SLASH: This is your third visit, right?
RICK: Fourth.
(well, that question was enthusiastically received. Am I being a real thicko? Paul Weller arrives.)
SLASH: Hi Paul.
PAUL: I'd say you look pretty good you know, it makes you feel at home!
RICK: Yea, he looks really well don't he?
(They're alluding to he vague greenish tint of my skin that day, the result of too much early morning jogging)
RICK: Were you on a piss last night?
(He means "on a binge". I know because I've heard that question before.)
SLASH: Nothing unusual. Paul, do you think that the subject matter of your last album, which is definitely very british middle or working class stuff in its inspiration, might be an obstacle as far as the american public being able to relate to it? (My killer key-question. Ought to get things rolling now.)
PAUL: I dunno . . . That sums the logical attitude more than what might really happen.
(No predictions today. It could have started a dialogue, I know it could have.)
SLASH: (with the first whiffs of despair) Do you think you'll get some pressure from the record company to orient yourself a bit more towards this country's receptivity?
PAUL: We haven't experienced it so far. We don't intend to do anything we don't want to do. We can't write about things we don't know, about America . . .
(What the fuck did I expect? "Sure, man, we'll write about growing up in the San Fernando Valley and watching the Rose Bowl with a six pack of Bud if our agent says we should. Man, we'll do ANYTHING to get accepted, you dig?" There is the possibility that by now they're starting to think I'm a creep as well as a dumb bell.)
SLASH: How's the album doing in England? (Fine thank you. How's your rag? Not bad, thanx.)

selves in the major scenes (rest of the sentence gets lost in the sound of an airplane, obviously waiting for the longest sentence of the interview to test its acceleration capacities! Two more dubious questions are dangled and most rapidly dealt with (grunts and shrugs). I mentally wave the white flag. Sounds of splashing water from the pool.)
RICK: I thought Slash had packed up.
(Innocent small talk or cheeky comment on my professionalism? I'll never know. I assure him of our unsagging vitality, it's just that at the present we're boycotting England until they show respect. Frustrating, the wit I can be capable of a week later. Bruce and Rick are staring at their glass of milk — brought by Paul's dad, a tough white haired fellow who's been everywhere with the band since the very beginning — next time I'll talk to him (at least there won't be a generation gap — Ed.)) A few more minutes are filled with disjointed chit chat on the rest of the tour, homesickness, steak and kidney pies and the vileness of yankee beer. From beer we move on to other liquid joys, Bruce recounts a brief dip he found himself taking in the pool the night before while under the influence, everybody is almost becoming human again as statements, interviews and other sobering duties are gratefully forgotten. Until someone mentions Woking, their home town, and I ask about their local boys made good status, and the youth situation there today as compared to when they started the band some 4 years ago. A little bit of sociology, the comatose interview gasps for a few more breaths of oxygen:
PAUL: There aren't any local bands there, really.
RICK: It's like most places like that in suburbia. There isn't a lot going on, not a lot of clubs where people can start playing. All the council is interested in is a new fire station or a nice new shopping center so the kids can go round there all the time!

SLASH: Any personal feelings you'd care to share with us about the conservative government of your country?
ALL THREE: Useless!
BRUCE: Making promises they never keep . . . . .
PAUL: Anyone I ever speak to hates them . . .
SLASH: It's always like that innit? Everyone you speak to hates the government, any government, but they still get elected . . . . (suddenly inspired, first time that day) Perhaps we're not speaking to the right people . . .
(Someone coughs embarrassedly. After more sighs, belches and feet shuffling we half heartedly nibble at a usually juicy topic, the old Where-did-punk-go-wrong-or-has-it? battle horse. On a good night we can get an entire interview out of that one subject (check back issues) but in the harsh morning glare even the reliable old standard fails to get any decent mileage.
PAUL: It's all in the past, but punk was going to change all that (alluding to earlier selling-out anecdotes involving your favorite bands, yes yours too). I wish they had. But you can change anything, you have got the power to change that fucking rock n roll syndrome, it's just that it's a lot easier to go along with it, it might be frightening . . .
(Also frightening is the popularity of bands like the Beat, the american pop combo that opened for the Jam at the Civic. I mention having missed them, Rick assures me I didn't miss anything. We all agree that the Beat should not only change their name – which they will do so as not to be confused with the ska hoppers from England – but also their music and their underwear. This witticism has us in stitches, which gives a pretty good idea of the general level of the moment. Eager to terminate on a cheerful note I finally become worthy of my reputation for quick on the spot decision making:
SLASH: Shall we resume normal living?
Someone claps . . CLICK

Which all goes to show . . . .
1) That it is a bad idea to meet a band that twice before refused to go into an all night rap session with you about their concept of death and the astral world when they were three years old.
2) That it is a bad idea to meet that band in the midst of an exhausting and unrewarding tour on the morning of an apparently very rewarding hangover.
3) That just because you liked them on stage the night before does not mean they'll like you in their privacy the next day.
4) That having something to say does not obligate you to say it.
5) That if I had standards I would now confine myself to local shit footnotes.
6) That the Jam were officially present in Los Angeles during the month of March.
7) That you will read anything. Hi mom.

pic: Ruby Ray

SHAKE, RATTLE, and ROLL . . . . ZEV
Interviewed by Laurie O'Connell

Zev is a percussionist who has recently gained attention from his work with Johanna Went. He is perhaps the first artist to make his creative schizophrenia work FOR him, by splintering himself into 4 distinct personalities who direct and maintain 4 separate careers.
SLASH: How do you select your instruments? Do you have a specific sound in mind and then look for something that could make that sound, or do you see things that look good?
ZEV: I see things that look good – I always keep my eyes open when I'm driving down the street, and I always stop to look in junkheaps, I'm always looking for pieces. When I find something I'll throw it up in the air and it hits the ground and bounces – I hear what kind of a sound it has. If I decide to take it it sits around in the place where I build instruments until a couple of other pieces similar to it show up and then they get tied together into an instrument. Right now I'm just using shapes and sizes of materials that I want to use and whatever shapes and sizes I find. Eventually I will have them made by machine shops and foundries, steel rolling places, because I know how to make a particular sound and I'll have the shape made for that particular sound, it will have a sound capability that you'll be able to see in the same way you see heat rising off pavement.
SLASH: Didn't you used to look for specific places that would be good to play in?
ZEV: Using acoustical instruments that produce acoustical phenomena you're limited by the place as to what you are able to come up with. I used to perform solely in acoustic locations – tunnels, freeway underpasses, concrete rooms, bunkers . . . so that when people came to hear they heard these awesome acoustical events.
SLASH: Who was your audience at that time?
ZEV: People who would wander by, because they were being done outdoors. And I had a certain following of people interested in my work, musicians and artists in the Bay area who were familiar with my work would come. I wasn't concerned with playing to an elite audience. I was concerned with presenting it outside so that normal people, passersby would be confronted with this information that they would never under normal circumstances encounter.
SLASH: Like punk rock/new wave nightclubs . . .
ZEV: In '78 people in San Francisco were really anti-art. There was the Mutants and me in those days . . . that was pretty much the beginning of whatever other art stuff – second or third generation – that now proliferates all over the place up there. When I first started playing in 1978 at the Mabuhay people did NOT want to KNOW about it; they were NOT INTERESTED. But I persisted, and then disappeared.
SLASH: Who did you play with in those days?
ZEV: Everybody . . . Dirksen used to throw me on before the band. I played with the Cramps, The Avengers, The Screamers, Dead Kennedys, DOA, Weirdos . . .
SLASH: How did the crowd react?
ZEV: I always got people really excited – some people really liked t and some really hated it. More people really hated it than really liked it.
SLASH: What is going through your mind while you're performing?
ZEV: Absolutely nothing really . . . . watching my breath, watching my pacing, making sure that I don't completely burn myself out too fast, making sure that I'm not getting hurt, making sure that the audience isn't endangered. Sometimes people are pushed up to the front of the stage, and I have to watch to make sure that when I throw something around I'm not going to . . . I was coming real close to one person and they wouldn't move so fuck 'em.
SLASH: Most people seem to keep their distance.
ZEV: It is dangerous. If I ever let go of anything it would be death.
SLASH: Or if you get tired of looking at a certain person . . .
ZEV: I can't really deal with he audience that way. I deal with them by not dealing with them. With Zev, I don't talk, I just come out . . . I don't have much to say . . Whereas with Shaoul (Uns personality) . . . Shaoul has tons of stuff to say. (read on for explanation . . . Ed.)
SLASH: What is Shaoul?
ZEV: A facet of myself . . . There's four names now. There's Shaoul, with Uns, and there's Raks Works, the person who works with Rhythm and Noise Associates, and there's Stephen Weiser, who does concrete poetry and sound poetry, and there's Zev, who does percussion. There's this body sitting here who pops into these different facets that have the ability to develop and exclude the others. You're always trying to challenge yourself and take as many risks as possible, and the Zev thing is a very heavy physical risk, going out there and

any moment you could be mauled completely by the instruments. But after a while even though you get hurt occasionally the majority of time you don't so it kind of loses its edge just a touch. How do you keep an edge on yourself? One way is to fracture yourself into various different parts. That thing's sitting out there and you give yourself up to it and let it manifest these personalities. Within the last year this has started . . it's getting very clear this year, in 1980. Great time for it to happen . . .

SLASH: What are some of the differences when you play as Zev and with Johanna Went?

ZEV: Zev is the whole show. When I accompany Johanna she's the show, and all I do is make it sound good. I try to keep them very separate. There's a big difference if you're going to be playing behind somebody and dotting *their* i's and crossing *their* t's than if you're going out there and playing the whole music, then you are the band and you are the show.

SLASH: How do you prepare for a Zev performance?

ZEV: I eat some meat, which I normally don't eat, so that I get more of the vibe that people who go to clubs have, that carnivore mentality, and I drink a little alcohol, take a little drugs, concentrate intently, and go out there and just do it. I have to be watching the instruments to make sure that I don't get hurt, and listening to the sound they're making that particular night in that particular space so I'll know what to do next.

SLASH: Show us your wounds.

ZEV: (Shows his wounds) . . . My legs have all these indentations . . . When I die I want someone to take the leg bones and drill holes in all the scars and indentations, and make a flute . . . I always thought it was cheating to wear the kneepads when I first started playing.

SLASH: How did you change that spartan outlook?

ZEV: Because I realized that if I wanted to continue playing I'd cripple myself, would get to a point where I would not be able to do it. There's still a real risk. Now I have protection . . . and so now I play without a shirt. (laughter) It's not a masochistic thing . . . it's semi-ritualistic . . . Now I try to play at a level that when I'm done, I seriously think that I am going to die, that my heart is going to burst, and that I'm just going to die.

SLASH: When did you start drumming?

ZEV: I've been doing it all my life. I started drumming professionally when I was twelve. I had been making instruments since I was about five — pots and pans, orange crates, and Baskin Robbins containers. As soon as surf music came in, that was it. I knew every single surfing song there was, I swear, but I was a greaser. I grew up in Van Nuys, was in a gang when I was seven. Then I started hanging out with the beatniks in Venice when I was about 14. They smoked pot and played bongos. They were very much like the original hippies.

SLASH: Do you have any desire to play a more conventional type of music?

ZEV: That's where Uns came from, because I wanted to do music that had lyrics. Also Zev doesn't translate to records, and I wanted to do that.

SLASH: Who's in Uns?

ZEV: Uns is three superscope C105 varispeed cassette players, one C108 defective cassette player, a farfisa organ, a fuzz-tone and echoplex, and the vocals are delivered through a bullhorn. It's an analogue system. I stop playing for certain periods, and the instruments keep on going.

SLASH: What do you use for source material?

ZEV: Skipping records, manually skipping records, loops of skips re-recorded. I use sound effects records of disasters, wars, machinery . . . The second Uns performance I did was recorded for Subterranean Records for a compilation album with Nervous Gender and Flipper. Should be coming out in April or May.

SLASH: What kind of lyrics do you use in Uns?

ZEV: Well, in a 20 minute set there's 20 to 25 songs, completely different lyrical passages. The sound continues throughout. One of the songs goes like: "I was drawn to self-destruction. I was very self-destructive. I did something over and over again, but that's old ways of being self-destructive. What do I worry about? What do I worry about? I was sick once, was sick just a little while ago. What do you worry about?" I'm addressing the audience — a very direct relation, it's a conversational form of address, throwing out information that's not locked into the typical bullshit that 99% of songs deal with. Most people write songs — either a hackneyed love song, or macho melancholy, or a woman's thing from the other side.

SLASH: Tell us about the record you did.

ZEV: I took it to the engineer, and he was getting his levels to master it, and then he asked, "When does the music start?" That was when I did percussion with a synthesizer player, in '76 and '77. Precursor to what became Zev. Then I was still in the accompany mode, starting to develop percussion that matched the timbre and range of synthesizers. Normal drums, and wood, and cymbals, sound good with old world instruments, and new instruments needed percussion that matched them. I used stainless steel and plastic, which are produced by the same basic technology that produced synthesizers. I had big boxes of small plastic pieces and when I started working solo I tied these all together into 1 or 2 pieces, and all the matal boxes into 1 or 2 pieces, I realized that all I had to do was have 3 or 4 things happening at once, and that was the beginning of Zev. I'm interested in product, I'm not going to sit around and do work in the studio and let it pile up, I can't stand it if there's no place for it to go. I'm not interested in being an esoteric artist.

SLASH: Is the audience important to you?

ZEV: Yes. Even if they are sitting there yelling for you to get off the stage, they hate your guts, they tell you you suck; that's the best, I'd rather have an audience that does that than one that says (syrupy voice) "Oh, you're so great." I'm not interested in that. Those people's belief system is being challenged, they're the ones who need changing, and they are going to change.

SLASH: So you have a sociological purpose . . .

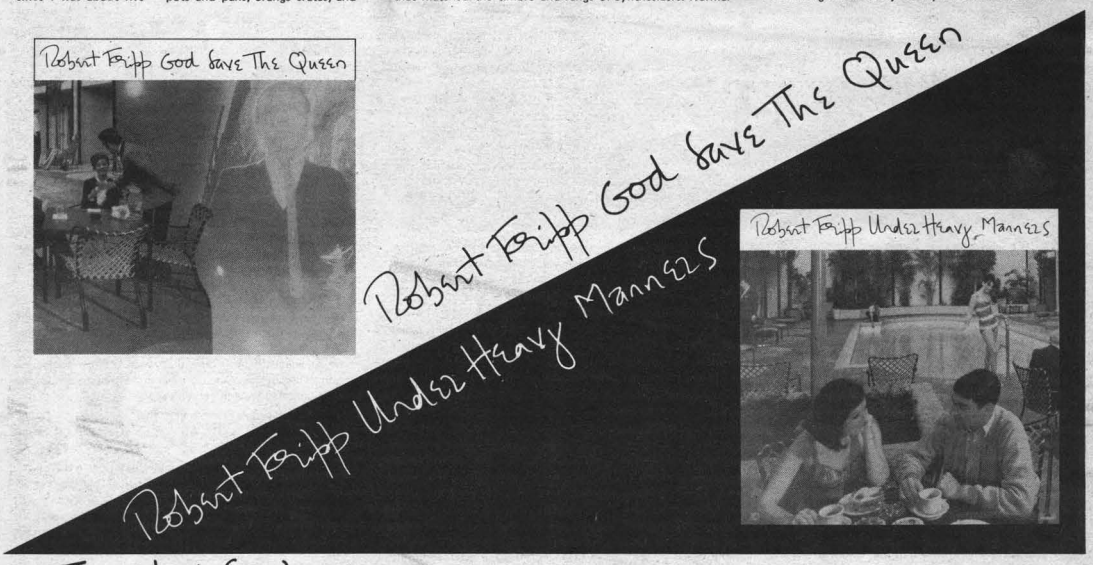
ZEV: Very definitely. That was it from the very beginning, to do the Mabuhay and open things up. It's very difficult for people to get into electronic music because it's a whole new range of sounds, and there's no connection to it. It's just a person sitting there diddling knobs. It's too abstract, but if people listen to me and like me they're going to go home and maybe listen to some Stockhausen . . . because they have seen sounds happen and seen sounds being made, and now they know they're real.

SLASH: Tell us about some of your ideas for the upcoming tour with Johanna Went and Non.

ZEV: With Zev I want to do things like drop scrim screens in front of me and project lights from various angles so that the shadows spread out. Using rear projection for locations . . . Johanna will use live action and flat projected sets, so that every time she goes through a costume change she'll also be in a whole new location. It could look like there are two or three of her on stage. Then we could film that in 16 mm., put out a film for the midnight shows. The three of us will do something together, so this whole thing could grow . . develop into a circus . . . Go into a town, play 3 nights, different shows each night in different combinations.

BOYD: Yeah, we ought to buy a 16 mm. camera as soon as we get back there.

ZEV: We got the *money* to buy a 16 mm. camera????



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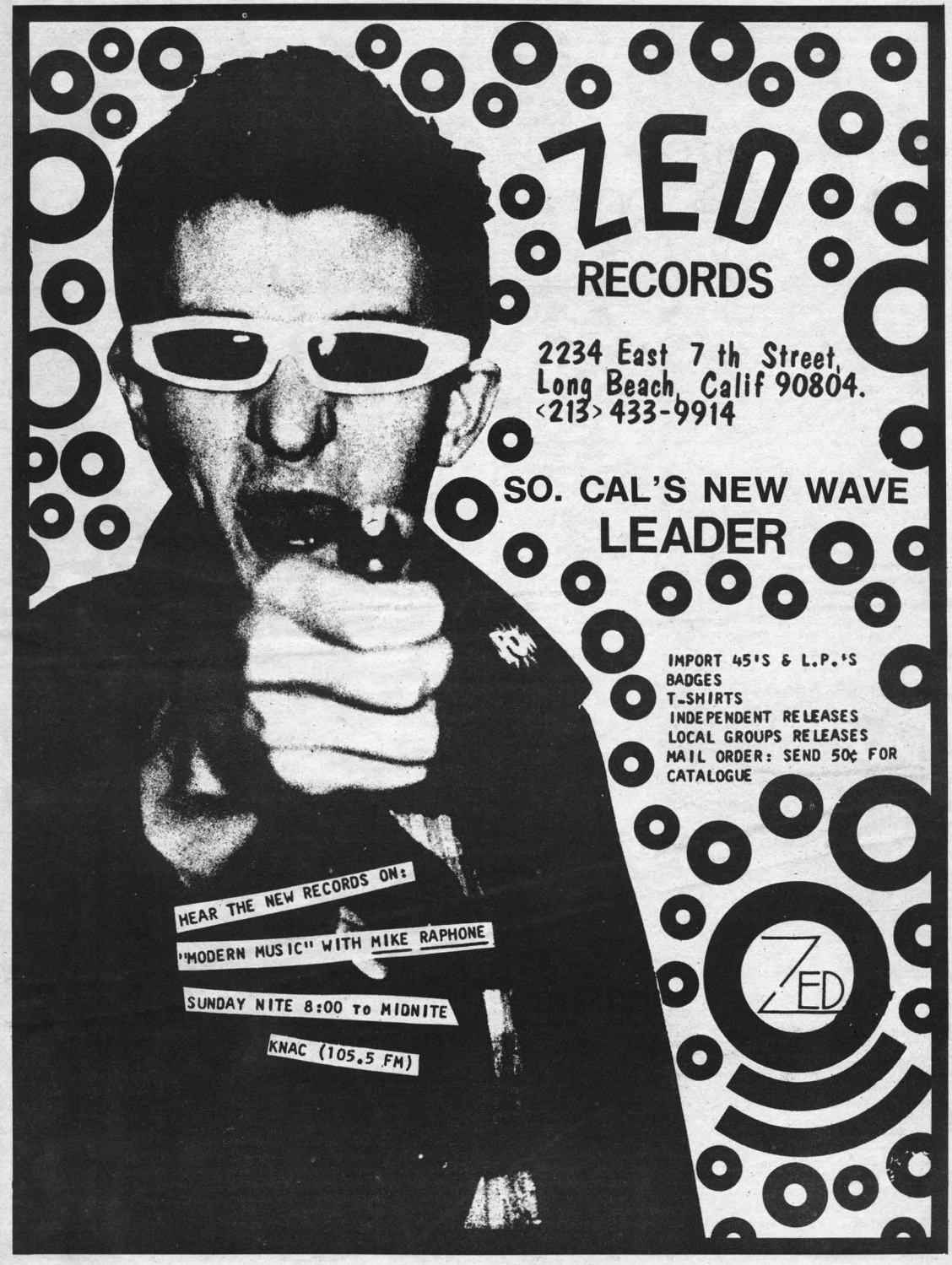
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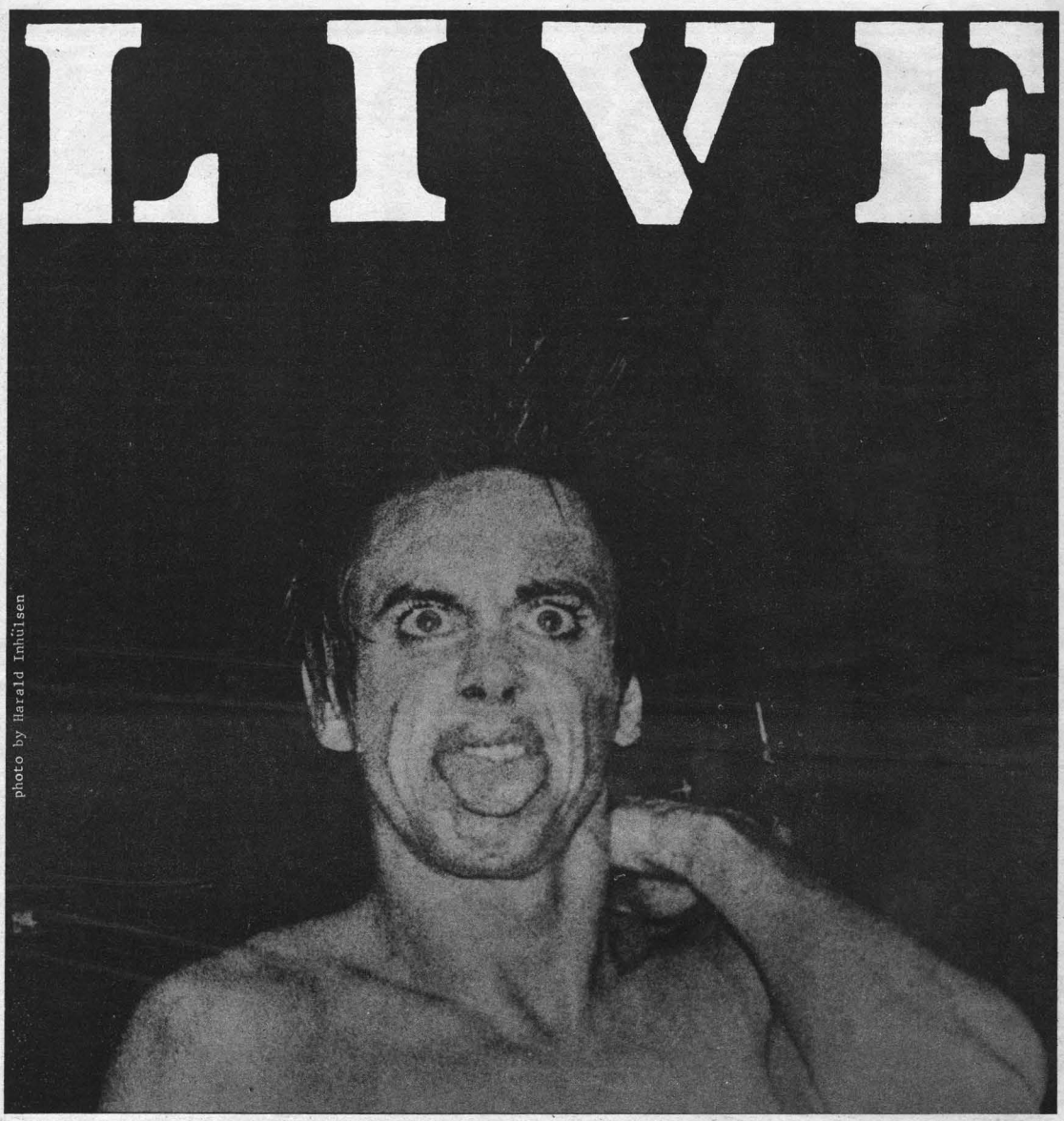


photo by Harald Inhülsen

HAIRBALLS AND BALLDERDASH

It's not like I blame Mr. Oysterberg for this whole clammy affair, big Igg was just, like, doing his thing man, taking care of business, shuffling off to Buffalo. I was the *jackass* there. I was the jackass who hoisted his little rump up towards the stairs like a flat tire in need of a change.

Who can blame Iggy, then, for screwing me good? Maybe that's just what the dude figured I wanted for my $8.50. Maybe he figured I deserved something special for that much moolah, after all, there's zillions of other activities that cost less – including being on the other side of the screw for *free*.

But what the Hell, jack, ya only live once. Lust for life and all that musty gusto. Why the heck not spend eight-fifty for a pain in the ass? I mean I may be *sore*, but I don't mean I'm *angry*.

Iggy seemed genuinely pleased to be in such an intimate position. He smiled a winning smile from ear to ear, saying "Thank you" or "Thank you very much" over and over while the whole crowd moved their asses over to the lip of the stage. In fact all he did was strut to and fro, to and fro, for about the first ten minutes of his show – his band was playing all right, but you know Iggy. His fans always come first. That must be Why They Love Him So. He even took his shirt off so we could admire the tensil of his torso: it's even better than in the pictures.

The band was pretty hot. Iggy stopped them after ten minutes and told the drummer that he was playing shitty and better knock it off. It really worked (I heard that the Screamers used intimidation extensively) cuz the whole band kicked up after that. The best number (the one that got the retarded audience the most infuriated) was a real, real slow blues song whose apparent structure was disintegrated by the stretching of each tone into a corrective device for paranoids. Most of the songs were cranked out pretty anonymously, except certain ones (Lust for Life, Sister Midnight) whose very familiarity made them stand out. That's why Rock Stars stand out, because their fantasy becomes so familiar that you can almost touch it – and you pay loads of cold cash to try. I guess it's unavoidable going to see the Big Stars without three tons of prejudicial anticipation to deal with – seeing the Stones in 1975 was one of the more depressing shows I've seen, and though this was hardly that kind of crash (with the stone wall called reality), the big three tons did manage to flatten my tire. The seal of my innertube popped.

It's funny too, because that very familiarity is what caused the rest of the audience to go crazy from the start, to make Iggy a Big Hero and Lust For Life

a Big Anthem. It certainly wasn't reality animating that crowd, it was the luggage they brought in with them. I was almost pleased that Iggy did just one encore, because my luggage was all packed up and ready to go. I didn't muse over this show when I was leaving, I just high-tailed it over to Club 88 to see the Human Hands. At least the whole night wasn't a butt-fuck.

–SHIFTY-EYE L'AMATO

IGGY POP
at the HOLLYWOOD PALLADIUM

These big affairs do start early, don't they? The same thing goes for the Palladium show just the other night. You want to see second-billed X dynamite the Boomtown Rats right off the stage? You'd better be there eight o'clock sharp because come hell or high water the Palladium management is going to have you back out on the streets by eleven PM. I got to Iggy's show about 9:30 and I thought, Christ, I'll probably have to wait at least half-an-hour before he even shows his face. I might even have to witness the last number of the dreadful opening Mi-Sex. Unfortunately, things were a bit in reverse. Five Iggy songs had already bitten the dust. Now I've given up on all the "Iggy could be so much better" routine. He probably could be. The same can be said about a lot of people including you and me. The facts are contrary. To be great, you have to want to be. And once you've been there, and it probably wasn't too hot to begin with, why bother? Iggy *doesn't* seem to want to bother. And no one can blame him. He plays to fans that are so desperate to let out their own frustrations, so out of their heads to submerse their own befuddled personalities in adulation to someone like Iggy who walks the highwire without a net, without flinching . . . he could stand on stage and snap his fingers for an hour and a half and they'd still go wild. What comes out of all this is that Iggy practically does his shows with his eyes closed. He's "loose" and "takes a ride with the pretty music" that leaves him plenty of room to do things different every other set. He does it so you feel the hair occasionally stand up on the nape of your neck. But he doesn't hold you from first second to last anymore. When you're as good as Iggy though, just plain good is consistently way over the heads of 95% of everyone else who has the nerve to set foot on stage. Iggy is the only person who can mumble Shakespeare then drawl out a short, sweet "Fuck You!" and get away with it. I even liked songs "I'm Bored" and "Five Foot One" which I hated on the records. No freaks to the bone, they're not as bad as most studio/tour duration hire-ons usually are. In fact, they're very passable in a non-personality kind of way. Let's just say that Iggy has yet to find anyone he can relate to and work with on his level. The last few months before James Williamson went straight are undoubtedly the closest he's come. Since that's the case, you get a slight inkling of what it must take to continue on in the face of such a void. Iggy put on a good show despite unavoidable frustrations. It's no wonder that even a soulless mega-ego the likes of Kim Fowley has dubbed Iggy the white James Brown.

–CHRIS D.

THE GREAT FOLK ROCK SWINDLE
APRIL 4 CLUB 88

Phranc goes pholc, after playing "androgynous Phranc" in the dial-twisting Nervous Gender, velvet underground-like guitar with Catholic Discipline (the best l.a. band ever – please don't edit, I'm entitled to my opinion), and the sole male at a girls' slumber party in a Hell cooked up by Mary & Shannon, brilliant female visionaries of Castration Squad (this band would frighten Kim Fowley & John Ingham), Phranc hunched defensively over her accoustic guitar and harmonica holder like Dylan about to go electric at Newport. In every interview she'd given in her year in the public eye, Phranc had called herself a lesbian folksinger and now she wanted to put her music where her mouth was. The hand drawn flyer seemed to promise the "real Phranc" and Club 88 was made up like a punk club on Ironside – a new wave church basement with beer & wine and blue felt behind the stage for illustrating Bible stories. Strumming pure hoot night folk guitar, Phranc started singing "Take off your swastika – it's making me angry." Dylan invented his character by adding moral indignation to Chaplin's Tramp and Phranc had a few tricks of her own behind her turtleneck. "If it had been you in the ovens – you wouldn't think it was so cool," was an Elvis Costello-style gag and Phranc sang the fourth "Fascism isn't Anarchy" to an old Sex Pistols tune. With a burning cross on the cover of X's album and a Slash writer implying that Lenny Bruce proved swastikas to be the best way we can express ourselves, Phranc's defensive stance seemed almost warranted. Punk friends had promised to boo but they either lied or didn't show up. Phranc's art is in being likeable no matter what she's doing. She sang "I'm a Jewish lesbian" to an audience that included her parents and a handful of lesbians who weren't speaking to each other, let alone anyone else. She asked that her Jewish anger be taken seriously but faded in & out of the Dylan-bit to say she was in on the joke.

Phranc's melodies and guitar playing have been improving rapidly and the preachy feminist sound of "What Can I Do?" was not heard. Still, her harmonica sounded like a broken toy making Pablo Picasso sound like a dying Ballad of Hollis Brown compared to Catholic Discipline's far superior, Nancy Sinatra-inspired version. Her voice sounded pure and beautiful when she sang "The woman I know . . ." from her own Ballad of the Dumb Hairdressers, but the punch line "She's a good barber" was a too obvious copy of "she's a real swell girl" from "Charlotte". Still, this was her best singing yet. Going to fights at the Olympic illogically inspired a version of Dylan's Who Killed Davey Moore? that sounded like Odetta outside Jackie Kennedy's window. This song has always reminded me of Johnny Rotten's Bodies. After Hours sounded just like Mo Tucker. A sudden "thank you" and she pretended to leave, but was pushed back to the microphone by fans, she hadn't done her current hit. Playing folk chords low on the neck she confessed: "I Liked Charlotte", sending one Go-Go on the kind of world tour where you wouldn't wanna come back. This was Phranc doing Renaldo and Clara; she could make me cry if she don't know.

–JAMES VALENTINE

(Editor's protest: the cover of the X album – buy yours today, thank you – is NOT, NOT, DEFINITELY NOT a cross. It's an X, we thought it was a good idea for a band called X. +, that's a cross. It stands upright. Jesus wouldn't look too good suffering at a 45 degree angle now would he?)

CLASH at the Roxy

It was a real nice gesture, not a pose, god forbid. The latest new wave idols were in tow to tape some stupid rip-off Saturday Night Live garbage show and decided to do a small club gig for the fans. Real swell of them, and I guess it was fun, but I didn't notice. Some people thrive on smoke and sweat and being pushed down and lousy sound mixes and a band whose lead singer has lost his voice and having to stand all the time and being stifled, crushed, mushed, pushed, dished and processed fucked into oblivion all for the glory of ROCK AND ROLL. I probably got closer to Joe Strummer's contorted grimace than I ever would at another concert, yeah what a rush, but hell I been standing right under Lux Interiors nostrils, Exene's mascara, Darby's drool, Alice's sweat, Denney's half-day growth, Tito's hair grease, Lee Ving's tattoo, for a few years now. Strummer's gap-tooth Marine head ain't nothing much compared to them.

I did enjoy the pre-show d.j. playing the recycled sixties funk and soul for those poor american bastards who've lost their cool culture. I was thinking about how I used to love the Clash's first album, the first time I heard it at a Slash benefit, the album was distorted, the p.a. was distorted, it was a grating blare, I was getting a headache before even the first band, and I knew I had found the music for me. I was thinking about my disappointment when I heard the second album, how I hadn't bothered to buy the third. I was noticing how, out of the so-called 'hundred' punks who started this arts and crafts neo-scene, only a handful were here tonight to see a group that ostensibly helped start it all. And the d.j. was playin' "My World is Empty Without You," by the Supremes. Wrong choice. It should have been, "Where Did Our Love Go."

Grovel you new wave dogs, you've claimed your idols, now worship, you sheep! So what if you scream with approval every time Strummer says fuck or shit during a Lenny Bruce soliloquy during the worst song of the Clash career, Jimmy Jazz. Moan for the posing pop Mick Jones with his ridiculous phased/flanged/echoplexed guitar. Raise your fist as the band plays one incoherent song after another, anger rock reduced to dub hell. Strange how nobody reacts to the best one, "48 Hours." But they want this "Train in Vain" they want Saturday/Friday nowhere nights of safe clothing and appropriate buttons, and Strummer works it, works it, but I bet you ten to one that had more to do with chemical interference than genuine rhapsody.

There's this guy next to me. He's screaming, he's yelling, he's sweating and smoking and giving his shirt to the girl next to him to wipe her sweat off, he's pushing and shoving and swigging beer and he probably ripped the curtain down at the end too. I don't know because by that time I was home, smoking a cigarette by a cool [illegible] window and listening to the Cramps new album. I was having a great time too. It's all relative – what a load of shit, eh?

–CRAIG

THE DECEDENTS, THE SCREWZ,
VICIOUS CIRCLE, THE CHIEFS,
THE MAU MAU'S and BLACK FLAG
At The FLEETWOOD (Redondo Beach)

Friday night at the beach, and the kids flock to make the scene. A scene which at first, in the days of "The Masque rules OK" seemed like the unlikeliest direction the hard core sound would take. The beach bleached blond brats into punk? Come on!!! Even the blacks going punk was easier to imagine. Orange County and all that stretch of materialistic paradise was a fortress of time warped values and anybody with different tastes and priorities quickly moved out and stayed away. Music wise everything soaked in surfer culture, and Devo was as far as the aesthetic boundaries would ever get stretched. The rest was faggot stuff. The few bands that emerged from this stagnating swamp did most of their

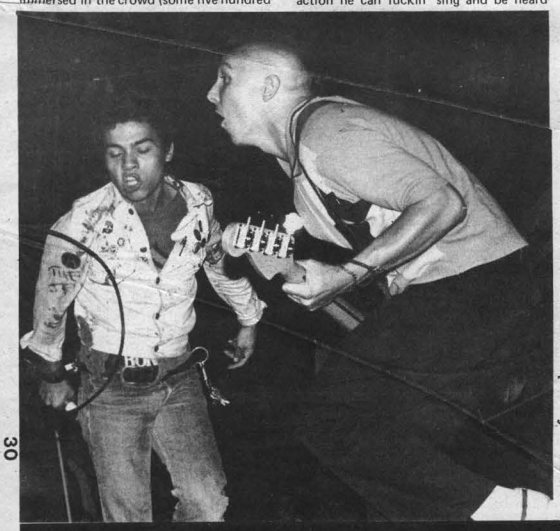
PHOLC PHRANC pic: Philomena

playing and socializing in L.A. or almost-cosmopolitan Long Beach and put up with a lot of shit on the streets and in the schools. Then, in a matter of a few weeks it became obvious that something culturally significant was happening in the land of the eternal wave, someone called it surf punk, but there was a band by that name, and then beach punk cos after all many live on the beach and don't know how to even swim, while the local papers preferred the term punk rock whenever they editorialized and sensationalized about what they unanimously viewed as the gravest menace to their sacred way of life since the Watts riots. Rumors flew every which direction and punk rockers drew more vicious criticism down there than Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden ever have. Of course the proliferation of new bands grew accordingly and the rest took care of itself. The new contingent of punkers (many younger than the arthritic Hollywood scene has ever seen) made periodic raids on big draw concerts in L.A. or Santa Monica, checked out the Clash the Buzzcocks and others and brought some much needed madness and enthusiasm to some of the most dehumanizing gigs the big shots were playing. Their energy and wrecklessness drew scorn from the new wave establishment, like liberal reviewers and others who had thought things were civilized again and that now they would be able to savour the music in dignity and danger-free environments. Just for bothering those people I felt grateful to the beach crowds and their wonderful "immaturity".

This wordy after the fact introduction to one concert was of course for the benefit of out of touch readers from other parts of the world who are not aware of our local cultural layers and who think all punks look and are the same. Going to the Fleetwood in Redondo Beach was like a trip to unchartered territory, and there were as many differences as there were similarities between that scene and the older now-totally-diffuse L.A. one. It's not so much a time lag that separates the two world as a difference in pursuing the initial spark. Funnily enough being immersed in the crowd (some five hundred strong) that night was much more like the british live punk of a couple of years ago than L.A. itself ever was. It had the same roving packs of aggro-seeking toughies, the same tension between hostile subgroups, the same dedication to living that moment for all it's worth cos out there is limbo and inside is all the life anyone could ever wish for. Girls and boys in separate bunches, not like now in Hollywood where punk girls and boys mingle like any other civilized cocktail party, 'cept they do it louder. No booze for sale inside but there are enough bullet heads puking their guts out in the corners to reassure me that most got their alcohol buzz before entering, some things are truly universal. I catch part of the first band's set although most of the crowd hasn't arrived yet. The Decendents (spelling liberties are very "in" down there for some reason) are blasting away all the droning fuzzy metal noise they can crank up and spitting out inaudible vocals, they're like a formless sub-standard Middle Class and that can get pretty abstract. No reaction from whatever spectators are here, they soon split and their name gets taken down the wrapping paper banner above the stage. The next band's anme is next on this giant note pad: Screwz (or The Screwz, I forgot). They take a long time to set up, someone is missing, eventually they locate him and 1 2 3 4 here it goes. Well that one set convinced me, this is hot and raw and real good if you appreciate that particular style, best known example being true pioneers Black Flag also known as The-Explosion-That-Won't-Stop. Total sound assault of classic riffs, a physical brand of music some people just will never get used to. They're not outstandingly original, you think of early Weirdos, Germs and other destructo machines but they're not copying anyone either, that style does not allow for stunning individual statements of tone and texture, you don't aim for the eye of the target when you're gripping a submachine gun. They are tight and fast and the kid singer belongs there and shows it. And besides his dislocated is-he-falling-or-dancing? constant action he can fuckin' sing and be heard above the apocalyptic din provided by his mates. See that band, they don't make them like that in Hollywood no more. Audience reaction fair, but I notice a strange local habit: some girlies find it extremely cool to sit in a tight row on the lip of the stage distantly staring ahead in the wrong direction as the band is three feet in their back screeching away. Must be a teenage coolness test of sorts, at Blackies or the Hong Kong such audacity would get them a boot in the spine before the end of the first riff. Somebody in charge checks a watch, the band's time is up and off they go, obviously they had more noise in store but time is precious. Next combo: Vicious Circle. Similar noise directions but much less precision and instant class, it lurches and tumbles and splatters, they all sport a classic skinhead look I didn't know existed in this country 'cept in Marine bases and the singer acts like a giant Darby Crash on a bad day but can't really start anything noticeable in the vocals department. There's a lot of aggression throughout, the band has its hard-core followers on stage with them who regularly take a few swipes at the encroaching audience below, the confusing melee ends a bit later and I've already forgotten what Vicious Circle sounded like. Long, extremely long wait as out of town recently reformed Mau Mau's behave in predictable Mau Mau Manner and search for their master schemer and singer Rick Wilder. Wilder is outside the hall unable to get in, the Chiefs take over and the 3 other Mau Mau's retreat. Not being up to the in-group politics and status scales I am unable to explain why the Chiefs inspired as much hostility from the packed hall as they did, they have a good rich sound with a few extra twists and hooks and the singer knows what to do with his voice, maybe he isn't considered punk enough in the looks department or maybe he comes from the wrong neighborhood but there was no adulation surrounding him that ight. They seemed edgy and frustrated, fucked up a few intros, insulted the preseht company and ignored the steady verbal abuse. They are most definitely worth checking out, along with Screwz they showed me that night that the punk we all filed our teeth on is moving along nicely and proudly while your fad detector is registering an overload. What's more these outfits can actually play the stuff with their eyes closed while most of the L.A. sound guer-illas offered enthusiastic but approximate interpretations of the great punk armageddeon.

By then quite a few had gone [illegible] the police had shown off its impeccable taste in riot squad gear (regulation leather fetishist outfit with military additions, striking in its covert bondage appeal such as dangling handcuffs, unneeded straps and flash buckles, the latent kinkiness of the image only failing in the headgear department, where they show their insecurity and thinking deficiencies by sporting robot-like bulging helmets instead of close fitting leather hoods — oh the sight of these grown middle-aged men flaunting fantasy projections on themselves, I swear ten cops in full riot gear are better than a whole drag show) and the people in charge of the sound system had tried everything they had from Blondie to the Cars without getting anyone to dance between the bands. Mau Mau's got a second chance and redeemed themselves, their extended "holiday" did wonders for their music, it's tighter, sharper and less derivative than ever before, Wilder showed off his superb trashy singing and sarcastic poses, got his shirt ripped off his skinny ribs and sneered all the way thru the crowd massage that followed an unexpected dive. Catch the Mau Mau's quick, who knows how long they will last before something shatters this unstable association, it's already a miracle they're still around with all the parts working. Finally Black Flag, already something special unlike anything else in town, the ultimate punk band until you show me something better, everybody else does artistic interpretations or medical variations but they carry the sceptre, one singer slips out a new one slips in — adjust or die — he adjusts better than anyone could have hoped for, the three other maniacs don't have to adjust to nothing ever since they first exploded in our midst looking like country bumpkins in search of the big city. Now one has a mohawk that would give a nervous breakdown to any landlord and that's about as urban as they've got. Their music is already timeless, a potent concentrate of everything that ever meant anything before new wave killed the taste of the soup, what's the use you either know it as well as I do or you never will, don't worry about it one day you'll get it right sucker, anyway that's what the night ended with. Six bands, probably over fifty mini skirmishes between punks from this beach and punks from that beach, some two dozen long hairs surrounded and threatened at various times throughout the evening (which I suppose is an inevitable consequence of daily abuse the punk minority encounters at the hands of similar looking reactionary youth — Haven't you ever been provoked on the street because of the way you look and wished there were suddenly twenty of your kind around to do some dentistry work on the subhumans blocking your way?? — Not very progressive but very very satisfying sometimes that gang ideology. And it is going to spread, just watch.) Quite a wail of a time for a friday night in Redondo Beach. And while many of the city's beat groups dabble in techno poop, jazzy fusions or theater rock revisited the great primeval punk rumble is alive and growing in the beaches. Most likely the first meaningful and useful thing these kids got their hands on since they were born. Yep, Sid lives all right, and he's now got himself a tan.

—KICK



pic by Philomena

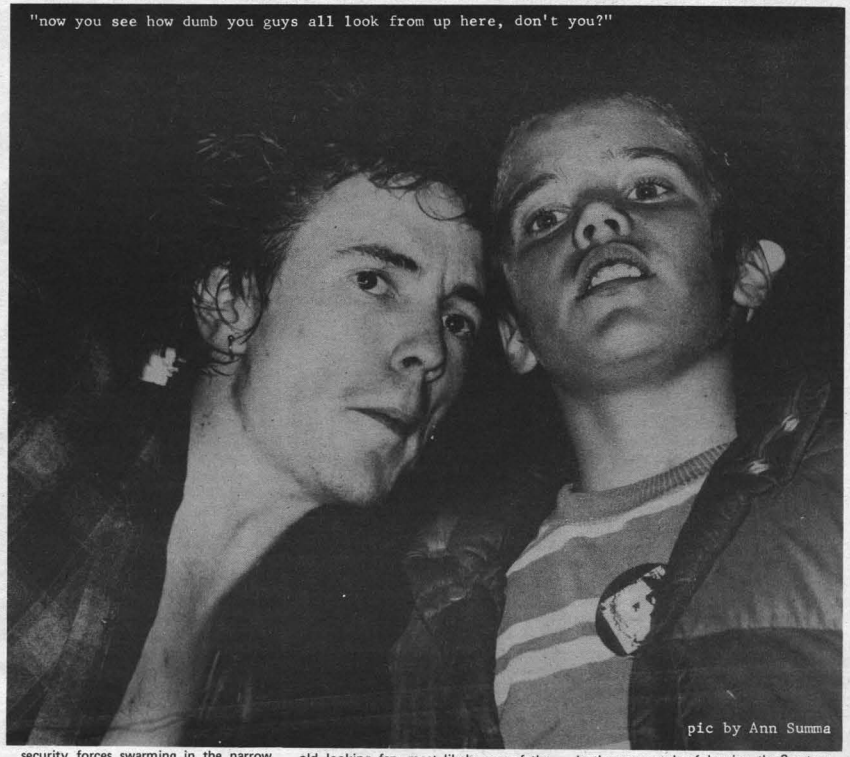
(STILL) GETTING RID OF THE ALBATROSS: PUBLIC IMAGE
at the Olympic Auditorium

PART I: ACTION AND REACTION: IMAGES COLLIDE.

Action was what the thousands of kids who had paid a lot of money (or worked putting up posters and flyers for CD productions in return for a pass) were yearning for, action and a good look at a certain fellow who, some 4 years ago, had started something most of us are still trying to figure out. Action with their peers, with the authorities (in this case bouncers as the regular police pretty much kept themselves out of the event),

on stage, and with all three combined if the conditions were favorable. They were. Yet it all started in a most civilized manner. I missed the first two warm up acts, a mexican mariachi outfit that apparently didn't last very long under the pressure and a brief episode by the Kipper Kids, conceptual clowns who failed in imposing their idea of entertainment on the barbarians and had to beat a hasty retreat. I did catch a very gutsy commendable set by the Plugz, they gave everything they had and were rewarded by an enthusiastic response from the hard core nucleus up front, the rest of the audience remaining somehow cut off due to a very uneven distribution of acoustics throughout the arena. After the standard long waiting period Public Image music gradually filled the huge resonating spaces, as Jah Wobble (in casual colonial shorts and matching shirt) and Martin Atkins felt their way thru various combinations. Eventually the bass settled into a thick syncopated pattern that locked itself into the beat, slow and erratic tide-like ripples ran thru the standing mass of bodies and Keith Levene strolled on, followed by John Lydon looking like some kind of sanitary worker in Hell, long loose black raincoat and skull fitting black bonnet which he took off shortly after. As he started crooning "Careering" I realized how stunned I was by the force and the precision of their sound, instrumentally as well as vocally. There was a strength to John's voice I certainly didn't expect in a live setting. But the music is already being challenged by that antiquated "punk" tradition so gleefully kept alive by dumb media and dumb gullible regulation punks: spitting. At first ignored, it steadily intensifies until it is obvious that John and especially Keith are not going to grin and bear it much longer. For each new superb rendition of a Metal Box tune (only Anna Lisa, Public Image and Religion remained from the earlier record) there comes more saliva on the jackets, the hair, the trousers, the face. Yet there is nothing in the atmosphere of the music that calls for reciprocal aggression. What a bizarre grotesque way to react to such haunting sounds and nightmarish laments, what a stubborn refusal to adapt and move on. Lydon clearly hates this public now and the well-known contemptuous snarl of earlier days has replaced his initial grin. He grabs a container and starts throwing handfuls of what from up here looks like metal coins: "Time to feed the animals" he explains while wiping his face (not from the sweat). All thru this display of generosity he prances like a bad female impersonator and wiggles his ass to the faceless macho troops — if that's what you think of our music that's what I think of your taste must be the message implied. Still he continues wailing his songs of anguish to the steel thread tapestry backdrop of Levene's sinuous and elusive guitar work (some later called it inaudible — we'll get back to that) and the double-edged rhythm machine of Wobble and Atkins.

Repeated pleas and threats have no effect, it's raining, it's fuckin' pouring out there on stage. Much bigger projectiles are also used, including the odd human body raised on countless extended arms and catapulted forward. Of course it never reaches its destination (the stage) and ends up being intercepted by the security forces swarming in the narrow pit separating customers from product. What its fate becomes once down there is left to the imagination. In "Chant" Lydon crouches, feet away from the salivating mouths and glazed eyes, he tries focusing the lyrics on particular audience members, perhaps hoping to snap them one by one out of their hypnosis. Less patient, Levene quits in disgust and, guitarless, hands in pockets, just stares at the fans. The music has become a syncopated soundtrack, with Wobble endlessly marching up and down to the beat (he only interrupted this tin soldier routine once to curse the crowd for what he viewed as their "pathetic imitation of English kids" or something to that effect.



pic by Ann Summa

More random flashes of violence on the floor, there's even a full scale skirmish threatening stage right where the pit-dwelling gorillas (hey, from above it's hard to distinguish between species in the zoo below) are being pelted by lit projectiles (not nice) and must eventually beat a retreat under the stage itself, being brave and all that but not brave enough to mingle with the mob in order to reason with the culprits. By now Keith is back on the job, providing eerie melody snatches on guitar and electronic console while John Lydon, crouched and writhing like one half of an earth worm, recites the mysterious "Poptones," a chilling but undefined horror story that fails to work its magic on the masses.

Just when I am about to conclude that the gap between the musicians and the crowd is beyond repair Lydon crawls to the edge of the stage and after some talking and arguing picks a twelve year old looking fan, most likely one of the beach punk contingent and hands him the microphone. Nothing much happens until the kid is lifted to the stage and John starts whispering in his ear (no doubt professional tips on stage presence) while handing him a notebook of lyrics. The song is "Bad Baby," and soon the "don't you listen. ." chorus is being sung by the new vocalist, over and over and over again, first with John, then alone. The fans, the hecklers, the spitters, everyone is stunned, at a loss for an appropriate response. John sits grinning by the drum set, puffing on a cigarette while the rest of PIL endlessly repeat the riff. The spitting has stopped, this substitution of targets being after all very upsetting and most unlike the way things ought to be. And, to the dismay of a mob that can't wait for the various roles of star and audience to be reinstated so they can go on with their idea of fun, "things" never get back to normal. Appropriately it's with "Public Image" the song that the symbolic lesson takes on its full meaning. John may have helped with the singing itself but it's still the kid that everyone is focusing on, one of them, up there, and who's gonna spit now? One hell of an illusion has been shattered, no fun.

Lydon skanks lightly, enjoying his holiday — then spots a clinging figure to one side and helps a second junior punk to the stage. Number 2 understands the new game and immediately struts about, giving the finger to his mates, *spitting* on the top of their heads and arrogantly skanking and weaving in the Huntington Beach downhill racer fashion. Two more minutes, a third addition who specializes in the worm style of dancing, the 3 extras take turns banging on Keith's synthesizer type of thing, Lydon announces "That's it, we've had enough" and bids farewell to Los Angeles. One by one they let go of the riff, Wobble clowns around with the beach representatives and reality settles around everyone. It takes a good 2 minutes before it is understood that the end had come. Delayed hesitant applause, cat calls, but the P.A. drowns the last gasps. Now everyone can go home, stare at the bathroom mirror and spit, spit, spit at what they see, a jerk that wants his idols to be different from him, better than him, so he can resent them, envy them, lean on them forever.

PART II: AESTHETIC NITPICKING AND COSMIC CONCLUSIONS

So a huge segment of the attending crowd came, still searching for the ghost of Rotten and the way things were when they were too tame or too young to taste it, and instead of a ghost found a very live fellow who showed more patience than he is ever credited for but nevertheless had other plans for the evening than being the local subculture's collective spittoon. Public Image take their music seriously, the later-day punks take *their* image more seriously than the music, no wonder the night felt confused.

Music wise I was thoroughly spent from letting the sound weave its murky evocations around my head and body, like a bizarre massage it combined as much rhythm as anyone could ever wish for and still had countless exit paths to let the dreams out. A few were heard complaining about Levene's guitar but it is not that prominent record-wise either, and

Keith spent so much time fuming, drying himself or on strike it didn't exactly leave him much room to establish his own sound. PIL is a rhythmic band, now more than ever with Martin Atkins adding his superb beat to the well known deep and wide funk paths of Wobble's guitar, frail Keith does not try to compete, choosing instead to deviously sneak in thru any opening, above, under, right behind. And too bad for the headbangers who are intent on shaking their brains loose from its moorings to the pulse of the songs and can't hear the rest of the noise. You want modern dance music or you want the fuckin' Heartbreakers? I've already praised Lydon's vocal prowesses, he sure makes it sound as *the* only way to sound today. (But hundreds are still trying to sounf just like him and wonder if it's true the guy is really a sarcastic terror. You'd be too if, after imposing your own voice on the world it was that voice that became the style, not the determination to remain intact and original and to hell with the voice lessons.)

To hell with everything, actually: Great music triggers senseless confrontations, rebellious kids become mindless troops, intelligent artists are forced into patronizing ordeals or total breakdown of normal contacts, and some of us are forced to watch what we used to participate in and wonder what the hell is going on? The death of rock n roll is so overdue no one believes in it anymore, yet this sure smells like death, and a painful one at that. The agony of youth culture? Wishful thinking? Slow weaning of the teenage nation? Could this be it? Or, to put it in a most cosmicO-mystico-daddy-O perspective: something is dying, something is being born, and they're going to claw the daylight out of each other if it goes on any longer. (sounds of muffled trumpets as the solar system recedes into a dot).

PS: Never mind the gloomy predictions, a man that can get rid of the albatross and stubbornly keep it that way the way young John did and does is in no immediate danger. You watch *your* own tail, amigo, I'll watch mine. And don't let no useless memories get in the way, ever. Adios.

—KICK FACE

ONCE AGAIN, LOS ANGELES DROOLS AND PANTS AFTER THE LATEST SKA STEAMROLLER.
THE SELECTER at the Whisky

Whoever is in charge of the safe deposits in the Whisky offices must have added the words ska and two tone to his morning prayers (please lord, I mean jah, give the ska coming and the two tone two toning..) Yes, this ska is getting more coverage and more mileage than any other musical fad of the recent past. Levi and the Rockats are still dragging their brothelcreepers from obscure stage to lifeless tv showcase and Ray Campi is still trying to rock out despite the arthritis, Burning Spear couldn't put a gig together when he last dropped by, but mention pork pie hats trombone solos and rude boy problems and you'll have people lining up behind you clutching their six dollars fifty for advance tickets. And the huge majority of these instant connaisseurs is largely unconnected with our beloved veteran punk underground crowd that supports X, Fear, the Germs or Black Flag. The punks for the most part have looked the other way, and of course the blacks have not shown any more curiosity in this black and white jive than they have in any other white man's scheme, so the bulk of this *new enthusiastic* public can only be called the new wave crowd, the ones that packed the Pretenders shows, cheered Lene Lovitch until they went hoarse and can't wait for the return of the B-52's. They don't dress ragged, consume loads of vinyl (the disk variety) and spandex (the stretch variety) and all are depressingly healthy and full of fun. Bless the New Wave for it changed their lives, at least the part dedicated to entertainment. Which brings us back to the Selector at the Whisky. An unusual opening act had been chosen on that night, the Ink Spots. (Just because you may never have heard of them does not diminish the impact.) They were (are) a*type of supper club harmonizing black vocal group in the fifties with all kinds of marvelous hits I can't remember. Slick, sweet sound, white tuxedos with tails, white carnations, the works. I also thought they were dead, but I was wrong. Actually I believe only one of the original Spots was present, the other three look much too young to have been serenading during Eisenhower. They were very good with their voices, you could almost imagine the sound of crystal glasses and gentle laughter on the veranda. Thank god for the absence of street kids, because I would have hated to see anything splatter on those fancy white threads. After the intermission that, traditionally, enables you to say meaningless things to all your pals and them the same unless they want their twenty bucks they lent you back, but which that night saw you just standing there in the crowd, hardly able to pivot on your heels and scrutinize the surrounding sardines only to realize you don't know anyone so you stare at the ceiling or the neck in front, wondering if Don Drummond's wife was pretty.

It was crowded all right. Too much so. Too much pressure, too much industry hype, you can almost taste it in the air: all the secretaries in their Ramones t-shirts all the record execs casual and remote but here anyway, on the lookout, the word has spread in the industry, this ska shit is cleaning up why haven't we got one in the stable? Especially too much starvation for good times, show time, entertainment time, TOO MUCH PASSIVITY AROUND HERE. But my brooding is eventually interrupted by the arrival of the band, Hosannah Hosannah the Messiah is amongst us Joy unto Earth, a more faithful audience of trusting fans I don't see very often. Well, the Clash and 999 do get big welcome roars from beach punks and street kids but it's less worshipping, more a growl of unchained instincts. If there are any instincts being unleashed for Pauline and the band tonight they are a very nice bunch of instincts, sort of traditional, let's-party instincts. So party they did, there's a brand new beat in the land of a thousand dances and they're going to twist or skank or pogo again like they did last summer. Course everybody is well aware of this dance's optional accessories like social significance and street consciousness and racial unity and yes it's very nice to have bonuses to your fun, it's also good for England, helps them put up with the political weather as well as the rain and the wind but here? It's different . . . believe it, they keep saying. The bands that pass thru keep saying it's different too, they don't see the inside but they look at everything, see some people, the ones that come to them: so Pauline glares at the far back spectators that stand and gawk and sarcastically questions their ability to have real fun, let loose, cept most are record companies complimentary admissions and anyway there is no fucking room to lift either knee, would you like us to join you on stage sweet Pauline? Or she alludes to the problems of english living while introducing a song and demands to know right there on the spot whether us american young ones have similar obstacles to face in our lives and whether we can relate? A few murmers of ascent, not the roar of approval this sort of thing must trigger back home, it sounds dead, complacent all right, but the equivalent of your english followers is not here tonight girl, they don't often come to the Whisky, not even the white ones, it's not really home it's not a hang out (there is no hang out no more) you're just singing and dancing to tourists, rich people and young executives with several bank accounts. I take you seriously while everyone else thinks you're great fun. And naturally you all are, you play more convincingly than Madness and more passionately than the Specials, you two got the best vocal team of any of them and you guys with the instruments make more attractive noises than one could imagine possible with such basic upfront music. And since your lyrics are intelligent and funny, your attitude friendly and your energy contagious, you deserve all the success you will get and all the following you care to handle. But a band of people is always a band of some people, a street band is not a band for every street and social messages are harder to translate than dancing footsteps are to learn. Whether ska makes any kind of dent on the hide of the beast itself, the America outside the coastal urban centers touring circuit is unimportant (and quite unlikely). What is is why can't perceptive and clever artists or performers keep their initial challenge as sharp and precise and vital as it was on their home turf, why can't their relevance be exported along with their instruments? The only thing universal about music is its beat. So far everyone still hears different melodies. And, contrary to what the advertising hype has been suggesting, it's not even a brand new beat. Poor America, getting only half of the goodies, and that half ain't even what it's supposed to be. Well, as long as the customer is satisfied....

—KICKBOY

PS: Don't get me wrong (you will anyway I'm sure), the Selecter was great, undoubtedly the most exciting representative of the style we have seen so far, and they are not just going for the ride either (see interview), it's just that something pisses me off these days about the club audience and about the whole fuckin' set-up, the hit-and-run feeling of most gigs by out of town big and medium sized names, the jive, the misunderstandings and the apathy that's starting to pervade everything again. Not that bad you say? Just wait . . .

Pauline Black (The Selecter)
pic by Ann Summa

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"YABBY YOU & MICHAEL PROPHET—VOCAL AND DUB"
Prophet record import

"TOUGH GUYS IN DUB"
FAT MAN RIDDIM SECTION
Top Ranking International import

"I WAH DUB"
BLACKBEARD
EMI import

"SCIENTIST V PRINCE JAMMY — BIG SHOWDOWN 1980"
Greensleeves import

"BLACK ASH DUB"
SLY AND THE REVOLUTIONARIES, WITH JAH THOMAS
Trojan import

If dub is mainly the art of stripping music down to its minimum structure one of the year's masterpieces has to be this "I Wah Dub" by Blackbeard. At times there is so little actual sounds in there you stop in your tracks and start wondering if you're the victim of an illusion. "Uh, where did the tune go? perhaps there never was one, I should stop smoking that shit!" I mean it takes nerves to discard whatever sketchy melody or even riff you started with and just cruise on on segments of something that hardly existed. Like a rock being thrown in a pond and all that's left are the ever widening concentric circles on the water. In much dub there is no progression of the music, no reaching a certain state, no build-up. The opposite of most rock. Not meant for action, but for reflection (what the rastas call meditation — known in these parts as spacing out). They might put the most militant revolutionary illustrations on the album covers, cram slogans of change and revolt in the titles, I still can't picture any revolution fueled by this music unless it is used the way quinine and morphine were during War World II.

But anyway (easy to digress with this music playing) "I wah dub" will most likely become a classic, it may be sparse but it is also richer and more sophisticated than all your experimental dabblers put together, and Denis Bovell (who produced the Slits and others and who plays a shitload of instruments here as well as producing) does not have to prop the sounds he creates with techno-philosophical babblings and abstract theories like some honkies we know. You don't even have to listen to the stuff, it just surrounds you, coats your reality whether you're driving in the ozone blankets or ambushing cockroaches in one corner of the kitchen. Mindbending, in the true sense (not "mindsqueezing" like hard or psychedelic drugs). A long long way from the ska roots, where instrumental tunes went overboard slamming everything from drum beat to horn riffs, right up front: a rhythmic musical barrage with no room to stick a thin blade anywhere.

More basic and predictable but still tasty is the "Tough Guys in Dub" deal, plus it's got a truly hilarious concept: jamaicans being partial to macho culture (they're still obsessed by spaghetti westerns and kung fu movies like I am) and its symbols, the brain behind this lp titled every tune after a tough guy of the american screen (Eliot Ness (?) to Bogart, Edward G. to Lee Marvin) and slammed some sketches of the dudes on the cheesy cover. Et voila, a new trend. Dub wise it's the old bass leading the way

with scattered percussion and squeaky keyboards in the uphill sections. Also some sound effects of the novelty store variety, if they had found a whooppee cushion they would have thrown it in with no qualms whatsoever. Still most listenable to and good fun.

The grand old tradition of pitting two dub big shots against each other is not dead. King Tubby himself may have retired from competition but two of his "apprentice sorcerers", Prince Jammy and the Scientist use the tracks from Barrington Levy's "Englishmen" (reviewed last issue) to compare each other's expertise and inventiveness at the console. Since they work with different tracks it's rather hard to pick a winner or even pinpoint a style but it's a fun concept anyway and it keeps everything nice and tight (or makes it seem that way). Since all tracks are by the fluid Roots Radio Band nobody has to really perform miracles of editing and knob twisting to give class to the final sound. Standard echo bits, a dash of reverb, fade out, bring the guitar in, you know the score. A dependable dub chunk. Read Chris D.'s review of Prince Jammy's real masterpiece somewhere else in here.

Film gangsters may not be the most obvious inspiration in dub matters but getting stoned certainly is. Hence the Revolutionaries latest platter on Trojan, "Black Ash Dub". Half of the titles are of the weed variety, the other actually alludes to such unkosher poisons as acid, coke and rum, a most sacrilegious lapse of righteousness but who am I to judge? (since you ask my own titles would go more toward the burgundy/mescal/crystal end of the spectrum). The obvious (well for some of us) experiment is indeed to play each cut while blitzed on the corresponding title drug, but research funds at Slash are non-existent and it would probably be misinterpreted. So, sticking to the routine nicotine and caffeine buzz I listened to Mssrs Dunbar, Collins, Shakespeare and co bop along the grooves and found nothing to complain. It is busier than the average dub and a bit short on surprises, these guys do know each other awfully well. Scientist and Jammy do the mixing, in the liner notes God the Creator is dutifully thanked and mumbles a muffled "don't mention it" before peering over Teheran again where He lately gets his biggest thrill watching angry puppets admonish each other over nothing, sometimes He wonders why can't everyone be like these nice reggae children who don't fuss nor fight, just puff and play music, other times He has the nagging feeling giving reggae to the jamaican folks was like getting a kid a toy drum and having to live with it for the next few years. See, God hears everything and the dub beat can make Him pretty fidgety, He Himself favors strong military marching beats and Wagner grandiose explosions, always liked action He did, but what can you do? Well I could bring this fuckin' thesis to an end for one, I'm going soft in the thinking dept., all this dub-induced reflection and the boundaries between me and the outside are fading, quick one last album before I levitate away from the typewriter.

Yabbu You is back, kind of, dubbing away with Michael Prophet. I wouldn't mind another batch of songs like the classic "Ram A Dam" batch but as the sleeve introduction points out this is "a new roots raggae phase of Vivian Jackson", okay by me dub it up Vivian, whatever inspiration dictates, this is good stuff anyway save for the Star Wars laser effects

here and there that those two should truly be ashamed of. Give that toy away now and behave like a musician. Especially when the text that comes along tries so hard to sound serious, even academic and high-brow. Bits about "policy of co-operation," "Realities of life, both moral and social," "freedom (that) finds its meaning not only in liberty but in responsibility," "vital area for future research," it's all part of roots reggae playing believe it or not, that's what the old tchak a tchak is really about. To me it sounds as if someone is trying to squeeze a grant out of some university or upgrade his respectability, god knows whom with or what for. Praise jah jah the music itself refrains from theorizing and extrapolating, I couldn't take dub with latin and greek titles! Oooops there goes my carnal envelope, gently rising off the chair, why me Jah jah I don't deserve it, I am unclean, I'm not in the mood to skank on the astral plane, somebody turn this record player off! bloody rastafarian vibrations are disrupting my materialistic living! I don't mind too much impersonating a helium balloon but suppose I come down with vegetarian urges, uh?

—DUBBED OUT KICK, somewhere on the narrow path

"CREATION ROCKERS"
A six volumes compilation
Trojan import

Maybe the music of Jamaica has reached its peak. Some fans seem to think so, and I agree that there are signs pointing in that direction. Maybe, like sixties soul, it will gradually and unnoticeably (at first) ease itself into middle of the road shlock noise for mindless consumption on the airwaves and the department stores stereo centers, maybe it has started already, and the occasional beautiful release from Hugh Mundell or Black Uhuru detracts us from really questioning why so many of, say the giant disco 45's multi-levelled packages sound like they're all quoting and duplicating each other, with Jah Something or Ras Somebody yakking away to computerized groovy rhythms laid down by the same four or five studio heavies hopping from label to label and switching aliases as naturally as they change a guitar string. Does anyone really know how many names the Revolutionaries have recorded under? Britain excepted, it sure looks like a few people's proficiency and technical wizardry are effectively preventing newer, rawer contenders from ever reaching the vinyl stage. And that is only one of the disturbing signs. But we're not here (not this time anyway) to spank *the* definitive essay on-the-subject-of-musical-decadence-in-reggae-matters on the outraged assembly of faithfuls, we're here to celebrate what has to be the most essential compilation venture of the year, no way anything will upstage it for quite a while, this is more solid than the Pyramids, a real monument of musical greatness, ought to be put immediately in them official containers in which dignified scientists and experts deposit artefacts from the era so something tangible is left behind if war boo-boos bring about total generalized cultural wipe out, not a toothpick left not a dum dum bullet, clean slate for the planet. So if you people at the Smithsonian Institute are reading this, get the set from Trojan pronto, tomorrow may be too late, this decade isn't exactly oozing with good vibes and optimism. Six albums, twelve tunes on each ranging from great to fuckin' superb, the time span goes from 'round 1965 to yesterday, each album separately starts with the oldies then eases into the newer cuts which is very nice, that way you don't have to shell out for the whole thing at once. Of course there are gaps, all this stuff has been sitting in Trojan vaults for ages but they don't have access to other stashes, although I can't think of one outfit that could boast of being able to cover so much of the evolution in jamaican sound. From ska to disco dub, and nothing token about any of the en-

tries either. What's more this panorama is also a fascinating document on the styles of production reggae has gone thru in the past 15 years, from the crude approach of C.S. Dodd in the sixties to the recent slick and sophistico work of Linval Thompson, Lincoln Minott or A. Pablo. It's all there, the Lee Perry sound, the Duke Reid stuff, or would you rather check out what Bunny Lee or Leslie Kong are responsible for? Most obvious vacancy in the ranks is Joe Gibb's, who only features once in this list of studio bosses. Genre-wise the emphasis is on the straight singing approach and the toasting stuff, not much dub and not much vocal trios a la Culture Diamonds Gladiators but the early sixties harmonizers are well represented (some songs are not to be found anywhere else in any form and I heard they had to re-master this or that from its single, the original master having disappeared somewhere in the hazy past!), no point in giving artists' names, it would take half a phone book anyway, just take my word for it if I say go deh mi bredren, endless hours of the most pleasant and lasting sounds are awaiting you in this sumptuous collection, most of it you'll hear for the 1st time no matter how hip you fancy yourself to be. And if the richness and variety you'll find in there makes you wonder how all this could have remained so thoroughly out of reach of the american public you might then also wonder what else we're being denied because of the mass market catch 22 attitude of the entertainment industry. Ever thought what a jive nonsense this global communication bla bla really is? Today, as Yugoslavia, Sweden and Texas are starting to feel the initial warnings of punk unrest, sophisticated urban america is showing some signs of reggae awareness. Fast move there, America!

—KICK

"SEX EDUCATION"
CLINT EASTWOOD
Greensleeves Records import

What a smart-aleck clown this guy is. You want something meatier and more varied go back to "Death in the Arena". You want the lazy man's way to reggae riches, start here and don't pass GO. Clint didn't pass GO either; he just about passed out from the monotony of what was happening on the rhythm tracks back in yon recording studio. "On the Continent" and "Side Kick" open things up, Barrington Levy giving tiny doses of his melodic voice as counterpoint to Clint's stoned-out rap. OK, it seems pretty cool so far. Nothing-special but nice. By the end of Side 1 the sameness of it all has gotten a little too same for its own good. I'm talking boredom, brother. Ditto Side 2 except for "Brother Man" which features Barrington Levy again a touch more prominent than what's preceded. Clint, mon, you need to go back to dat sex education school and study some more.

—CHRIS D.

SKA-NNING THE LATEST OF THE NOT SO LATEST:

"CLUG SKA 67"
Island
"CLUB

SKA-NNING THE LATEST OF THE NOT SO LATEST:

"CLUB SKA 67"
Island import

"MORE INTENSIFIED! — ORIGINAL SKA 1963 - 67"
Island import

"SKINHEAD MOONSTOMP — THE ALBUM"
SIMARYP
Trojan import

At the rate this is going there won't be one note of original ska music to be dug up by the end of summer. Not complaining mind you, I love this loud chunky shit, it brightens my days, scatters the smog and silences the creeps. And the Two Tone terrors still got a way to go before they work up to the overall wackiness of the genuine stuff. The Club Ska 67 care package specializes in chart hits, you'll hop to the Skatalites' "Guns of Navarone", Desmond Dekker's "Shanty Town", Baba Brooks' "Gun Fever", Roland Alphonso's "Phoenix City" and other certified masterpieces. Not one weak moment or your money back (Well . . .). "More intesified" follows volume 1 issued some months ago with a new batch of skanking noises, some famous some rather obscure, some smooth and some so fuckin primitive you expect poisoned arrows to start zipping above your head. The instruments are in good hands with the likes of Baba Brooks, Don Drummond, R. Alphonso, Tommy Mc Cook, the atmosphere is perfect, full of far away visions for your escapism to grab on when here and now sucks a big one, this is not a review this is a bloody commercial, you know what I'm saying, either you're a fan or you're not. Last album in this section is a total surprise, and a bloody good one. Apparently Simaryp (what's in a name?) recorded this in the late sixties when the skinhead/ska love affair was running its unnatural course and are still a working band today. Or so it says on the liner notes. Maybe they lost the knack to bop cos I haven't heard any news of a band by that name on the ska bandwagon today, anyway who cares they sure knew how to when they did this, they were raw, funny, funky and their music hasn't lost one c.c. of excitement. The skinheads this was aimed at are most likely all stuck with meaningless factory jobs or in the police force now (where I hope they keep the stomping to a minimum) but the new generation of cropped tops should find itself right at home, there's a "Skinhead jamboree" to rough each other up to (also full of dressing tips on braces and boots — very strict code them weirdos), there's a love song "Skinhead girl", some instrumentals, even an american pop song "These boots are made for walking" after a suitable overhaul, this is an LP for the working youth, basic needs catered to, something for all occasions, no wasteful nonsense here. When Simaryp lay off the rowdy thump thump they remind me of a rough Pionneers, and that ain't nothing to bitch about. Funny thing is that this skinhead-this-skinhead that bunch is all blacks, like in negro, like in africa. Must be awfully confusing being a right wing skinhead, what with wanting to send all them darkies back to wherever but who's gonna play the fockin' moonstomping music then? What a dilemma! Life is so complicated when you're ignorant.

—KICK

"KAMIKAZE DUB"
PRINCE JAMMY
Greensleeves Records Import

Go out and get this immediately. If you fall for the real thing and *can tell* the real thing when you hear it, then you can take the hint, can't you? The only records this is comparable to are King Tubby's early Dubmaster LPS and A. Pablo's "East of the River Nile". With this and the Big Showdon vs Scientist LP Prince Jammy comes into his own. A Kung Fu triple matinee with dub soundtrack. Jammy takes romantic melodies, joke song ideas, background music for elaborate spiritual encounters and phases organ, guitar, piano, horns into the spookiest crossover ever. The disembodied Oriental psyche rides on lines of tranquil reggae rhythms. It blends into something I'm fumbling words over trying to describe. You got the Far East, right? You got the Mid-East Ethiopian mind? And you got the boys in the jungle? What do you come up with in the end? Prettiness without the mellow. It soothes without bullshitting you with an easy-listening vacuum. A masterpiece.

—CHRIS D.

"LOS ANGELES"
X
Slush records

Los Angeles, yeah, with its orange skies, its writing on the walls, its long bus rides, and its blood on the freeways. Back on the map now. Every bit of energy accounted for. L.A. has finally delivered the goods. You see, it's not just X's album, it's the city's album, and the people who have followed them all these years should feel just as proud as the band itself. After all, X more than anyone else, represent this scene or whatever you call it. More than that, even. They represent our whole lifestyle over the last three years. Songs like "Los Angeles" and "The Unheard Music" are pretty damn exact in describing the kind of living that's been going on for a while. And now, it's all gone full circle. All the way around the monopoly board. Collect the money and go. You can't stay on St. Mark's Place forever and you can't hang out at the Masque forever. It's over now. L.A. has won back its credibility and has this album to prove it with.

This record, this record itself, being the best from the City of Angels in a long time, with a little more money and a little more experience, could have been even better. As it is; it's five songs short of being an album, (Beyond & Back is sorely missed) and the production varies from brilliant ("Sugerlight") to slightly excessive. (World's A Mess, It's In My Kiss"). Ray Manzerek's keyboards give some songs new depth as on "Nausea" and are especially cool with an errie-like whine on "Sex & Dying", but on "World's A Mess" they are not particularly special. I much more prefer X's live performances of the song when the rhythm just pounds on and the guitar chords batter on like a burning tape-loop until the whole thing ends in a frenzy. Maybe I'm being an X purist, but I have to listen hard to hear that same intensity going on beneath Ray's organ work. I know I'm approaching sacrilege for some, but that's my opinion and if it gets me into trouble, it won't be the first time.

On the other hand, our heroes do not disappoint us at all. Johnny gives a stunning performance every time he opens his mouth, "Sugarlight" being the highlight of the album with a rich-dense echo mix that shows off Johnny's voice like never before. Exene's vocals transfer well to vinyl. Her best moments being "Nausea" and "Your Phone's Off the Hook" where her own personality takes the tune by storm. I still don't understand why she's been so criticized for her vocal abilities. People have been singing off-key since Hank Williams. It's the material that holds it all up and songwriting is unquestionably the key to X. The simple ability to come up with tunes like "Sugarlight" is 50% of the whole game right there. Few people in the world can write that balladeering-chord structure as intensely. It just goes verse, verse, verse, until you can't stand it anymore and then it cuts your head off with a chorus. That's good songwriting! It's both highly sexual and so loose you can sing anything over it, anyway you like, and still never let up the attack for a minute.

Everything else is delivered here safely. The whole feeling of L.A. with its rush hour madness and smoggy-eyed despair. It also gives off the feeling of smallness that makes people so crazy. It's like that very apocalyptical vision of deep-feeling men and women drowning in drugs and wrapping their cars around poles, because they just discovered that there's no place for love and compassion in this world. Many of these songs come from the pain of that kind of disappoint-

ment and hit so close to home sometimes, that I feel totally uncomfortable around this record. It's a real and haunting kind of thing that everybody tries so hard to escape. (Now I know what John Lydon means by "getting rid of the Albatross".) The difference with X is that they also give some sign of hope and concern, which is more than most of us can give, since almost all of us stopped caring long ago. X still care, and that's what keeps them a people's band. They still play for you. I hope they never lose that.

Anyway, other than slight odds and ends, this record is what it should be and I don't see how anyone will be disappointed. The only thing lingering with me is the feeling that this one success means the end of the underground thing as we know it. (Success is just as lonely as failure, it's the inbetween that's fun.) In realizing its potential, X has pushed L.A. punk rock above ground, only to be continued with the same passion in places like Huntington Beach. Maybe over there they can keep it going, but in Hollywood, it's dead as doornails. Excuse me while I go shoot-up and race my car down Sunset Boulevard . . . . .

–UPTOWN TOP RANKING J.

GOD SAVE THE TEENS!!!!

"SONGS THE LORD TAUGHT US"
THE CRAMPS
I.R.S. records

To everybody's numb surprise and musical jadedness comes this kick in the face. (!) With New Wave chewing at our throats, punk rock forced back underground, and most effective music either hiding, dead, or burnt-out, these Cramps come leaping out stronger than ever, crude as ever, and all of it just as exciting as it was in 1977 when they first started lurking about the stages of New York.

There must be some magical formula here, because by every possible rule, this is complete success. The delivery on wax by a group that did not die, sell-out, change, or lose intensity. A rare instance indeed. What do you do when this happens? There's no tangible excuse why a person shouldn't remain devoted to this band indefinitely, since apparently they have no intention of ever disappointing us. They only improve with age and as they learn to play even better, the more they abuse what they learn. All of which creates that wonderfully intended monstrosity known as the Cramps.

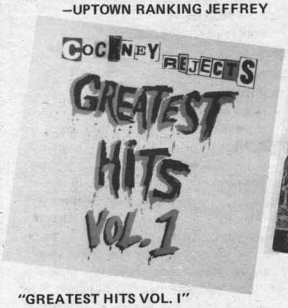
The most important thing that works for them is style. They never jumped a bandwagon or took themselves too seriously. There's no message in their tunes and they have no intention of reflecting some social despair. Their only intent is to be one big creeping terror. Like a laughing monster that won't go away, or the rotten kid that always starts a food-fight. They are a thorn in every artist's side, and a kick in the head to every socially concerned bleeding heart that thinks he influences his world. A complete untrustworthy pain in the ass and everyone wishes they would go away!!!

But, they never will. The Cramps won't let us be so lucky. We need them badly to teach us about some of the lost concepts of rock & roll like having fun with destruction and scaring the older people. Some of the evil mischief you enjoy when young. Lots of you idiots thought that the Sex Pistols were evil. Or the Clash. No way. They never came close to the malevolence of the Cramps. (Except the Damned for a year or so.) Most English punk rock was meaningful ballads from sensitive artists. There was always some bleeding heart message. Even in "God Save the Queen". So, if you ever wonder why it all failed, consider that it may have taken itself too seriously too early. (Art damage wins again.)

The Cramps survive all that. Their music gives everybody the freedom to be like a wild animal. People forget that they're animals who eat flesh and love to reproduce. They think their intelligence means something, but it doesn't. It's just a device to help us catch more food to eat. The Cramps are always hunting and in the most cunning ways possible. Their abuse of classics like "Tear It Up" and "Fever" keep them two steps ahead of any other band in the jungle. Not even Public Image or the Fall (two magazine faves) could ever free themselves from their neurosis long enough to accomplish something as catastrophic as "Sunglasses After Dark". In fact, no European could ever understand the lifestyle of rural southern living that beats at the heart of this kind of rock & roll. The original kind, southern white rock & roll. Trashy music from white trash teenagers. Because before Elvis Presley there was only adult music. Pop or Country. Blues or Rhythm & Blues. All of it, black and white, was a reflection of adult lifestyle. Elvis brought it to the kids and thereby created the first musical movement that actually scared the older generation. Rockabilly musicians played crude and sang about sex, booze, and fast cars. They lived their songs and we are still living their songs now. (I don't think most of L.A. will deny that sex, booze, and fast cars is still the lifestyle.) The Cramps live it all too and sing proudly about it.

I don't prefer revivals (the very word makes me uneasy), but I can't sit and watch people deny their own culture. Writers in this magazine (a certain French Fry and Euro-damaged brethren) made an international embarrassment of us all by ignorantly condemning a short-lived rockabilly revival and instead encouraging a ska revival, which has no relevance to our music and culture at all. The herky-herky ska beat did not influence the likes of Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, and Jim Morrison (under whose shadows all good new music exists), but I'll bet you all three would gladly confess to a preoccupation with Elvis. Just about anybody growing up in America in their time would. It's part of that weird Americana that goes with T.V., chili-burgers, and race wars. It also has to do with the desolation of having so much land between generally the same kind of people. Everybody in this country gets an instant dose of feeling lost and meaningless, when they go on that first vacation with their parents to Arizona or New Mexico. Long drives through the desert or those endless bus rides from your grandmother's house in El Paso. All of that shows up in the music. You live in a country that has a war every ten years, most of us have had some relative killed in one. That shows up in the music too. You can especially hear it in X and even more so in the Cramps. These two bands are more important than a hundred Marquis de Sade's or Joy Divisions or Cabaret Voltairs or whatever worthlessly bored intelligent mind is on wax this week, because these two bands reflect your life. Your culture. So, if you must have a revival, don't shit on the one that hits closest to home. That's like being black and denying you're from Africa. You're gonna learn a lot more about yourself from American music of 20 yrs. ago than you are from Jamaican music of 20 yrs. ago. The best thing of all is to find a way to twist it all into something new, like the Cramps have done, and this isn't just one of the best albums of the year, it's one of the best albums ever made . . . . . .

–UPTOWN RANKING JEFFREY



"GREATEST HITS VOL. I"
COCKNEY REJECTS
EMI import

A real jet-powered fist through the steel door. All fourteen songs are rockers, the kind that haven't come out of Britain in a good while. Jimmy Pursey redeems himself from the pompous pedestal and produces a vehicle for these yobboes that lets their energy feed on itself, chain-reacting more energy in the studio instead of the customary reverse case. These kids have one of the most explosive rhythm sections I've heard. They're not letting anyone stop them. Listen to the joke reggae intro to "Where the Hell is Babylon?" and hear a more authentic crazy piece of white reggae than any other of the punk imitators like the Clash and Ruts who, in comparison, sound like they have two-by-fours up their bums. It kinda gives you hope to hear a record like this again.

–CHRIS D.

"SIREN"
391, RED CROSS, SPITTIN' TEETH
Posh Boy records

Let's step back and take a cool, neutral look at this. So much derision and abuse has been heaped on Posh Boy lately I'm going to try to be objective (ha!). 391 have a lot of get up and go but their words are strictly zero, and the hard rock flavored vocals leave me cold in a similar way. Red Cross, who have the most songs here (six, three on one side, three the other) are about as far in the other direction as you can get. These younguns mean what they're doing and they're having a blast. The production's too tinny, voices too loud but it's a lot of fun to listen to. They come off ten times better than they did live. A muscle beach party song like "Annette's Got the Hits" has an hilariously nasty piece of hard-core sentiment that shouldn't be missed. Then listen to these real life 14 and 15 year olds singing about an "S&M Party". Spittin' Teeth fall somewhere in between 391 and Red Cross in sound. I'd heard these guys were somehow "avant-garde". Seems like rock 'n roll to me. "Second Generation" 's words aren't bad but not particularly glutted with any thrilling rewards either. "Prostitute" though is a gem, shivery and riddled with ghostly Catholic guilt that rivets you to your seat. The singer's voice gave me a real start when it whispered into earshot. "Destruction" delivers a comparable effect, swaggering drawls with a philosophical dissertation like you've never heard before. . Over half of this stuff shows Posh Boy, whatever his faults, has more guts than most people give him credit for.

–CHRIS D.

"BOWLING BALLS FROM HELL"
CLONE
Clo II

Holy Moley, those quaaazy nuts from Ohio are at it again! Is it the rubberized atmospheric conditions that have turned them into electro-shock neuro-gumbies, or do they have a Devoid tradition to uphold?

But, gee whizz professor, who gives a fossilized shit for your trite theorizing? The hard beans of the sitch is that boatloads of bizarre music is coming out of it. Some of it, like this album, is real swell – funny, eccentric, hypo-original gas music. It's like the great escape man, these cats are leaping way Out There with springs on their shoes – I bet it's twice as boring in Ohio as in LA.

Yes, but not as *mean*, young man. If these kids want to escape they best head for someplace like the Planet of Pickled Grubworms. If they came here they might find Hell a lot closer than imagined, and not even spring shoes could turn glitter-bricks into bowling balls.

–BAD HUMOR L'AMATO

"LABELS UNLIMITED"
– (The second record collection)
Cherry Red Records import

"Sixteen tracks from sixteen independent labels" say the liner notes. Most of the bands represented I had never heard of before and I pray this brief acquaintance is the closest I ever get to them. Obvious-

ly England has also a fair share of limp, dismissable combos and various debris riding the fuckin' wave but they all seem to reach the vinyl stage a lot sooner than in this part of town. Only cuts worthy of interest are by Glaxo Babies (they also highlight the Bristol compilation lp mentioned somewhere else), Second Layer (a british Suicide soundalike), Spizzoil, and Rudi, a neo Ramones energy bunch with no pretensions. Most nauseating of the rest of the contenders: Girlschool and Staa Marx.

—KICK

"SID SINGS"
SID VICIOUS
Virgin Import

So awright awready. You want something that belonged to Sid? Maybe his belt buckle? Just $10. An empty Heineken bottle? Only $2.50. Cigarette butt? I'll give it to ya for $1.25. Something Else? Well, then, C'Mon Everybody! Hurry, hurry, hurry! The show's about to begin! Oh, I can hear the moneychangers in the temple. So what. Sid is gone from this world. Virgin can go fuck themselves, but this is a good record anyway. I can hear the groans now. This guy will give a good write-up to anything Sid did. Don't be too sure. But it is good. And considering this is the last thing he ever did . . . he's amazingly together and full of energy. Gossipmongers and groupie fishwives can tell all the true stories they like about Sid's little junk hobby. He pulls off something special here and deserves credit. Anyone who can pull various members of the Heartbreakers together and make them sound like they can actually put one foot in front of the other is a miracle worker. I don't know if this atrocious cassette recording is the gig that Mick Jones sat in on. It doesn't matter. What you can hear through this wonderful racket is a band that 2/3 of the time is trying to burn a hole in your eardrums. Sometimes chords get mushy, the pace goes sluggish as if someone just got off and felt a bit numb after the rush. Fingers and brain asleep? No! We practiced these songs all night long! And just to prove our point... BALOOIE! How do you like that buzzsaw chewing up my guitar strings? Sid sings in a full-bodied warble that doesn't mask the sneers, the whining self-mockery or the astonishing "musical" range of his voice. Surprising when you look back on the mercilessly vindictive slagging all of his records have received from the holier than thou Brit press. Of course these pieces always focused on Virgin's exploitation. It's really a shame Sid's never been judged on his own merits.

—CHRIS D.

"SHARP CUTS"
(New Music From American Bands)
Planet P-6

In which the Big Money finally starts to display a nervous tick and feels the time is right to stick its well-cossetted pinkie into the rip-tide it's been studiously ignoring for the past four years . . . Most of the tracks hereon are instantly disposable, bearing all the traces of the demo recordings that they probably are and an absolutely essential budget cover price. The sleeve notes blether on about "music of a hundred different strains coalesced into an unwieldy but animated new scene", but there is very little evidence of it here, most of it being that last resort of the uninspired; watered-down power pop. Only the Suburban Lawns' "Unable" (the album's shortest cut) and an untypically thin version of the Alleycats' "Black Haired Girl" are worth playing more than once, and the whole package is testimony to the cloth ears of America's A & R men: On any given night in any large American city I've spent any time in, you could find half a dozen unsigned bands performing or rehearsing more inspired, committed music than most of the stuff here.

—MARK WILLIAMS

"AMERICAN MUSIC"
THE BLASTERS
Rollin Rock records

The Blasters have got their sound down pat, no question. But it all comes off a trifle anonymous when it shouldn't. Phil Alvin isn't a bad singer but he doesn't have the magnetic personality (at least here) to give this the shove it needs to go up into the realm of the greats. Of course, these guys aren't claiming any masterpiece credentials; they're playing for fun and you can tell that they dig it the most. All songs here, both original and covers, fluctuate from direct hits to uninspired, standouts being "Marie, Marie," "She Ain't Got No Beat," "Buzz Buzz Buzz" and "She's Gone Away".

—CHRIS D.

THE LIVE FALL LP
Rough Trade import

In spite of all the currents of post-rock post-modern post everything thinking and predicting, rock n roll is still with us. Hold it. Not *that* rock n roll. I mean the rock n roll that does not sound like rock n roll although it sure feels like it, the one in which all the outside trappings are gone, mercifully discarded for efficiency's sake and general dignity. That rock n roll. And anyone blabbering on and on about "good ol' rock n roll" meaning old posturing old audience-performer relationships old riff progressions la la la la is just like some country old man who still has not traded his horse carriage for a pick up truck and swears that motorized vehicles are just silly, an inefficient experiment the world will soon tire of. What the world most likely will soon tire of is grampa's senility and his insistence on screwing up the flow of traffic on main street. But let's get back to our business while ol' timer gets flattened by a diesel truck.

The Fall have been here for a certain time although no one remembers inviting them, and it's highly debatable whether the release of this live record was the result of overwhelming popular demand from the masses. Any market analyst would tell you (for a fee) that this is after all a band in which no one looks the part, the subject matter is at best speculative and the singer/lyricist/spokesman may very well be a fervent admirer of Elvis Presley but sounds more like some high strung nervous case in the local loony bin. Harsh, but true. God or the devil only knows what that boy raves and rants about, but he is definitely not at peace with himself, the music scene or the astral world. He may be preaching but then he may be taking the piss out of us all, so hold back that instant conversion my friend. Since this is a rock band (just take my word for it please — we can't start arguing on semantics we ain't got all night) the mental singer comes equipped with players of instruments, a very functional crew that does not even require a full length mirror backstage of every gig, absolutely nothing there to write anything about in these fun-filled pages, if they were not the only ones able to weave a semblance of musical order behind the partly sung soliloquies of the head patient you'd never find out about their existence. Some stay at their post longer than others, and the particular team that provided the notes and stuff for this record pounds, picks and strums very groovily cept when you put all the parts together it never sounds like Walking the Dog or Proud Mary. It's like those dreams in which you're repeatedly trying to piece a familiar face, body or object back together and every time you're almost there, whamo a horrid mutation is what you're clutching in your sweaty hands. Such acceptable riffs or rhythms to end up with such unpalatable unstreamlined melodies, there is a wicked perversion at work here, is what I think. As no efforts were made to smooth the final product, polish deficient sections and be presentable we must keep our production awards for more professional contenders. What's the use of technology advancing any further when it's wasted on arrogant primitives obviously under the impression that live recording is just letting the tapes roll and making sure nothing gets unplugged. Why not mono on a portable cassette player with built in mike, you cavemen you??

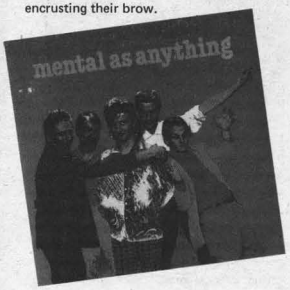
I hope all the rockin consumers have been warned. I repeat. There is on the shelves of your merchant a live record that may not satisfy your sophisticated needs and meet the latest labelling requirements; it's black vinyl, standard size and all that but not until it's too late will you know that it actually is a travesty of your favorite products, a raw unprocessed fluke that gives a bad name to the record industry in general, the rock n rollers' union and the associated youth movements of the country.

P.S. What do you mean what about the songs, the requisite comparisons with studio work, the subtle differences in words and intonations? What difference is it going to make if I tell you that in a new delirium mysteriously titled "New Puritan" Mr. Smith goes on in a very unbecoming manner about washing his hands every day but still feeling unclean, burdened by society's decadent sins, or later nastily shrieks all kinds of previously undisclosed information about Cary Grant's wedding? New stuff or not so new it's all undancable, useless as a soundtrack for an intimate groping session and pitiful as far as youth anthems go. And although it's on populist avant garde art patron Rough Trade it's not experimental in the least or politically subversive or even aware of the battle of the sexes. Whoever authorized these people to practice and perform and sell is in need of social and artistic readjustment. We cannot tolerate such anarchy much longer.

Double PS and no more after that: Okay, you nosey bastards, the songs are

MENTAL AS ANYTHING
Regular records

Not astounding in any way, but real good anyway. This is one of those records that you don't have much to say about in One Way or Another, but works just fine Right In The Middle. That may be the way they would want it anyway, because they're certainly not extremists. Their gripes aren't monumental—mostly broken love affairs from a nurd's-eye point of view. Their clothes don't fit quite right, and Lord help them when acne starts encrusting their brow.

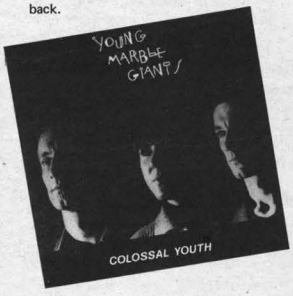


Their sound is a very white r&b type — rollicking guitar licks over pulsating bass and organ shuffle — sort of a Herman's Hermits meets The Animals, though I'm not too familiar with either and finding antecedents are a big bore anyway. Look, being "innovative" is not being innovative anymore so I'm not going to waste my time defending albums like this. If Mental As Anything were in the top 40 instead of Blondie things would indeed be healthier for all concerned.

—PEABODY L'AMATO

YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS
Rough Trade
Rough 8

Listening to this album instills within me a very definite feeling, sort of a quiet, pensive melancholia. It's not a depressive feeling, because past and future haven't been pared away for any *particular* present situation, but more of a brooding that runs *through* time — distant painful reticence. The kind of feeling that comes with watching loved ones disappear down the traintracks, never to come back.



The arrangements are spare, rhythmic interweavings between bass and guitar, with occasional use of organ or rhythm-box. The singer holds back, half speaking or sustaining smooth tones without vibrato or syllabic emphasis, as if this were a confessional between close friends.

There is a tragic tone throughout this album, but not in the grand dramatic tradition of Excess. It's the smaller and constant tragedies of inward living, and in its very *lack* of embellishment it shows its good faith.

—WILL L'AMATO

"AFRICA MUST BE FREE BY 1983"
HUGH MUNDELL
Message import

Someone at Slash bought this and sold it to me two days later, seems the ethiopian propaganda that saturates every groove made it impossible for him to go beyond more than a couple of spins. Shame, truly, cause this also happens to be a staggering musical masterpiece which hasn't left my turntable since that lucky day. This most precocious youngster (can't be over 17 if one is to trust the cover pic) has, with the help and guidance of mentor Augustus Agustus Pablo (yes, Jah's guidance too, sorry) come up with the most soulful collection of roots tunes I have ever heard. No jive, my brethren. It just buries itself at the core of your heart and soul and stays there. The most tasteful, evocative instrumental accompaniment of thick almost slow motion percussion, piano and organ (played by Pablo) sparse rhythm guitar and bubbly, murky bass surrounds the most incredible voice ever to appear in the reggae field, I kid you not, just give it a listen and if you can tell me straightfaced that it ain't so you have peanut butter jammed in your ears and you wouldn't know an inspired voice from a Marine's fighting yell. Mundell's vocal chords have a raspy, jazzy quality closer to Nina Simone than to normal reggae crooning, and the loose fitting structures of the songs (long dub breaks pop up on most of the tunes) enhance this jazz like atmosphere of bluesy trance-inducing improvisation. Some especially primal sections in here still give me shivers although I know every note and every wail by heart. What about the propaganda, the jah jive? Hey, it's much too sincere and deeply felt for me to even dare suggest that it ought to be different in its approach. None of my business, the beauty that runs thru forbids any kind of judgment but awe and respect. Sorry, but humility is all this usually adamant unbeliever can muster in this particular case. If they say 1983 is the deadline, that's what the deadline is. No arguing with the sacred. Not today, anyway.

–KICK

"HAIL H.I.M."
BURNING SPEAR
E.M.I. import

Not quite the title we heathen had understood the new collection of Winston Rodney songs would go under, hey you try to transcribe the floating monologues of a real gone rastafarian visionary before you snicker, anyway here it is in all its glory, the Burning Spear Appreciation Society may rest easy, the master has delivered. No major surprizes or striking departures, Winston simply consolidates his unique awesome sound and while doing so adds a few haunting new tunes

to the catalogue of great music of all times. The voice is as gripping as ever and the group of familiar names in charge of the instruments rise to the occasion and easily give the very best they are capable of, an impeccable classic backdrop of dense and complex roots tracks for the Spear to wail and moan and whisper thru. There is nothing like Burning Spear music anywhere, it's a world unto itself, way over there by the river, down the foggy road and past the plains where the lions roam.

–KICK

"AVON CALLING"
THE BRISTOL COMPILATION
Heartbeat import

And another compilation job (how many this month? eight? ten? Sheeeet!). Like most compilations (cept for reggae ska historical ones) not too essential, some interesting slices by Glaxo Babies (who have an LP out – check next issue for a critical appraisal) (Critical appraisal? that's what you hacks call your gibberish eh? – Ed.), Moskow, Various Artists (that's what they call their band), Vice Squad and Stereo Models, but nothing to get all worked up about. The combo "Double Vision" do an awful/great thing that gets me for unknown reasons. That's it. Just a bunch of bands that will never be heard from again, give or take the one odd exception. This documentary mania is going a bit far is what I think.

–KICK

"HALF MUTE"
TUXEDO MOON
Ralph records

Mood music for dreaming or introspective reflection, somehow at odds with the rest of the experimental underground because of an almost total lack of aggressive/oppressive atmosphere, it leans heavily on classical influences, it's all vaguely familiar, like half forgotten memories of more civilized days in a post-disaster mind. Escapist well-behaved combination of sounds. I'd be mildly curious to see how this stuff would fare once out of the studio and up on a stage, away from the protection of privacy.

–KICK

"HOW MUCH LONGER DO WE TOLERATE MASS MURDER?"
THE POP GROUP
Y/Rough Trade import

Funk with third world connections and a backbeat of white man guilt. This is much more sparse, leaner than the first, the music itself loses its dominance as more extraneous odds and ends are grafted onto the basic frame of bulging bass dehydrated drums and squealing sax. Slogan chanting, narrations complete with sound effects, tortured distortions

slapped on the going ons, there isn't one second in there that could be found even vaguely acceptable in the wide and wonderful world of radio airplay. Which brings us to the dilemma of propaganda vs art, and what do you do with your righteousness besides carry it inside or flash it to kindred elements? If the Pop Group are as seriously disgusted and horrified by society as I think they are and intent on doing something nasty to the status quo (on recent pamphlets they scrawled "now despair ends and tactics begin") I can't help but wonder how effective such all-out aesthetic separatism can truly be. It'd be a shame that such radical use of music and entertainment machinery be confined to a helpless tiny elite of connaisseurs. You must pay attention to what this group is doing, after all anyone who can draw such unanimous hostility from the press in their own country must have struck a pretty sensitive spot in its detractors' self-view. But the dismay of philistines is a tiny victory, and the fun shouldn't stop there.

–KICK

"TAKE AWAY THE LURE OF SALVAGE"
ANDY PARTRIDGE
Virgin import

What's happening with all this "Eighties" music? In the past three days I've acquired a deluge of thirty or forty records – all different kinds of records, all very incredible in their own way (and usually in small doses). Which musical category outdoes the other? Should I become fascinated by various masterpieces over and over and over again?? "Take Away" confuses me.

Now we have Mr. Partridge, the Andy force of XTC (remember them?), out with a disc that takes description-defiance to the extreme. This "solo" LP is outrageous in the sense that it makes Godley-Creme (remember them?) sound like amateurs, compares to Fripp's "Exposure" like a gull to a fly, thumbs ContortionsWireGangofFour BuzzcocksResident sevenPiLallfaveweirdwavewavewavewave into the dirty the dirt, puts ole Eno (remember him?) into his ambient casket, and most of all, transcends even the best of XTC (bless their hearts) by miles.

I love (and think I understand) too much musical genius. That must be my problem, because like so many vinyl junkies-cum-artists, I'm waiting. For something. Something to change the world, maybe? I dunno. Beatlemania must have been the last big mistake.

Partridge's tongue-in-cheek/dead serious collage of edge rock should be the best techno-pop album ever made (so far, right?). But it won't be. Is it gimmicks? Is it the brain of an extraordinary forerunner? Does even he know??

Perhaps I'm not telling you much about the record itself. Created around the restructuring concept of "Go+", the 12" 45 EP which gave you blatantly different mixes of five songs on XTC's album "Go2", "Take Away" introduces entirely new compositions recorded on top of basic rhythm tracks of other XTC songs (mostly from their recent commercially evident "Drums and Wires" set). For true fans, much fun lies in trying to identify each early song. But this becomes such a chore by the intensity of the newness in Partridge's own sound, that concentration is blurred. "The Lure of Salvage" suddenly emotes absurdly good output.

One wonders about his secret marketing statement as well, "Drums and Wires" disappointed many staunch early fans because of its comparatively mild approach. Yet that particularly helped reverse their cult obscurity into Real American Public Notice!! (some, anyway).

"Take Away," like a wisely maniacal hypocrite, quickly bites right back at the world which is by now so jaded by quantity that quality is a redundant word. This LP reaffirmed my belief that all that matters anymore is me. Read that out loud and it's you. Just us.

–R. STEVIE MOORE

"PARTY
THE TAPES
Passport records

This fascinating lp from a dutch band will be discussed at length (oh no! – Suspicious Ed.) in next issue, as there is neither the time nor the inspiration to tackle its complex highly structured music this time around, someone is breathing on my neck and grumbling about deadlines this and deadlines that and disrupting my delicate thought process, how can anyone write about a group that effortlessly extracts the very essence from heavyweights like Talking Heads or Pere Ubu and after a swift and thorough rearrangement of molecules dishes out a sound that is as amazingly unique as it is physically powerful under such materialistically oppressive conditions? Not me bub, not tonight. In the meantime grab it if it sounds like your cup of audio broth, you'll thank me later. Unless of course you do entertain some musical ambitions of your own and the masterful mutations from tiny Holland stored in this record shatter your hopes of leaving your little footprint in the sands of history once and for all. Hey, the fierce competition is now on an international scale, all the anglo predominance is a thing of the past. Until next month when I am better equipped to tell you exactly how and why, hang in there you fading glories.

–KICK

45'S

ADAM & THE ANTS
(CAR TROUBLE/KICK)
Do It import

Relatively catchy A side in the british hard pop tradition held in such high esteem on the Madame Wong circuit. On "Kick" Adam yodels to a practice run of typical hard rock "explósions" and puts my name in a bad light. If he hadn't been recently subjected to foul play I would sue.

—KICK

SLITS/POP GROUP
(IN THE BEGINNING THERE WAS RHYTHM/WHERE THERE'S A WILL)
Rough Trade

These two groups have formed a bond in the interest of fuckadelic message. Slits have never been about self control and discipline, but Ari's long preachy cosmic rap about the ramifications of rhythm sometimes threatens to bore the jumpy syncopated backdrop to premature senility. However the 'silence is a rhythm too' break saves this crazy bit of cool dance music. (At this time I have just heard the Slits album of rehearsal tapes and other precious garbage that no one else in their right mind would have any interest in. To say it is an embarrassing bore and the most self indulgent bit of prattle these mud honeys could come up with would be doing them a great service. So I'll ignore it and hope it goes away.) Side B Pop Group become the masters of dialectic funk. It's a strange proposition, I'm not sure if you can hear the message if your feet are so busy responding to every recycled George Clinton riff in the books. But after the torture angst of the last single this is surprisingly uplifting. (Their new album is also cool, by the way.) The Pop Group know the importance of control to be effective — while the Slits are still groping. Luckily they've got a good producer to keep things in check but let's hope the girls don't drown in their own mythology.

—C. LEE

"HELLO! MY NAME IS BLOTTO, WHAT'S YOURS?"
BLOTTO
Blotto 001

Boffo/Yuck-Yuck/Novelty records live a dangerous and notoriously brief life span. Like a new court jester, they can only remain in favor so long as they provide surprise, tragic idiocy or merriment — after that they are dropped into a slimey mote or deposited in some dark corner to collect a coat of dust. If they weren't exactly a laff riot to begin with they may quickly find themselves as an appetizer for the king's pack of hounds.

This knave Blotto deserves to live a little while longer. Not that they provide much amusement to this unduly troubled king, but they do have a wit and are pleasantly structured. If the kingdom were not so dilapidated then even their dumbness and cuteness might charm me. As it is, their talents are ineffectual, but I'll spare them because they try hard. I might even arrange to keep the dust off the, but we'll have to wait and see.

—SIR WILL OF WOGG

LEE PERRY
1) (BAFFLING SMOKE SIGNAL/ CAPTIVE)
2) "LEE PERRY AND THE FULL EXPERIENCE" (4 titles)
3) "HEPTONES DISCO DUB" (4 titles)
Black Art import

You may recall past rumors of Lee Perry's alleged "flip out" and subsequent silence. Well, whatever happened was temporary as Scratch appears to have found most of the marbles he'd lost. (They probably just rolled under a mixing console during a particularly inspired session and the rest was just the competition's wishful thinking spreading around.) If you must make a choice between these three platters (that's supposing you find the stuff — altho this town is getting relatively better for reggae esoterica) the first one is my personal pick to click since it's brand new stuff, and more representative

of the sound the Upsetter is after these days. The two others are stylish exercises using vintage production materials, No. 2 is based on the "War inna Babylon" Max Romeo album ("Chase the Devil" becomes "Disco Devil", "Norman" remains unchanged until voices of serious card playing jamaicans are added over, both songs then ease into lengthy instrumental trails where bass, percussion and muted horns play footsie with each other), only the Jah Loyd "Sexy Natty" is new as far as I know, a token nod to the latest rude talking crazy. The same treatment is applied in the 3rd record: initial straightforward version preceding the mainly instrumental bulk of pure sounds. Since Lee Perry is behind all this every groove holds more great music than is customary in the self indulgent giant 45 field, the musical textures are unlike anything else in or out of dub, but it's especially in the 1st record that you will feel the full impact of this genius' abilities. "Baffling smoke signal" is about that quaint custom they have in Rome to announce a new pope's election, it hops along hypnotically on a skeletal frame of light percussion, piano, Perry's double tracked voice and what sounds like an accordion. "Captive" is black social consciousness merging with trance music, it's slightly more electronic in flavor, but in the same understated style Perry has now opted for. Primitive, obsessive, you'll run out of adjectives before the music wears thin. This is more than music: it's medicine, protection and inspiration. For mysterious reasons these records, along with all upcoming releases from Lee Perry (especially a long awaited brand new album entitled "The Return of Pipecock Jackson" are handled exclusively by a dutch roots distributor outfit called Black Star Liner. How Island could lose this guy as well as Burning Spear is something worth investigating. Anyway expect an article cum interview on Lee Perry in the next two or three months.

—KICK

THE SHAGGS
(PHILOSOPHY OF THE WORLD)
Red Rooster/Rounder records

We are in the presence of probably the greatest american cult classic of all. The Shaggs are three frighteningly psychedelic farm girls from New Hampshire sixties. They are sisters, and they probably are playing off their common genetic codes 'cause there doesn't seem to be any other rule concerning their music. I mean the drummer is playing a beat, but it has nothing to do with what the girls are playing on the guitars. And I guess the girls did have a melodic line to their songs 'cause that tinny fuzz guitar is going right along with it. Listen, this is the most twisted, weirdest, silly, stupid genius record I've heard in months and months. The Raincoats are seasoned classical pros compared to the Shaggs. The liner notes mean it when they say "The Shaggs are real, pure, unaffected by outside influences." It will drive your best friends screaming from the room, not because it's loud, distorted, ugly — it's probably the most uncoordinated thing I've ever heard, it's brilliant, I'm foaming at the mouth — god what shit, take it off, I love you, hate you, quick the thorazine, what's wrong with these people!!
(I found this at Vinyl Fetish. I won't hold them responsible for my actions.)

—DUSTY

THE BONGOS
(GLOW IN THE DARK/ TELEPHOTO LENS)
Fetish records

Smart pop. A minor tingle is guaranteed unless you have an allergy to well executed ditties with everything crisp and in order. Makes the Cure sound like Joy Division.

—KICK

THE ZEROS
(THEY SAY THAT . ./GETTING NOWHERE FAST)
Test Tube records

This just does not cut thru, you want to lift it to the surface brush the dust off slap some color into it and then hear it again loud and clear and snappy, not like a demo cassette from punky poppy hopefuls number 438, I mean the Zeros can play and they can sing and they write ok tunes and they're cute and smart and none of that comes thru. Getting nowhere fast, but it doesn't have to be that way. It's not a bad record, it's just a record.

—KICK

THE URINALS
(SEX/GO AWAY GIRL)
Backlash records

"Sex" is a masterpiece of doom, the magnitude of which most bands dealing in darkness could never hope to realize. It even ranks up with "Sister Ray" and "I Wanna Be Your Dog" as one of the most dark and threatening slabs of noise to ever damage my hearing. The vocals just moan and drone while the chording runs circles around the mess. Producer, Vitus Matare, brilliantly clutters up the sound with enough echo to compete with the Grand Canyon. All of which serves to make this record really creep into your brain. The other song ain't nearly as good, but the B-side has a wonderful test pattern with several different pitches making this quite a deal indeed .....

—UPTOWN MR. J

MAGNETIC HEAD CLEANERS
(I WANT TO FUNCTION WITH YOU/ MECHANICAL RIGHTS)
Break'er records

THE HIT SQUAD
(PICTURES OF MATCHSTICK MEN/ THOU SHALL NOT STEAL)
Break'er records

WILMA & THE WILBERS EP
Break'er records

Three from Break'er, a Minneapolis Minnesota label working overtime to keep Minnesota from turning into a dismissable figment of the imagination of some drunk cartographer: I checked the postal stamp closely and there it was: Minneapolis. It was not a fake, the place is still up there, and they've still got young people and they still play and record stuff, keeps them from going mental I guess it's like scientists on a long mission in some North Pole bunker take up all kinds of hobbies for therapeutic purposes hey I know a fuckin' lot lemme tell you! Anyway these records here got some punky rock outfit with girl singer (number one on the list) and some wacky rock outfit (no. 2) who can do some pop and some weirder stuff if it's that kind of party, you name it we'll give it a shot, finally the Head Cleaners (no. 3) bunch who supply the technological kicks and are the only ones who can fix the generator when it breaks down, rest of the time just doodle with their tape recorders and bizarre equipment, the pic sleeve has the "instruments" listed as "tape transport," "pinch rollers" and "power module," and I'm not about to argue. Still if a choice must be made I'll share a room with Wilma and her gang, I'm sure they'll be more fun to hang out with.

—KICK

BAUHAUS
(DARK ENTRIES)
4 A.D. records import

To think I almost missed out on that one 'cos of the name: no not another clumsy art-oriented project, I mean what's next in pop music, a band called Sturm Und Drang, or Le Nouveau Roman (o the nerve throwing esoterica about what all I know of the stuff is a bold letter entry in some art history digest!)? Then the german name bit, very "in" at the present, even L.A. caught on, yea I said to myself I'll pass, where's the next Joy Division platter? Anyway everything turned out ok this single reached my ear somehow and within 5 seconds (precisely) it was climbing up my own little inner chart faster than a monkey in a methamphetamine store house. Not a speck of a trace of wimpiness in spite of a few warning signs like a cultured cover elaborate lyrics on the back and a b side titled "untitled". No, no limp poses or half digested education anywhere, just a mother of an overwhelming riff blasting thru while the words effortlessly ride alongside which is as much of a miracle as Darby Crash fitting *his* prose into the furiously boiling Germs sound, the song crashes thru 3 or 4 roadblocks (where nice tunes are supposed to stop and break into a chorus, a bridge or some other quaint convention) it's a runaway express, it's an all out outburst of real music and it's impossible to play only once or twice. It also makes me look for "Bullet" by the Misfits just to keep the mood nice and edgy after. Other side is more of an experimental sketch, unstructured but far from formless, all angles and edges and broken rhythmic starts, a few words, it's over, quite nice as a teaser. With an A side like this even heavy breathing would be tolerated.

—KICK

PINK MILITARY
BLOOD AND LIPSTICK EP
Eric import

So I hear the first song in the record store, sounds real good, the guy mentions something about "post-modernism" school of bands, like Certain Ratio, Joy Division, yeah that stuff is real o.k., I'll try this. Get home, smoke a hooter, and — oh no, burned again! So slick and produced, so deliberate in its attempt to be contemporary, but it's a hollow conceit this band's got. England's been waiting for their Debbie Harry, and I guess they got a good theoretical version of one in this Jayne girl, but the band's jazz-punk-funk fusion gets kind of stomach churning at times. Especially obnoxious is a cut called "Clown Town" featuring probably one of the most pointless use of dub effects I've ever heard — yeah let's use this dub stuff man, it's *real spacey*. So there are still poseurs after all. Comparing this attempt at "modern" music with other groups in the same field is the same difference between a live fuck and humping a dead pillow.

—CRAIG

HONEY BANE
YOU CAN BE YOU EP
Crass records import

This girl's inevitably gonna be compared to Poly Styrene cuz she's got one of those crazy, wacky cockney screech voices that are painful and irresistible at the same time. But this little miss charmer has politics on the mind and is telling us all about those social situations of great relevance while her friends from Crass provide great chunks of musical backdrop for her to yammer in front of. "Girl on the Run" works great, the other songs are not quite up to it — as in her former band Fatal Microbes, this girl's only got a few outstanding songs in her, but they are enough to carry this EP. With people like this behind a revolution, how could we fail. (Don't everybody shout at once . .)

—CRAIG

"1980, THE FIRST FIFTEEN MINUTES"
Neutron records import

Mini compilation from the land of teenage industrial existentialism, it casts no light and radiates no heat but glows gloomily in the twilight (of pop music? of the century? of civilization? Take your pick, it's all the same). Four outfits (a much more suitable name than "group" in this case) with suitably alienated war names, two of them quite gripping judging by this sampler from the stylish (black & white graphic angst, the post-punk, technology-infiltration style popular amongst the thinking indies) Neutral label (based in Sheffield, England, wherever that is). The two worthwhile efforts occupy one side of the vinyl: Clockdva (a name like that and you know you're not going to have "mod" muzak thrown at you) do a tune called "Brigade" and irritate very nicely with some simplistic electric violin that buzzes like a hopped-up metal mosquito trying to find a way out of your cranium. Anguished singing and basic drum propulsion complement the picture. Not unlike the Subway Sect of the "Don't Split it" period, which in my warped book is quite a reference. Other song is by Stung Kites, who sound like a warbled murky punk patrol that divide their time between snarling or grinding their teeth. Good to know arrogant negativity still has some practitioners. Musically it's somewhat on the left of Eater, if you're old enough to know what that means. Other two bands don't fare as well, on this record at least, Vice Versa sing about "Genetic Warfare" but their synthesizer is square and their singer pompous, "I'm So Hollow" win the award for the best band name of the day but no other mention.

—KICK

WARNING: THE FOLLOWING CONCERNS SKA MATTERS. SO ALL YOU SKA HATERS LOOK THE OTHER WAY.

MADNESS
"WORK, REST AND PLAY" EP
Stiff import

THE BEAT
(TWIST AND CRAWL/HANDS OFF. . SHE'S MINE)
Go-Feet import

THE BEAT
(TEARS OF A CLOWN/RANKING FULL STOP)
Two Tone import

THE BODYSNATCHERS
(LET'S DO ROCK STEADY/ RUDER THAN YOU)
Two Tone import

Madness cruise along their beloved blend of cockney slapstick routines in jungle setting and have a grand old time. So far it's still infectious and it will wipe the existential frown off anybody's face but the terminal cases. Note the topical "Don't quote me on that" in which they take a (gentle) swipe at a certain female prick of a rock writer who did them harm. The Beat have a certain punch in their super-dry hopping attacks, Twist and Crawl really tears thru, real supersonic ska for the fastest rudies on the block, the 12 inch throws the tune back one more time for a full run of basic and effective dub additions, of course it's a hit. Tears of a clown don't work as well, why bother proving that it can technically be done if the song doesn't gain anything from it? Somewhere lagging behind in the race The Bodysnatchers manage to do the Rock Steady with no major flaws, the all-girl band has a nice edge in the vocal department, instrumentally it goes from tinny to wobbly, you get the impression they're used to a lot of false starts but they're stubborn. Still highly playable at parties which reminds me when is the next really classic drunken bash what's happened to everyone??

—KICK

CLIVE LANGER
(SPLASH, A TEAR GOES ROLLING DOWN)
F-Beat import

Ex-Deaf School now all around producer of various diverse combos Clive Langer adds his two cents worth to the wide and wonderful world of chart-designed pop fodder. Lush and designed to hook itself into the softer portions of your unconscious. Aw fuck, I am humming it already!

—KICK

TEARDROP EXPLODES
(TREASON/READ IT IN BOOKS)
Zoo records import

Disappointing. First singles promised new directions, hypnotic subconscious drone beat music, cool tinny organs and haunted vocals, all that. Now this comes along, a real slick piece of perfect production that is oddly complete yet the final reaction is basically: so what? Any number of bands can produce great pop productions but that's not what I expected from this group. Also why do they do a cover of fellow Zoo labelmates Echo and the Bunnymen's "Read It In Books"? Though the sound is fuller and perfectly executed it misses the ragged simple charm of the original. This band's initial product had me interested. This one just left me confused.

—CRAIG

PLASTICS
(TOP SECRET MAN/DELICIOUS)
Invitation import

Product perfect. Shiny bright colors to celebrate an orgy of delirious never quenched consumerism (b side reads like an alien's race anthropolotical shopping list for a week end raid on western civilization: Chanel No. ./digital watch/Maseratti/Fellini/Tomato Juice/Condord/Tennis shoes/Andy Warhold Jerry Hall — while sounding like Kleenex clones — a mechanical plagiarism of a mechanical band no less). Song titles from the album say it all: Digital Watch, Copy, Robot, Last Train on Clarksville (slight duplication error there of no consequence of course), Deluxe, Welcome Plastics, etc. etc. For more info on these youngsters' perceptions of dehumanization in Japan read upcoming interview or look at the pictures with same (words recorded on portable Sony, pix taken with Fujica). Is it a toy? Is it a weapon? Is it a xerox machine? Stay tuned.

—KICK

STANDING WAVES
(DONT' WORRY/INTEGRATING CIRCUITS)
Classified records

Hey hey all right, ten points to Austin Texas for pulling a sneaky one on the snotty coasts, this easily competes with the best of the sophisticated neo techno pop from both, lightweight category. Bet Ralph records wouldn't mind getting their hands on these people, sounds to me like they have some pretty impressive goodies in store. A band that can nonchalantly switch from techno jerky rhythms to swaying swinging bop tunes can probably do other tricks as well. Not essential but nothing seems to be this morning, ska pop reggae it's all clippety clopping making the occasional minor discovery, a time of mutations but no great upheaval. Of course tomorrow is another matter.

–KICK

DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS
(GENO/BREAKIN' DOWN THE WALLS OF HEARTACHE)
EMI import

I play Geno a lot it gets me somewhere special, people around stop for a second, cock an ear and casually ask "hey, who's that?", I tell them, they shrug and go on with the chatter. Fine by me, peasants, cept that day some dork asked in a loud voice "what the fuck? Chicago going modern?" and I could have killed the mother. No fuckin' culture anywhere. Stax, Volt, all the same to those spuds.

–KICK

4 BE 2
(ONE OF THE LADS/UMMABUMMA)
Virgin records

I guess it wouldn't have been released if not for the one eyed leader having a famous Rotten brother, and yeah it sure sounds like the PiL rhythm section dropped by for a pow-wow, but this is some kind of fun record. One of the Lads is typical of the new Lydon approach, bottom heavy disco cymbal drum/bass kit with some guy yowling in a subconscious mix and by god is that a banjo plunking along with the tune? Whatever, it may be a self indulgent wank, but it's entertaining, it grows and grows. Side B is a jerk off send up of those African pop songs, like Dr. John meeting Screaming Jay cept they both in white face and too shit faced to be coherent. I'd like to go to one of their parties . . .

–C. LEE

JAY COMDOM/GARS PANTER:
DURCHFALL FRUM DER COLAHAUS
Pandomoniax records

"Con Crete; Muse: "ikk"; Dis Das Der Durchfall from dur colahaus; urp urp twitter-knee." Literal translation: "Hee-bee-Jeebees always come in pairs" (though "Durchfall" in the context of "urp urp" might also be taken to mean "small rhomboidal air pockets left by the creator for the benefit of teeny malformed mammals"). I found communists hiding in my bedsprings, but I wouldn't play this until they left – now I regret that. My farts solidified into boa-descriptors after I listened to it, and I regret that also. If little kids listened to this instead of Sesame Street there would be no tax accountants in the next generation, but the market would be gutted with cubistic cake decorators. So you could say that this is a public service, but not any public now in existence. If you don't like green-eggs-and-ham, this is a swell alternative, if you don't like alternatives, this makes a great McBreakfast. Just tell them Alphonso sent you.

–CRACKPOT LUMPINO

STIV BATORS
(NOT THAT WAY ANYMORE/ CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE)
Bomp

Terrible trash. Very poppy with a strong, rich production by Jim Mankey being its sole asset. Both songs go on and on with little dynamic variation or convincing emotion. Stiv wasn't the greatest as a Dead Boy but it was better than this. I hate to say that now I can't find "any way" he is at all "anymore". Pretty boring.

–MR. OK

CRAWDADDYS
(WHY DON'T YOU SMILE NOW/ THERE SHE GOES AGAIN)
Voxx Records (Bomp)

Two Velvets songs covered by a band that has a feverish lowdown and dirty almost junked-out feel for doing other people's tunes namely the cream of the lowdown and dirty crop of '60's punk. Take the Shadows of Knight or the Standells and let them do some Velvets and you'd come uncannily close to this. These guys look as straight as an arrow on the sleeve but their music and the astounding gravel bed coarseness of the production has a bleak, sinister despair to it that grabs your soul.

–CHRIS D.

SHRAPNEL
(COMBAT LOVE/HEY)
Salute records

Shit, I expected some pretty gross outfit here, they're supposed to go on stage with sandbags, mortar sounds or something, and Norman Mailer digs them he rents them for his kids' parties and Leg McNeills manages them and then pfffft, the grenade fizzles the bayonets turn out to be made of soft aluminum, cos all I hear is chirpy fast rock, not bad at all but man the Undertones are more gungho than this.

–KICK

TEN POLE TUDOR
(REAL FUN/WHAT'S IN A WORD)
Korova import

Korova is Sire's new sub-label in Britain, Eddie Tenpole was my latest favorite cult figure because of his over the top singing of "Who Killed Bambi?" in the Swindle film. Here Tenpole and his ruffled mates take no chances but would like to be called "energetic". Since he can do so much better he'll have to try again before being granted any encouragement.

–KICK

THE BOG PEOPLE
(NORTH AMERICAN FEELINGS/ COMMUNIST DISCO)
KGB records

Cute. Studio jokers waste vinyl and reviewer's time. Rule Number 24 of the Perfect Little Dabbler in Far Out Recordings: Don't rely on your little brother or your mom to determine how good your newest idea is. They are biased (and probably pretty stupid too but let's not get personal here).

–KICK

THE VISITORS
(ROCKET ME HOME/COMIN' FROM BEHIND)
Faculty X records (N.Y.)

Cut very loud the way I like 'em, but hold your horses cause that's as far as it goes. Whining, hiccoughing vocals that come off like an unintentional Richard Hell caricature. The guy who sent this said we'd probably throw it in the garbage can. A realistic fellow with much presence of mind. THWACK! There it goes.

–MR. OK

GARY JONES
(SCIENCE FICTION/WHAT IN THE WORLD)
Tyfilms records

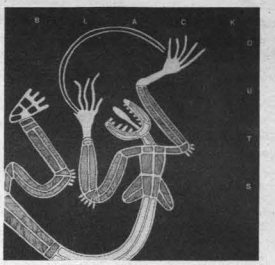
An okay rhythm section gets sucked in and lost in the shuffle by yet another deluded one in search of the perfect Bowie gene (for cloning purposes). Stylized yokel vocals get nowhere fast luckily buried amongst the yawntime arrangements. It's still better than Robert Goulet.

–CHRIS D.

WILLIE WILLIAMS
(ARMAGIDEON TIME/VERSION)
Studio 1 import

The original, a C.S. Dodd production with this Williams guy singing rather movingly about them lots of people not getting their supper tonight, a simple tune to which the Clash added a lot of guts and majesty, regardless of the way I feel about their existence these days.

–KICK



THE BLACKOUTS
(MAKE NO MISTAKE/ THE UNDERPASS)
Modern records

Strange record from Seattle band that can't quite decide which modern road to follow, snatches of neo Talking Heads run head first into some big production progressive rock, it's relatively intriguing but eventually ineffective, too much mish-mash for any long lasting impact. Something worthwhile might very well come out of it all one of these days once the present state of confusion has been successfully dealt with.

–KICK

NEON BOYS/RICHARD HELL
(THAT'S ALL I KNOW RIGHT NOW/ LOVE COMES IN SPURTS/ TIME/DON'T DIE)
Shake records

Yeah, now I get the picture. Neon Boys were probably Hell and Verlaine at their peak, before either one had gotten too pretentious or one iota of their cult fame. "That's All I Know Right Now" is close to being a really cretinous romantic masterstroke fraught with horrible nighttime threats of violence, the singer (Hell) knowing only one thing through the nightmare, that "you're mine and that's all I know right now". Corny but it works. Not so "Love Comes etc." The music's passable but this kind of lame double entendre is what first turned me cold on the Blank Generation LP. Hell's solo side with more recent things isn't too interesting no matter how sincere . . . the wax just can't stand the heat. A molten soppy mess with no guts.

–MR. OK

THE YOUNG CANADIANS
(HAWAII + 3)
Quintessence records

SECRET V'S
(4 title)
Friends records

Catchy pop rock from Vancouver B.C. where according to our Man in Canada punk is dead but the new wave is thriving and 12 inch 45's grow wild in the unspoiled northern wilderness. Hey hey, let's rock the winter away. "Let's go to fuckin' Hawaii" sing the Young Canadians who like all modern youngsters wouldn't mind a change of weather and a different sky to party under. Competent upbeat noise, healthy enthusiasm, very exportable product, visas granted, next applicants please. Hmmmm, the Secret V's, eh? Less wholesome name than the nice chaps before you, let's take a look at your wares. "Modern boy," "coffee girl," thank god you stayed away from D.O.A./Subhumans type of obscenities, nice playing, clean rocking melodies, okay hand your passports over, here's your youth ambassadors official stamps, let's make sure you stay worthy of your benevolent government's trust.

–KICK

THE BOXBOYS
(AMERICAN MASQUERADE/COME SEE ABOUT ME)
Zone H records

THE WAYWARD YOUTH
(ELMUNDO/DO YOU WANNA)
Final Solution records

THE STIMULATORS
(LOUD FAST RULES/ RUN RUN RUN)
Stimulators records

THE MONDELLOS
(LET'S JOIN/WHITE RIOT NIGHT)
Swell records

What's the unifying thread running thru this grab bag you may ask. They all got here thru the mail on the same morning I may reply. Which one do you favor most o Mighty Kique you may inquire. I may tell you if you stop sounding like a pompous wind bag I may counter. Ha you may retort, but it is you that started with this issue. Shutup please, PLEASE, or this May issue is going to become a June issue if all them voices in my head don't pipe down immediately. May I start Start number 2. Rolling . . . . . .

Okay boys and girls, here come the awards. Most enthusiastic newcomer: The Stimulators, from New York. 5 extra points for mean twelve year old drumming maniac. Most funny (what? oh, okay . .) most funny AND funniest newcomer: The Wayward Youth, from New Orleans, Louisiana. Most politically committed (beginners' course): The Mondellos, from San Francisco. Minus five points for digging the expression "white riot" out of the garbage dump where old cliches are waiting for a proper burial and sticking it right back up the mantel piece without even the excuse of being consciously kitsch. And finally, most likely to succeed (hey relax, don't mean shit these days – still, some have got what it takes to get the masses twitching, regardless of talent): The Boxboys, from Los Angeles. Los Angeles? Are you sure? I fuckin' live here, at least that's what it says on my traffic tickets, and I never ever seen, been asked to see, or heard of anybody gettin a glimpse of anything by that name. Sure it's not the Busboys? Nope, this bunch is of the pink pigmentation persuasion allright, not a trace of a restaurant food disposal engineer (that's what they call them busboys nowadays, so you only get two bucks an hour to wire back to the ten bambinos and the blind aunt all living in a 1956 Desoto on the outskirts of beautiful downtown Tijuana but fuckin hell hombre you can sign "from your muy importamento papa in los Estados Unidos, official F.D. engineer in one of the leading gourmet hang outs in Hollywood, El Disgusto Burrito.", so who cares about the pay with that kind of social status? anyway I suppose I am slightly digressing, so I'll stop.

–KICK

OOoops, the music: from punky pop to punk revisited to the Boxboys' "uptown yankee ska" mutation , their expression not mine, (you're sure it's not the Busboys? Listen you. .†*%4@=!!**$XZ"" . . . . . forget it, this review is never going to work, hey who stole my beer?

–KICK

THE DILS
(SOUND OF THE RAIN/ IT'S NOT WORTH IT/RED ROCKER)
Rogeletti records (Vancouver)

It's finally out. And it's not the John Cale collaboration. A lot of very mixed emotions ran through my head listening to this. Thoughts of how satisfying it would be to hear the Dils tear up vinyl with the same blistering pyro-guitar-mania they used to use tearing up your local club. But this was not to be. The result of this latest and, as it turns out, final effort is just as effective even if the energy level has abated a few degrees. A lot of snobs listening in will call the Dils snobs again and "tired hippies playing protest music" and there'll be a general air of "better-than-thouness" thick and stinking in the air. There's an awful lot of sinners out there all ready to cast the first stone etc. if you ask me (if you get my rather jumbled biblical drift). And they'd better look into their own cold little shivering hearts before they start feeling too superior. I'm not going to go on and on about masterpieces, transcendent beauty and hope springing eternal, don't worry. This weirdly packaged two record EP has its faults. "Red Rockers" which is the heaviest on the rock is also the weakest. There's other original things Chip and Tony had up their sleeves that surpass it. It's Ok but nothing crucial. "Not Worth It" and especially marrow-chilling "Sound of the Rain" wrap their sinuous intangible fingers around you and, if you're not made out of stone, you'll find yourself pretty choked-up before it's all over. The angry resignation, bitterness and sadness here has few equals in recent records. It doesn't matter if you thought their political crap was crap or not, this is a hell-of-a-fist in the stomach even with added acoustic guitars and laidback pace. Take some of the few good qualities belonging to the early Who and Kinks, then graft on the depressed activist persona of Phil Ochs and the tragic life-is-a-joke sadness of Hank Williams. The Dils approach mighty close to this. It's too bad because of so many of you, me included, they decided it's not worth it.

–CHRIS D.

AUGUSTUS PABLO
(CLASSICAL ILLUSION/OREGAN STYLE)
Dub Vendor import

AUGUSTUS PABLO
("A. PABLO PRESENTS EL ROCKERS – CHAPTER I TO IV")
Greensleeves import

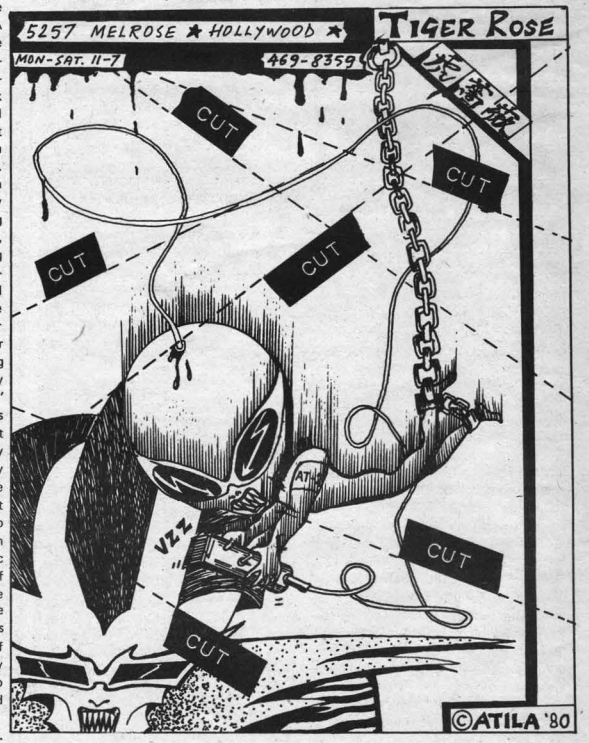
More from the prince of dub. The day Pablo releases something that is not totally worthwhile any way you approach it I will eat anybody's dreadlocks (get away from my locks mon) with no salt or pepper and nothing to wash it down with. The Greensleeve disc (both are extended 12 inch giant dealies) is more of an exercise of style, same melody done in 4 different dub manners (hence the 4 chapters), 1st with guest DJ Jah Iny, then with emphasis on the clavinet, then the melodica, finally with the bass and drums carrying most of the load. Most educational, a true teaching course in dub magic, Augustus could do twelve versions of "Happy Birthday to You" and make me happy. His name is my seal of dub quality. On the Dub Vendor disc the master truly excels, this "Classical Illusion" piece will make musical history, mark my words. Pablo is the Miles Davis of dub, a true genius who is almost single-handedly reshaping that most unrespectable musical form, dub music.

–KICK

THE TERRORISTS
(RIIS PARK/JUSTICE)
Max Kansas City records

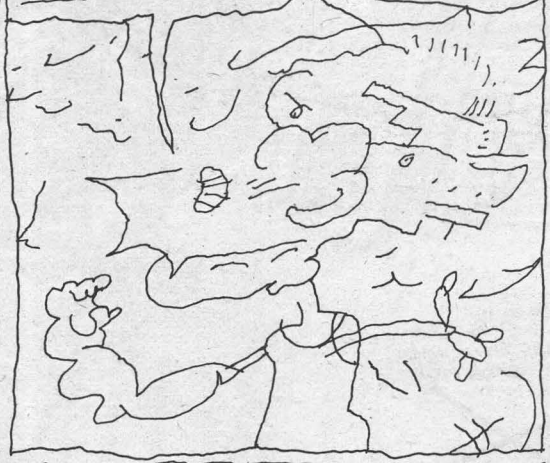
This is amazing: last thing I expected ever coming my way was a domestic reggae record, especially one that sounds every bit as rich and rootsy as the best from either Ja or the grey soggy island. But it's here, came in the mail yesterday courtesy of tiny Max Kansas City label (shame on you tiny label for such a blatant copy of another tiny label's visual signature) and it's still blowing me away nicely. A side "Riis Park" is a soulful gummy *real* reggae toon with strong vocals by a certain John Collins and tasty backing vocals by many people, the lyrix got me real intrigued I can't quite make them out on this slash office turntable that should be called a sewing machine cos I'm sure it would do a better job sewing clothes and things than it does playing records anyway the lyrix I said are real odd I hear things about naked people on top of each other, vaseline jars having something to do with Dracula daughters, no jah anywhere, most unrastafarian all that. But what a sound my lambs, what a potential hit if there were such things as hits that can be actually listened to without puking. B side is a neo ska ditty about wanting some justice, yeah yeah yeah, definitely less intriguing lyrix, it hops good in the ska mold, maybe the drummer does it a bit wrong in his selection of what pieces of the kit to hit and which ones to leave alone but let's not squabble this is such a remarkable unusual admirable single (it's pretty good too) it does no one no good to be a musical snob. It would most definitely be on my picks of the month back there in the staff chart if it had come earlier, cept now the chart is all typeset and the quarter it would cost to typeset this instead is going to get me a chocolate bar.

–KICK



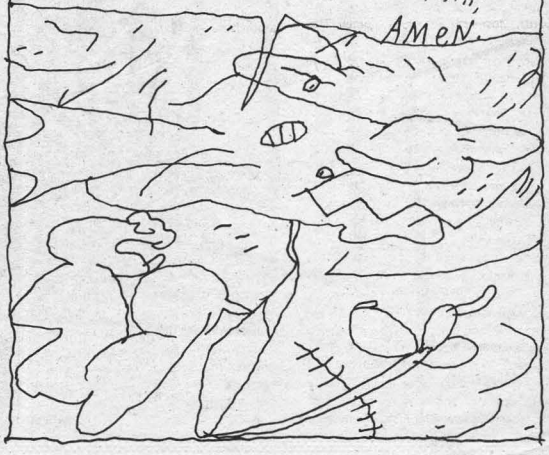
BOY!!! Fighting cockroaches is sure hard work!!!
oh Hi!. This is Jimbo Stark here, your very own cute, intellectual moron pack in Slash (the good magazine) ((our magazine)) after a brief appearance on ₹ in New West magazine (the Bad magazine) ((their magazine)) !!! Is that what you want me to say? I hope not, magazines are magazines. That's all. Dont Believe them. Don't believe me. Think for yourself...if you can.

us versus them is stupid!! I hate it! Bravado!!! I hate it! Jimbo is entertainment! Jimbo tries to not but Jimbo is entertainment! Slash is entertainment! Slah try to not, but Slah is entertainment you have big toilet to flush, me have time to worry about appearances ... about good guys & bad guys but we only disgus entertainment. it pathetic. Have so much time & toilet we think we better ... know better ... time to become Elite Jack-off-artists. you read Slah! Slah will save you right & WRONG!!! Slah no can save, Jesus no can save.!!!



I have seen the old burned out stupid Hippies, The old shiting & fuck up sheep. what are you? what will you become? old farting old burned out stupid punks? Dont Pledge allegiance, Do not take thine Entertainment For what it is, not! Do not sit still & do nothing but bitch & moan & compare & declare while all of it sucks you dry. Do something, watch out For your big toilet, For some guy who has it not will take it! Guard thy toilet & brain & 45's, Thy T.V. Thy Compact car. Jimbo thy Faithful Servant exhorts thee!!!

Do not believe thine own bull-shit!! And For Christ, The beloved Lamp of God oh high doo not believe any one elses! When is an entertainment form more? Who the Fuck does the Government think he is? who the shit is that Mewling spewing oil triumvirate coughing up? What is this New Wave shit? Is punk holy? You better do something, You better Find out what you like & hate & why!!! you better start living cause you're going to die before you know it!! Now Back to the Entertainment. Get to WORK!!!



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WORLD UPDATE

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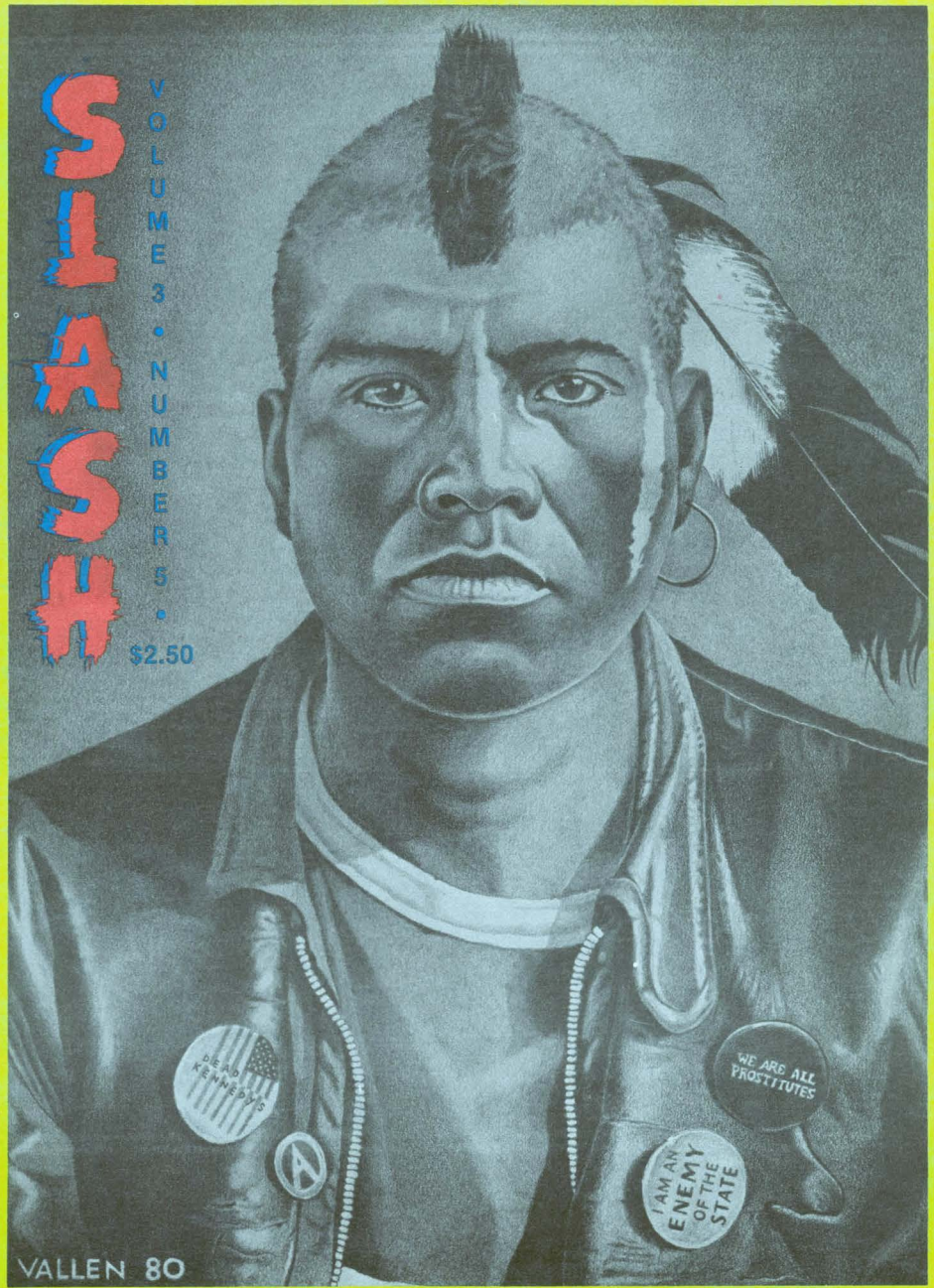

POP GROUP CRASS ROKY ERICKSON

SAM FULLER PHIL DICK BLURT L.P.S 45'S + A LOT MORE

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PRESENTS

CRISTINA

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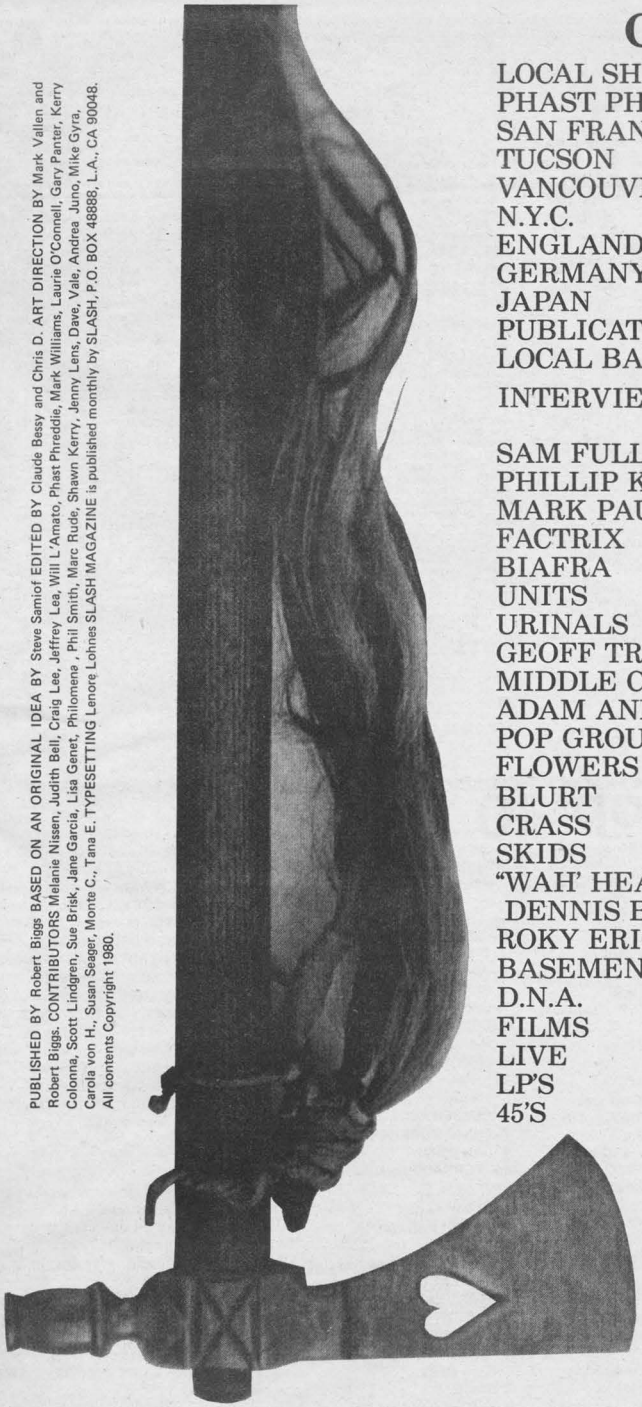

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COVER ILLUSTRATION: MARK VALLEN (213) 981-3119

LETTERS.

HI,
SLASHOIDS SEEM SO RELUCTANT TO VENTURE BEYOND THE SAFETY OF THEIR FEW SELECT CLUBS AND TOPICAL BARS. PERHAPS THIS IS WHY WE HAD TO WAIT UNTIL THE JAN-FEB. ISSUE TO READ ABOUT THE ONLY TRUE UNDERGROUND IN THE AREA. I REFER OF COURSE TO THE ANTI-CLUB
APTLY ENOUGH, IT WAS FORCED TO CLOSE THE SAME MONTH YOU FINALLY CHOSE TO SHOW INTEREST IN IT...ALTHOUGH I NEVER SAW ANY COCKROACHES, THEY MAKE HIP DANCING PARTNERS, SO FUCK-OFF YOU SQUEAMISH BORES! JETT'S CAFE IS ANOTHER STORY. I WENT THERE FOR THE FIRST TIME TO SEE OVERMAN(YOUR FIRST MISTAKE!-Ed.) A WHILE AGO, AND LOOKING AT ALL THE SHIT ON THE WALLS, I THOUGHT,"AHA, THIS IS WHERE THE ARTISTS COME TO DRINK"WHOOPEE! BIG SHITLOAD! THE ACOUSTICS, HOWEVER, SEEMED NO WORSE THAN THE OLD ANTI-CLUB AND WHEN THE BAND STARTED, THE WHOLE FUCKING SCENE SUDDENLY SEEMED REAL FRIGHTENING AND DEMONIC. MAYBE IT WAS THE BAND, MAYBE IT WAS THE LIGHTING, MAYBE IT WAS THE STRANGE AUDIENCE. WHEN I WENT BACK LAST WEEK TO JETT'S TO SEE SUBURBAN LAWNS IT WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. THE PLACE WAS FULL OF
REFUGEES FROM FLIPPER'S AND "NEW WAVE NIGHT" AT THE ODYSSEY. DON'T GET ME WRONG, I'M NOT ONE OF THOSE PHOBIC GUTBRAIN PUKES(YOU'RE NOT? MISSING MORE THAN HALF THE FUN, AREN'T YOU?-Ed)WHO SCREAM "FAGGOT QUEER HOMO,ETC.," IT'S JUST THAT I CAN'T EXORCISE MY PODIATRIC DEMONS IN A GODDAM CRUISE BAR! MOREOVER I TEND TO FEEL JUST A BIT FUCKED-OVER WHEN ONE OF THE CUNTFLAP PROPIETORS(CONSISTING OF SEVERAL ANDROGYNOUS FEMALES, SOME OF THEM QUITE AMIABLE) TAKES OUT HER AGGRESSIVE BULLDIKE HATRED OF MEN ON ME. I DON'T WANT TO GET INTO ANY OF THAT "CRITIC'S RESPONSIBILITY" SHIT 'CAUSE SLASHOIDS HAVE MADE IT OH SO CLEAR THAT LIFE'S A BIG PARTY AND THE MAG IS JUST A WAY TO KEEP DRINKING MONEY IN THE POCKET. IT'S JUST THAT I RECALL CLAUDE SAYING SOMETHING ABOUT "DECENTRALIZING THE SCENE"...

HATRED AND GREED
WOL IGBID

DEAR WOL(OVER EYES)
A BIT PARANOID AREN'T WE?IF YOU HAD ANY CONCEPTION OF HOW FUCKING LONG IT TAKES TO GET ANTHING INTO PRINT EVEN INTO YOUR OWN XEROXED FANZINE YOU WOULDN'T HAVE GONE SCREAMING MIMIS OVER OUR LATE INCLUSION OF THE HOLE IN THE WALL CALLED ANTI-CLUB...WHICH IS CERTAINLY THE BEST HOLE IN THE WALL L.A.'S HAD SINCE THE MASQUE. WE WEREN'T TRASHING THE PLACE BECAUSE OF THE ROACHES, IN FACT WE WEREN'T TRASHING THE PLACE AT ALL!HOWEVER YOU HAVE TO ADMIT, NO MATTER HOW RICH IN PROTEIN THEY ARE THE LITTLE BUGGERS ARE NOT THE MOST WONDERFUL THING TO FIND TREADING GIN IN YOUR MARTINI. FUNNY HOW BY THE END OF YOUR MISDIRECTED TIRADE YOU'VE BECOME THE PRIME EXAMPLE OF"GUTBRAIN PUKE".THE SCENE IS DECENTRALIZING...WITNESS WITHIN THESE PAGES THE SCHIZOPHRENIC ESOTERIC EVIDENCE. AND TRUE TO SARCASTIC FORM, LIFE IS A BIG PARTY. FORTUNATELY FOR THE LOT OF US YOU WEREN'T INVITED.

CHRIS D.

SLASH,
READING THE "FUCK THE NEW WAVE" EDITORIAL GAVE ME AN INSTANT HIGH. ITS ABOUT TIME THE IGNORANT MASSES LEARN THAT PUNK AND NEW WAVE ARE NOT ONE AND THE SAME. NEW WAVE EQUALS WATERED-DOWN PISS FOR WIMPS AND ZOMBIES WHO COULD NEVER EVEN BEGIN TO RELATE TO THE URGENT, FRENZIED UTTERANCES OF THE GERMS OR BLACK FLAG. SOME PEOPLE SEEM TO THINK ITS COOL TO BE "A LITTLE BIT PUNK" OR A "WEEK END PUNK". WHAT THE HELL IS A LITTLE BIT PUNK? EITHER YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON OR YOU DON'T! AND WHEN I HEARD THAT THE PRETENDERS SOLD OUT THE S.N. CIVIC IN A HALF-HOUR, I COULD HAVE BARFED. JUST HOW GULLIBLE CAN PEOPLE BE? ANYWAY I WILL SOON MAKE MY FEEBLE ATTEMPT TO EDUCATE SOME OF THE NAIVE FOOLS OUT IN NEWWAVELAND WHEN I PUT OUT MY LOW-BUDGET MAG WHICH WILL DEVOTE SOME ATTENTION TO GREAT OBSCURE BANDS SUCH AS THE CIRCLE JERKS AND CHEIFS.

STEVE STIPH

HA, FINALLY A TRUE BELIEVER! GO TO IT NATTY, ENLIGHTEN AND BAPTIZE AND MAY THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PUNK KEEP YOUR SPIKES SHARP AND YOUR STUDS SHINY.

KICK

SLASH,
I JUST LEFT HOLLYWOOD TO MAKE MORE MONEY SO I CAN AGAIN SUPPORT THE WHOLE FUCKING TOWN. THE FUCKING PLACE WAS BROKE. NOT ONLY THAT-EVERYBODY WAS BELLYACHING!NOW I CAN UNDERSTAND AN HONEST BITCH-GRIPE BUT EITHER HATE IT, LIKE IT, FUCK IT, OR BE BORED. IT WAS A GRAND TREAT TO SEE GOOD BANDS ON LEAK NIGHT(?-ED.) AND THEN HEAR THEM ON RADIO. THIS IS INCONCEIVABLE IN THIS TOWN OF NO IMPORTANCE I EXIST IN. AND WHAT IS THIS SICK SHIT NOISE THAT THESE NON-WHITES ARE PLAYING AND PEOPLE ARE LISTENING TO?! HONEST HYPOCRISY IS OK BUT THE WAVERS AND SOME PUNKS LIKE IT. IT'S THE WORST OF WHAT THEY HATE-WEED-SMOKERS ARE HIPPIES AND ALL BLACK MUSIC IS JUNGLE SHIT. SO THEY LISTEN TO SKA*? WOULD YOU BELIEVE ARTHUR MURRAY DISCO IS BETTER? MY MOTEL WAS JUST STARTING TO BE THE PLACE TO GO WHEN I LEFT. WELL, I'LL BE BACK SOON-GIMME SOME NOISE!
*SHORT FOR SCAB OR SKANK OR SKAT OR PISS-THAT STUPID WORD-SHORTENING ACCENT.

NEIL

SAY HEY NEIL,
NOW NOW SWEETHEART AREN'T YOU JUST TAKING IT A BIT SERIOUSLY, AND TURNING INTO A NERVOUS WRECK ALONG WITH IT WHILE TRYING TO KEEP IT PURE, ARYAN, AND UNTOUCHED BY EVOLUTION? RELAX, THE TRIBAL CONFRONTATIONS ARE NOT SCHEDULED FOR ANOTHER DECADE AND BY THEN SOME OF THEM ARE GOING TO SPORT SOME PRETTY STRANGE SHADES OF PIGMENTATION, GROTSQUE HYBRIDS OF UNSPEAKABLE ORIGINS THAT WILL MAKE THE ROKY ERICKSON INNER WORLD AS CUTESY PIE AS NORMAN ROCKWELL. I HOPE YOU DON'T CHICKEN OUT AND COWER IN A WELL STOCKED BASEMENT, MISSING SUCH FUN WOULD BE EVEN DUMBER THAN YOU SENILE CLICHES DISPLAY, ANYWAY IF IT'S THE NON WHITES YOU GOT AN ALLERGY TO YOU'RE BOUND TO JUST LOVE THEM DAYS, THE COUNTRY WILL TRULY BE HEAVEN'S OWN HUNTING GROUNDS IF YOU DON'T SKA PERHAPS YOU POGO THEN, OR IS THE FRUG YOUR SOCIAL THING? DARN!ALMOST FORGOT TO POINT OUT YOU SHOULD PLAN ON WASTING SOME LILLYWHITE HONKY BROTHERS OF YOURS TOO, 'CAUSE THEM HIPPIES SURE HAVE NO JUNGLE BLOOD IN THEM, JUST NICE CRAB GRASS, WATERED-DOWN STUFF THAT MIGHT AS WELL BE THE PISS THAT'S SOAKED IN YOUR MOTEL ROOM FOR ALL THE GOOD IT DID IRRIGATING YOUR BRAIN. IF YOU HATE SKA IT DON'T MEAN YOURE THE VISIONARY SAVIOR OF THE PINK AND BLOTCHY RACE, BUT IT COULD VERY WELL MEAN A HAPPY ADULTHOOD AMIDST SOME REAL CAUCASIAN NOISE PEDDLERS LIKE VAN HALEN. FEEL THE CALL OF THE GENES YET? RUN SWEETHEART, I KNEW YOU WERE A CONFUSED GAY PERSON ALL ALONG YOU BAD BOY, YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO READ OUR MAG UNDER SUCH TAXING CIRCUMSTANCES, IT MIGHT JUST BADLY AFFECT YOUR OFFICIAL COMING OUT. My, MY WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

KICK

SLASH,
I'VE HAD IT UP PAST THE BRAIN TISSUE WITH "I WAS A PUNK FROM MY CONCEPTION ON" WHININGS. OK, SO I DIDN'T LIVE IN L.A. AND I DIDN'T EVEN GET SHITFACED, COMATOSE AND CLUBBED INTO THE DIRT EVERY FUCKING WEEKEND SINCE '77. I DON'T LISTEN TO DISCO, EITHER, AND PUNK/NEW WAVE WAS THE FIRST ROCK NOISE THAT EVER MOVED ME PAST A YAWN. SEEMS I'VE ALWAYS HAD THE ANARCHY. IT'S JUST EXPLODED IN DIFFERENT WAYS. LATELY I'VE FELT LIKE I'M GRABBING ONTO THE LAST WAGS OF A DYING DINOSAUR BUT FOR SOME SLASH AND GOOD OLD WEST COAST DESTRUCTO SOUND(LIKE X, GERMS,TOOTH&NAIL) IT CHEERS ME UP ENOUGH TO SMASH CRETINS WHO SAY "PUNK?OH,I LOVE HEART OF GLASS!" AND UK CROMAGNONS WHO SMUGLY ASSUME THAT ALL AMERICANS LIVE TV/HOLLYWOOD/RICH KID LIVES. I DON'T NEED TO PROVE I CARRY EVERY BIT THE ANGER, VIOLENCE, PAIN, AND REBELLION AND I DON'T DIRECT IT WITHIN. AND I'M GETTING OUT OF THIS EXCAVATION, SO THE NEXT TIME A SHORT, YOUNG, RADIO-ACTIVE HALF-JAP NURSE HELPS PUT YOU BACK TOGETHER AFTER A "FRIENDLY DISCUSSION", TAKE A SECOND LOOK FOR THE ANGRY, BRUISED LOOK AROUND THE EYES.

CRISIS OUIDA T. FROM TUCSON

DEAR SLASH,
AFTER LISTENING TO THE TWO RECORDS, SLASH HAS PUT OUT SO FAR, I FELT LIKE BEING IN THE GERMS WORLD OF PAIN AND THAT X OPENS THE DOORS TO SUCCESS.
WE ONLY WANTED TO BE LOVED, SINGS JOHN LYDON

UK

YEAH?

KICK

SLash Stàff Top 10

CRAIG LEE
1. DATE WITH JACK – Castration Squad (live)
2. THE URINALS LIVE SET
3. OUTSIDE THE TRAINS DON'T RUN ON TIME – Gang of Four
4. CRAZY RHYTHM – The Feelies LP
5. SPIDER AND THE FLY – The Monocles
6. NO QUESTIONS ASKED – The Flesh Eaters LP
7. PRIME OF MY LIFE – The Human Switchboard
8. DROP IN THE OCEAN – early Buzzcocks (w/Devoto)
9. ANYTHING BY THE VELVET UNDERGROUND
10. PINK SECTION EP

MISSISSIPPI RANKING STACK O'LEA
1. MADAME ENTELLE TWO STEP – Marie Falcon
2. RAILROAD BILL – Will Bennett
3. TRAVELIN' BLUES – Blind Willie McTell
4. LA VALSE DES MECHES – Octa Clark & his Dixie Ramblers
5. IKO IKO – any version ever done
6. A GOOD OLD REBEL – Traditional (from "Long Riders" Sndtrk)
7. LUCY MAE BLUES – Frankie Lee Sims
8. GOING DOWN TO THE RIVER – Dr. Ross
9. BABY PLEASE DON'T GO – Top Jimmy
10. RUN NIGGER RUN – Traditional Folk Spiritual

WILLIAM AMATO
1. CHOPPIN' AWAY ON WHITES – The Tenants (live)
2. BENT LIVE! – Bent (tape)
3. NO QUESTIONS ASKED – The Flesh Eaters LP
4. ANTI-WORLD – Nina Hagen Band (live)
5. JEEPSTER – T. Rex LP
6. REPLICA CRAZE – Kira (tape)
7. DAMNED ARABS – The Monsters (request)
8. COLOSSAL YOUTH – Young Marble Giants LP
9. LIVE AT THE WITCH TRIALS – The Fall LP
10. No number 10

PHAST PHREDDIE
1. STORMY WEATHER – Lena Horne
2. LE CHAT BLEU – Willy de Ville
3. SEARCHING FOR THE YOUNG SOUL REBELS – Dexy & Midnight Runners LP
4. ROCKING TIME – Burning Spear
5. SOUL REBELS – Bob Marley
6. START – The Jam
7. CODE BLUE – Code Blue LP
8. MY WORLD – Secret Affair
9. SHINING STAR – The Manhattans
10. ROCKIN' IN THE HOUSE – The Zantees

GARY PANTER
1. DIE KLEINEN BOSEN – Deutsch-Amerikanische-Freundschaft
2. SEX MUNX – Jay Condom
3. CASANOVA – Nino Rota
4. CROCODILES – Echo & The Bunnymen
5. SHINY BEAST – Capt. Beefheart
6. HONKY TONK MASQUERADE – Joe Ely
7. RUBBER RODEO (tape)
8. ENNIO MORRICONE (anything)
9. CAR WRECK
10. TORNADOS – Natural Disasters

KICKBOY FACE
1. MY MOTHER WAS /GET – Blurt
2. C30-C60-C90 – Bowwowwow
3. DOG EAT DOG – Adam & the Ants
4. STARSHIP AFRICA – Creation Rebel LP
5. LIFELINE – Force 7
6. WHEEL AND THE ROSES – Rema Rema
7. DOME LP
8. PANTHER BURNS EP
9. ABSOLUTE GAME – Skids LP
10. SEASIDE SPECIAL – Jah Wobble

CHRIS D.
1. WHITE GIRL – X (live)
2. DRUG TRAIN – The Cramps (45)
3. BURNIN' HELL – John Lee Hooker
4. CLIFTON CHENIER LIVE AT VERBUM DEI HIGH (live)
5. HOW I WROTE ELASTIC MAN/CITY HOBGOBLINS – The Fall
6. MY MOTHER WAS A FRIEND OF AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE/GET – Blurt
7. SEX MACHINE – Crawling Chaos
8. C30-C60-C90 GO! – Bowwowwow
9. CLOSER – Joy Division LP
10. WALKING WITH THE BEAST – The Gun Club (live)

DAVE
1. DOG EAT DOG – Adam and the Ants
2. NO WAY – Adolescents
3. DARBY CRASH (live)
4. CHIEFS (live)
5. ILLUSION OF GRANDEUR – U.X.A. LP
6. NO QUESTIONS ASKED – Flesheaters LP
7. BACK AGAINST THE WALL – Circle Jerks (tape)
8. ROKY ERICKSON INTERVIEW (this issue!)
9. NO NORE NOTHING – Fear (live)
10. THE DECLINE OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION (movie)

TROUBLEMAKERS

TROUBLEMAKERS IS THE NEWEST "LOSS LEADER" FROM WARNER BROS. RECORDS. THE TITLE DERIVES FROM THE FACT THAT WE'VE CHOSEN MUSIC FROM SOME OF THE MOST CHALLENGING ARTISTS PRESENTLY ON THE LABEL AND ITS AFFILIATES.

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LOCAL SHIT

Exene/photo: Chris D.

The Zero-Zero, an after hours club on Cahuenga had only been open a couple of weeks when it was busted by the cops. Seems there was a noise complaint but the complaint turned out to have come from someone who was an illegal resident of the building. A real juke party was in full swing before the little boys in blue made their entrance. Hits of the party before the law weren't on any cassette or turntable but in the form of two wild gals from Montana. These gals clad in mini-skirts and colored nylons were drunk as a skunk. When the law did arrive they made everyone sit in a circle on the cold concrete floor then had all the menfolk step into the center one by one with their hands on their heads. Members of THE GUN CLUB, X, THE BLASTERS, and TOP JIMMY held their own against such verbal abuse as "Grab some wall!" "Get that hand back on your head if you still want a head!" Real TV cop Dragnet stuff. The doorman of the evening, Wayzata, got more than a tongue lashing and was manacled until the coppers suddenly turned friendly, started telling jokes and tried to pick up one of the Wild West wimmen. Things ended in a peacable fashion. The next night (Friday) there were no problems. Saturday however ended in fisticuffs when a disgruntled patron decided he didn't want the club to close so early and started throwing things. Once again the defenders of life, limb and property intervened. No telling what exactly will be the Zero-Zero's status by the time you read this. Admittance is by membership card only (or supposed to be). It's $5.00 a night for all the beer you can drink. Since it's a private club the letter of the law allegedly can't do anything about it. But we all know how that goes, don't we?

Speaking of law enforcement, Terry of THE GUN CLUB was recently thrown into the pokey for drinking on the freeway.

More busts, burns, and bummers: The La Vida Hot Springs punk festival Cal Slam Zero in Brea (Orange County) on Sept. 7 had problems from the outset. It started around noon. Before daylight fled over all those drab confab tract homes and industrial complexes the cops zeroed in on EDDIE of EDDIE & THE SUBTITLES as the ringleader & organizer of the event. When they found his trailer in the parking lot they didn't bother to knock. We later heard these uniformed bruisers claimed they smelled marijuana and that's why they'd been so rude. Once inside so THEIR story goes, they found not only EDDIE but some cocaine. We think EDDIE's out of jail now but aren't sure. Anyway, Mike Patton from THE MIDDLE CLASS took over as supervisor and the show went on after they'd hauled away Eddie. In the interim, before the officers reappeared, there was some music, a few bricks thrown through nearby motel windows, some bikers beating up tiny punks, and one biker on his hog disappearing down that long dusty road followed by a stream of rocks, beer cans and bottles. The feared biker/punk gang war never took place, though, perhaps because the cops came back to tuck everyone in. Groups not getting to play were THE MIDDLE CLASS, ADOLESCENTS, and GEZA X AND THE MOMMYMEN. Other groups that had been scheduled were DEAD SKIN, SEXUALLY FRUSTRATED, THE ASSASINS, CHINA WHITE, AGENT ORANGE, Eddie's heavy metal combo IRON LUNG ... the list goes on and on.

Some slightly more extreme violence: after two nights of "rioting" (so the story goes) at the Mabuhay and Savoy in San Francisco, two L.A. punks were being sought in connection with the stabbing death of a fifty-seven year old wino on Polk Street. There were some "punk" witnesses so supposedly this isn't another media/police smear.

Speaking of stabbing, that girl who claimed she was stabbed while standing in the audience at an X gig at the Whisky (as reported in Patrick "Mr. Fantasy" Goldstein's column in the L.A. Times) has been proven a liar. The stabbing took place several blocks away. X attorney, Jay, is now readying a lawsuit against this trendy namedropper (the girl stabbed). Speaking of X, they'll be entering the studio soon to record "White Girl" for release as a single sometime in December (?). B side will probably be an edited version of "World's A Mess, It's in My Kiss."

THE CRAMPS Bryan Gregory replacement, Julian formerly of THE MAD, has left the group, and they're looking for a new guitarist, so if you're interested . . . It looks like this is one band that may have abandoned their home base in N.Y., at least for the time being. Lux jumped up onstage at a recent BLASTER's date and sang "Tear It Up" with them.

While we're on the subject, all Bryan Gregory-joins-devil-cult rumours are now believed to be untrue as he is living here in Hollywood (hoping to break into horror movies ... it's true!) and keeping a very low profile. Look for an exclusive interview with Bryan in the upcoming edition of NO magazine.

THE ADOLESCENTS played at the wedding of Gerber and Tar in Marina del Rey. The stage was the bottom of an empty swimming pool with people skateboarding dangerously around the coping edge. We heard the acoustics couldn't have been better. Also playing were THE CIRCLE JERKS, CHINA WHITE, THE CROWD, SOCIAL DISTORTION and THE STINGERS.

More Marriages: Helen Killer tied the knot with Paul Roessler, then both headed for NYC so Paul could work with Nina Hagen.

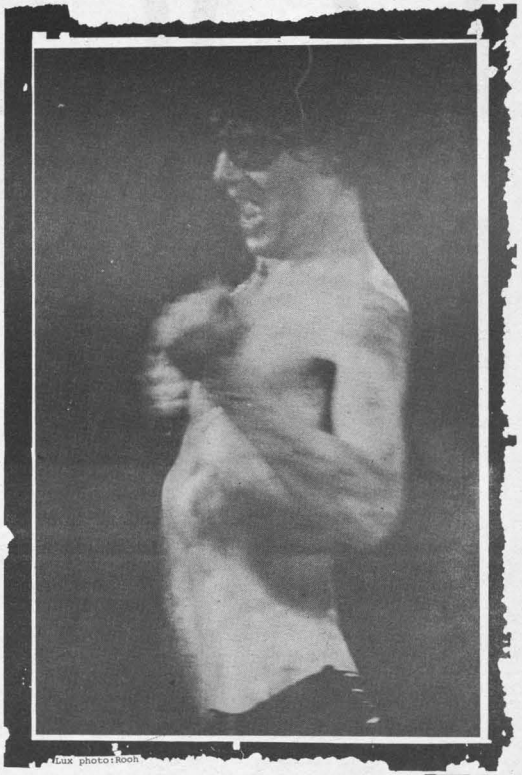
Gary Panter and Nicole Oliveri exchanged vows before a judge in a deserted courtroom in a hole-in-the-wall desert town somewhere outside Palm Springs.

Jack Albee wants to invite punk and experimental bands to participate in selected classes of his Theatre of the Absurd course he'll be teaching at Otis Art Institute starting Sept. 22. It runs for fifteen weeks. Call him at 453-5555.

De Detroit of U.X.A. is rumoured to be singing regularly with the Johnny Otis Gospel show in his parish. Not sure of the exact location, think it's in Watts. Another extravaganza on that side of town occurred at Verbum Dei Catholic High School. The occasion was a Creole dance party with drink, food, and CLIFTON CHENIER playing a near three hour set. Several members of the SLASH staff made it down as well as members of X, THE GUN CLUB, and THE BLASTERS.

PHRANC, as well as BUTCH and THE BONEHEADS, recently completed their cameo roles in Paul Morrisey's upcoming as yet untitled punk comedy. Phranc was not too pleased at the treatment she received at the hands of the intellectual right-wing maestro of low camp and is going to add his name to her list in her "Take Off Your Swaztikas" song.

FOR MORE LOCAL SHIT SEE THE NEW BAND UPDATE ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE.



Lux photo: Rooh

EDITORIAL

HEY MUCHACHOS, HOW WAS THAT LONG HOT SUMMER IN THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITIES? BET YOU WERE SO BUSY BOPPING AND DRINKING YOU DIDN'T EVEN MISS YOUR MONTHLY PACKAGE OF SLASH NONSENSE... WE KNOW, WE KNOW. THE ONLY ONES THAT SEEMED TO EXPRESS ANY INTEREST IN OUR HEALTH ARE ALL THE SWEET SYMPATHETIC MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WHO SUDDENLY SHOWED SUCH A DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF OUR ADVENTURE AND SUCH A SINCERE CONCERN FOR OUR FUTURE WE SIMPLY HAD TO HOP BACK IN THE ARENA AND REASSURE THE FAITHFUL THAT, YES FOLKS, THE OLD SLASH STILL HAD IT, THAT OLF FIGHTING POWER WAS THERE AND BY GOLLY, IT SURE IS GOOD TO BE BACK HERE TONIGHT AND GIVE YOU ALL THE VERY BEST YOUR GOOD MONEY CAN BUY. TEARS FLOW ON BEAMING FACES, LOUD ROAR OF JOY SWELLS UP IN THE FRAGRANT SUMMER NIGHT AND REACHES HEAVEN WHERE THE GOOD LORD AND ALL HIS MINIONS GET QUITE A BUZZ OF SATISFACTION AS THEY ALWAYS DO WHEN THE JUST TRIUMPH. CUT. CLOSE, BUT NOT QUITE. FIRST WE HAD NO INTENTION OF SNEAKING OUT OF THE BACK DOOR LIKE ADULTERERS IN THE NIGHT, WE'RE NOT DONE WITH THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE PROPAGANDA YET AND THERE WAS SUCH AN OVERLOAD OF INFORMATION TO LAY ON YOUR FRAIL INTELLECTS, SUCH A GORGEOUS DISPLAY OF TERMINAL CONFUSION AND UNEXPLAINED PHENOMENA TO REPORT AND INFLICT ON YOUR VILLAGE SENSIBILITIES AS WELL AS MUCH LOCAL CLIQUEY FOULNESS TO DEPOSIT ON YOUR ELEGANT RUG AND OFFEND YOUR WORLD-CONSCIOUS SOPHISTICATION (WE WELCOME ALL TYPES EVEN THE PROXY THRILL SEEKERS WHO GO SLUMMING THRU OUR X-RATED BINGES), THERE WAS SO MUCH TO GIVE AND SHARE AND COMMUNICATE (OH WHAT A SENSE OF DUTY) THAT EVEN JAH JAH THE OLD TEA HEAD HIMSELF COULDN'T HAVE STOPPED THIS CULTURAL APOTHEOSIS. A MAN WITH A MISSION DELIVERS THE GOODS, AND WHEN MANY ARE INVOLVED AND THEY ALL COME THRU (TAKE A BOW BOYS AND GIRLS) WATCH OUT, TIMBER, THE IMPACT MIGHT KILL YOU. POTENT STUFF EVERYWHERE, DROOGIES, A PANORAMIC SCOPE WITHOUT EQUAL EVEN IF IT OCCASIONALLY BLURS OUT, STUNNING ABSENCE OF MANIFESTOS AND EDITORIAL UNITY (MEANING RESPECT IN THE READER AND A STAND STILL AT THE OFFICE),OBSCURE BELIEFS EXHUMED FROM THE TOMB,COVER SYMBOLISM (INDIAN LAND AND PUNK MUSIC MEET WITH...) THAT DOUBLES AS FASHION EXCLUSIVE. NO ONE ASKED FOR IT BUT WE CAN'T RESIST SHOWING OFF, THERE WAS MORE BUT YOU CAN ONLY TAKE SO MUCH OF A GOOD THING. AND YOU OUGHT TO KNOW WHEN TO STOP. LIKE NOW ??

"HOT ON THE ONE." JAMES BROWN GIVES YOU THE BEST TIME OF YOUR LIVE.

James Brown in concert is the stuff legends are made of. And "Hot On The One" is James Brown at his legendary best on a new two-record set. Featuring some of his all-time greatest hits, like "Sex Machine," "It's A Man's, Man's, Man's World," "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag," "Please, Please, Please" and more, "Hot On The One" was recorded in Japan before adoring fans. But you don't have to go half way around the world to hear it for yourself.

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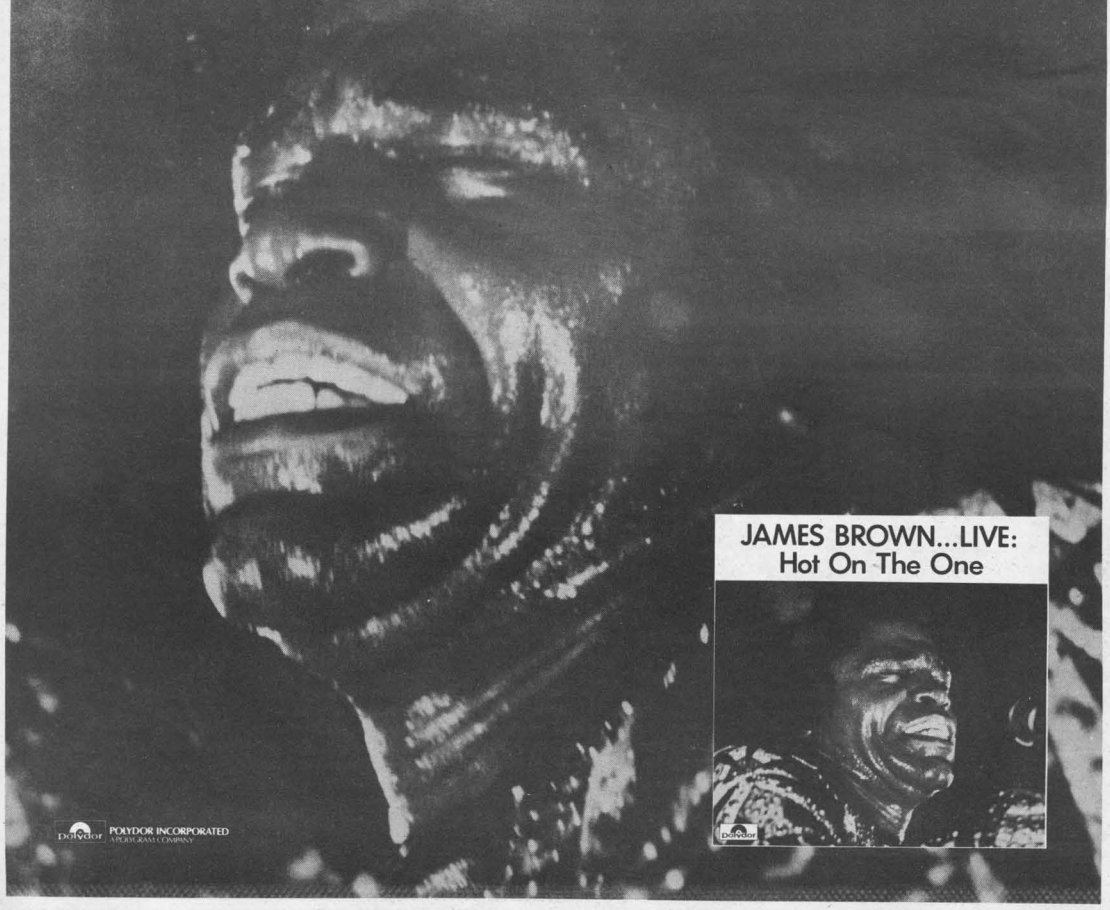

JAMES BROWN...LIVE:
Hot On The One

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FASTER THAN YOU

Phast Phreddie

Digging into the vast collection of photographs in the Fast Man's archives, I found one of particularly keen interest to FASTER THAN YOU readers. It fully illustrates how horrible it was in Los Angeles before the Masque days. This quartet of beings once flew under the moniker of Zolar X. Believe it or not, they are not refugees from Star Trek, but an attempt at a Rock'n'Roll band with a ridiculous concept. And get this, these jerks actually walked around Hollywood dressed like that. I also understand that they got beat up a lot. All of this happened circa 1974. Funny thing is that Kiss came out about a year later and cleaned up. Possible reasons: Kiss is from New York; also, Zolar X just didn't have the musical chops that Kiss had when the white faced four were unleashed. The Fast Man had the misfortune of seeing and (worse) hearing Zolar X at the now legendary Hollywood Trash Dance (featuring the New York Dolls, Iggy backed with James Williamson and Ray Manzarek, Peter Ivers and the GTOs) and can bear witness to the horrendity of the group. I ended up entertaining myself with a pea-shooter that night.

ON THE VINYL SCENE: At mid year the Fast Man regurgitates these selections as his Top Ten LPs of the year so far:

1) Mink Deville – LE CHAT BLEU
2) Dexys Midnight Runners – SEARCHING FOR THE YOUNG SOUL REBELS
3) X – LOS ANGELES
4) The (English) Beat – I JUST CAN'T STOP IT
5) Steel Pulse – CAUGHT YOU
6) Cramps – SONGS THE LORD TAUGHT US
7) Burning Spear – HAIL H.I.M.
8) Lacy J. Dalton – LACY J. DALTON
9) Fabulous Thunderbirds – WHAT'S THE WORD
10) Wailing Souls – WILD SUSPENSE

Most of the above I'm sure many of you are aware of. However, let me hip you to one that you may not be – Lacy J. Dalton. Lacy is a very good female Country and Western singer. The way she handles songs like "Crazy Blue Eyes," "Late Night Kind of Lonesome," "Losing Kind of Love" and "Turn My Head Around" with so much soul and finesse it sends shivers down my back. What's more, these exceptional songs were all written by Lacy J. Dalton herself. If you are at all interested in C&W music you should check this out – you won't be sorry.

The re-issue business seems to have been kind of slow this summer, or at least I'm just not aware of too many good ones. But a pair of fine packages comes to us courtesy of Columbia Records. One is by the late great Chuck Willis, who is generally known for his hits in the late Fifties on Atlantic Records such as "Hang Up My Rock'n'Roll Shoes," "It's Too Late," "C.C. Rider," and "Betty and Dupree" among others. He was a prolific songwriter whose tunes were covered by a great many R&B singers of the time, as well as Little

Milton, Otis Redding, Buddy Holly and Elvis Presley. The set of tunes in question contains fourteen songs that he recorded for Okeh Records (a CBS subsidiary that featured ethnic musics like blues, jazz and hillbilly) during the early Fifties. The King of the Stroll, as he was called, had a cool approach to singing much like Charles Brown, Roy Hawkins or Floyd Dixon. Also like the other blues singers, many of his songs were very sad. In 1958 he died of a perforated ulcer, leaving a legacy of far too few great songs and vocal performances.

The other re-package is a two-record set by Mr. Five by Five himself, Jimmy Rushing – who is also late and was very great, indeed. Jimmy was a jazz singer who was given his nickname because he was about five feet tall and about five feet in circumference. Jimmy was best known for his singing with the Count Basie Orchestra in the Thirties and Forties. The recordings on this album are all fine jazz performances dating from the late Fifties, many of which feature a big band backing, ala the Basie period. Some of the musicians that appear on the record with Jimmy are such jazz notables as Buck Clayton, Coleman Hawkins, Walter Page, Jo Jones, Dave Brubeck, Roland Hanna, Zoot Sims, Ben Webster and Hellen Humes – each of which are good for their own LPs.

However groovy these two LPs are, Columbia Records still has tons of stuff by R&B greats Big Maybelle, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Dr. Feelgood and the Interns, Little Joe & the Thrillers, the Schoolboys, and Rex Garvin & the Mighty Cravers. I, for one, would like to see all of it back in print.

YOU'LL NEVER HEAR JIMI HENDRIX AGAIN: Apparently what was once, will be again. In recent times we've seen all kinds of old styles of rock'n'roll being revived, from rockabilly to ska. But are you ready for the Surf Revival? That's right. Surf Music lives again in Jon & the Nightriders, a group from Riverside, California who do nothing but surf instrumentals. And quite well, too. Already out (and may I add sold out) is their first recording, an EP featuring one original composition as well as three covers. The absolute best is the original, too. Soon to come is an album which is in all reality a true fine recording for the genre. Better than many of the ones made in the surfin' summer of '63. The LP even boasts the blessing and liner notes of the one and only King of the Surf Guitar, Dick Dale. How's that for authenticity. Jon & the Nightriders could be touring soon, also, so watch for them.

Also on the revivalist scene is Split Rivitt, an English R&B band whose rendition of Booker T. & the MGs "Soul Limbo" (Red Lightning Records) may even be better (certainly more frantic) than the original. Here, Split Rivitt substitutes Booker T.'s organ for a screaming harmonica gaining exciting results in the process.

"Rockin' In The House" by the Zantees is likewise a noteworthy recording in the rockabilly vein. Imagine if the Trashmen ("Surfin' Bird") were from Memphis in 1955. It's that wild. Definitely a likable contrast to the mellow Robert Gordon method.

PLEASE HEAR MY PLEA: It has been brought the Fast Man's attention that Heroin has become (more like has been for some time) the swingin' drug in New York City and is threatening to catch on here in L.A. I don't want to preach at nobody and I certainly do not want to keep anyone from having fun (Hell, I take drugs myself. Recently downed a quantity of "Magic Mushrooms" and saw God in the likely form of Smokey Robinson ("Ooh, Baby, Baby"). I just wanna say if you use this drug, please take it easy, I don't want to lose any friends, if ya know what I mean.

That's it for now, kids. Ya'all pay attention to yer Uncle Phreddie, now, 'cause he won't steer you wrong. Until next time pray for Surf.

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SAN FRANSISCO

What follows is an Incomplete Glossary (A-Z) of Recent Phenomena in the Bay Area, compiled by Vale and Andrea Juno.

ADOLESCENT RECORDS/SEARCH & DESTROY PRODUCTIONS: a merger to release trans-time/avant garde records & cassettes. Scheduled: new albums by FACTRIX/SLAVA/SLEEPERS; re-release of THROBBING GRISTLE's "We Hate You (Little Girls)/Five Knuckle Shuffle," etc. P.O. Box 99350, S.F., CA 94109 or 20 Romolo, No. B, S.F., CA 94133.

APPLIANCES: 3 girls 2 guys. R&R plus homemade instruments. Songs like: MIAMI/RUN ME OVER WITH YOUR CADILLAC/CEASE TO EXIST. . .

BACHELORS EVEN: 2 wry *experimentors* from NY/Boston: like, rhythm tracks are records sawed apart & recombined . . . Have destroyed TV sets on both coasts . . .

BAY OF PIGS: "A continuing experiment in merging language & sound" — music/noise experiments plus Andrew on vocal seizures. Influence: Demetrius Stratos, Italian sound poet. New 45: ADDICTION/ALIENS. Forthcoming EP: POLYPHRENIC MAN/THE FLUX PATROL/THE SCHIZOID VOID. Hawaiian lap guitar, guitars, trumpet, drums, focal effects, etc. Other song titles: REVOLUTION OF THE SENSES/YOUR CLIMB PHOTOGRAPHS/LIFE AFTER TIME/I FEEL A FUCK COMING ON/SAN FRANCISCO'S A SMALL TOWN/MIND MACHINE/etc. . . .

CAZAZZA, MONTE/TANA EMMOLO: Oakland's genetic terrorists with Something For Nobody — their new EP on Industrial Records . . . .

CLUB FOOT: The place for special performance/music events. Like, Bruce Conner showed films while the BACHELORS "played" recently. New LP forthcoming with the LONGSHOREMEN/ALTER BOYS/BAY OF PIGS/ and NAKED CITY . . . . (2520 3rd St., 285-0206)

DEB-U-TAUNT BALL: June 21st — A summer solstice torchlit ritual for girls by girls. Held under a freeway next to a canal, it included a voodoo metabolic soundtrack by FACTRIX, an emergency flarelined presentation walkway, and an unplanned medieval bonfire, climaxed by appearance of police. (Unreported post-punk peak event)

DNA — recent NY assault on SF. Basic R&R Tools (12-string guitar, bass, drums) re-invented to blast black sound patterns against stark white space. Highwire Minimalism . . . .

MR. E & THE NECROMANTICS: domination of Hotel Utah, 4th/Bryant. Bomb Threat Graphics . . . .

FACTRIX: "slow motion soundtrack is flesh" from SF's most industrial/experimental 'live' ensemble. New LP featuring PHANTOM PAIN/CENTER OF THE DOLL/HEAVY BREATHING/SNUFF BOX/EERIE LIGHTS forthcoming. . . .

FALSE IDOLS: military/punk madness from Max Volume & cohorts. (415) 787-2053.

GREY MATTER: New Band forming by Heidi (x-VS) — for info call 921-6741.

INFLATABLE BOY CLAMS: "4 primitive virgin witches that change instruments/10-year-old tinkertoy skeleton sound." Carol & Judy from PINK SECTION/Jo Jo Planteen (who recently did CHILD HOOD PROSTITUTE at the Savoy)/Genvieve from Paris on sax

JEORGIA ANDERSON: One-woman band/the Inventor of Girls' War (Ladies First — Draft Girls!)

LEWD (the New): Satz & Bob from Seattle + Olga & Alex from VS. with songs like CLIMATE OF FEAR/WALTER'S LIPS (Cronkite)/GO TO HELL IN HOLLYWOOD/MENTALLY 17/PUBLIC EXECUTION

MAGGOTS: 6 or 7 teenagers. New 45 with pet maggot in handmade package: (LET'S GET) TAMMY WYNETTE/2-2-79 ("the date that Sid Vicious died — about him croaking"). . . .

MINIMAL MAN: did soundtrack for Fred Klein's RACKTOWN (sleazy movie of manslaughtering girls on rollerskates), & performed with giant skull at Eureka Theater recently

NAKED CITY: musician-types "intending to expand to an orchestra. . ."

NEGATIVELAND: 3-6 from Concord who've produced experimental LP (S7 from Seeland, Box 54, Concord, CA 94522) with Individual Cover Art. Performed once at Savoy with "baby-at-tract-home" movie (super 8, mostly overexposed). Authentic suburban frustrations sublimated. . . .

OUT-OF-TOWN BANDS can get booked in SF at Mabuhay/Sound of Music/Back-Dor-Rock City which Robert Hanrahan books/Club Generic/Club Foot/and the SAVOY///in Berkeley at Barrington Hall & the Berkeley Square (also a record company).

PALACE OF FINE ARTS where TUXEDO MOON & DNA played. "Majestic/a change, all red drapes & black sound reflectors. Big white screen reflected huge shadows onstage. Red rocking chairs. Half the crowd were heckling fools from suburbs who *just didn't get it*. After the show I was surprised more people didn't walk around the lake. . ." (Heidi)

PUNK ROCK LIVES: FLIPPER/VKTMS / TOOLS / REGIME / IMPATIENT YOUTH/NOCTURNAL EMISSIONS/etc.

RAT, PAUL: since the defunct Geary Temple now booking Independent Halls like the Victoria Theater, California Hall (864-1639)

R&N$_2$ PRODUCTIONS: "vaudeo incision of crisis data transfer — rhythm & noise deploys." (tales of life & death from the electronic battleground). Alive at *The Compound* Sept. 12-13. (415) 822-5749.

ROUGH TRADE: Legendary London Record Company/Store/Distributor now in San Francisco! Mail Order Catalog: 1412 Grant Ave., SF CA 94133. (415) 986-3675. Record stores may write for a Wholesale Catalog . . . .

SAVOY: wide variety of innovative performances/one of the best atmospheres in SF now. (362-7024, 1438 Grant Ave)

SHOOT A MONKEY: oblique triangle of explorers: Peter Worrall (London), Alan Brown (New Zealand), Jo Jo Planteen (USA). New 45 forthcoming: ISLAMATIC/MOTHER IS. . .

SLAVA: Mad synthesizer shaman unleashes arctic hysteria upon a hollow earth soon!

SLEEPERS: Michael Belfer, Ricky Williams back! plus band. Forthcoming album includes ZENITH/THE MIND/LET ME FREE — "when there's sleep there's no pain . . . ."

SOCIETY DOGS: hardcore anarchist punk band with new 45: WORKING CLASS PEOPLE/BAD DREAD. Johnithin Christ on vocals, Joe Dirt (g), Jamil Hell (b), David Del Prado (d). some songs: THE BABY IS DEAD/METROPOLITICAN RUSH/HOW CAN I MISS YOU WHEN YOU WON'T EVEN STAY?

STAND THEATER: Sleazy Market St. Moviehouse featuring *James Bond, Ilse She-Wolf of the SS*, etc. now a significant punk burrowing hole . . . .

THREE: new ensemble with films/slides/sound: "we always use something new as soon as we find it." some works: BREAKFAST OF CHAIRMANS (Mao)/PARANOIA & PERSECUTION/THE AIRPLANE SONG (video piece)

TOMMY TADLOCK & THE LOCKETTES: "C&W Punk — combining basic attitudes of shit kickin' southern dixie R&R with punk stance." some songs: QUEER & ASHAMED/NO MOBILITY/DON'T BLAME IT ON MY MAMA/ME & MY UNIFORM. from gay subculture.

TONG, WINSTON & BRUCE GEDULDIG: Internationally famous duo's recent SF performances: AGAINST NATURE, SCHWEITZER/COWARD, CLOSE TO YOU/PRIVILEGES, THE MERMAID, PROSTITUTE (with JoJo), DANCIN IN THE STREETS, WATER BURNS, FRANKIE & JOHNNIE

UNDEAD, THE: with the original David Vacant (g), Sid Terror (v), Bob Noxious (d), Larry Conquest (b). hardcore roots-punk with songs like HITLER'S BRAIN, SUPERMARKET MUSIC, ONE-HANDED LOVE AFFAIR, IS THE PRESIDENT A MORON?, FIDO IS A CROTCH SNIFFER.

UPTIGHTS: Guy Ana, Cary Cruel, Larry Godwin from Eureka with WHITE WAR, FOXHOLES, BREAK THE LAW, COURT OF THE DEAD & other songs

WOLFARINES: "Jimmy" plus R&R band (including Bruce, Dead Kennedys): "Why do you think we have a band — to make music or to make girlfriends?"

WOUNDS: Teenagers from Oakland plus Paul from Petaluma: "We're a band centered around soulful rhythmic patterns, droning overtones; very likeable." /"life's just a bowl of rocks."

ZEV: Important local percussionist/trance innovator with found/'junk' percussion tools. Recently returned from NYC (where his UNS equipment was stolen). 12" 45 on LUST/UNLUST Records "Salt of Heavy Metals." ("Skin on Thigh. Thorns.")

ZRU VOGUE: Palo Alto/experimenting heavily in percussion — tropical jungle track music/wild boar sounds, etc. Forthcoming 45: Nakweda Dream/Kyoo-mye-loh-nim-bas . . . . .

SUFFER AND DIE IN TUCSON!!!

Well, maybe we didn't suffer as much as we have in years past, considering that we now almost have a scene, and it's as permanent as most things, these days. The Record Room, now a year old, is still the only place in town where misguided souls can buy imported and independent 45's, and book local and out-of-town bands into the clubs. The place

to play in town is an ancient shitkicker dive called Tumbleweeds. Lots of old hippies and bikers like to hang out there and talk about killing the punks. So far, they just talk and drink a lot, which, in some cases, may be too bad. There's no air conditioning and the place looks like it might fall down all by itself, but the old place, run by an older, uglier, greedier, less self-controlled version of Madame Wong, in white folks' drag, was worse, even if fun to trash. Partly because this is really the only place to go, the audience is really diverse: one electropopper, two '77 punks from Bisbee, one mod, one cowboy Serfers fan, one Germs/Ultravox/Pink Section fanatic, two rockabilly people, etc. Each faction has about one or two people, so it's hard to gang up on anyone, consequently, we don't see very many brawls. The bouncers are usually tolerable, (one even sang "God Save the Queen" with one of the bands) and I've only seen the police drive by once.

LOCAL BANDS

THE PILS: Everyone puts them down for having "rock star" attitudes, and for wearing the same lame spandex pants, playing the same songs and leaping around the stage the same ways every single night they've ever played, but they sure have a lot of fans, hardcore and trendies, alike. They play some good covers and some rawish power pop originals, which unfortunately get slicked up on their tapes.

SERFERS: First of all, they sound and look nothing like the Flyboys OR the Controllers, more like Human Hands, occasionally, if anything. They call their sound "serf music," (you know, like the serfs), have a distinctive, undulating organ sound and have a big following in town, even if certain of us have OD'ed on them for now. They keep talking about going to L.A., so maybe you'll get to see them.

MEMORY PRODUCT: Banned for spreading margarine on each other, pelting their audience with lettuce and being bad, bad boys, these pigpen punks have since moved to San Francisco to find a "more appreciative audience." Left behind is Hector, of Charlie Monoxide-and-the-$7,000-parrot fame.

COWGIRLS, THE: This band, which plays sometimes classically rooted music which will alienate both you and your mom, has an ad nauseam version of "Death Disco and audience participation

LES SELDOMS: I have seen these guys go through puberty during the summer, and now I want to see them play, which, unfortunately, happens . . . seldom.

LOUDNESS ONE: Great, rivetting one man with electric violin, tape loops and short films. Watch out, Billy Curry!

MENAGE A TROIS: Q - Why are there 4 of them? A – Because there are 4 people in the band! They say they play reggae, but I hear rockabilly ??? Anyway, I like reggae, rockabilly and Menage a Trois, except for their X cover.

MODEL PATIENTS: On again, off again, they appear to have lost drummer Moises to some band in Phoenix and left bassist Mary to start a new band.

POTATOES: Poppers who play B-52's covers and have a girl who can sing but can't play bass. What are you doing in that band!!!

GIANT SANDWORMS: I haven't heard them and I don't know if I should. Pop . . . Contenders for Tucson's worst punk/new wave band: THE ZONE (infamous for their Vegas version of "Psycho Killer") and the COMMERCIALS, infamous for just putting in an appearance.

Giving us a break from staring at the same dumb faces every week, were a steady stream of out-of-town bands. Some band from Texas came, and I can't remember who they were, but everyone seemed to like them a lot. From Phoenix came the X-STREAMS (reggae or ska, depending who you want to believe), the NERVOUS and SUZANNE AND THE EROTICS. Unfortunately, I only caught that last band and well, they had this chick dressed up in a "Yi, there, I'm supposed to be sexy" naughty-git cheerleader outfit with a big diamond on her finger, teamed up with Lance Logic, of Motive infamy. They massacred a bunch of originals and stuff by X, Siouxsie, Polystyrene with that Ethel Merman vibrato that mini-Benatar clone had and, well, you can just imagine.

The SUBHUMANS came from Vancouver and Wimpy, post 3 broken strings, shortly after he fell through the stage, delivered the quote of the summer: "It's too hot here for punk rock!" I liked them.

L.A. bands came too, nothing short of a major miracle, or maybe a special dispensation. The great PLUGZ got everybody up and dancing, in spite of mass heat prostration. I thought FEAR should find some fags to teach them some good jokes, or stay home. (Not really! Just kidding! We LIKE you! We wanna be your friends!) HUMAN HANDS looked as if they might have Feelies damage and, when they started to play, Serfers-type damage, too, mixed in with cliche hate rock posturing. Nerd rock will never catch on in places like Tucson, because everyone looks like that already. I liked them, too, O.K.?

My totally biased personal favorites were the ALLEYCATS, especially since I had waited so long to see them. People moved in from the sides fairly quickly to dance, in spite of extreme heat. Diane Chai, sweat running down her bass, eyes rolling back, looked like she might pass out, but kept on playing. Randy inspired a rush of experimentation with thumb picks and brought us up on most of the bad news from L.A. More people stayed upright and dancing for them than for most any other band I've seen here. Appropriately, BLACK FLAG finished off the summer, once and for all, with noise that rips ears off and causes stomach ulcers, and though not very many people danced much, everybody stayed to watch. Personally, I could live off the stuff, sludgy mix, indecipherable lyrics and all.

MORE COMMANDOS, PLEASE!!!
-PUNK NURSE, O.K.

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VANCOUVER
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"Punk rock, in Vancouver, is dead."
—Phil Smith, ex-Slash correspondent

Despite the funeral pronouncements of my esteemed colleague, the spiny beast is still thrashing about, and while there is indeed a generally felt sense of withdrawal and frustration, this has been offset by the release of some excellent local wax, the gradual diversification of venues, and the signing of local bands to major record labels. The big problem remains. a successful club run by or for musicians and fans. A new organization, Streetbeat, sponsored a gig to this effect, with the Secret V's, Braineaters, the Modernettes and Subhumans scheduled for an eastside Oddfellows Hall. However, following a brutal attack on a nearby punk hangout and threats on the lives of anyone attending, the show was moved to a downtown warehouse. Halls have always been plagued by indiscriminate destruction, bloody fights and liquor busts. The alternative is a place like Gore St. Manor. This was a Chinatown squat, condemned, with no heat or plumbing, but it was the nerve center of the whole scene, anyone could play, the bands charged a buck at the door and sold beer out of the fridge, and you could do anything you fucking-well pleased, with no cops around either. The Smilin' Buddha remains the only place for struggling bands to play on a regular basis, but this is a mixed blessing. If we didn't have the Buddha to fall back on, bands would have to find a decent place to play instead of a one-way ticket to Palookaville. Constant exposure to this place makes you feel as useless as the terminal winos dying by the dozens outside. As if this wasn't bad enough, here's more good news . . . .

It's 90° in the shade and you can't get a beer in the whole fucking Province (except Yankee pisswater like Oly) cause of a brewery strike, the unspeakably vile Social Credit Government (a gang of millionaire used-car and snake-oil salesmen) is riding a new wave of welfare-mother witch-burnings, and the palsied geeks on City Council have passed a by-law banning posters on city property, violators subject to $2000 fine and/or 3 months in the slammer. Death to the sickoids, indeed.

July kicked off with the "Canada Day Punk Extravaganza," at the West Indies Social Club, a benefit for the Open Road anarchist-oriented magazine, and the Black Hills Alliance, featuring No Exit and the Bludgeoned Pigs, the Rabid for their umpteenth farewell gig, and the Subhumans. No Exit scored a coup with their new album, about 20 tracks, half of them live at the Buddha, recorded and pressed for a mere $800. The Bludgeoned Pig's taking a lot of slagging for being "mindless Pistols-clones," inspired more pure mania than anyone since D.O.A., despite their set being a total fuck-up. D.O.A. are back from a midwestern tour, playing 23 dates in a month, notably Rock Against Republicans in Detroit, and the Toronto "Deep Wave Festival," where they were booted offstage by the gutless wonders in charge, for being "too dangerous." The long awaited album "Something Better Change," out soon. The Subhumans' new 45, Firing Squad/No Productivity, is getting airplay in San Francisco and Connecticut, but is, of course, ignored by local stations. A Subs album will be out soon. The Modernettes are finally getting some recognition. Following the excellent "Barbra" video and the Teen City E.P., Buck Cherry, Mary-Jo and Jughead scored a gig with the Undertones at the Commodore Ballroom, plus a date with the Pointed Sticks at the Cave, a swanky downtown nightclub in the bankers district. The Sticks headlined for a week, having recently returned from a western Canada tour.

Subhumans/photo: Eric

The Payola's came out of nowhere fast with their China Boys single, were snapped up by A&M, toured the east coast with the Chris Spedding Band and the Electric Chairs, and are back with a 4-song E.P., to be released worldwide on I.R.S. any minute now ... In the wake of their "Hawaii" E.P. and XTC tour, the Young Canadians headlined at the Commodore recently, along with Tin Twist, the Payolas, and L.A.'s Black Flag. The Young Canadians held the stage for an hour and a half, showing great range, power and complexity. A new 4-song E.P. on the Quintessence label should be out by the time you read this ... Gary Taylor's Rock Room took a chance and booked D.N.A., Tuxedo Moon and Minimal Man, the response was a sold-out show, the following night the Commodore had the Dead Boys, Members, Pere Ubu and Magazine. The Dead Boys sucked, Stiv being the only original member. The next night it was Devo at Kerrisdale Arena. People came out in hordes to these affairs, but never catch local bands, Christ no! Spineless fuck wits ... The reclusive U-J3RK5 released a bizarre E.P. on Polygram, with songs like "Eisenhower and the Hippies," this band is a major threat to world order and mental health. (How about "average threat?" — Ed.) Some interesting new bands ... The Singing Cowboys, a bent sixties-type pop group, Tin-Twist, an almost all-girl band showing great promise, The Insex, amiable skinheads haunting the Buddha of late, and of course Tunnel Canary, the most despised and underrated band in Vancouver. Tunnel Canary grind out screeching noise and aggravate everybody, it really gives you the creeps, and yet, such self-evident virtue goes unrewarded! Last but not least is the earth-shattering debut of the Rude Norton E.P. with such classics as "Gilligan's Island" and the monumental "Tits on the Beach," Rude Norton are rivalled only by Sgt. Nick Penis for obnoxious vileness. The Rude Ones are led by the divine Dimwit, and Wimpy Roy of Subhumans and Bloated Cows fame ... Don't miss it!

That's All Folks

NEW YORK

Howard Devoto (Magazine)/photo: Susan Seager

WHAT'S UP IN NEW YORK?

Everybody's broke. What with the lower east side being invaded by bourgeoisie willing and *able* to pay ridiculous rents — 400 dollars for a studio rathole — real people are getting desperate. The shell of the old Fillmore is being turned into a roller disco. The Ritz on 11th St. has a parking lot so that bridge and tunnel people won't have to worry about their cars being sat on — or lived in. The housing situation is *that* bad. STEVE PICCOLO of the LOUNGE LIZARDS is letting his hair grow. He can't afford snappy new wave styling anymore. He and the other Lizards will be touring Europe in the Fall. They have a record coming out soon — an album. Look for and *buy* it in your nearest store — Steve needs a haircut. Speaking of albums, SICK DICK AND THE VOLKSWAGONS are being immortalized on the LUST UNLUST label. Their record will be out in the autumn. They recently did a gig at the Cooper Hewitt museum which was excruciatingly arty. What they need is more sex. Their work with controlled noise is interesting, but they establish zilch rapport with their audience. They'll probably work better on a record. BUSH TETRA is leaving town — but just for a visit. They'll be in California in September in the bay area. Their last gig at Danceteria (or diphtheria, as it's known) was high energy. They're tighter than they used to be. While we're on the subject of *tight* — have you heard of the TECHNICAL VIRGINS? Not many people have, but the Virgins are beginning to acquire a rep. They played a punk block party on the lower east side (the peons can't afford clubs anymore) and were a smash. The group has good material and they really put it across. Their songs actually sound different from each other! They're good performers too — even the local Ukranians liked them. After all, they know nice girls when they see them. REVERSE played, too, and were double plus good. Junk, junk, junk — another o.d. This time it's GEORGE SCOTT, 26 year old ex-CONTROTIOKS bassist. George also played with JOHN CALE on his SABOTAGE tour. Recently he'd been playing with 8 EYED SPY and his own group, the RAYBEATS. Anyway, it seems George's landlord smelt something spoiling in George's apartment and broke down the door. There was George. What can be said? Nothing that hasn't been already. But how junk ever acquired an aura of glamour is beyond me. The SOHO NEWS helped that aura along a few months ago, with a trendy article that basically advertised the stuff while pretending to put it down. The Soho News, which has ruined countless neighborhoods by "discovering" them, is one of the biggest art parasites in existence. But there are other publications that are more interesting anyway. LISA BAUMGARDNER, editor of the always pink and black BIKINI GIRL just got married so B.G. was put off for awhile. But Lisa has a *giant* issue in the works, packed with all the usual fascinating material plus more — such as a Gone With The Wind-length bondage novel. And MICHAEL WELDON, ex-Clevelandite and drummer in EX-BLANK-EX, has been publishing PSYCHOTRONIC. It's a guide to grade b through z movies on t.v. But it's more than that, it's a world view. And the SLEAZOID EXPRESS, which is *free*, can be found in bookstores on St. Mark's place. THE RATTLER, a really low and scurrilous rag, is packed with rumours and dirt about everyone. No one knows who MADAME X, the editor, is. Many people would like to — so they could silence her forever. But the point is — if you don't like what you're reading, do it yourself. That's what's happening here on a lot of levels. Nobody can afford *anything* anymore. It's got to come from somewhere! GEORGE JONES, Mr. Country & Western, finally came to New York on August 18th. He'd been slated to appear several other times but had always pulled no-shows. Despite a sore throat, his performance at the Bottom Line was really hot. This man is *sexy*. And a little scary. As his ex-wife TAMMY WYNETTE can testify — definitely not a good person to cross when he's drunk. Jones' latest hit HE STOPPED LOVING HER TODAY is an incredibly effective tear jerker. Morbid as shit with a beautifully timed punchline. JOHNNY PAYCHECK showed up to do a duet with Jones. He also sang his own wonderful punchline song — YOU CAN TAKE THIS JOB AND SHOVE IT. The only drag to the show was an insipid female vocalist who had the *nerve* to do Tammy Wynette's material. She sang like LINDA RONSTADT and looked like LOUISE LASSER. Ugh. Which is what people say about the famous KIEV coffee shop these days. Not only is this dive wall to wall spandex, but there've been rumours of food poisoning. So when you visit New York — eat at MacDonald's. At least the horsemeat is *fresh*. Ciao for now — see you on the breadlines!

—CAROLA VON HOFFMANNSTAHL

MAGAZINE at Club 57, the Mudd Club and Hurrah's Vaguely

"I'm a fly, I climb up a window pane, I fall, I start climbing again. Now and then, I feel the caress of time as it goes by. At other times — most often — I feel it standing still. Trembling minutes drop down, engulf me, and are a long time dying. Wallowing, but still alive, they're swept away. They're replaced with others which are fresher but equally futile. This disgust is called happiness."

—SARTRE

I'm on one of the higher floors of an "upper-westside flat" in Manhattan Island, New York City. Smallish beadlettes of sweat are running out of my skin and meeting at the hipper locations of my face. From there they rush downtown towards my chin or take wheelless taxicabs into the sky. I'm getting lighter by making the air heavier, I'm reflecting on memories, I'm playing the eccentric critic.

I also saw Magazine three times in two days: I saw their concert at Club 57, I saw their "get-together" (a charming affair it was, too) at the Cludd Mub and I even saw their video at Hurrah's Neo-

Exene/photo: David Arnoff

Rococo Disco. Howard Devoto's image simply evaporated before my eyes — rarified into atmosphere and memory, dissolved into frisky electronic particles. Sure it's a bum rap for him, but disgust proves nothing: the proof is in the puddles. At this very moment a man with incredibly magnetic eyes is melting into twilight . . . and gosh, do my armpits ever stink! At this point, my bone encased muse receptacle is suggesting I draw nifty connections between "the correct use of soap," jail breaks, and invisibility, but for the sake of journalistic postures I'll play St. Anthony, putting the sackcloth on his intellectual erections to get to the real meat of truthfulness. Ahem, uh.

But right off, I have to admit that there's no chance for me to be writing objectively ("the blue vase was on the redwood basinette") about these pearly stringed affairs, not only was the past (Mag's Whisky show last year) worming its way into the stone-and-sober, but even the peripheral phenomena of the situation-at-hand; that is, the charming "we wanna rock" crowd at Club 57 and the even-less-charming saran wrap mascots at the Mudd Club.

Magazine's show last year was just plain great, one of those "landmark" shows that sculpt their residue into beacons: they can either be appreciated for their own impressive heights, or used as reference markers from afar. Unfortunately, having that A=1 Beaut photo in my wallet it was easy enough to whip it out to check it against the concert I was seeing (I'm *so* glad the Pistols broke up before a second tour!). Last (Whiskey) time Devoto affected his role of amused detatchment with such aplomb and grace that he really *had you* from the start, you were really *willing to pretend* with Howard that he had the only will in his own private world — he climbed up a pole to get to the mike, while we squirmed below he sat with perfect composure in the Above-It-All, reeling off his existential one-liners with just enough irony to make them squirm. And squirm they did.

But the goddamned lousy critics (glad I'm not one!) didn't want to play with Howie-Howie-bo-bowie, they didn't grasp the intrinsic subtleties of obviousness, they called Devoto "colder than mighty Pluto's penis." Now, come on, *nobody* likes to be called things like *tha-at!*

This time Devoto seemed determined to prove that, provided that its inserted into the correct crevice of his soul, he cannot only register on human thermometers (celsius *or* farenheit), but can melt ice cream by sitting on it. He sort of proved the latter claim at Club 57 and Mudd Club (though his puddle of Rocky Road was larger than my puddle of sweat, my puddle was sugar free), and as for the thermometer bit, he made do with the actual smoking of a cigarette — an act that would be disastrous for a cold blooded creature, or an alien lung used to high-ammonia atmospheres.

I mean, here was Magazine using smoke bombs and light effects and Howard Devoto playing guitar and drinking beer. Obviously my previous criteria about this band doesn't really apply. Let's see, what kind of audience does this "new band" attract? Gee, they just stand there sort of bowlegged and out of it . . . and they raise their fists during the chorus and shout out "Fuck Yeah!". Hmm, no, this is *all wrong,* there's a dumb heavy metal audience, but the band is neither dumb nor heavy metal. Does Magazine realize that some grim accident has exchanged this audience for the correct one? Yeah, they know *something*'s wrong alright, they sure don't look happy about it. I bet it's frustrating playing to a crowd of carefully concealed substitutes. And Jesus, I don't know if they were making a movie or what, but I swear someone filled the Mudd Club with zombies and plastic-eating ghouls — I felt weird there, like I didn't belong with these strange animated bodies, these wretched creatures who know no death. I weren't the only one: Magazine creeped on out of there after five songs. The creepy crew didn't clap or boo, they just grunted and moved out into the night's dawn.

Some brilliant moments still, in "Perma Frost," "Song From Under the Floorboards," "Back To Nature," they were once again, great. But between these they sounded rather sluggish and homogenous — this could be because in tempering the tension they lessened the perceptive adhesion, but more likely they were frustrated with the "circumstances" of the evening. After the 57 gig, at five-in-the-morn, they had to play for undead playdoh at the Mudd Pits — this proved to be so nerve wracking that at one point the keyboardist was deliberately banging out wrong chords to throw the poor guitar player off — believe me, at 5 A.M., he wasn't the only one who was being chord-banged.

Listen: they've found living lizards frozen into solid ice, but once thawed out the little bastards can run like the devil . . . and bite like him too. Maybe Magazine is in that position. A little time, even more warmth, and they'll have their old bite back (and a lake-sized puddle to draw inspiration from).

—WILL AMATO

X IN NYC

Seeing a band that you know by heart and truly love in a radically different environment, in this case on the foreign soil of New York City, is witnessing the most exhaustingly brutal test of their ability to hold an audience's attention that I know of. Because that audience is going to be totally unfamiliar with the group's material unless they've heard the songs on record. Live performance is always another case. This out-of-town stuff can also be a pretty traumatic gauge of potential to bridge regional prejudices, preconceptions and tastes. "If we make it in L.A., N.Y. and Peoria, then Christ! they'll take us anywhere!" I'm happy to report that that is almost unanimously the course X followed on their East Coast dates, particularly NYC. I only got to see the first three dates before they winged over to the UK but in the three instances X conquered the most jaded palates, leaving only a few constipated artsy-fartsy types muttering about "playing too much rock 'n roll." No real traumas or temper tantrums developed because of the overwhelming (understatement) pressure and attention focused on them. They needed all the strength they could muster to spend around 20 hours a day on the job, making themselves available for pix, interviews, soundchecks, etc. Too bad a lot of self-important, egocentric bands don't follow their example. That is if they want to enjoy the fruits of their labors in that elusive butterfly called success. Because X was nice and helpful to everyone interested in them, even patient with the misbegotten nerds who hadn't a snowball's chance in Hell (like these cliches?) of knowing what they were about.

First night was at the 80s, formerly the Lorelei a country western dive that would occasionally feature the likes of Jerry Lee Lewis. It was somewhat consecrated ground till the largely new wave crowd took over and refurbished the disco dance floor. No food, so we took to the surrounding uptown blocks (the 80s) and searched for at least an hour. Nothing. Either $10 steak dinners or sleazy hot dog stands you wouldn't want to bring YOUR dog to. We eventually settled on the Excellent Cafe which didn't quite live up to its name. Back to the nitty-gritty. The 80s was packed. The DBs started things off on a lame power pop note, unashamedly showcasing their Beatles / Flaming Groovies damage for the world to see. N.Y. Rocker and other Eastern press rave regularly about them. It just goes to show how little they know. Scrap the DBs. X was great if you can judge anything by that misleading, overused word. The sound mix was terrible, especially the first set with a shaggy dog dork of a sound man panning guitar from one PA column to the other in a pathetic attempt to demonstrate creativity. The second set went somewhat better after a persuasive discussion seemingly swayed said sound guy to clean up his act. The distinctly suburban crowd loved X. It might've been a swimming pool of sweat up front, but everyone pulled through with flying colors. Danceteria was the BIG BLOW-OUT. A near hysterical mob congregated outside, indignant over not being able to get in EVEN IF THEY PAID! Reaching the punk doorman (yeah) at the roped-off entranceway! required a bit of elbow grease. Then down a long hall into the furnace. Three stories of new wave crap. A triple decker sandwich left out too long in the sun. Or should I say moon? Two microscopic bathrooms (male/female variety) for the three jampacked floors. I'm sure you can guess how long it took to get your turn to piss. You couldn't even go outside to some dark alley; they wouldn't let you back in. Watery mixed drinks that went for around $5! failed in the getting-oneself-drunk department unless you spent around $50. So why not $2 for a clandestine pint of I.W. Harper next to your crotch inside those tight pants. Upstairs, HEY! another more posh bar and a color TV set on every junkstore designer coffee table. New wave, punk, experimental product gets the phosphordot treatment and is served up piping hot for the new breed of smartly dressed new wave assholes who make up Danceteria's clientele. Way down in the basement you find the disco with very little on the sound system (the night I was there) except stuff that sounded alot like disco. Every layer of the building was a shoulder-to-shoulder situation. Opening band Walter Stedding and the Dragon People didn't do too much for me. Just heard, though, that they're the first group to be managed/produced by Andy Warhol since the Velvets. X appeared lit in an eerie blue light. Funeral crosses covered with flowers dotted the stage. When they ripped into their first song, the sound was so deafening it could've easily brought the concrete warehouse walls crashing down around our ears. Without question the best sound mix that I heard. Didn't have much fun, though, aside from their set. Made it splitsville afterwards. Next night was X's last in NYC before London, and the Mudd Club was the place. Every NY native I talked to had bad things to say about the Mudd Club. If I thought Danceteria was a trendy piece of shit . . . Well, on another night I might've agreed with the consensus. But this was a Sunday. "The second floor-inner-sanctum-for-the-elite" was closed so things stayed a little bit on the human, down-to-earth side. Right as we walked in the doors, X hit the boards. The sound was pretty good, the place was crowded, and X played their shortest and most-at-home-set. This wasn't a regular gig night for the Mudd, so before the last chord of the last tune stopped ringing in the cavernous bar, a metal garage door (as in stage curtain) came crashing down, shutting us off from the band. No encores, even though the applause was VERY healthy. Further review of alcohol: most reasonable prices though the drinks weren't much stronger than Danceteria.

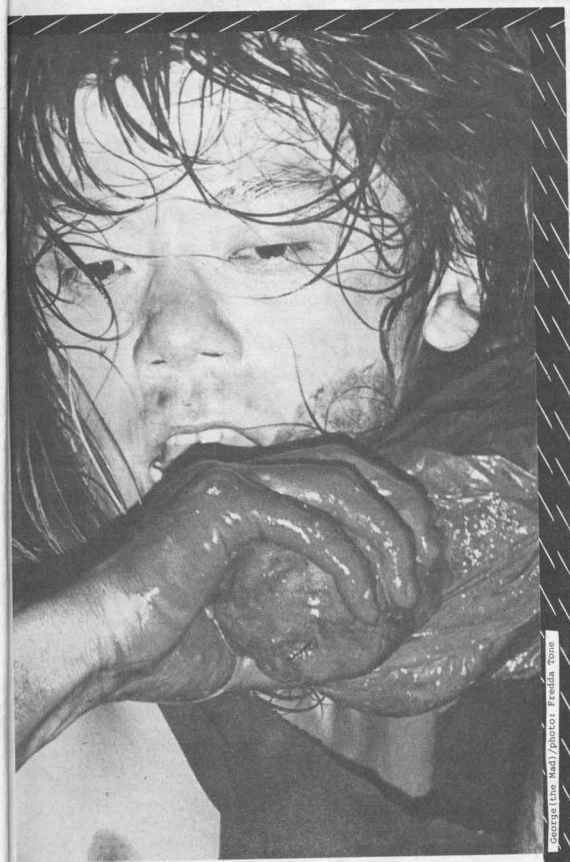
—MR. OK

MORE NEW YORK

The Bush Tetras soon to have a single out on newly formed 99 Records. They're becoming popular and it should go over well.

Suicide reunited at Danceteria. Mr Alan Suicide had been playing with sad eyed blues guitarist Phil for the last couple of months, using pre-recorded rhythm tapes. Many were skeptical about this configuration — we say it's been a successful leap into folk singing hell. Anyway, back at Danceteria with Martin Rev for a gripping, frightening and all around gut wrenching performance. They did such old faves as Ghost Rider and Johnny, leaving us feeling like we were made of jelly. Next stop, Vegas.

Circus Mort played Tramps for that club's last night of Rock and Roll — Tramps changing their format to jazz and blues exclusively. Tortured amputee



George (the Mad)/photos: Fredda Tone

singer M. Gira lead the band into new heights of psychedelic raunch. An EP expected soon on Labor Records.

Award for best new club goes to Danceteria where the bands are "served up piping hot to a hungry audience.." The club offers three levels with the stage on the main floor and a video lounge upstairs where you can watch shitty tapes and act bored. Downstairs is a dark dance den with an icier than thou ambience, where you can dance and act bored. Still, it's a good club.

Bad times ahead for other clubs such as TR3, UK club, the 80s, and Heat (already folded) all falling under the heavy weight of Danceteria — Heat will reopen shortly under the new moniker "Rock City." Frank Roccio and Tom Goodkind, formerly of Irving Plaza (still kicking) will be booking that place.

The best thing on TV ever? The Cramps on Rockworld! Lux can be our garbage man any day of the week. Speaking of the Cramps, evil acne demon "guitarist" Brian Gregory left the band. Rumours are he's gone off with a witch to join a commune, who knows. Julie, ex-guitarist for the fantastic eyeball oriented band, the Mad (more about them later), replaces Brian.

Word is Dark Day has broken up. Hope not, they were/are a promising venture into repetitive and thick paranoia. Audiences never exactly boogied to them but they did leave you with a satisfactory bleak taste in your mouth. And they were getting much better. In any case they'll soon be releasing a (post-mortem?) LP on Charles Ball's Lust-Unlust Infidelity Records Label. It should be out by the time you read this.

Siouxzie and the Banshees will be in town shortly for their first US appearance. They'll be playing at Irving Plaza. Expect a sweaty mob scene. Siouxzie was in NY recently where she went, among other places, Danceteria.

Psychedelic Furs played the Mudd Club recently, suffering from a shitty sound system, but pulling it off anyway. They'll be at Hurrah soon.

A new cable show has emerged called New York Dancestand and it's becoming very popular. Produced by Carl Bloat and Dee Dee Bache (Third Wave Prod.), it's their answer to American Bandstand. It far surpasses Nightcubbing, which was your basic video camera bobbing about in the audience, and provides great visual fun. Local yokels dance to the show's Top Ten. It also features bands, who lipsynch to their records, true to the age old format of these shows. Past guests include the Undertones, Stimulat-

the B-52's

WILD PLANET

party out of bounds/dirty back road/runnin' around/ give me back my man/private idaho/devil in my car/ quiche lorraine/strobe light/53 miles west of venus

Produced by Rhett Davies and The B-52's
Executive Producer: Chris Blackwell

The bright red album on Warner Bros. Records and Tapes

ors, Psychedelic Furs, X, Go-Gos, Iggy Pop, etc.

Now for the Mad, probably the weirdest and most overlooked band in town. Saw them for the first time at Max's a week ago. The stench of exposed intestines still lingers. We hear they used to be more basic punk and less successful theatrically, but who cares if it took that to get to what they are now. Their show opened with a pleasant little film. It was of a grubby looking fellow strolling along in a field. He sits down, picking in his ear with a Q-tip, examining the residue carefully, tasting it. This seems to inspire him to take a bite from his hand, blood spurting out of his mouth. This in turn inspires him to cut off his leg, which he eats ecstatically. Eventually he's ripped open his stomach and is eating his own guts, greedy and happily. We're left with a close up of his face covered in guts, a twinkle in his eye. The screen lifts and the band appears in a yellow hell-landscape environment, the singer a mutated oriental kabuki with long hair frizzed out in every direction growling the most hideous threats imaginable. The guitarist: Manson like long hair and beard, long black robe, crown of thorns, eyes looking up to the heavens from hell. Put it this way: they don't look like your next new wave trend. The music is as tortured as the visuals. Grinding, slow, and raw. The drummer and bassist keep a satanic pulse throughout. Another film: close up of a woman getting her eye snatched out, this time projected behind the band. We begin to think these guys are satanists. They revel in it, they're in bliss. Singer sticking his fingers up his nose, pulling his face apart, contorting his body impossibly. Another scene: a figure squats behind the band in front of a painted backdrop of a barren desert. It's a red figure, not moving. At first you're not sure if it's alive or a cut out. Eventually it stands up. It's someone in a muscle suit, the face, the entire body seeming to have been stripped of skin. It poses, dances, mimes the twisted gestures of the singer and the music. One understands immediately why the New York press has given this band virtually no attn. They're not danceable, they're not fun, they're not "New Wave." Certainly they don't play it safe (no funk-punk here). Sure, they're disgusting, and they leave themselves open to the inevitable Alice Cooper and Plasmatics comparisons, but in this case it just means they're taking risks — they make it work. With the exception of the Cramps this is the only band in NY that can make you feel like they just stuck their fingers down your throat. Thank god for bad taste.

More tidbits: Lydia Lunch leaves 8 Eyed Spy. Klause Nomi finishes cutting album. New York's a stinking sweltering pit. Gang of Four return soon. The Mudd Club begins to advertise, unable to maintain its elite attraction. Polyrock album for RCA. New Senders material due out soon on Max's K.C. label. Good-bye.

—D.S., B.R., J.S.

(NYC cont. on p.97)

BOSTON PUNK: THE BIG DEAD ONE

Prior to taking leave of the smelly corpse they call a scene in this town, I pissed away better judgements and decided to pay one final not-so-fond farewell visit to a local New Wave hotspot (P**k being a no-no word in Boston). Another converted Disco, this one comes complete with mirror ball and stainless steel dance floor. As I arrived, the opening band was "jamming" (that is the word, isn't it?) through a 20 minute song with 19 minute guitar solo (unforgettable lyrics: "my baby's all mine / yeah, she's so fine"). The next band, Irony, was an ingenious parody of the Knack except they didn't know it. The guitar player looked like Starsky and the singer resembled Hutch. First song: a 20 minute version of Quinn the Eskimo featuring Starsky on a 19 minute Boston-obligatory guitar solo. I went outside. There I met a local DJ of the New Wave variety who wasted half an hour trying to convince me that "they're still really ROCKIN' in Boston!" Sure they are. I asked him why this town didn't have any substantial experimental or hardcore punk bands or anything besides a bunch of fucking Keith Richard clones. His answer: "We went through all that years ago. It's really passe!" ... well that explains it.

All this slander is not meant to misrepresent a small but thriving TRUE underground in Boston. But, in my worldly and (formerly) respected opinion, the assholes who fancy they run the scene in this city — especially the clubowners and DJs (you know who you are) — deserve nothing short of a Rasputin-like torture party so let's invite them all.

As for the good bands, new and old: HAVOC, INC. — They don't play clubs, and don't expect to. Fronted by Steve Stains of HYMIE AND GLINDA fame, and backed by anywhere from two to twelve wonderfully unaccomplished "musicians" who bash away on various noisemakers. No songs per se but one lengthy wall o' noise and Steve screaming his fucking brains out. They've been around for years and are still a closely guarded secret thank god, look for occasional loft gigs.

V. — Image-conscious and they mean to be. Play every type of music imaginable, but seem best at straightforward fast and loud punk, other stuff too Gang of Four-ish to me but that's my problem. They're new, they play alot, and they have an excellent demo tape.

BOUND AND GAGGED — All-girl band thrust into the spotlight before they were good enough are now good enough. Drums, synthesizer, guitar and vocals. New and improved after recent personnel changes. Long, weird songs with lots of rhythm changes and dense lyrics. 12" single out soon.

BOYS LIFE — Punk quartet, very young (oldest is 16). Probably the only hardcore band in Boston. Clean-cut lads, I'll bet they all have newspaper routes and help mom do the dishes. Dress in Boy Scout uniforms. Guitar, bass, sax and drums. Fast and danceable, for what it's worth.

VITAMIN — Two guys running around playing a multitude of instruments and creating a uniquely exasperating cacophony. A handful of rare appearances, they should play more often.

—DAVE

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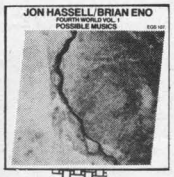

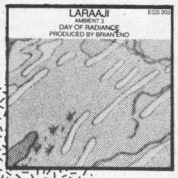

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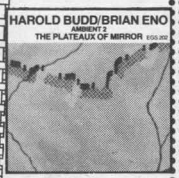

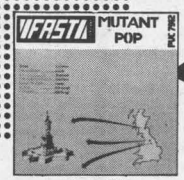

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ENGLISH REPORT, PART I. "THE NATIVE'S UNAMUSED POINT OF VIEW"

by Mark Williams

Hitherto hairy neanderthal men bask cautiously in an unseasonally late summer and blame the volcano for four previous months of shitty weather. A mad nazi dyke runs the economy resolutely into the sewer, claiming divine right and Milton Friedman as her dual justification. Ten percent of the workforce are unemployed and it gets worse by the day . . . another 15 thousand yesterday, 2500 today and everyone is bracing themselves for The Big One.

It seems virtually one hundred per that Blighty is teetering on the verge of some extremely unpleasant civil insurrection. The cops are fixing bayonets as I speak and the proletariat are marching on the metropolis, damn their hungry souls, which will unfortunately provoke those valiant keepers of the peace to carve out their disgusting commie livers, or at very least, give 'em a damn good macing. It's just like the '20s when Britain last tasted the bile of political irresponsibility, only this time there's fifteen channels of radio muzak to nervously wallpaper the cracks in a few million troubled minds. The newspapers shreik disaster, polarizing the haves and the have-nots in a shameful display of divisiveness, whilst radio and the tube maintain a nervous barrage of mindless tinkling.

A friend from New York who's been here regularly over the last ten years, just cut short a projected three-week visit after only seven days.

"There's something wrong," he told me the night before he left, "I can't put my finger on it, but people aren't going out anymore, none of my old friends can afford to do anything after eleven o'clock, and all they seem to do is moan. It's grim."

Maybe what torpedoed his previous affection for the Bulldog Spirit was his inability to wrench a contract from an English record label, despite his offer of finished masters on a plate. The music industry is in even worse shape than its American couterpart, although some indie labels are doing great biz with specialist stuff cut for low bucks and delivered to an avaricious but limited audience. Rough Trade is in danger of becoming the EMI of the eighties, which would be no bad thing except that they exercise a different sort of prejudice, but a prejudice nonetheless. (They turned down the X album, "Los Angeles," for example!) But it's the giants who're falling to their knees, ruthlessly sacking staff as diminished expectations look in retrospect like lofty aims. A recent television expose of chart rigging hardly helped confidence in an industry learning to live with a 70% reduction in sales compared with last year, which in turn represented a 25% reduction on the previous 12 months.

In tastefully decorated boardrooms throughout the West End, grown men in satin bomber jackets are sucking their fingers nervously and wishing they were back in University changing rooms, contemplating the first uneasy stirrings of homosexuality and a life of accountancy. "Nurse! The back catalogue, if you please, and sack the sales reps whilst you're at it."

It is hard to sympathise with the fat cats whose paranoid and insensitive tactics have progressively destroyed their own (admittedly farcical) reputation as "the industry of human happiness." That as you may recall, was the dubious entity which Andrew Loog Oldham's Immediate Records was "happy to be part of" back in the sixties. Oldham has recently resurfaced to do his bit for the decline of the vinyl fiefdom, although it's ironic that his victim should be the relatively credible Sire label. The Story is that Oldham was summoned from his New York eyrie to produce a single for teenage Irish punks, the Moondogs, insisting as part of the deal that he should have an expensive London apartment, hire car and hot n'cold running room service. Instead of the week anticipated by Sire, it took Oldham three times that period to deliver the masters which, by all accounts, were dreadful, and panicked Sire execs, faced with £10,000 recording costs and ludicrous expenses, decided to dispense with further nonsense from Oldham and get the backing tracks re-mixed and a new vocals added on. Before they had a chance to effect such an operation, cunning Andrew skipped to Ireland with the tapes and demanded a ransom for their return. Sire will not reveal how much they actually had to pay to get 'em back, but in the current financial climate, you can rest assured it was sufficient to've established a small indie label . . . or bankrupt a big one. And all for an unknown band!

Seeing as how SLASH and its contributors have absolutely no responsibility to chart the changing currents of the whacky world of rock-a-boogie, I shall make only scant mention of the mindless aural bludgeon that is heavy metal. The almost wholesale aquiescence of British post-punk teenagers to this farrago of pyrotechnics may sadden those of us who vainly assumed that revolution was on the cards, but doubtless has the opposite effect on any politician at all anxious about the possible ill-effects of inhumane economic policies. The metal hordes, as they affectionately dub themselves (and that's about the only incidence of affection you'll find amongst them), are subservient to openly right-wing rabble rousers like Rush and Judas Priest, middle aged long hairs whose paunch bellies poke incongrously out of studded leather trousers as they exhort the headbanging serfs to some obscure rite of Nordic solidarity. There is none of the joy of ska, nor the exhuberance of punk to this meaningless musical cant, but the frightening thing is that these kids seem happy with the absence of such ingredients. Docile and ready to be led to whatever fate the record companies or the government has in store for them, they represent the biggest chunk of leisure spending currency available. Can Geza save us, or is it too late for that now?

This pervading tone of doom is not entirely isolated amongst sharp witted social commentators such as myself, for that estimable organ of all that is fair and just, *New Musical Express,* has spared us lengthy dissertations on the Halifax new wave scene in favour of a massive, three part treatise on the depressingly sinister Orwellian aspects of modern life. *The Road to 1984* has chronicled the quiet ingress of totalitarianism into the British Way of Life (whatever *that* is) and predicts civil disarray by that charismatic date, followed by all manner of grim erosions of human rights plus spiritual declines. Whether nuclear war, industrial chaos or simply parliamentary bloody-mindedness will be the precursor of such a state of affairs is not made clear, although the *NME* sees all three as distinct possibilities. Similar forebodings are coming thick and fast from all quarters of the printed media, and although ten pages of Armageddon-speak are infinitely preferable to the infantile twaddle of Paul Morley, I wonder what right *NME* thinks it has to pontificate on such matters without providing alternative points of view?

Still, the music press is just about the only buoyant aspect of the youth economy these days, that and the t-shirt trade, and I suppose it's easy to get cocky about rising circulations and a marked increase in brown-nosing by press officers trying desperately to sell their company's pap. The exploits of individual labels will, I'm sure, be adequately chronicled elsewhere in this issue by King Kick, so I shall leave off here, go down to the record exchange and try and sell a few Kate Bush albums so's I can buy a crust of bread for tonight's supper.

A Certain Ratio **pix: Philomena**

ENGLISH REPORT, PART II: THE FRAGMENTATION PROCESS CARRIES ON. OR "I DON'T MIND THE CONFUSION, I'M NO EXPERT ON TOGETHERNESS MYSELF"

by Kickboy Face the Music

After a few weeks nosing about the soggy island we all love to hate (you know who you are) I must admit to being as un-enlightened as ever as to the future of the new noise, a lame but temporary tag for the erratic currents of real gone sounds that are popping up with increasing regularity all over god's golfball (image courttesy of Beefheart). England is most certainly a fertile breeding ground and I will try to throw some light on some of the most relevant (and exciting) aspects of the action I was able to catch but please just forget right now about unity, meaning, direction, the old SLASH speciality of putting the universe in a nut shell and throw in predictions for the future as a bonus, cos that scene over there is a mess.

War correspondent Mark Williams having already given you the scoop on the other aspects of british life I'll keep my nose under the water line where it's all teaming and fermenting and fragmenting. To say that there ain't no spokesmen right now in the more or less underground network would be a gross understatement. In fact everyone spoken to has a divergent viewpoint and a few are too disgusted or confused for words. Check out the handful of interviews in this issue and you'll get the point: The Ants hate Crass who hate all rock bands, the Scots resent the English and gung-ho Scots like the Skids favor nationalistic ideas yet right wing or not their singer Jobson approves the attitude (not the music) of the way-over-to-the-left Pop Group (who are into country music I think that's a nice touch).

Of course the british music press is pushing for coherence and unification and regularly lambasts Pop Group, Skids, Crass, Adam and the Ants co's they're all wrong. And everyone, absolutely everyone that plays jusic or has something to do with music has horror stories to tell about the papers, their attitude and their policies. Charming, uh??? Dexy's Midnight Runners have taken these skirmishes one step further and added one extra battleline to the already existing ones: they stopped doing interviews with the major publications, claiming everything the "hippie press" puts out is corrupt and distorted. Instead

they plan to go on using the space their label buys in those very papers for explaining their views and opinions in their own words. It might be judged as an arrogant gimmick, the press certainly sees it that way and there's been mucho teeth-grinding in those circles but anything that pricks them out of their unbelievable smugness and elitism seems okay with me. Speaking of the Allmighty printed word the independent challenger to the monopolies known as NEW MUSIC NEWS has thrown in the sponge (or is it the towel I never know?) for various reasons like financial stress and distribution problems (while in existence it had to cope with a very noble competition, their issues removed from racks and out of sight by other rags' distributors, that sort of sportsmanship). Another sign of the times, an omen even, is the glorious reappearance of the english music world's Enemy number 1, Malcolm Mc Laren, the Living Plot himself. Eager to be of use and add his little touch to the tilting edifice, he contributed to the general confusion of the industry by convincing EMI (a label he if you recall had once treated with less than perfect business courtesy) to sign his latest concoction, a never-seen-live band by the name of BOW WOW WOW (see singles review). There's nothing subversive about that I know but where it gets good is at the release of the band's first single, a song titled "C30-C60-C90 ' which messes with the british industry's sore spot of today: the taping of records off the radio and the telly and of course off other records. The record companies swear it's killing their market, ruining the artists and putting everyone on welfare, it has to be stopped, forbidden, punished and Malcolm gets the biggest label which is head of the industry and was doing the biggest whining on the subject to fucking put out and advertise a song that openly, defiantly advocates extensive generalized taping of unaffordable music! And to print the lyrics on the sleeve. Officially EMI (who only found out what the lyrics were at the last minute) does not see any deep contradictions in their stance. It will be fascinating to see how many non-contradictions they are ready to swallow if Mc Laren keeps on haunting the place his motives hidden behind whatever music group he can put together between morning and lunch. My situationist prayers are nightly dedicated to the guy. It's not only EMI who's been hearing the word "cassette" a lot lately. Everyone and their kid brother is getting into the home-based cassette action and stores of higher standing are starting to carry the stuff, which is a fast growing range of obscure bands' demos or cheap recordings later put on cassette, and duplicated whenever there's a demand for it. Now there is bands are churning out their gems and doodles as fast as they can and the orders keep coming in. Which is why some outfits have started handling the more popular ones. Good by vinyl, it was tood while it lasted. Well it isn't a threat to that medium as much as a new channel of communication for the anonymous rabble, it's fun and it's cheap (some only ask for the blank cassette and the postage, others charge for duplicating or special artwork) and the machinery is still within access and ought to be grabbed before they succeed in keeping everyone nice and passive and only interested in the official fun products. It must be similar lines of thought that led veteran underground outfit "Fuck Off Records" to put out the first "tapezine", a cheap cassette load of features and articles and opinions which they hope will underline the growing sterility of radio. Issue No. 1 will have a contribution by Mark Smith, a man known not to mince his words or look at his surroundings thru rosey-colored glasses. We visited the Fall sometimes this summer while they recorded the upcoming album of nasties andcreepies which Rough Trade will release in November (the "All Wired Up" single just came out and the faithful are already grinding their teeth) and they haven't attenuated anything that makes them the spooks of the english music scene and the fanzines' favorite mystery. Hidden somewhere in the north vicinity of Manchester and keeping off the beaten underground tracks of that city they still exert an odd hidden influence on kids and musicians alike, probably because their very existence and stance tears the validity and relevence of most of their contemporaries to shreds. Smith and his demons are leaning more and more towards a negative anti-social mysticism, and he pushes the fragmentation process we already pointed out in the overseas scene one step further by bringing it on a geographical level as well and gleefully participating in the general breaking off of everything from everything.

And that includes the North of England versus the rest if his visions are correct or if he had his way. His "North shall rise again" routine is a bit esoteric to a foreigner but I was seeing what he was getting at while visiting up there, the mood, the audiences and the music are different, the London trends and flash have no effect and no meaning and bands like the Fall find it increasingly taxing to cohabit with what to them is decay and waste of time. Mark then becomes a true menace to communities, the good neighbor spirit and family life by stretching his obsession and declaring that it applies to Manchester just the same, south of Manchester is where the music "scene" revolves and a constant source of college bred art-conscious crap while thenorth part is the working class no nonsense section which he only feels at ease with. And home is where the album was put together, a few miles away in Rochdale in a few rainy days while unsuspecting London town was dismissing the latest press-created fad and thinking of "what next?" How about an invasion of totally wired, reasonably paranoid and occasionally haunted wiry young men, an invasion of uncouth norththern boys?? I guess I am not that good at thinking up fads. Besides the Fall Manchester has some other ways to be heard above the din of endless hypes, next big thing announcements, the shattering of ideals as well as glass and it's an independent and top-hip label, Factory records. And films, and concepts, and inside jokes . . . they do it all, but only when they feel like it. And although they are as much representative of the fragmentation/confusion symptoms we've become quite expert in since the opening line of this article, they are not part of it or its potential victims, they may even benefit from it and thrive on the resulting climate. Factory the label has released music by Joy Division, Durruti Column, Certain Ratio, Crawling Chaos, Blurt will be one of the coming records. It's all undeniably modern but hard to label (see 2 live reviews further down for a mighty good try) and even harder to ignore. Besides the Joy Division minor take over of Britain there will be other Factory music that will infiltrate the market and the concert halls, it's an ideal sort of music for this period, it reflects the mess while staying cool, but while Throbbing Gristle wallows in it, undoubtedly the leading exponents of "alienation-and-chaos-used-for art/fun and propaganda," the Factory stuff keeps its distance, it describes a climate without ever asking for your approval or participation. The label is run by 4 or 5 people who appear to combine efficiency and untogetherness very harmoniously. Also a bit strange at first but perhaps symptomatic of the musical climate is their certain dilettante and removed attitude which permeates the label, from packaging concepts to the bands' promotion and support.

Factory keeps its cool and it's either a very loose or very tight organization because if it's both the contradiction and confusion theme is out of control (no pun). Unless it is a prototype of future recording industry reality; small concept-oriented nonchalant capitalist outfits that because of their flexibility can ride thru the uncertainties and the shiftiness of public consumption.

Whatever the formula is Factory is one part of the british industry that has no complaints to file with the management of the establishment! Very nice, thank you. Many other independents are if not expanding, at least holding up very well, so it could very well be a doomed future for one part of theindustry only. Perhaps there is justice after all. Whether Factory is going to push them along to world domination and concerts in Bombay and Peking or not, the Factory bands are still playing small concerts and pubs and were amongst the best of the lot. Which was a lot (God! . . . . .) It is at these live gigs that the confusion/no direction syndrome hits you most explicitly. And it's at live gigs that you can see and hear how every aspect of live music is fiddled with, rejected, embraced, improved upon, made fun of. It had never hit me so hard and clear before how deep reaching and lasting the post punk chaos would really be. Proverbial tip of the iceberg, cept tip of the volcano is closer to it. Pick your noise or pick your image or pick your politics there's a band splashing in it, defining it or rejecting it. In front of fanatical followers and terminally cynical observers, including other bands checking out everybody's progress or slow surrendering to the whim of the elements. At the Clarendon Hotel Delta 5 and basement 5 banged their stuff with equal passion and determination to get thru on their own terms, Delta 5 prepresnt one of the most visible post punk directions, the foundations are spikey music cept now that occasional discoid funk beat gets thrown in (it's true the textbook punk bass sound never triggered any sensual reactions) this new hybrid gets you real good when the musicians know what to use and what to leave out. Delta 5 put the cherry on top of the cake by having two bass players up there, and the irritated half-screamed half-spat out lyrics attacks with the right proportion of repetitive catch phrases bring it all back to the good old punk sarcasm anger and aggression but in a flashier vehicle, complete with improved features and the latest modern additions. I exaggerate, Delta 5 don't go overboard at all in the quest for the modern classic noise, energy and all that is their recipe, and anyway how could a classic modern noise be invented if everyone is dabbling and testing? No classic anything for a while, which I think is a relief. Basement 5 followed the other 5 and come closer to the edge of the catwalk, they squirt on the crowd an awesome racket that won't stand in line or fall back on any safe patterns, metal shards and slabs with sketchy bass and rhythm peeking thru the din, Dennis Morris growls and snarls, if his voice leaves you cold you can always stare at the neo-Clockwork Orange-with-hints-of-an-old-West-carnival threads these out-of-line blacks are decked in. Basement 5 claim they started where Pil stopped, I'd say they discoveredthat all these white bands made greatsounds with hardly any technique, strip it bare let's play with what's left, and if it can work with dumb old rock or punk it's got to work with reggae and funk. The parts where we don't even have that technical minimum we fill in with metal noise and we'll show them we've got it sussed out in other areas besides Ethiopia and ganja. Pil were experimental, Basement 5 are not going the esoteric way, they just like to floor you but they want to make it new. They do. Confusion build-up, item #92: because of Deutsche Amerikanische Freundschaft at the Moonlight. Doubly confusing because of their german nationality coupled with their obvious musical independence. Post-punk, heavy into a facade of aggression behind which some fancy metal structures are brought up and down or right in your face when you don't expect it. This entire german forray no one expected, about time the limeys stood there with their mouths open. And every show you see over there adds to the impossibility of spotting the forest for the trees and the pioneers from the iconoclasts. All is confusion in Babylon, only thing most seem to agree on is punk in its classic form has pretty much had it as a force. The punks are very much visible, their bands can be heard fine without an ear aid andthe vinyl is flowing, thing is they're not freaking anyone out but their moms (not even certain of that) and japanese tourists, they're less funny or angry, fall about a lot (not knocking it mind you) and put up with a lot of shit from goony skinheads with beady eyes that always buzz on the edge of the swarm. For extra sociologizing on the matter check single review of The Wall in the back section of this issue. At least some punks keep oppping up at all kinds of music deals besides the regulation ska nights, they make for nice visual counterpoints to that kafkaesque lot with the entire Jean Paul Sartre legacy on their frail shoulders. That jolly contingent can be seen at everything the skinheads avoid, they certainly turned up en force at the

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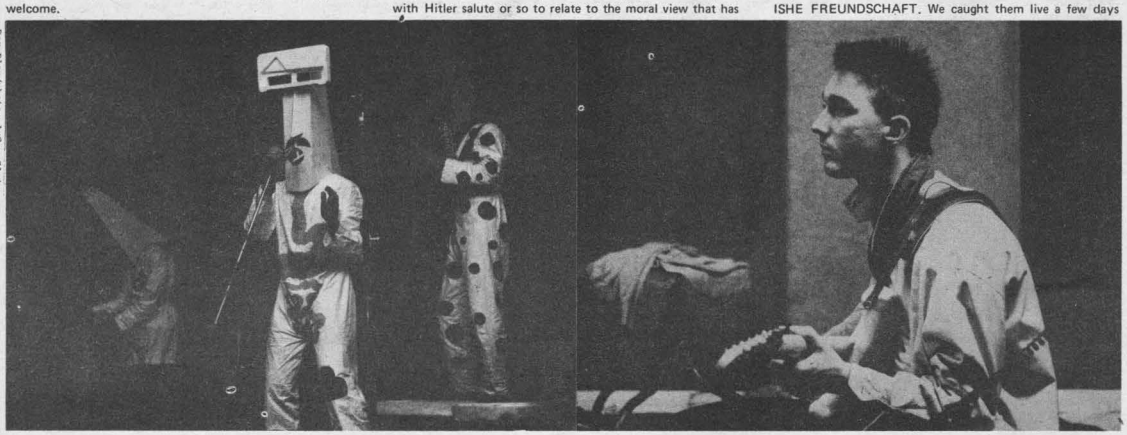
the neue german music

DER PLAN / DEUTSCH-AMERIKANISCHE FREUNDSCHAFT AND OTHERS:

compiled by Bob Giddens and Slash

Our first introduction to the new music from Germany came thru Bob Giddens, an englishman who lives there and is involved with the music. He also occasionally writes for ZigZag. Bob has produced music by DEUTSCH-AMERIKANISCHE FREUNDSCHAFT, a band that is quickly becoming one of THE new combos on the european circuit, andplays in SURPLUS STOCK, which recently released an album on their own label (you're welcome Bob). Here are extracts (sorry Bob) of some of the notes he sent us concerning the music and the bands, along with a conversation he had with someone from one of the bands, DER PLAN:

". musically Germany has suddenly found an identity, and with that an escape from the suffocating effect of an anglo-american 'english' music and never homegrown talent. This is basically still the case (how many german records have you heard recently ?) Yet the independent alternative labels have arrived, a bit behind schedule, but very, very welcome.



Der Plan/photo: Andee Gisin

My favorite group is 'der PLAN', one of numerous bands that come from Dusseldorf. Their lp 'GERI-REIG' has sold over 2500 copies with distribution from Ata tak. Their music, with its Residents influences, is a joy and a bind, it pleases and then annoys, attacks and then cowers in trepidation. The music of 'DER PLAN' is 'GERI-REIG'; the definition of this is given by Sharon of San Jose, a city somewhere west of WATFORD I believe.

> "Geri-Reig – making the most of the least, using your wits to complete together with no tools, hastily throwing something together. Nothing is needed to do Geri-Reig, other than your mind. An empty room can produce Geri-Reig if you use your ingenuity."

Singer Moritz of Der Plan describes their music as being simply electronic. "I think simplicity is the essence of artistic product, and we are a primitive, modern group, dancing around the campfire to electronic music!!"

FEHL FARBEN (it means the wrong colors) are the group with the best prospects at the moment. They have just agreed to do an lp with EMI. The Fehl Farben started off as a joke, five musicians from some of the best Dusseldorfer bands got together to record a send-up of the English ska revival, and stayed together. Their single 'GROSSE LIEBE MAXI' was pop music at its best, and the demos of their EMI recordings are dynamite! including a version of DAF's 'KEBAB TRAUME' which leaves the original for dead . . .

Groups like DAF, SYPH, GEISTERFAHRER, HOLGER HILLER, MINUS DELTA T, are moving German music into the eighties, and all this activity comes at a time when the English scene seems to be stagnating. The German music suffers under a distribution problem which is only just being solved by shops like RIP OFF (Hamburg) and ZENSOR (Berlin).

I chatted to FRANK of DER PLAN and asked him to give an overall report on the last year.

SLASH: How do you view the last year?

FRANK: Success, a lot of success But still I have an insecure feeling, that this success is due to a trend or a fashion maybe. I can't believe the success of Geri-Reig for example. Is there a need, a demand for this kind of music or is it just manipulation from the media? i.e. SOUNDS (a German magazine, nothing to do with the English weekly). I don't know how many we would have sold without the Sounds review.

SLASH: How have things changed?

FRANK: There has been a steady development, musicians have found their self confidence. The result is that more groups are bringing out their own records, labels have been formed, and the development in the media means that every attempt to do something new is being taken seriously.

SLASH: Do you think the German youth has been waiting for this to happen?

FRANK: It's important that it's German. An example is DAF, they make a point of being German, using all the prejudices people have against Germany Also radically so, with Hitler salute or so to relate to the moral view that has been censured, killed off and avoided. They say 'look we are German and we are not afraid to say so.'

SLASH: Any specific problems?

FRANK: My problem is that I make music, I manufacture that music, and then I sell that music. Which involves a lot of foreign work that kills the interest and takes up too much time. But I still have the motivation to do this work, because I see no alternative at present. I hope that in the future the work we do will be more co-operative. This has been a year of competition between small labels, but we could achieve much more if we worked together.

SLASH: This last year has given the German music its own identity, something it has never had before. The German groups that were popular were all 'carbon-copies' of English or American bands.

FRANK: It doesn't really matter which German lyrics are being sung, the listener is forced to come to terms with it. It doesn't ride over him like a lot of UK/USA music, which to most people was just entertainment, now they have to think. I dream about a form of disco music that will provide a spiritual dance as well as the physical dance. Not just to make your legs move. I just wanted to say one more thing. The thing that annoys me on the English scene, is that so many groups use so many cliches, like sex, in their live act, to create some sort of image. I find it very superficial. I suppose it is the music culture that the English have, that is to blame. The groups have only one goal: success. Success means a record contract, or whatever, with the help of the public, who are really being used. And here is the situation so no one will lie, and now we must find out if that works, can you work without lying or not? That's where we are, at present . . .

Plan are a strange group, somewhere between pretension and reality. Our EP was an expression of our feelings about life. Very realistic, but still a cul de sac. I began to realize that the only way it could work is with positive goals, a positive utopia. That's the ideal.

SLASH: A lot of people would say that's very naive.

FRANK: But it's an attempt to win it back, an intellectual attempt. It's still a long way off. It's experimentation.

Frank played me some tapes he's received from behind the Iron Curtain, groups from Poland, Hungary, etc Frank was going to the first punk festival in Poland, to be held in Danzig, but for some strange reason he was refused a visa. He is sorting through the material and we might get an album of all the stuff soon on Warning Records. Some of the music is amazing, recorded at home, and there isn't a synthesizer in sight!"

Our second introduction to the German thing took place while we were visiting sunny England this summer. Graham Lewis (half of Dome, one quarter of Wire) told us of a performance which had taken place a few days before our arrival and which had featured, besides Dome and a bizarre trio by the name of BLURT (see interview elsewhere), a very intense German bunch called DEUTSCH-AMERIKANISHE FREUNDSCHAFT. We caught them live a few days later at the Moonlight Club. They were amazing. Here's an interview we did with them around that time in a Notting Hill Gate coffee shop. D.A.F. are Gabi Delgado-Lopez (vocals, trumpet), Wolfgang Spelmans (guitar) and Robert Gorl (drums). Another "floating" member of the band is synthesizer player Chris Haas, who wasn't part of that particular tour. D.A.F. have two albums out, the second one on english label MUTE records, run by Daniel Miller (of Silicon Teens fame).

GABI: . . . for certain projects we work with Chris. Maybe in the future we work with other people. The three of us are like a base around which we use others You have to understand they are not studio musicians, they are full time members for the time they are in the band. We share the money, everything. Chris is also a singer. Maybe in the future we'll be only 3 for one gig and six for the other ..

SLASH: Tell me about the performance you just did here with Blurt and Dome (Gilbert & Lewis of Wire) at Notre Dame Hall ..

GABI: There was also a film and some ... art action (I think he means performance art). But I wasn't so happy with it. It was a little bit boring. For me if I had to choose between an art audience or a skinhead audience I'd take the skinhead audience. It's okay to do it, but only if it's not artificial, if people react to it. In this gig it was only visual, there was no communication. Something you see and forget about the next day. The typical art audience is very, very boring.

SLASH: Can you tell me very briefly about the band's background which is also a very boring question to ask a band I know ...

WOLFGANG: My english is not so good so it's better to let Gabi tell you.

GABI: Okay. We're from Dusseldorf and started making so-called new wave. Then we stopped that and tried to take a radical approach: everything that sounded like another band,

out it went. We tried to do german music. Using german things against german things, if you understand.

SLASH: What is your status in Germany now? Does your music and ideas get acknowledged?

GABI: Yes, but only in music papers.

WOLFGANG: In the first six months of D.A.F. the band made a recore called "Produkt Der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Freundschaft," it's an instrumental record, with 19 tracks. Quite different from what we do now. The reaction of the press was not so good. But in England it was well received.

SLASH: How did you choose that interesting name for the band? (it means germano-american friendship in case you were not sure)

ROBERT: It's a bit .. ironic.

WOLFGANG: We had a piece of paper with 13 names on it. It took us a long time to choose.

SLASH: Are all the lyrics in german?

GABI: And some in spanish. I am from Spain.

SLASH: Who are you thinking of when you called the 2nd album "The Small and The Wicked" (in german, Die Kleinen und Die Bosen)?

ROBERT: It's political.

GABI: But we like to keep it ambiguous. We don't say the Good and the Evil because most people see things that way We don't want to say no to anything that is around, it is also in the music. There are fascistic elements in the music, but we are not fascists There are also anarchistic elements. We want to reflect everything, from true love to rape. But it's difficult when you asked about your political statement. Do we say "today I feel like an anarchist, tomorrow fascist, the next day feminist, the next day sexist"?

SLASH: Do you find it difficult playing in England to people who don't understand the lyrics?

WOLFGANG: I think the lyrics are only a quarter part of D.A.F., and anyway when we sing things like "Germany Germany all is over" in german a lot of the audience really know what we are saying ..

GABI: The music is such live that people really understand what's happening even if they don't understand the words.

SLASH: The 2nd album is on the english Mute label, which is Daniel Miller's label. Is it distributed in Germany as an import then?

GABI: Yes. But now in Germany they have the type of shops like Rough Trade, and it's selling quite good. But we are trying to get a distribution deal for Europe and maybe the U.S.A.

WOLFGANG: It's important for us that people in Germany can buy the record in every small shop.

SLASH: Are there labels in Germany that produce this kind of music?

GABI: Only a few little alternative ones, but with no distribution. That is one of the reasons we came to England, Spartan or Rough Trade can really sell 20,000 or 30,000 copies. A thousand is the limit in Germany.

SLASH: What is the state of the "new music" in Germany?

WOLFGANG: Not much of it really, but it's better than nothing.

GABI: Not much and too late. Now it's starting. Three years later.

SLASH: What are the centers

GABI: Dusseldorf, West Berlin, hard core punk in Hamburg, that's it for the centers

WOLFGANG: And not many clubs to play. Our last german tour was only seven dates, and some of them there were only 20 or 80 people to see us.

GABI: But it's growing. I've seen it last time we played. In a year there will be lots of people. And they are enthusiastic, much more than in London, over there it's new.

SLASH: What is the general climate in Germany right now in the youth?

GABI: Satisfied. Money, cars Brave new world.

SLASH: Are you part of a dissatisfied minority?

GABI: Well, we are not really .. that's the difference between us and other bands In England they are very serious when they make such music, they make heavy political statements. We know things are really bad. There could be a war tomorrow, but we want the people to dance to it. We are having a lot of fun and enjoying ourselves doing depressing aggressive music. We want to dance to the apocalypse. Some want to preach anarchy, like some new christianity, we just want to go over the top. If the conditions are extreme, be extreme too.

SLASH: What's important to you besides music; Suppose they made music illegal, what would you spend your time doing?

GABI: Music is a very little part for me. I'd go to orgies and parties .

WOLFGANG: I'd go to West Africa and play traditional west african music.

ROBERT: Sex is the most important thing to me

GABI: We wouldn't make extreme music, just extreme sex. Try some deadly things.

Bits of D.A.F. lyrics from "Die Kleinen und die Bosen":

"Life is good but the people are weak."

"I take you out of here into a better world / full of love and money / fly to land of fantasy / into the federal republic of Germany"

"The funny boots are marching over Poland / the Germans are marching over Poland / in funny heavy boots"

"If you want to dance / if you want to dance / you need a little bit of drive / a little bit of drive / and a few things more"

"Funk for little boys / funk for little boys / funk for little girls and their mothers / Adventure funk"

* * * * * * *

Once back in L.A. we found out that some of the key people involved in this german "renaissance" had been here for part of the summer, working out some distribution for their records and possibilities of live playing later in the year. The first one we ran into was Hilger Hiller, who has an EP on Warning records. Thru Hilger we met Kurt, of DER PLAN. Kurt is only 22, he was an early member of D.A.F. (and is featured on their instrumental first lp, "Ein Produkt...", has released a solo lp of his synthesizer work under the name PYROLATOR and at the time of our meeting was about to go back to Europe to play on a record Wolfgang Spelmans (D.A.F.) is working on over there .

Der Plan singer Morritz left California before we could corner him but Kurt stayed a bit longer and we talked about Los Angeles, Germany and the world of post-punk music. I asked him about the bunch of pictures Bob Giddens had sent along with his observations, and the others he had just handed me of Der Plan live on stage. One showed a little kid with a toy police helmet on ...

KURT: .., we did 3 or 4 gigs with this small guy, he is great, not nervous at all. Once on stage he was holding a hammer and sickle sign in front of the audience, shouting "Do you know this sign?", people reacting very ... strange.

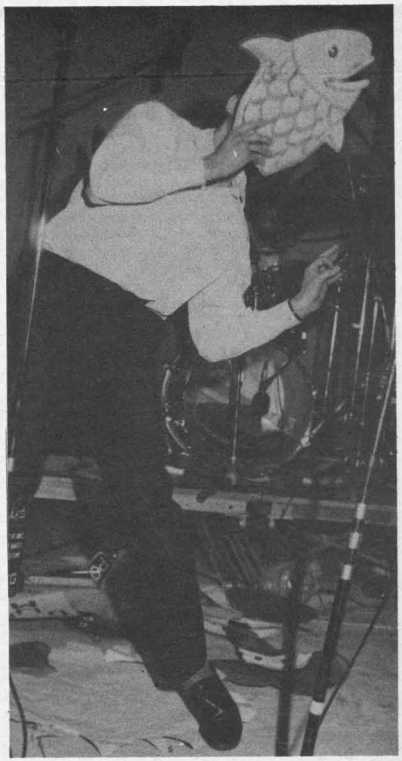
SLASH: How many live gigs have you done?

KURT: Ten. When we get back we do a tour with a Berlin group, 3 or 4 places in Germany, then Belgium, maybe Netherlands, then Zurich in Switzerland and Vienna, places where we know people who have offered us gigs."

* * * * * * *

I asked why every live shot of the band features all kinds of cardboard props. Kurt explains they are a visual illustration of their tunes, like on one Morritz is holding up a big red circle and a big green one, something to do with the genetic incapacity of a german person to cross the street when the light is red even if it's 4 o'clock in the morning and there isn't one car in sight. This is by the way the subject matter of their latest single. Kurt explained that his interest is strictly musical but that both Frank and Morritz have jobs as designers and attach a lot of importance to the visual side of things. "Once we used a gigantic painting as a background to the stage, and we work with slides. We have a friend in electronics who builds things for us." They get a mixture of art scene followers and hard core punks, sometimes it works and occasionally it doesn't. Kurt mentions that the band MINUS DELTA T mixes live music and aggressive performance art antics like dropping curry powder all over the audience and sending pieces of wood flying into the crowd by chopping tables and furniture on stage with power saws. Der Plan have been known to dabble in **impromptu** performance bits, like playing unannounced gigs in the streets of Dusseldorf with saxophones and battery operated amplifiers but Kurt has no inclination to follow in the footsteps of Minus Delta T and perform real dangerous and aggressive gigs.

Other plans for Der Plan (brilliant!) include a lp of ten Dusseldorf bands all performing Xmas tunes and an international compilation that would include the Iron Curtain contributions already mentioned in the Bob Giddens section. It will all most likely be out on their own label, the mighty Warning/Ata Tak (which originally started as art attack) conglomerate which they run at home when they are not busy surviving. When I left Kurt he was off to plan his next live appearance in California (Santa Barbara, sit on a cactus Los Angeles!) with Christian Lunch. So there you have it a little taste of what to expect from overseas in the next few months, all may be quiet on your front (lawn) but other places have picked up the flag and are carrying it part of the distance to wherever flags used in figures of speech get carried to, while most people sleep or nod out in the spaghetti-o. Auf wiedersehen, as they say in Turkey.



DISCOGRAPHY

WARNING RECORDS –
c/o ata tak, furstenwall 64, 4000 dusseldorf
wr 001 – ein produkt der DEUTSCH-AMERIKANISCHE-FREUNDSCHAFT (lp)
wr 002 – PYROLATOR – inland (lp)
wr 003 – der PLAN – geri reig (lp)
wr 004 – HOLGER HILLER (ep)
wr 005 – der PLAN – vorne steht ne ampel (single)

WELT REKORD –
c/o ata tak again, but available from EMI.
wer 001 – FEHL FARBEN – grosse liebe maxi (single)
wer 004 – TRANENINVASION – sentimental (single)

ZICK-ZACK –
c/o rip off, feldstr 48, 2000 hamburg 6.
various singles from GEISTERFAHRER, ABWARTS, SAAL 2, KFC, FREIWILLIEGE SELBSTKONTROLLE.

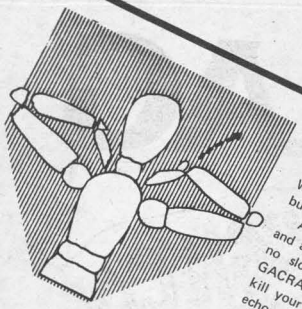
OUTATUNE LABEL –
c/o giddens, berlinerstr. 36, 4570 quakenbruck.
out 7911 – spiv/vips SURPLUS STOCK
out 8004 – holland in not SURPLUS STOCK

other labels include MONOGRAM (from berlin), KONNEKTSCHEN (hamburg) and RONDO (dusseldorf).

The best way to get any of these records is to contact RIP OFF, FELD STR 48, 2000 HAMBURG 6, who are the biggest retailers of german new music. Distributors should contact the individual labels.

This discography is by no means complete, but it should put you on the right track.

–BOB GIDDENS



like he's saying "X-Ray Death") while the band weaves a tight little wall of sound featuring guitar distortion, bass rumbling in and out, and drums setting a breakneck pace for the whole set. P MODEL also rely upon a heavy synthesizer sound although they play much slower and sometimes fall prey to the "tin can" syndrome, leaving their instruments to run wild while they catch the next bus home. SHEENA AND THE ROKKETS are Japan's Token Lightweights, a Blondie clone with pre-pubescent fans to tear at their clothes, today Tokyo tomorrow Donny and Marie Christmas Special. Watch for their album out soon on A&M but please don't buy it.

As for hardcore punk rock "1-2-3-4!" and all that, well these Japanese kids are no slouches let me tell you. GUNJO-GACRAYON have a tape guaranteed to kill your neighbors' petunias. Feedback, echo, delay, flanger there's just no end to the electronic miracles these Tokyo-Tech dropouts can conjure. The Pop Group were just the beginning ... now we have another true unabashed undisciplined unpleasant bunch of noxious brats to rape studios and maim our collective eardrums if only they would put out some vinyl. In the meantime I'll just say that these guys are the real thing. PAIN, another Tokyo band, present an excellent argument for parallel evolution — they sound exactly like our own (former) Germs except they have a keyboard. Must be the baddest of the bad in Japan, the singer shouts for all he's worth and the band also plays very nicely. An equally abrasive quartet is SEX, punk rock rules, O.K.

Other bands from across the blue Pacific spoken highly of: JISATSU, 8½, LIZZARD, CHA CHA 82, THE PLASTICS.

–DAVE

(information from Bruce Osborn and Sarchin)

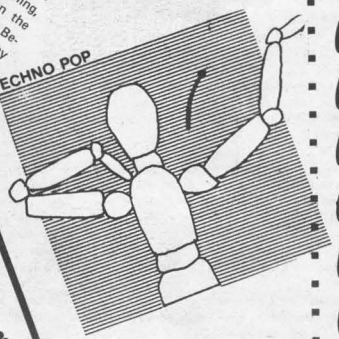
JAPAN UPDATE

"Everybody knows Japan is a dishpan" –SEX PISTOLS

No doubt most Japanese kids would be the first to agree with the Rotten one, but they're not just waiting in line for the next Cheap Trick concert, not by a long shot. In fact, those kids are generating steam heat of their own in the form of a punk/new wave scene and it's going mighty strong thank you. It's also becoming quite a market, what with the major record labels from the U.S. of A. sniffin' out Tokyo's local talent – of course, sticking strictly to the new wave stuff – and even some of Japan's record labels are doing a share of the signing. The New Music (as they call it over there) is also getting quite popular, and the mainstream Media, including Japanese T.V. and magazines, is throwing in a handful of support ... somewhat of a different situation than here in America, us punkeroos being a little bit more dangerous, huh? Anyway, since Japanese radio plays very little rock music, most of the bands concentrate on performing as much as possible and/or securing record deals so that people can actually hear their music.

In congested downtown Tokyo, club space is hard to come by. The few clubs that exist hold only about a hundred – they pack the young punks in and once the music starts there's plenty of pushing, poking, and bashing to keep even the hardest of hardcore fans on cloud 9. Because of the limited club situation, many bands resort to free outdoor shows in the summer and there are even small music halls in department stores where an occasional punk act is booked (some example for us to follow ... how about Fear at J.C. Penny's? Darby Crash at May Co.?) The leading punk club in Tokyo is the Minor, which rents out its space to the bands for ten thousand yen per five hour gig – sounds like a lot, but it's only around 40 bucks. As in America, it's up to the bands to publicize and manage their concerts.

At first, the Japanese punk bands tried to copy the sounds coming out of America; they listened to Ramones, Iggy, Blondie and any other singles they could dig up. But now the Japan scene has taken on its own character. The foremost style of New Music coming out of Japan is "techno pop" (a rough translation, but that's what they call it): it's a sound characterized by thick layering of synthesizers, often without drums or bass, and accompanied by gizmo and gadget noise. "Techno pop" reflects the mechanized, assembly line world which most of the punks in Japan endure through the daytime hours. By day they make digital watches for the American businessman and by night they turn technology inside out with noise machines built with the circuits that made Japan the mess it is today. THE NON BAND play a quiet, almost classical music which suddenly, unprovoked erupts into a maddening morass of rhythm generation and guitar plucking. They also do instrumentals and a wicked version of "Louie Louie" although I'm not sure that's what they're singing. SYNCHRONIZED are a psychedelia/experimental fusion band. Two chord wonder songs a la the Seeds with the same tremolo organ but they play fast fast FAST! The Middle Class would be proud to play such stuff. The lead singer chants over and over (sounds



Plastics/photo: Bruce Osborn

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PUBLICATI

"HAIL THE PRESS! GIMME FREEDOM OR GIVE ME A XEROX MACHINE."

Publications Update

Long overdue, but here it is, the latest listing and slagging of the fanzines and other do-it-yourself shortcuts to the press, in no particular order, first ones on the top of the pile (or the bottom of the rat cage) first. A few are only very vaguely related to the music circuits but their existence would be a highly dubious matter if the xerox zines and the music they yak about had not happened; please don't send us the name of every exception you can think of, we're not writing a thesis here just tryin to give you as many alternatives as possible to Rolling Stone Creem Bam and Slash. Also there were many more than the ones listed here but that's one of the charms of these filthy little bundles of bad paper: they get grabbed by every visitor, music fan or curiosity seeker. Neither are they substantial enough to warrant a body search or demand of restitution. "Give me my fanzine back" sounds awfully petty! So here are those that made it thru to these posterity awards. If yours isn't included although you sent it don't cry, we too have tasted the suspicion of deliberate ignorance on the part of the establishment, we *still* have a few grudges that just won't dissolve. Cultivate yours right now, it will come in handy one day.

And now . . . heeeeeere's Johnny!

Since the limeys were behind the orignal 76 xerox renaissance we'll start with one of them. It's called *CHAINSAW,* is a fair enough name for a middle of the road punk zine. It looks like the archetypal sniffing glue mess, bits are handwritten, misspelled and corrected right on the page, talks about the standard meat-and-potato punk concerns: anarchy, freedom, singles and favorite groups. This issue (august) has a tasty interview with the Au Pairs and a few worthwhile bits here and there. Write: Charlie Chainsaw, Box 787, 1 North End Rd., London W 14.

Next one I stole (I told you, it's a tradition) from someone's apartment in England and I'm not giving it back either. It's a punk comix fanzine, name is *CRISIS* and issue number 1 is given over to the hilarious story of Johnny No-One (The Rise and Fall of . .), a punk like thousands of others, cept maybe meaner and dumber: The little fucker makes Jimbo look like Prince Charles. Basic drawings (meaning not your typical french comic strip experimental extravaganza with multiple meanings and conceptual graphics) but they work perfect for the subject matter. In some 7 or 8 pages every punk cliche since Day 1 gets dangled and dismissed, I tell you it is a shame if no number 2 issue ever comes

out. Write and demand it from Kev Hopgood, 101 Manchster Road, Slaithwaite, Nr. Huddershfield, W. Yorks (of course England).

Still doodling abroad here's *GIG,* a Paris free hand-out number that comes out once a month. I know it's totally useless as far as your Huntington Beach social needs go but in case you do end up there, and you need music info every day no matter what, grab this and look at the pictures. Format is like Zig Zag but looks better, modern minimal graphics, excruciatingly hip looking ads ("never mind the product" is a rule you can safely apply in the land of the eternal bourgeoisie). No point in giving address and stuff, I mean can you imagine anyone living halfway across the world and subscribing to L.A. Weekly??!!

Still in France, I want you to meet *ACTUALITES DU MONDE LIBRE,* don't turn your back just because you don't comprende the lingo, bimbo, it means "Newsreels from the Free World," it's small and messy with loads of Scientific Americans/World Imitation type of graphic nonsense, this particular issue is music-oriented but apparently they tackle whatever they get inspired by. The music one has stuff on Pere Ubu, Fred Frith, Marquis de Sade, I agree *totally,* it *IS* a bit on the serious side and all that: Art damage is the unescapable verdict of the jury, so all the art damaged ambivalent youngsters can secretly write to Pierre Fablet, MJC Rennes Centre 9, rue de la Paillette, 35000 RENNES, France. Be arty. It's just a phase teenagers go thru.

TALK TALK, the "Midwest rock and reggae magazine." Talk Talk is one of the few you do keep for a while, it's clean and tight looking and the size is perfect, really perfect. We are envious. They come out super-regularly, which also pisses the shit out of us slash layabouts because they're always reviewing the latest records (especially reggae which they seem to have a good pipeline to) *ages* before us, which is really bad for our super elitist collective ego. Fortunately they don't cut it half the time as far as the quality and the interest of the reviews themselves, there's loads of fillers with the whole review nothing more than a list of musicians, a list of the songs, some timid comparisons to earlier records and loose tidbits of historical info that might apply: As if they were afraid to stop getting all of them free platters, they just have to say something good about everything. Either that or some of the writing wonders involved are brand-new at the game and basically much too nice guys to start spitting fire and brimstone as a matter of principle. Shame, cos there's always an interesting range of subject matters, from Throbbing Gristle-Dexy's Midnight Runners and local bands to live reviews. Less faithful reports on every move by Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare, more madness, outrageous claims and wrong points of view and they got it made. I'm sure they disagree and are proud of their reasonable stance. They're wrong. Whatever you decide, check it out for sure. Talk Talk Publications, PO Box 356, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

Somewhat much less of a mini-pro format than Talk Talk, *THE HORIZONAL* hails from Newsbury Park in California (I don't know where that is either), it modestly and merrily tries to tackle all the new music and does ok, in the super amateur category. No pictures, and the typewriting is rather washed up and on the verge of going invisible but lots of words, opinions and unashamed bandwagon jumping. I think they discovered it all in a matter of weeks, reggae-punk-industrial musak, now I suppose life in Newsbury Park will never be the same. Determined to catch up with the trends, the media and the fun of it all (us old timers know better) they also include an album by a thoroughly unknown band from the neighborhood and some super 8 footage of same if you pay the extra dollar fifty (the zine itself costs 50 cents). With gimmicks like this they can't fail. (I suggest that any band desperate for coverage sets up a gig in old Newsbury Park. I know that Horizontal will give them the cover, most of the inside, a place to stay and a chance to get on vinyl. Best time to catch these little publications is right when their enthusiasm is blinding them to the harsh realities. Of course they happen to be right, the world of music needs as much of an overhaul as he did when anarchy in the U.K. seemed like a pretty reasonable program.) Horizonal has my blessing. 3914 Blackwood Street, Newbury Park, CA 91320.

A bit more jaded than yank youngsters, the literary musical youth of Coventry, England puts out ALTERNATIVE SOUNDS. This one here says issue 15 so you can deduce that Alternative Sounds is already into phase 2 of the-life-and-death-of-an-unwanted-youth-cul - ture-rag, it even *looks* like phase 2: the traditional punk visuals are precise and orderly and readable, the emphasis is on the underground of the underground so you get features and news stories on bands us overseaers (new word that) have never ever heard of: Check the names if you don't believe me: Eyeless In Gaza, Aorta Major, Profile, Criminal Class . . . Of course they've never heard of the Decendents, the Adolescents, the Screwz or Sex Sick either so we're even. Besides the esoterica there are letters of discontented youth, bands that bitch and bands the predict and a constant commentary from the fanzine team itself that shows a lot of intelligence and determination not to go the stupid route that so many have fallen for *AGAIN.* If you know what I mean this is a choice piece of reading material, if you don't they'll bore you I'm sure. Interested parties contact Martin, 143 Moat Avenue, Coventry, England.

If the preceding allusions to integrity and music politics made you yawn cheer up here's the thing just for you: *I.D.,* a "fashion magazine" that is in fact a fat glossy intriguing super-zine of sorts, cept it has no words to speak of, just snapshots of "street kids," dozens of them, parts of this publication are a bit like a disposable Diane Arbus type of book, the heavies whose pic are inside range from sharp but disturbed in the looks dept. to plain subhumans on a genetic dead end. Next to each one there's a few lines as to their identity,

ON UPDATE

social status and clothes' origins. Sounds mincy but it's not, not with *those* samples of youth culture. It's also like a human reference book to the streets of London, invaluable for quick identification of species; skins, mohicans, glam rock die-hards, industrial fop and no-nonsense ska legionnaires, they're all here for you to check it out. The mutations of street gear since punk are mind-boggling. And you don't have to think about the meaning of it all, cos there ain't one, the package makes that clear enough. If I.D. keeps coming out they will be referred to for eternity by sociologists and zoologists. Me I am mainly tickled by the blinding proof that Fiorucci and other pink hair swish-sticks will never ever even come close to catching up with real youth. Probably the nicest thought I've had all day. Get an I.D. from Better Badges, 286 Portobello Road, London W 10.

On this end of the glamour tracks I am now looking at *ANOTHER ROOM,* a free rag from Oakland which I believe we mentioned once in the past but which deserves another hello, this issue here has an intense shot of Monte Cazazza on the cover which makes them ok in my book. Inside there's an interview with the dude, some hip and in record reviews (good too), some Bay area music makers' profiles and the normal grab bag of ads, announcements and personal messages which you find in the free publications. Still Another Room gives a bit of class to a field almost totally ruined by the loathsome Boulevard. To get it try 1640 18th Street, Oakland, CA 94607.

Back on the Skytrain for a quick evaluation of *BREACH OF THE PEACE,* a Watford zine if that means anything to you. Color cover looks fine, contents very Rough Trade-conscious with features on Stiff Little Fingers, Cabaret Voltaire and others. They only just started so you can't really get a feeling, somewhere along the line they will either go the Stiff Little Fingers way unless Cabaret Voltaire gets the votes, it's interesting to see how an interest in one type of noise almost automatically pre-empts an equally awake attitude towards another type of noise, the truth is being chopped in tiny little bits. I suppose it's all right. This remark applied only to fanzines, us here in the Big League are quite good at covering the spectrum, at least that spectrum that covers one tiny part of the overall industry. Back to Breach of the Peace (strong name that isn't quite lived up to) the voice from the Watford scene, we truly wish them all the best, a first issue should always be encouraged, and this one actually makes it. Well done lads. To support the voice of Watford write Bobby Dellar, 20 Woodhurst Ave., Garston Nr. Watford, HERTS, England.

Back and forth, back and forth. Hailing from this continent is the 1st issue of tabloid-sized *REGGAE WORLD.* I will be accused again of negativity, or poisoning the great brotherhood of Jah music, but telling it like it is is one of the ways to a good ring side seat in Heaven I have been told: so blast the hypocrites and the lame ducks I say. This paper really bores me cept when it just pisses me off, either way it gives the music a bad name. I hope it's not a symptom of what's coming. Boredom I was saying, gaga articles of praise and worship about Pete Tosh, Bunny Wailer, many album "reviews" that badly try to paraphrase while glorifying, "if it's reggae it's righteous" is the message it bloody reads (and looks) like those sheets the Black Muslims were peddling downtown cept that message and the tone were a *bit* tougher. Reggae World has all the fire, insight and passion of a church-affiliated publication, which I guess is their way of approaching the whole reggae thing anyway. Fools! To top it all there's a little section of homily moralizing called "Boos to . ." in which the moralists on duty boohoo: "reggae recording disc jokeys who are defiling the music with filthy pornographic lyrics"! Pete Tosh churns out porridge that is like an insult to reggae, yet he gets praise, but a cool cat like General Echo puts out "Bathroom Sex" and the curse of the ethiopian midget is upon him. When this kind of shift in values becomes evident in any subculture it is advised to seek another form of expression because the creeps and the sickos have arrived and the fun is gone. Still, if you're aching to Enter His Gate With Praise and leave your party shoes outside humbly contact 37 East 32nd Street, Brooklyn N.Y. 11226.

Let's get a move on around here or we'll never see the end of this report. From San Jose, California, a baby fanzine with the name of *FORGET IT!* Gosh darn what strong words some people use. Enough snide remarks, it's not bad just very very new and formless next one will tell if they are going to be worth their weight in staples. Write P.O. Box 23073, San Jose, CA 95123.

In London I found *AFTERMATH,* very informative xerox pack (thick one too) that reviews gigs, talks to new bands, listens to all the singles and keeps you busy longer than most others. Quite recommended, for info contact Tony M., George Gillett Court, Banner Street, London E C 1. Also available from same address is something called *ASSASSIN,* a name which should appeal to the L.A. gutter aesthetics.

Also from Limeyland a pretty solid zone called *ALLIED PROPAGANDA,* unusual variety of bands are covered in issue number 3, from the Raincoats to Killing Joke to the Damned to Crass, looks like their main goal is information, no matter what the particular stands are it's as good a way as any to participate in the final fragmentation of culture-and-life (yeah for the Frag Future!), there are enough zines specializing in the dogma dialectics anyway. Contact Ray & Mick, Allied Propaganda, 65 Briar Crescent, Northolt, Middx UB 5 4ND.

Now for a pinch of aggro and abuse, just about time too as we're just drooling approval on just about anything. Destination of abuse: a fanzine from Dublin called *BLACK AND WHITE.* Cause of abuse: half-assed rip-off of entire Slash editorial (the Fuck the New Wave outburst) without a simple accompanying hello. It's the difference between being proud of being quoted (including a bunch of local allusions to Westwood, Darby Crash and L.A. liquor stores that must have read like swahili to the Dublin contingent) and being annoyed for being ignored afterwards. On top of that the pus sacks do their own little equivalent of a publication survey and call us *boring,* while creaming on and on about New York Rocker. Next time you irish snots should use a N.Y. Rocker editorial instead of a boring one like you picked. Eventually you may even be able to *write* one. Enough, actually I ain't that mad, just had to break the mood. But I *do* expect a pint of Guiness as payment for the borrowed literature. It's a spacious-looking zine, either because of style guidelines or lack of material, pleasant lay-out, bla bla bla, they're all right really. Write to BLACK AND WHITE, 10 Dodder Park Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14 Ireland and say hello for me.

Coming in for the home run now, just in time too as the dreaded fanzine indigestion is looming: Mentioned once before in a similar piece some time ago, *IN THE CITY* is quite "established" now (14 issues), it looks as good as some professional mags I won't mention; more dilettante than ever in its choice of subjects to focus on, and the Gary Numan cover piece suggests some very suspect ambitions beneath the alternative veneer. "In The City" is ... not far from teeny cute crap, maybe it's just a phase unless it's the humble beginnings

NEW L.A. BANDS UPDATE

This is a NEW L.A. area bands update; which means bands covered are either new or have not appeared in SLASH before. Logical, eh? Bands that've been around for awhile (just so you'll have a perspective): The ALLEYCATS are still together and play regularly. The trio recently returned from an East Coast tour that included several NYC dates. They've recorded an album and are currently shopping around for a label. THE PLUGZ have also been touring extensively, primarily in the Southwest area of the country. They've got their second album in the can, are also looking for a label. FEAR returned about a month ago from scorching gigs in Arizona, New Mexico, Texas. THE GEARS have released a debut album "ROCKIN' AT GROUND ZERO" on their own Playgems label, are starting to headline bills here in L.A. BLACK FLAG lost another lead singer, Ron Reyes, this time to Vancouver. Release of their second independent EP is eminent. THE GO-GO'S made a triumphant return from London only to whisk off in mid-July to do a date with X in Philadelphia. As for X, if you don't know what' happening with them, even without reading SLASH, you're deaf, dumb and blind. Watch for a new single on SLASH around Xmas. THE GERMS have broken up only to resurface (Darby & Pat) with a new bass player and drummer in THE DARBY CRASH BAND. For a vague idea of Darby's new look, see this issue's cover. THE BAGS have disbanded also with Patricia taking the copyright name with her. Alice is now playing bass for CASTRATION SQUAD. NERVOUS GENDER has undergone some personnel turmoil, too, and looks to have come to the end of the road. THE WEIRDOS are still playing but infrequently and with little fanfare. Release of a new record is scheduled in the near future. THE SCREAMERS, along with CATHOLIC DISCIPLINE, are still vaguely together but not performing at this time. THE SCREAMERS recently lost keyboard whiz Paul Roessler to THE NINE HAGEN BAND in NYC, right after completing production on their nearly hour long video-disc spectacular. KK, while remaining a SCREAMER, is rumored to have joined a new band, ENFANT TERRIBLE (a new group about whom we could find out very little, hence their no-show in the following pages). Cheri the Penguin has also formed a band, BUTCH, but no one was home whenever our man on the street called for info. MIDDLE CLASS are readying release of their new EP for EDDIE SUBTITLE's label. HUMAN HANDS continue at various local venues and have a cut on the DARKER SKRATCHER sampler LP. Likewise the B-PEOPLE whose deal with SLASH RECORDS has fallen through. GEZA X AND THE MOMMYMEN gig regularly and GEZA produced the latest DEAD KENNEDYS' 45. We've tried to be as thorough as possible but there are omissions here due to time and availability. There are bands which we heard about but proved impossible to track down. There were bands whose numbers we had but no one ever picked up the phone or phones were disconnected. Some of these were Nicky Beat's group THE MONSTERS, SQUIRT GUN, SACCHARINE TRUST, ZAMP & THE SUSPECTS, THE SMOG MARINES, ELLA & THE BLACKS, etc. If you don't see a picture beside your fave new combo it's either because one doesn't exist, their smiling mugs melted the lens, or the primadonnas couldn't get it together to drop their snaps by the office. Compiled and annotated by CHRIS D. except where otherwise noted. —

used to have. THE ADAPTORS have also gotten a much harder edge since they first came together. Before Mark and I joined the material and performance was much more pop-oriented ..." "I think L.A. has got to be one of the hardest towns to work in. The press right now are completely ignoring us. It happens with a lot of bands. I don't mean to be negative, but it can get frustrating."

THE ADAPTORS are currently negotiating with an undisclosed party for backing to release what will probably be a ten or twelve inch EP. Possible cuts are: "Money and Power," "Big Street," "Stuck Up," and "Work in Progress." Other songs: "I Love My Life," "My New Bag of Tricks," "Junior Adventures."

AGENT ORANGE

Mike P., vocals, guitar. James, bass, vocals. Scott, drums. From Fullerton, Mike P. says about their music, "Post-punk isprobably the safest thing you could call it. We've got punk as our roots; that's the first thing we played. We still do some songs that sound that way because they're old songs. But it's progressing in a different direction. It still has the energy and the originality but not as threatening a stance. It's more personal than political or anything like that. It's not as obnoxious ... we're really trying to have fun and make money, too. Alot of people are really getting fed up with the punk scene, the fighting and all that. We're sick of it. How stupid can everyone be? When we played shows at the Fleetwood there would just be constant fighting. It gets to be a drag."

AGENT ORANGE has a single coming out on their own label: "Bloodstains/America/Bored of You." Other songs: "Living in Darkness," "No Such Thing," covers of "Pipeline" and "Miserlou."

THE ADOLESCENTS

Steve, bass. Tony, vocals. Rick, guitar. Frank, lead guitar. Casey, drums. From Huntington Beach/Fullerton. Steve was in AGENT ORANGE until they kicked him out. Rick was in THE SLASHERS, THE DETOURS, SOCIAL DISTORTION. Frank was also in SOCIAL DISTORTION. Casey was in THE DETOURS and SOCIAL DISTORTION. Steve and Tony got the band together after Steve was kicked out of AGENT ORANGE. Have been together since February, 1980. Tony: "When I was trying to talk to Frank the first time I met him he was ignoring me. So I started eating this aluminum can, tearing it up. That got his attention." Everyone has written songs, but Tony and Steve write the majority. On the music: " 'Kids of the Black Hole' is about this apartment we used to go to in Fullerton where we had parties all the time. That's a story about all the shit that went on there. 'Who's Who' is about not knowing who to trust. 'Word Attack' is about three different things at once: things keep changing and come back to what you were just talking about."

Have an EP recorded that should be out soon on EDDIE SUBTITLE's label: "Wrecking Crew," "Creatures," "Do the Eddie," "Self-Destruct." Other songs: "Amoeba," "L.A. Girl," "No Friends," "I Hate Children," "We Can't Change the World," "Rip It Up."

The Adolescents
photo: Bob Say

THE ADAPTORS

Alan Seymour, vocals & guitar. Burt, drums. Mark H., bass. Kenny (Dim) guitar.

THE LOW RIDER HORNS (who play on some songs): David, Sax & two others (trumpets). Alan formerly in THE SHARKS, Burt formerly in THE FURIES and Kenny (Dim Wanker) formerly the guitarist for F-WORD.

Kenny: "We play upbeat, loud rock 'n roll. And we have a kind of R&B flavor on some stuff. Sometimes we do sets where we bring in horns. We play things fast, but not too fast. I think we come off with the same power the PISTOLS

THE BONEHEADS

Trudi, accordion, organ. Chase Holiday, organ. Craig Lee, guitar. Scott L., bass. Elissa, drums. Andy, occasional sax. Band has been together a couple of months. Craig says about the music: "It's Nico doing surf music. Gloomy dance tunes." THE BONEHEADS will appear in Paul Morrisey's latest film.

Song titles: "Manhattan Pipeline," "Sludgehammer," "Dream Awhile, Scream Awhile," "Monster Beach Party."

photo by Jenny Lens

THE BLASTERS

Phil Alvin, vocal, harmonica, acoustic guitar. Dave Alvin, lead guitar. John Bazz, bass. Bill Bateman, drums.

THE BLASTERS live in Downey. Dave formerly in a punk band called THE MURDERERS during the Masque days. They made alot of tapes adding different instruments like organ and sax to get a sound which Dave says, "... was similar to the DEADBEATS." "We played alot of parties on the East side and we played our last gig at a mental institution." John Bazz played drums and Phil occasionally sat in. When THE BLASTERS first came out they didn't know anyone in Hollywood so consequently played places like Cuckoo's Nest in Costa Mesa, alot of biker parties and country western bars. "We get gigs in Hollywood now ... but we're sick of the rockabilly label. We're trying to veer away from stuff like "Honey Don't" 'cause we don't want to be labeled. We do American music. Outside of music there's not too much else you can be proud of in this country. Alot of people put things onto us that just aren't there. We had this girl come up to us the other night who asked us, "Gee, how does it feel to be happy-go-lucky rockabilly guys? What do you think of Colin Winski?" And that is a million miles away from where our heads are at. When we first started out we were sharing a rehearsal place with THE KLAN this beach punk band, and we were pals with them for a long time. When we first started playing we said, "Now this is going to be a straight blues band." Hanging out with these guys, though, the music got crazier and crazier til we finally caught onto a way to make that kind of music viable for today. We came out in a backlash period. When we finally started playing L.A. THE ROCKATS were breaking up, RAY CAMPI had this horrible band, THE KINGBEES were around; they were nice guys but they didn't really turn me on either. There was a big backlash against rockabilly or traditional music or whatever then. People turned off to us the minute they found out we played any rockabilly stuff. Eventually people saw us and realized we were good and alot of the other stuff they'd been seeing wasn't."

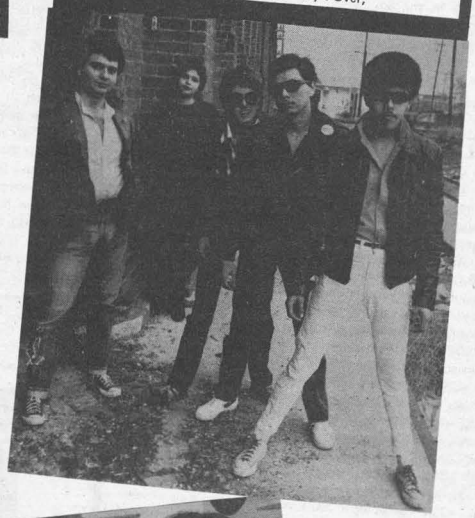
THE BLASTERS have an album "AMERICAN MUSIC" out on Rollin' Rock Records but are no longer with that label. They may put out an EP soon with new versions of "American Music," "Marie, Marie" and two new songs. A cover of "Marie, Marie" by SHAKIN' STEVENS was a top twenty hit recently in the U.K. but people who've heard it say it's "cocktail music" compared to THE BLASTERS' own original treatment. Other originals include: "She Ain't Got the Beat," "Flat Top Joint," "She's Gone Away."

THE BRAT

Theresa, vocals. Lou, bass. Robert, drums. Rudy, guitar. Sidney, lead guitar.

From East L.A. Have been together a year. Theresa, Rudy and Robert were in several other bands together, among them KAMIKAZE, SPEED. Rudy and Theresa write most of the songs. Rudy: "Not too many bands have been coming out of here until now. There's been a big explosion of groups lately. Groups like THE UNDERTAKERS, THE ILLEGALS. People from Hollywood are afraid to come down here to see any gigs because of the stereotypes of Chicanos. You know, gangs. There's really only one place to play down here; it's called Vex, on the corner of Brooklyn and Gage. But there's bands who do come down to play from Hollywood. X played here once. The other gigs we do are in warehouses, halls, wherever we can get into. Down here you can make noise all night long and no one cares. I guess that's why there's so much violence ... because you can get away with it. It's strange."

THE BRAT will be releasing an EP soon produced by Tito Larriva of THE PLUGZ. Song titles: "Attitudes," "Leave Me Alone," "High School," "Starry Nights," "Pretty Boy Loser," "Psychology," "The Party's Over,"



Castration Squad/photos: Jennifer Lynn

CASTRATION SQUAD

CASTRATION SQUAD is an all girl band consisting of six deathlike creatures. Shannon who sings lead vocals, Mary Batthing on backing vocals, Elissa Bello pounding the skins, Tiffany Kennedy on keyboards, Tracy on guitar and Alice Bag on bass.

Interviewing the squad is like pulling teeth from a grave. So here's their manifesto. It speaks for itself.

CASTRATION SQUAD MANIFESTO

Life in this society being, at best, an utter bore and no aspect of society being at all relevant to any woman there remains to civic-minded, responsible, thrilling girls to undermine the government; to reassess and reorganize the senseless, archaic legal system (and initiate a more effective method of enforcement), to stop the blind acceptance of implausible media role models, to reeducate apathetic female puppets who distort the image and impair the evolution of women ... AND TO REPAIR MEN.

Their songs include: "No Mercy For The Dead," "A Date With Jack," "Sheila," "The X Girlfriend," "Batthing," "Dead Billy," "The Dead I Never Saved," "Only God Could Love a Loser Like Me."

—PHRANC

THE CHIEFS

George, guitar. Jerry, singer. Bob, bass. Robert, drums.

At the moment not too much is known about the Chiefs. We had difficulty findout out if they were even still together. Live, they have a very clean, well-rehearsed sound and, if you have to put a label on the music, you'd undoubtedly call it punk rock. George used to be a poly-sci major at UCLA a long time ago. Jerry and Robert were formerly in the SIMPLETONES. Bob fled from a boring, stagnant scene in Oregon to L.A.

Song title: "Holly West Crisis" about getting kicked out of the building on Hollywood Boulevard and Western Avenue where the CHIEFS were born.

CHINA WHITE

Frank, guitar. James, bass. Mark, vocals. Vince, drums. James used to be in THE IDOLS, Vince formerly in THE SLASHERS, Frank formerly in THE OUTSIDERS, Mark formerly in THE NON-FASCISTS. From Huntington Beach. James: "Our songs are pretty serious. Mark sings about what he feels. We move around alot when we play. We're not dead onstage." About Huntington Beach: "The cops are pretty fucked. They've been reading the newspapers too much. They think the bands are like gangs. You get pulled over and they go, "Yeah? What gang are you in? THE CROWD? THE SCREWS?" And you just go, "WHAT!" There's not too many gigs down here. We'd like to play up in Hollywood, so anyone who reads this who wants to book us or manage us ..." About the SLASHERS (now broken up) who had a notorious reputation at the outset of the Huntington Beach scene for vandalism and theft, Dave (ex-singer of SLASHERS): "See, we had a pound scam. We ripped off these Negroes for 47 pounds of pot. And we sold it all and bought equipment. One of our friends went into a music store and stole a bunch of guitars. We bought hot instruments for a while ... we used to do some copies in the band but we had originals, too, like 'Teenage Frankenstein,' 'I Don't Need You' ..." James: "Yeah, they used to cut themselves up alot; they were that kind of band."

CHINA WHITE songs: "Danger Zone," "Criminals," "Solid State," "New Disorder," "Government People," "Anthem," "Addiction," "Your Fault," "On and On."

Circle Jerks/photo: Mark Seldis

THE CIRCLE JERKS

Keith Morris, singer. Greg, guitar. Lucky, drums. Roger, bass. From Hermosa Beach, have been together about nine months. Keith used to be the singer for BLACK FLAG and is featured on their first EP. He left BLACK FLAG about a month before forming THE CIRCLE JERKS. Greg was formerly the guitar player for RED CROSS. Lucky was in a band from up North called THE LIMIT. Roger used to play with some of the guys in THE ANGRY SAMOANS and he played with some other guys from a band called THE TERMINALS. Keith writes most of the songs. Keith: "Everyone calls us punk rock. We're just a garage band. We've slowly built up a fairly large following. When we started the only place we could play were places like Blackie's and private parties. Then we started playing the Hong Kong and opened for THE DEAD KENNEDYS at the Whisky a couple of times." About punk bands causing trouble: "It's not the bands anymore. In the beginning some bands would stir it up. Everybody gets real loose at times and does it. They just had two fires inside the Hong Kong Cafe. So for right now, there's not going to be anymore punk rock inside the Hong Kong. People don't need to be doing shit like that. People don't realize, people from Huntington Beach who come up here and trash things because they can't do it down there, it's like their playground up here in Hollywood or L.A. it makes it so bands can't work at all."

About their album: "It's recorded and mixed. We've been talking to a few different people about putting it out. There's a guy whose name we can't mention who may buy the tape to release it and he's guaranteeing us a trip to New York. We've also been talking to Posh Boy. He's excited about it. But we don't know yet what we're going to do. We've talked to Biggs (SLASH) too." Songs: "Operation," "Behind the Door," "Paid Vacation," "Group Sex," "Live Fast Die Young," "Deny Everything," "Red Tape," "Wasted," "Beverly Hills - Century City," "World Up My Ass," "Back Against the Wall," "What's Your Problem?". Also featured in upcoming documentary THE DECLINE and album soundtrack.

DEAD SKIN

Dave, guitar. Mike, singer. Fill, bass. Keith B., drums.

From Garden Grove and they've been together about five months. Before DEAD SKIN, Fill was in THE NOBODYS, Dave was in THE INLANDERS. They used to have a different singer in the beginning but he neither drank nor took drugs and, though no one forced anything on him, he decided to leave the band after a traumatic experience at a party where the rest of DEAD SKIN was indulging in pscylocibin mushrooms.

Dave: "We sound like the rustling of dead skin. It's a little deadly but you can dance to it." DEAD SKIN has been having trouble, as have other Orange County beach bands like THE ADOLESCENTS, THE RUINS, THE SCREWS, with jocks and nightclub bouncer types that crash punk parties for the sole purpose of putting punks in the hospital or the morgue. Dave is currently awaiting further court action for self-defensive measures he took with a box cutter when a rather big fellow (a foot taller and a 100 lbs. heavier) had Dave in his iron grip, and was using him as a punching bag. This occurred at a party featuring DEAD SKIN and THE ADOLESCENTS. Allegedly these monster men (who call themselves Rockheads, apparently because that's all they have upstairs) invaded the otherwise peaceful gathering and started coldcocking punks from behind. Funny, we hear they like to pick on the smaller kids. This seemingly was not an isolated case and still happens every so often.

DEAD SKIN hope to record a single or EP with a "guy down the street who has a professional recording studio in his garage."

Song titles: "Boxed-In," "Armageddon," "Going AWOL," "Mr. Hyde," "Police Woman," "Death Force," and a cover of "Can You Hear Me Now" by Donovan.

DER STAB

Keith, bass. Randy, drums. Andi, singer. Mike, guitar.

From Orange County, have been together for eleven months. Randy: "Keith used to sing but we've a girl singer now. Keith and Andi write most of the songs. We've had a lot of personnel changes." About the music: "Kind of a cross between THE CRASS and SIOUXSIE & THE BANSHEES. It's not your basic 1,2,3,4 – 1,2,3,4. We do alot of anarchistic type things, anti-politics."

Plan to have a single with: "It's Grey," "Tracers," "Labels and Finances." Other songs: "No Facts," "Bust Our Heads,"

THE DESCENDANTS

Tony, bass. Bill, drums. Frank, guitar. Cecilia, singer.

From Hermosa/Redondo Beach. Frank: "We've been together a little over a year. We used to be a trio until we found Cecilia. We've also changed personnel a couple of times; there used to be another drummer and bassist. Tony was in a band, THE AGITATORS. I used to be in THE SICK which turned into THE DESCENDANTS. I also used to drum for THE PAGAN BABIES. We try to be the fastest anti-poseur group. I work all day and night as a commercial fisherman so call it fish punk. I started getting into this music when I was in high school with the bass player for THE LAST ... we play what we want to in THE DESCENDANTS and don't follow trends. We try to kick ass, that's the bottom line. We do it ALL!" (? – Ed.)

Have a single out on own label, Orca Productions Records¾ "Ride the Wild"/"It's a Hectic World." Other songs are: "Kabuki," "Like the Way I Know," "Mr. Bass," "Statue of Liberty," "Myage," "Sewage."

Descendants/photo: Evan Rude

FORTY-FIVE GRAVE/VOX POP

Dinah Cancer, vocals. Don Bowles, drums. Rob Graves, bass. Paul Cutler, guitar.

"Amphetamine horror pop with a twist of heavy metal." The band originally formed out of a group of people recording for the hell of it, including a cover version of a cheesy sixties monster dance song "Riboflavin-Flavored, Non-Carbonated, Polyunsaturated Blood," which appears on the LAFMS "Darker Skratcher" album.

Some song titles: "Wax," "Party Time," "Black Cross," "Surfin Bat." Band name came from finding a button in a thrift store that had "We Dig 45 GRAVE" on it.

Band members have been part of, or are still participating in the various combos: CONSUMERS, TURQUOISE ORCHESTRA, MODERN TRIBAL MUSIC, RED ROCK BOUFFANT, YVONNES, DISTANT COUSINS, CASTRATION SQUAD, C.E.D.S., VOX POP, SKULL PUSSIES, HERMANN NITSCH ORCHESTRA, SILVER CHALICE, GERMS, NERVOUS GENDER, LIARS, EXTERMINATORS, KRAYZEE HOMICIDE, GUN CLUB, BAGS.

Influences: Neal Hefti "Batman" album, the CHALLENGERS, early VAN DER GRAF GENERATOR. "We're trying to think of a good band that none of us were in that we're influenced by."

Personnel exchange with 45 GRAVE.

Mary Syms (Dinah Cancer), vocal, synthesizer, tambourine. Don Bolles, guitar, drums. Paul Cutler, bass, guitar. The Yeti-drums. Michael Ochoa, synthesizer. Jeff Dahl, guitar, vocals. Joe Nice Guy, synthesizer. ("And whoever crawls up on stage with us.")

"Manic Metal. Psycho-delic noise!"

Song titles: "Tumbebug," "Fuck Me in the Weinie," "Destruction Unit," "American Women," (Guess Who song) "Sicurthibmeee" (Faust).

Single: "Cab Driver (vocals, Jeff)"/"Just Like Your Mom (vocals, Don)" on Bad Trip label. Initial pressing sold out. "The guy at Tower said it was the best local single he's heard in months." Band favors bizarre stage attire – often in drag or nude. Influences: Blue Cheer, Velvet Underground, Faust, Black Sabbath.

—CRAIG LEE

The Gun Club photo:Anna Statman

THE GUN CLUB

Jeffrey Lea Pierce, vocals. Brian Tristan, guitar. Rob, bass. Terry G., drums.

Jeffrey was formerly in THE E-TYPES and RED LIGHTS in New York. This is Brian's first group but he sometimes backs up PHRANC, also frequently plays with THE BONEHEADS. Rob used to play guitar and Terry, drums, for THE BAGS. Jeffrey describes THE GUN CLUB as updated swamp music with swamp influences. He writes all the songs. His favorite singers are Buck Griffin and Slim Harpo. Jeffrey: "We don't play that stuff but we listen to it alot. It's real easy to listen to Robert Johnson and come up with ideas for a punk group: Lightnin' Hopkins, John Lee Hooker.

People sometimes think we're trying to do country but there's much more blues in the sound. Everything we do won't always fit into that swamp sound ... but it is pretty much a deep south bounty hunter kind of feel. Voodoo rock 'n roll. I want a definite sound. Alot of people aren't going to hear the influences because they're so obscure. We use alot of rhythms taken from solo blues people like Son House and Harpo that's a different kind of rhythm from a regular band. We're NOT blues, though. We do the same things to blues that THE CRAMPS do. There's alot of scary songs coming out of that vein. It's something that everybody in the group has been brought up with, a rural Southern feeling ... As Johnny Cash would say, 'River, trains, levees, planes." Also the Devil. My dad is a Baptist and used to stress those principles. I'm using that stuff to my advantage. The music pries at alot of people's secret hang-ups; the devil from a Baptist point of view even though my mother brought me up Catholic. The hardest thing to do is get past your raising which tells you you don't belong to yourself. That gives you the 'killer on the road' attitude ... as Jim Morrison would put it. He got that feel live. Lots of country and blues hit that right on the head. Hellhound on my trail. Anyone who lives in the desert or the Southwest knows what I'm talking about. You can USE that uniquely American tradition."

THE GUN CLUB are currently rehearsing to record a single for release on THE URINALS' label. Songs will probably be "Black Train," "Walking With the Beast" and either a weird cajun cover with accordion or an all-stops-out version of "Iko Iko." Other songs: "Goodbye Johnny," "American Promise," "For the Love of Ivy," "Seven Miles with the Devil," "The Devil and the Nigger," "Sex Beat," "Preaching Blues (Robert Johnson & Son House," "Going Down to the Red River," "Gunslinger."

THE MENTORS

El Duce, vocals, drums. Larry Talbot, bass. Sickie, guitar. Formed in Seattle 3 years ago. Came to L.A. about a year and a half ago. El Duce is the leader. Sickie: "It's rape rock. Everything you wanted to hear but no other band besides the MENTORS had the balls to do. We're a rockin' band with dirty lyrics. Basically we're out to destoy stupid New Wave bands, destroy trendy people who like to put on their New Wave ties and sunglasses and go boppin' down to the night-clubs. We're out to destroy the Pro Fun scene ... We don't pussy around with the ladies, either." Asked if they ever met the all girl CASTRATION SQUAD, Sickie replied: "Yeah, I'm buddies with a couple of them." On playing with other bands: "The audience usually forgets who they came to see. And the clubowners and other bands don't like that." Have produced a four minute trailer for their planned feature film "GET UP AND DIE."

Songs: "My Woman from Sodom," "Going Through the Purse," "Let Me Fuck Your Botton," "Peeping Tom," "Cornshucker," "Get Up and Die," "I'm the Whipping Bastard."

PHRANC

Phranc/photo: James

PHRANC is solo about half the time but when she has a band backing her up it usually consists of Chase Holliday, organ. Craig Lee, drums. Brian Tristan, electric buitar. PHRANC, singer & acoustic guitar. This incarnation most recently appeared under the name THE REDCOATS owing to the fact they were all wearing their James Dean jackets that evening. Brian is also in the GUN CLUB. Craig Lee is also in THE BONEHEADS and along with PHRANC, the long dormant sleepy-eyed giant, CATHOLIC DISCIPLINE. PHRANC does predominantly folk material. When playing with a band, the sound has the quiet building tension of THE VELVET UNDERGROUND on their third album (you know, the one with "What Goes On" and "Jesus").

PHRANC is featured with CATHOLIC DISCIPLINE in the upcoming film and soundtrack, THE DECLINE.

PHRANC's songs: "Ballad of the Dumb Hairdressers," "Tiffany Likes Kennedy," "Take Off Your Swastikas," "I Like Charlotte," cover versions of "Who Killed Davey Moore?," "Masters of War," "After Hours," "I Still Miss Someone," "Pablo Picasso," "You Go Your Way, I'll Go Mine."

SCHMIDLIN

Rick Schmidlin, vocals. Rick T., lead bass. Ed M., rhythm violin. Gaylord, drums.

They've been together about three or four weeks. Rick S. describes their sound as "anti-music ... taking PIL one step further." Gaylord now books the Whisky, was formerly in the band SHOCK.

Song titles: "Don't I Walk Funny," "I'm So Violent," "I'm a Nazi and That's That," "You Can Read My Name on the Bathroom Wall."

THE SCREWS

Craig, singer. John, drums. Paul, bass. Ron, guitar.

From Huntington Beach, together about two years. Paul: "We got together when Craig was a little 13 year old in 8th grade ... when John and I came in we were replacing some other guys who called themselves THE PRESS; they played SEX PISTOLS covers. John and Ron are 18 now, I'm 17. The basic idea is still punk. We're not really anti-anything. Our songs are about people. Ron pretty much takes care of the words." About audiences: "When we play at the Cuckoo's Nest it gets kinda crazy. It's packed. But we played with THE WEIRDOS the other night at the Hong Kong and it was kinda boring. Everyone sat there. We've never been banned from anywhere. We get warned occasionally that if anyone in the audience gets too crazy we'll get sued ..." About Huntington Beach police harassment: "I've been pulled over for looking like a punk. I got pulled over once for not having a light over my license plate! And they gave me the drunk tests. They used to take pictures of you and put your picture on a 'punk card.' Even kids that were just on their bicycles, they'd stop and take their picture. And when you get thrown in jail down in Huntington Beach they pick on you like you wouldn't believe. They've lightened up a little. It used to be really bad. Alot of kids complained and fought back about the way they were being treated. But Newport Beach is bad now. They never had punks before but now they do. Someone got stabbed by a punk so automatically everyone gets branded. You can't even go down there without getting stopped, searched, and photographed. The cops down here, though, have always been dicks. They want to find someone to pick on ..." About parents: "Alot of parents'll kick you right out of the house. I know alot of kids who've been kicked out. All *our* parents, though, are pretty cool. We've brought home our demo tapes and had them listen to them. Some kids get the shit beaten out of them. Some kids move up to Hollywood and roam around with no place to live. One friend of mine can't even go into his house unless his mom is gone ..." About a record: "We've talked to THE CROWD about something, to Posh Boy but basically no one has the money to really do anything. We've recorded some demos."

Some titles: "Valerie's Dead," "I Want Out," "TV Timing," "Body and Soul," "Time After Time," a cover of 'Wipe-Out."

THE SHEIKS OF SHAKE

Sheiks of Shake/photo: Ken St. John

Paul B., drums. Louie L., harmonica, vocals. John S., guitar. Dennis E., bass.

Throw away your Blues Brothers album, because that's just Greenwich Village comedian jive. Burn up your CREAM albums, because those English acid-burnouts just exaggerated the classic blues licks without a thought to the passion and mood of the original versions. Skip every bad impression the blues have ever given you, and listen only to the original negroes or take a chance on something really adventurous like the big horrible blues-mess of the SHEIKS OF SHAKE.

They come on dressed in black with shades and looking like the authentic Chicago days of MUDDY and LITTLE WALTER, but when they play, the music is beaten and twisted into an experimental monster that sounds much closer to CAPT. BEEFHEART's attitude towards blues. Some songs have noticable blues structure, but others are one chord drones and whining death marches. The whole band looks to be approaching forty, and the audience at most shows are completely dismayed. The SHEIKS just blow way out into the ozone and leave the poor New Wave followers looking for any trace of drugs in their drinks. They're the most immediate heirs to the MAGIC BAND style of roots-conscious experimental music and would probably be at home on a bill with PUBLIC IMAGE or the FALL. They're odd and amazing which all just serves to make them one of the most fascinating and impressive new bands, in days with few bands of any style to be seen anywhere.

—'LIL J.

SEX SICK

Kira, bass. Melissa, guitar. Elissa, drums. Michelle, vocals.

(sekz sik) adj., n. 1) a state of distemper and/or nausea, esp. regarding physical contact with other beings, 2) the distinct preference not to engage in physical contact (esp. sexual union) with other beings, cadavers or inanimate objects (esp. "marital aids"), 3) a psychological term adopted by the Zurich Institute, who proposed that the "sexual revolution" of the late twentieth century had brought about more illness than health in many individuals, leading eventually to a state characterized by: a) restlessness and irrational actions, b) anti-social reclusiveness, c) misuse of drugs; 4) the name of a group that formed in LA in the eighth decade of the twentieth century who played "heavy metal" music that could crush your testicles.

SEXUALLY FRUSTRATED/I.U.D.

Leslie, vocals. Zoo, guitar and saxaphone. Randy, drums. Keith, bass.

Originally based in L.A., now in Orange County. Leslie: "Zoo and I formed SEXUALLY FRUSTRATED with Keith and Randy from DER STAB." Randy, about the music: "I can't think of any category it could fall into. It's both experimental and rock n roll. It was more or less a joke band when we first started but then we came up with some good material."

SEXUALLY FRUSTRATED is going into the studio in October to record their first single: "Baby Junkie/S.O.B." Other songs include: "My Face," "Barefoot Blues," "Sexually Frustrated," "Mama Don't Care," "Party House."

Leslie, keyboards. Zoo, keyboards, guitar and saxophone. Still looking for a permanent singer.

Leslie: "We formed SEXUALLY FRUSTRATED a year ago, but with I.U.D. it's all girls and a different format. We're going to keep both bands together. This is really Zoo's band and she's still trying out different people to sing. The keyboards make a big difference in our sound from SEXUALLY FRUSTRATED. We've got more of a HUMAN HANDS, B PEOPLE sound. We're going into the studio in October, to do a single. The only thing we know we're going to put on it for sure is a song called "Bon Appetit" which is about indulging in too much food." Other songs include: "Sex at 3," "Complication."

SOCIAL DISTORTION

DD, singer. Dennis, bass. John, drums. Mike, guitar & vocals. From Orange County. Have been together about a year. Lost their original drummer to the ADOLESCENTS. John was in THE NOBODYS and THE RUINS. Mike was asked to join THE DETOURS but declined. DD used to be in THE IDLE RICH. Songwriting is a group effort. Mike on the music: "We're trying to get this pop/punk sound that still has a hard edge to it. Keep the hard edge but still make the songs catchy."

Hopefully by December they'll have a single out: "1945/ Mainliner." Other song titles: "Social Distortion," "Moral Threats," "Anti-Fashion," "The Playpen."

THE SPEED QUEENS

Crystal, singer. Avenue, guitar. Sandra, bass. Killer, drums. Live in Long Beach at the moment. Ave. does most of the writing. Have a very fast heavy metal/punk sound. Not able to get in touch with any band members for further comments or information. They're currently working on an EP of some of their newer material.

Song titles: "Dogpile," "Fix Dick," "Dull Pain."

THE STAINS

Jerry, vocals. Jessie, bass. Gilbert, drums. Robert, guitar. From East L.A. and have been together off and on for the last four years! Known as the hard-core punk band from East L.A. Have had various personnel changes; Robert: "This band has been broken up so many times!" Robert writes the music, Jessie most of the lyrics with Jerry occasionally helping out. About the East L.A. scene: "We've played alot of places here but never Vex. Alot of the places we played too soon ... while they were still disco. A year later they turn new wave." About their music: "Some people say it sounds like BLACK SABBATH at 78 rpm. Everybody out here calls us the assholes, the idiots. That's because they're into "New Wave." I'm sick of all of them, they're boring! Real corny. People around here don't like us personally but they still come see us play."

They have plans for a single, maybe a live album "... that's the way people have to hear us, that live sound." Song titles: "Sick and Crazy," "Bombs Over Iran," "Obscene Phone Call," "Young Nazis," "Not Me," "Political Scandal," "Heroes."

Stingers/photo: John Robinson

THE STINGERS

Henry, guitar, vocals. Tony V., drums. Iris R., keyboards. Patti B., bass.

From Long Beach, have been together for about two years. Henry writes all the songs. Henry: "I've been working on the concept for about five years. The concept of doing my

own music. Our songs are about everybody's individual freedoms. "Victim" is about riding on the bus and people saying stuff under their breath. What goes through my head, what I think of them and what they're saying about me."

Of special note to the visually oriented: Tony has a shaved spot on his head and an eye tatooed on the side.

Have a single out on their own label: "No Value/Blind." Other songs: "It's My Life (not the ANIMALS' song)," "Bad Boy," "Calf's Liver."

THE TENANTS

Cliff Martinez, drums. David Arnov, guitar. Bill Underwood, bass. Chris Lissner, vocals.

Past the noxious glare of daily headline and detatched viewpoint of the faggot highrise, down the lowlight alley where Wilson Pickett slams the New Fakers and insolent romance breeds like a virus, the tenants of the streets slumped against the bricks with smuggled jade hypos plugging burnt-out skulls, snapping. Urban ferment with a crisp negro scent, fun as barbituate induced dry heaves with dirty fingernails in all the wrong pies. "Four-man groups are out, Mr. Hays, and get them to cut that hair."

Tenant tunes: "Fun Fun," "Do the Seizure," "Pressure Drop," "Chopping Away on White," "They're Yours, They're Ours, They're Everybody's." —WILL L'AMATO

TOP JIMMY AND THE RHYTHM PIG

Top Jimmy, vocals. Carlos Guitarlos, guitar. Steve Berlin, sax. Other members vary from gig to gig: sometimes there's John Doe (X) on bass, sometimes John Bazz from the BLASTERS, sometimes Gary Ryan from THE BLACKHEARTS (JOAN JETT BAND); sometimes Don (X) on drums, sometimes Bill Bateman (BLASTERS); also known to stand in are Phil Alvin, harmonica (BLASTERS), Dave Alvin, lead guitar (BLASTERS), Derf, sax (FEAR), Lee, harmonica (FEAR), Billy Zoom (X) lead guitar; guest vocals: John Doe and Exene (X), Jeffrey Lea (GUN CLUB), James Harmon (JAMES HARMON BAND). Carlos was formerly in CARLOS AND THE WORLD. Top Jimmy: "We don't really do rhythm & blues. We do more of what I like to call rockin' blues. It's rowdier than R & B. R&B tends to be a little more soulful. I really like playing but sometimes it can be kinda disappointing if you get an audience who just stands there and stares. I can't stand it if I don't see people moving around. It's too boring. They just stand there and ... it reminds me of fishheads, these dead fish staring at you with wide eyes. I don't give a shit if people are really dancing. They can be walking around, buying drinks, just as long as they act like they're alive. I've alot better responses usually when I play a bar or someplace small that can only hold about 100, 150 people ... one place I won't play anymore is the Starwood. And that's because of the bouncer situation there. They LOVE to beat up on people. I've seen them go after kids that are half their size that aren't doing anything ... But I love Los Angeles, it's the most wonderful pit in the whole world. I don't think people live here, I think they just exist . . That's why I'm leaving for a while. I'm going to Kentucky and spend a couple months, probably get this Harley Davidson Panhead bike while I'm down there. I've got to get away for awhile. I mean we get gigs and stuff but we make about $12. It's not worth the fucking effort I've been trying to put into it. It's not just us either, every band that's pretty new is going through the same thing. I'm gonna go take a rest then come back and do it again.

Songs (no originals yet, though several L.A. songwriters claim to be working on material for Jimmy): ".44," "Do the Do," "Baby Please Don't Go," "I'm Ready," "Framed," "Who Do You Love." Also has recorded versions of "Ubangi Stomp/Framed" set for release on 45 but no money to do it. Also recorded and mixed: "Do the Do" and "Do the Funky Negro." SLASH recently approached Jimmy to do his classic version of the Doors' "Roadhouse Blues" for release as a single in England, but this is still up in the air at the moment.

Top Jimmy/photos: Chris D.

THE UNDERTAKERS

Art, singer. Anthony, guitar. Mike, drums. Tracy, bass.

From East L.A. Have been together about a year. These guys dress in very formal outfits ... like an undertaker might wear. Live, they're a nervous, jumpy sound with nearly everyone in the band moving at once. What kind of music do they play? Christ, do I have to say it again? I've been wracking my brain over each successive band trying to think of new adjecctives to describe "punk rock." Art on their songs: " 'Halls and Walls' is a spiritual song. 'Lucifer's Shadow' is about all these things inside of you struggling to get out. Everybody in the human race is Lucifer's shadow because they're committing sin."

THE UNDERTAKERS would like to put out a single or album but, along with so many of the rest of us, have zero finances to do this.

Song titles: "Master Race," "For Your Information," "Undertakers' Federation," "Crucify Me," "Death Breath," "Eternally Yours," "The Plague," "It's a Sin," "Gravediggers," "America's Dream."

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IF YOU DON'T SEE THEM, ASK

SAM FULLER

Interviewed by CHRIS D. and JUDITH BELL

Sam Fuller started out at the age of 14 as a crime reporter on the New York Journal. One of his earliest assignments was an interview with an axe murderer. During the thirties he wrote several novels including TEST-TUBE BABY, one of the first stories about conception through artificial insemination, and BURN, BABY, BURN, a story asking the question, "Should a pregnant murderess be sent to the electric chair?" During the mid-sixties leaders from the Black Muslims and other radical black groups phoned Sam to ask permission to use this now famous slogan. Other novels include THE DARK PAGE, 144 PICCADILLY, THE NAKED KISS, DEAD PIGEON ON BEETHOVEN STREET and THE BIG RED ONE. In 1949 he directed his first movie, I SHOT JESSE JAMES. His latest, just released is THE BIG RED ONE. (For a complete list of his films see the end of this interview.) We talked to Sam in his Laurel Canyon home the day after an all night surprise party celebrating his 69th birthday.

FULLER: I'm totally unfamiliar with the whole music scene . . . the one contact I had with it was when I went to the Edinburgh Film Festival in '69. When I talked with my wife, Christa, who was here in L.A., she told me that Jim Morrison had been calling and he wanted to talk to me about making a film with him. I didn't know who it was. When I returned I met him. The irony of the whole thing . . . well, we didn't make the movie, anyway. The reason is it had been made. He gave me the script and it had been made. It was too much like EASY RIDER. Despite the fact that the man who wrote it had written it five or six years prior to that. I told him this motion picture business is not how long ago you've written something. It's when something else was either published, put on the stage or made into a movie. And, if your original story . . . you, you might've had it eight years ago, it doesn't make any difference to anybody, you see. I got very friendly with Jim. I've all his books. A very poetic young man. I liked him very much. The next time Christa was in Paris, she ran into him. He'd put on a lot of weight and shortly after that was found dead in a tub. Do you know the story of how he died? Was he high or something?

SLASH: Some people say that he took the wrong drugs. He thought it was one thing and it was actually something else.

FULLER: It had to be. He had no suicidal bent when I met him. He also made two movies at UCLA and he ran them for me here at the house. Excellent. I liked them. His dream was to make a movie. To actually make a big movie and not just be in one. I was delighted to know him. I got a kick out of him. He would hang around here quite alot and try to figure out what we could do. At one time I thought of using him as a heavy in a western. I wanted to get that fellow who was in PERFORMANCE, too, for a movie . . . Jagger, he was perfect for it. The studios wouldn't see him around the corner at the time. Within three or four months he's on the cover of Life. I cut out the picture and the story and sent it to the guy I'd talked to at the studio. . .

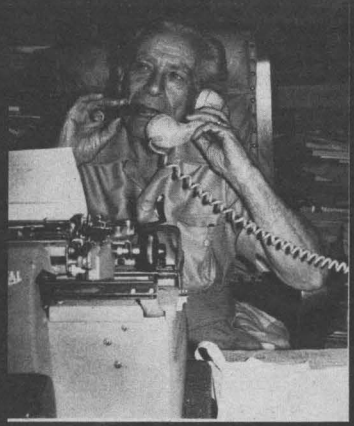
SLASH: I know that when you started and all through your career, you haven't always seen exactly eye to eye with your producers. In Merrill's MARAUDERS you had to add that ending where all the soldiers were marching along triumphantly. And then there was the scene you had to take out where the American soldiers went into a frenzy and started shooting each other . . . Why do you think the studios, the people who run the entertainment business, are that way?

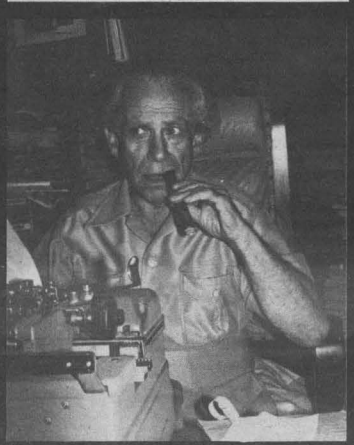
FULLER: Safety.

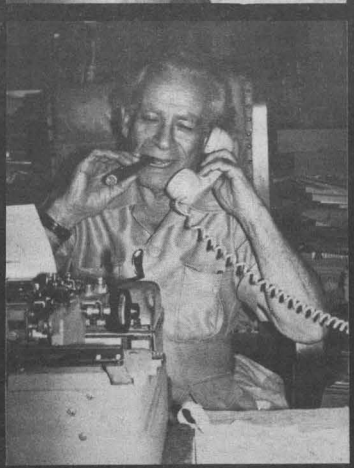
SLASH: But why do you think they're so interested in that safety?

FULLER: Because of money, naturally. Let me give you an example. You are either an independent producer or you're representing your studio. I come to you with a story and there's alot of things in there that either you don't understand, you don't like, or they seem strange to you. And the last thing that you want is that obstacle. My God! I mean we have the money to make a picture. We have an idea of who's going to be in it. And we certainly DON'T want this particular kind of a story. We don't like it, we don't want it, we won't touch it! It is unsafe. It is a gamble enough for them to make a film, hopefully even with a name let alone an unknown, it's enough of a gamble to make your money back and make a profit. You've a board of directors, you've a home, you have dinners, restaurants you go to, things you do. You want to keep that up. You're not going to endanger that for one second! My God! Why?! There's nothing wrong in doing a story comparable to there's nothing wrong with writing a certain song with a certain beat, you see, if it means it'll be used or published. It's the same with a story. If I write a story about you and you're in love with a woman and the only way for you to eliminate her distrust towards you is for you to prove that her father is an innocent man. The producer likes that right away. That's good, that's good!!! It may be ridiculous. But anyway. I was on a newspaper for years, I never covered a story of a hero. Of course, there's no such thing as a hero in war. The word heroic doesn't exist. It's just a myth that came from before William the Conqueror. A hero is if YOU are walking on a bridge and you cannot swim. And someone is drowning. A hero is: you know that there's one chance in a million of you saving that person's life. It's impossible for you to do it. But something prompted you to think maybe . . . maybe you CAN save that person's life. If you run into a burning building, and I've seen this . . . I've seen this and it's rough. Now the man who runs in there is mesmerized. The clarity in his mind is to save someone. Ten million things may have gone through his mind, we'll never know, of a similar thing that happened. Or a friend of his, or a kid, or he read about it, or instinct or whatever it is . . . but when you run into a burning building and it's falling . . . and with the heat you have to be seventy-five to a hundred yards away from that, you know, the firemen with their damn screens. That's HOT. I saw this. That's a hero. But to get back to the original point, so the motion picture industry is like the music industry that way. It's been that way for music whether it's ballet or opera or whatever the hell it is. The old expression that's associated with writers, or painters or poets, or musicians is, "I don't want to be famous a hundred years from now. I want to be famous now because fame means money. Money gives me the arrogance I'm entitled to and the ego that befits me." Now that's the artist talking. And unfortunately for what we call the establishment, and I hate that word . . . anybody with a dollar is an establishment . . . there's no such thing. It's a question of if you have the money or you don't have the money. And there are people who are bigoted or narrow-minded whether it's music or literature who . . . they don't have to have money. They're lost tribes. I pay no attention to them. There are millions of people like that all over the world. "Don't shake anything. Don't change anything." It's a very funny comedy I'm telling you. You see a board of directors of Chase, or Chatham Phoenix or some big bank in New York, fifteen or twenty men sitting there, this is wonderful, with Havana cigars . . . they can smuggle them because they're powerful enough . . . and they're saying, now this is in regards to Motown, "What about this black singer? Diana Ross Records?" "Well, they're taking in $11,400,000 as of yesterday morning." All they know is the sound of that money. Right away they become enthusiastic. No, no, it's very funny. Well, the greatest composers in the world had the same trouble that persons in rock n' roll or punk rock or whatever are having right now. Any one of those composers had trouble selling . . . generally, they were really impoverished and they died very poor from malnutrition. Tubercular bacillus mixed with malnutrition and they died. They didn't have to mix liquor and narcotics. They had no food. And they all had a problem of not being able to sell what they wrote because again the people publishing it had enough problems raising money. And you come along. Whether it's a Beethoven, a Mussorgsky or whatever the hell it is, they've got these sounds they've never heard before. That's all. I think that one thing has advanced as far as I'm concerned. In the last fifteen or twenty years, whether it's Presley or the Beatles or someone before them or after, there have been quite a few that've been financial smashes . . . which disrupts history. In other words, this IS WRONG. According to certain bankers, that's wrong. They should not have money coming to them until at least seventy-five years after their death. Now don't you think that's wonderful progress. No, no, I really mean that. I just think it's great.

SLASH: Bringing this back to newspapers . . . The kind of devices newspapers use to sell papers: the headlines they use, the pictures they use on page one, the typeface . . .







Sam Fuller/photo: Chris D.

For instance you were a crime reporter . . . There's a certain amount of sensationalism involved. You're trying to attract the least common denominator.

FULLER: Yeah.

SLASH: Why do you think that film, music or any other media, the people who bankroll, market it, why don't they use the same tools to exploit it? Have the same attitude? You can sell an unpopular type of music or movie story if you handle it right. Even if the artist doesn't agree with being exploited in that way, why don't the producers or moneymen take the exploitable element in their work, sensational elements and capitalize on them? Use them as a headline, a lead? Instead of not dealing with them at all? What I'm trying to say is that I've seen so many movies from the thirties, the forties, the fifties that were aimed at . . .

FULLER : Program pictures.

SLASH: Right. Action pictures, crime pictures, different "genre" pictures, and they were successful, yet they still managed to tell the truth, be much closer to reality than the movies you see today.

FULLER: To get back to your first point, you've got a good comparison there. I don't quite know how to put my finger on it. When you sell a story, a news story . . . that's actually what you're doing, is selling it . . . there's one advantage of course, one great advantage on a newspaper and that is the top news story of any news of the day is DEATH. THAT'S SUPREME AND NUMBER ONE. On any city desk. Stocks go up, stocks go down, new structures are being built, so-and-so left her husband, a father steals his three children, messy, gossipy stuff, all that junk . . . the priority, now this is what I think you meant and it's not a bad-off thought, what can you get that's comparable to DEATH in anything, especially in music. In film, too. With that story though you can't lose. It's a good thought. I don't know. I think that Beethoven did it. With his headlines. Bach did it, Brahms did it. Tchaikovsky did it. They had headlines when they wrote. It was undoubtedly, and I've read alot of books on all these old bastards, to the ear of that day it was noise. IT WAS NOISE. It clashed, it didn't run the way they were accustomed to listening to a piece of music. They knew when it would go up, when it would go down, and Beethoven belted them with headlines. He really did. He slammed them.

(First side of tape runs out here and we have an abrupt breach of continuity, to a discussion of THE BIG RED ONE.)

It's a different story. And the irony of it is it's not only a different story, and this is what I'm cocky about, it's an honest story. Forget about whether people like it or not, or the characters, because the story, the premise is so honest. When you take 100,000 men and put them into a battle area, generally the majority live. It's only occasional when you've a small group of men, maybe 100, very small, and they're bushwhacked. This happens. It happens where a certain group of men are physically outnumbered. That is usually called a massacre. IT'S NOT A MASSACRE. If YOU die out on the battlefield, as far as I'm concerned, THAT'S a massacre. Because that's the way YOU feel when you're dying. Why me? Forget the words. That's bullshit. I hate words! Misnomers completely, and completely hypocritical. That's YOUR war. If you have a police action, if four people are fighting five people crossing a border, for crying-out-loud! and the news story says that it's just a little skirmish . . . SKIRMISH, MY ASS! That's war as far as YOU'RE concerned. And your parents or your family. And when they pick you up and your head is not there . . . well, I would like for somebody to say, "Well, uh . . . uh . . ." they wouldn't know what to say! Because it is a war, it's your war. The individual's war. So I wanted to do the story, and I did, of just the survivors. That's all. That I haven't seen. And I've gone on record as saying, I'm guilty of it, of . . . it's easy, so easy for me to write a scene involving you, direct you, and I can maneuver just beautifully a certain moment, poignant moment. See, you just got that one letter you always wanted from Hildegarde, the little girl you were in love with you lived behind the goddamn butcher shop. And you say, "Holy Smoke! And here I thought she left me. Sergeant, you know what Hildegarde just – " RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!!! And you do that three or four times. And you must build up sympathy for the man. Not only sympathy, interest. But I went out of my way to make sure THESE men are faceless. I gave them all just a little touch. But movies have been false, and it's the same with music because they've been asskissers and hypocrites, too; they'll go the way the wind blows, and I don't care who-the-hell it is. Eighty percent, ninety percent plagiaristic. Highly, highly uninventive. So if you do a war picture, and Wayne leads your charge, there's nothing wrong with it. And you have the two or three young men, and one is killed and one is blinded and one is wounded. Nothing wrong with that. Except it bores me. That is not an honest story. The honest story is the selfishness of each individual. "I'm coming out of this in one piece, see?" The strength of victory depends on that feeling. There's no such thing as self-sacrifice. You are self-sacrificing yourself the moment you're on the line. There's no hypocrisy about courage and bravery. None. There's nothing cowardly about the Hamill character, what he has is buck fever. It's like hunting deer and you see those great big beautiful eyes. And the fellow says, "I can't kill that animal." Now I don't believe in that. I never hunted in my life. I never had an idea of killing an animal. So I can't put myself in the mind of a professional hunter. If I were hungry, I'd kill him and eat him. But to actually shoot an animal, I can't discuss. Ha, ha, I cannot see the reason. In other words if you have an M-1, I don't care if it's a rhino, a hippo, or six lions. They're dead. Do you know what I'm talking about? There's not even a contest. There's nothing. It's like going into a room and shooting ten infants, ten babies . . .

SLASH: Shooting fish in a barrel.

FULLER: I don't understand anybody saying, "Did you ever hunt a baby?" That to me is the same thing. So when Hamill froze in the movie, it's just not a question of cowardice. He shot, he grenaded, he killed people. He's the symbol in the film of alot of people who, when they turn and see the enemy, they didn't gauge them to be three feet, four feet away. Now that scares the hell out of you! It's like stepping on your brakes if an animal runs in front of your car. Did that ever happen to you? Don't you get cold all over? Same thing, same sickness. Now the hypocrisy about the whole thing is, and it's hard to explain it to anyone unless you're involved in it, and it is hypocrisy, shows how silly the whole thing is! The man you confront feels the same way! He's just as shocked, just as stunned! He pees right then. His ASS CURDLES! It's all within a second. It's just that fast! But the irony of it all is, you're both so terrified. So what I'm getting at, I didn't want to show him as being chicken. When he ran, he ran because it's human. It's got nothing to do with cowardice. When the tanks came into the Kassirene Pass, this is legitimate, there was a rout R-O-U-T. It was not an orderly withdrawal and it was not a retreat. And it was not a run. IT WAS A ROUT. A rout is when you throw your weapon away, your helmet away, so you'll have movement of your body. A rout is when there's mass panic. Nobody gets sore at that. Those are tanks! You see, I'm not trying to make a hero OR a coward. I don't want to go into that. Everybody's the same. In this particular thing, I thought if I could get the art of survival down to the fine grain of self-belief, self-centered selfishness. In this film, you can tell the story honestly, without flagwaving, patriotism, or speeches . . . you see, World War II was a very bad job that had to be done. The man responsible for it in Europe and Africa was Hitler. Now when you CAN'T sit down and discuss anything with a man, he becomes a thing. Forget him personally. And the thing represents KILL. And the only way you can stop a KILL IS TO KILL THE KILLERS OF THE KILL. It's wrong, mind you. But I agree with this particular war because it's been proven that for the first time in history since man began that nations who really HATED EACH OTHER slept in the same bed! They really did. Even had children together. They all had great sex. Whether it's England, Russia, or France. With Germany, with Italy. Everybody against Hitler distrusted each other. People can understand when you're talking about nations. Let's talk about YOU. Imagine you. You don't give a damn about these nations. Ha, ha, ha YOU DON'T CARE! You don't even care about the goddam division. You don't care if you read the Stars 'n Stripes and read that the president said this, Churchill said that. It means nothing to you. What you're waiting for is, "It looks like somebody's relieving us!" That's all YOU want to hear! In the old-fashioned war pictures, and I've been guilty of this, they had a romanticism in death. I wanted the gut humor of death. The gut humor of a guy getting hit. I wanted to have people laugh, make a joke. Because if you don't, you're gonna wind up nuts. The four men are symbols of the survivors. Four young kids. The Sergeant has no name, he's the symbol of war. And when the boy's hit in the movie and loses a ball, so what? We all know if you go up to someone and say, "Holy Smoke! This is terrible," and someone else is saying, "Oh, God! Half his ass is shot off!" You, the person who's wounded are going to go crazy! When you visualize bones sticking out. It's a-horrible feeling. So you kid 'em. When you say to a man, "You can live with one ball, that's why they gave you two." That's an honest statement. It is true. You must have humor with it. If you have one mental incapacity on the line you go the the shock tent. And it's very hard to get you back to normal. The irony is to get you back to normalcy is to get you back to the normalcy of killing someone, NOW THAT IS GOING TO CONFUSE YOU ALOT, TOO. Ha, ha, ha, ha.

SLASH: The book of THE BIG RED ONE is tremendously gory. There's the part on the beach in France where Hamill's character has a guy in his outfit blown apart right behind him. The head lands right in front of his own face and he's staring into this dead head's eyes for hours. How come you didn't have this kind of thing in the movoe?

FULLER: Very simple. You can describe something in writing and you're safe because you're not describing too much in color. When you show it, you can drive many people out of an audience. I'm an anti-ketchup freak. No matter what I've made, I've seldom gone in for bloody stuff. In war films it is very easy to have arms and legs flying. We know it's false, we know they're dummies. You can spot them. It's too much like a high school play kids made up with alot of fake blood. Anyway, if I can get a faceless flavor of the advance of nothing, no-one, non-entities and they keep moving while other people die around them, they're the survivors. If there's any robot movement in them I tried to get it. It's not a regular stoic reaction. They'll look at you and keep walking. That normalcy I want people to feel a little funny about. Because it's abnormal what they're doing. We ran it at the Pentagon and General Patton's son, also a general, got up in front of the 450 officers who saw the film, seven of them I knew who were characters in the movie, said he liked the movie but it wouldn't encourage any young American to head for the recruiting stations. I said, "My God! That's the whole idea. That would've been the kiss of death." You know it's funny. The whole idea behind most stories whatever they are, films, whatever is the idea either right out there in the open or below the surface is DEATH. It's a good thing we're all going to die someday or else we wouldn't have anything to write about. Ha, ha, ha. I think we're lucky we've got a subject like that. Poor Shakespeare would've shot himself! He'd have killed himself with a goddam dirk because everything connected with his stuff was people double-crossing each other, getting their throats cut. You hit the nail on the head earlier when you said there's just so many plots you can do. What makes it different is what we call human emotion. That's what makes a story.

SLASH: One story different from another.

FULLER: Of course. When you say there's just three or four basic plots, that's it. You can only interweave them one way or another. But it's there. You kill her. Or she kills you. Or it's a double suicide. Or you have a suicide pact and you kill her, then you change your mind and you don't want to kill yourself. I love real stories like that. When the man faces the judge and the judge says, "You had a pact with your wife. She was dying of cancer. And she decided she wanted to die. And you agreed to die with her. And you killed her. Why didn't you kill yourself?" And the guy says, "I changed my mind." Ha, ha, ha. It's the kind of story you like to write. The whole approach is to have fun with it. This is not an editorial. No message. I didn't bring anything too grim until right at the end where they're fighting inside the concentration camp. When you read the book you'll see the reportially honest approach: knowing where you're fighting. Generally you don't even know where you are unless you're in the water. Generally in war when you cross from one border to another there's no signs, nothing. There's a wheatfield or gulley. The important thing is you don't care.

SLASH: THE BIG RED ONE is about the survivors, about being self-centered if you're going to stay alive. What about some of the characters in your other movies like Mo in PICKUP ON SOUTH STREET when she knows if she says

Merrill's Marauders

The Naked Kiss

Underworld U.S.A.

a certain thing she's going to die but says it anyway, when Angie Dickinson as the Vietnamese half-caste in CHINA GATE blows herself up with the rest of the ammunition dump . . . What makes people do that kind of thing?

FULLER: Well, in the Moke situation that's a very old-hat approach. It's been used in plays. When you are dying, and she says it, "It hurts me to get up in the morning." When you're in pain. Euthenasia is a well-known subject. That's just another facet I took: "You'd be doing me a favor." She would not reveal the name to this agent because she didn't like him. She represents many ignorant people all over the world who dislike something because they don't understand it. It doesn't have to be a Commie, it could be anything. When the Commie agent said to her, "What do you have against Commies?" and she said, "I don't know, I just don't like them." That is the cry of 10,000 years of ignorance. You're afraid to open that closet door when you're a kid. I tell my little daughter about "Mumbo Jumbo, God of the Congo, HooDoo" and I tell her he's up there in the closet. I love all that stuff because then I tell her it doesn't mean anything. It's make-believe. But she's afraid of something she doesn't understand. So as far as she's concerned, "Mumbo Jumbo" 's bad. Now when it comes to Angie's character in CHINA GATE, that's what we call mother love. She's a hooker. She's Eurasian, a half-caste. No matter where she goes she's going to have problems. It's enough of a problem when the whites say something to the blacks, the blacks say something, the whites say something to the Asiatics . . . it's all horseshit! Everybody has something in them where they inherently shy away from something. It's normal. It doesn't mean it's bad, it doesn't mean it's good. It's there! It's your skin color on your body. You have to live with it. That's the same with what's in your mind. In the movie, there's no hope for her. None. And if this goddam son-of-a-bitch American who's the kid's real father can get the kid out of the country it'll make it worthwhile she had the kid. The hypocrisy involved is that that kid is going to have the same damn situation that's confronting her. That's real. The imaginary of the whole thing, is maybe that'll change. So actually her self-sacrifice was for naught. To me, anyway. If I wanted to continue that story with the kid 20 years later, I could show all the problems he has. Now this isn't a lecture tour through a church or anything, but when you have a man like Wallace, Governor Wallace stand in front of a school and prevent a black child from going into the school . . . he doesn't care if the kid goes in or not. He's a professional politician which makes him a man dedicated to falsehood, cheating, lying, and doctoring books. And hating Uncle Sam. Hating him. Wouldn't give him a penny. He was brought up a certain way, but he reached a point where he went beyond those people who were brought up to prevent the kid from going into school. He reached the point of money and re-election, his future. That's what made him a politician. So he benefits moneywise. The people benefit moneywise, too, in another way. They're thinking, "If that black son-of-a-bitch opens up a hardware store across the street, that dirty bastard, if he gets the business from the blacks now, maybe even the whites'll start going to him and maybe he'll undersell me." "We're not going to have our little white daughters violated by those big black cocks, for Chrissakes! Well, let's do something about it!" There's nothing wrong in all this. What's wrong is that we know it's wrong and accept it. A few little factions will say let's do something about it but they won't, they can't as long as there's money involved. What's wrong is that it's a fact everybody tries to cover up. It'll go on forever. Unless you have a whole new financial breed. And a whole new educational breed. I'm watching my little five year old girl play with this character or that character and she doesn't know any difference. No conception. I'm not going to govern her mind at all. If she turns into a racist, and I'm trying to make sure that doesn't happen, I'm just out-of-luck. She may have a certain way of thinking about skin color until she's 21 and then it SNAPS! And she could become a racist. We don't know. That's why I like watching her. She can dance to Beethoven or jump around to the music when Happy Days comes on the TV. What I'm getting at is music is the only international art. The closest thing to it was the silent movie.

You asked me earlier, why I haven't been making pictures lately, not until THE BIG RED ONE. One project after another . . . I'd get started on something and it would fall through. Either a producer wouldn't like my ideas at all or the money that was supposed to be there wasn't. When that happens and you spend six months here, eight months there, it adds up. Before you know it four or five years go by and I'm dead. I ran into a fellow I knew in Paris and he said, "Jesus! What happened to you!" I said, "Nothing, nobody likes me." All the scripts from then nobody wanted. They just didn't like them, didn't want to touch them. I don't mean I went overboard like having an opening scene where the Pope has an affair with a water hydrant. I mean it wasn't silly or childish. But the premise was explosive. About factual things in the world, which I like. But I'm going to try to make as many movies as I can. I'm not going to live that long but I've alot of shooting scripts. It's my hobby so there's nothing ingenious about it. If I played golf or tennis or poker I wouldn't be doing that. I've always had my hobby be my livelihood. It doesn't mean I made a great livelihood or even a normal one, I don't know. But it's very hard for a person to do what he or she really likes doing. Making a film is alot of fun. It's telling a story that's up there on the screen. Down deep in your heart you may want to make a film that's all your own or you may want to run for governor of your state and you're afraid to even bring that up. Ha, ha, you could lose your friends, maybe even your family. Down deep it would have to be something you'd really feel comfortable about. Running for governor, you'd have to be a pretty good con artist, too, a real spellbinder from behind the pulpit. I think it's phenomenal. I can write a story, make a film and I'm not bamboozling anybody. If the audience doesn't like it they tell other people not to come and nobody comes to see it. I'm not changing their lives or their thoughts. I'm just entertaining them. But a man who gets up and faces 500,000 people and says, "I AM YOUR SAVIOUR. VOTE FOR ME." Phenomenal.

SLASH: What do you think of Ronald Reagan, ex-movie star?

FULLER: I'm not interested in politics. I don't give it much thought. All I can do is say — the caliber of dreamers, or liars, or thieves has changed from the birth of this country to the stature of pygmies. Petty larceny people. Little people who are trying to make a few extra bucks out of the government. Out of the people. And sometimes they get away with it and sometimes they don't. In the future, there will be agents who will handle the men running for Presidency, of course. Maybe William Morris or somebody like that. . . It's happening. Steal and sell. Look at Watergate. We had men like Boss Tweed before, during and after the Civil War when they stole twenty million dollars, they only kept five. He told the people, "Here's a bridge, streets, schools, hospitals, sewers, I'm giving it to ya sons-a-bitches! You wouldn't've had it anyway." There was healthy thievery there. And he said it. They didn't hide or deny it like these men today. Pygmies.

SLASH: It's the same thing in the movie business. Some of the producers, studio heads, baby moguls of today make the studio tyrants of a few decades ago look like artistic geniuses.

FULLER: You're hitting on a very good point. There used to be heads of studios who'd have this idea of the money being most important, don't rock the boat. "We are borrowing money from a bank." But in those days, with these men, they had much more courage than today. When you make a picture like THE GRAPES OF WRATH directed by John Ford and it's a story about the Okie drought in the '30s, and you end it with, and remember this is a capitalist company, Fonda running away, his mother saying, "Son, where will you be?" And he says, "Wherever you see a cop hitting somebody with a club, that's where I'll be. Wherever one man is using another man." Now

the Russians all loved that because to them it was Communism, socialism, Marxism, all that. It happened to be a fact. Steinbeck wrote it. When you have a picture like I WAS A FUGITIVE FROM A CHAIN GANG with Muni and expose Georgia, when you do another story like HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY about the living condition of miners in Wales. Now these subjects the studios hate, but if the premise is there, the content, certainly a guy like Zanuck'll say "Let's go!" Ho, ho. They wouldn't do any of these today. Zanuck had a lot of guts, he put himself on the line a few times. You gotta remember the people back in New York didn't exactly like these kinds of stories. But the premise was too good a story for him. Now the bad part is not all the studios back then had heads like this guy. But you know aside from all that what everything comes back down to is telling a story. Sitting around a goddam fireplace, people saying to each other, "You know, a very funny thing happened the other day . . ." And a story is being told. Storytelling will always be with us. When you haven't got a story . . . there's nothing wrong with writing a book or doing a film or writing a poem where you're not doing the obvious. What's wrong is, don't get sore if the people don't like it. I've known alot of fellows who go, "The little bastards, they don't appreciate me!" and I say, "They don't appreciate you? You don't appreciate them! You're doing this for two reasons: one, to make money, two, to have a name, you bastard. Otherwise, if you didn't care what anybody liked, you'd write it and burn it! Right there! And you wouldn't even reread it!" There's alot of hypocrisy in that, you see. There's no such thing as an artist. It's A HARD JOB. I've never known of any great writer or painter who just wrote, painted, because, "I can't do anything else! I must paint!" Any that I've done research on did it for a dollar a gulden, a finnig, a halfpenny, a lire. Money. However, there may be five hundred other people doing the same thing. Why does one become great over the others? Why did Beethoven do what he did? BECAUSE HE HAD IT! Whether he did it for money or not! Same with Picasso or anybody else. They had IT. He wouldn't do anything unless you did pay him in advance! The "artists" don't like to have this connected. That's horseshit. That's what makes them go. A guy like Stephen Collins Foster after the Civil War wrote all his songs, music for this guy Christy for an occasional two dollars and ten bottles of rotgut whiskey. He killed himself eventually. He was a money failure. But he died thinking not only he was a money failure, but a composer failure also. It's a pity. There've been a lot of great people who died that way. It's very unfair. I try to tell this to alot of young people. Don't think you have to starve to death or don't be afraid to talk about money. Because if you have the talent, the money won't interfere. The only time money will interfere is if you make alot and get lazy. And then you don't work.

FILMS OF SAM FULLER

1949 – I SHOT JESSE JAMES
1950 – THE BARON OF ARIZONA, THE STEEL HELMET
1951 – FIXED BAYONETS
1952 – PARK ROW
1953 – PICKUP OK SOUTH STREET
1954 – HELL AND HIGH WATER
1955 – HOUSE OF BAMBOO
1957 – CHINA GATE, RUN OF THE ARROW, FORTY GUNS
1959 – CRIMSON KIMONO
1960 – VERBOTEN!
1961 – UNDERWORLD U.S.A.
1962 – MERRILL'S MARAUDERS
1963 – SHOCK CORRIDOR
1965 – THE NAKED KISS
1968 – CAINE (SHARK)
1980 – THE BIG RED ONE

PHILIP DICK

PHIL K. DICK INTERVIEW

Philip K. Dick is 51 years old. Since 1955 he's written 35 books that have been translated into eighteen languages. He has five ex-wives, two cats and lives 10 minutes from Disneyland. Of the books he has written, his personal favorites are, The Man in the High Castle, Dr. Bloodmoney, and Through a Scanner Darkly. His latest book, VALIS, will be relased in February, with the sequel to be published sometime in the spring. Mr. Dick says he doesn't take drugs anymore, but thinks about them all the time. Despite stories to the contrary, he is a real charming guy.

This interview was conducted in Mr. Dick's conapt by Gary and Nicole Panter. K.W. Jeter, one of Dick's close friends and author of the as yet unpublished but excellent DR. ADDER, attended and added his comments.

DICK: Um ... fuck.

JETER: Beer?

SLASH: I don't drink beer.

DICK: I don't drink beer either. What's so ... so ... I'm tired of all this circle of ... of effete intellectual ... this circle of intellectuals who drink beer. (laughter)

SLASH: Is this a conapt?

DICK: It definitely is a conapt.

SLASH: Is a conapt a combination of condominium and apartment?

DICK: Yes.

SLASH: So the people in your stories own their own apartments?

DICK: They own them and are doomed to live in them. And they are also doomed to participate in meetings with the other owners and have complaints made about their moral lives.

SLASH: Like in small towns ... do you go to these meetings?

DICK: Yes, it's mandatory.

SLASH: What do they say?

DICK: They say how come your car has got dust all over it? So I park it in a dark corner of the garage so no one can see it. This one lady built a little door for her cat to go in and out of and in a meeting someone complained that they saw cat shit out on the walkway and now she's responsible for all the cat shit anyone sees around.

SLASH: Can they make you move out if the other tenants don't like you?

DICK: No, they can't get you out they can just sue you to death.

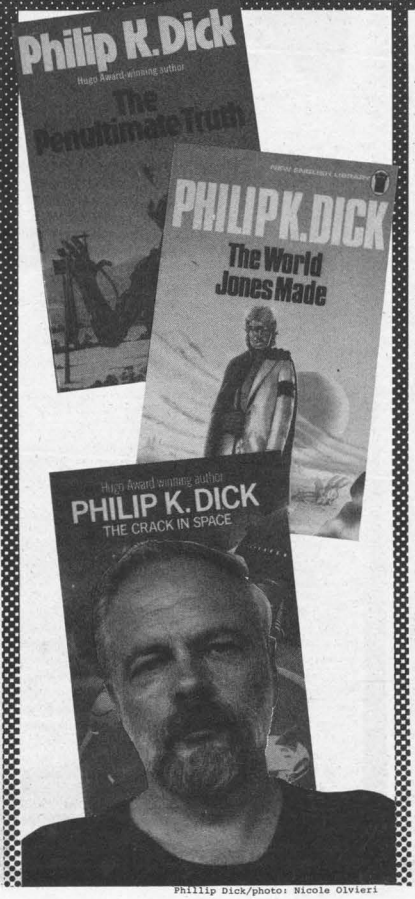
SLASH: Were you raised in a religious organization?

DICK: No.

SLASH: Are you anti organized religion?

DICK: Yes. Technically, I'm Episcopalian, but I don't ever go. I'm interested in them because they're a barrio church and they do a lot of civil service work ... technically I'm a religious anarchist.

SLASH: Is this Orange County?



Phillip Dick/photo: Nicole Olvieri

DICK: Very definitely ... I bet that's good beer. The Germs are breaking up, huh? The cat's laughing at me ... But Darby Crash is going to start his own band.

SLASH: Yeah, how'd you know?

DICK: I know ... I know this stuff. Did I do that right? I sure like the Plugz. Now the beach bands like the Circle Jerks ...

SLASH: Darby has a mohican now which brings up the kids you wrote about that modeled themselves after South American Indians or was it Africans. When did you begin to write about mutant youth cultures?

DICK: In my writing? TIME OUT OF JOINT in 1958.

SLASH: Were you a beatnik then ... a bohemian?

DICK: I was all of those things. I knew the first beatnik. His name was Chris McLane ... oh the first hippy, I'm sorry. He was into drugs – that would be hippy.

SLASH: What made a beatnik, alcohol?

DICK: Some were into drugs. The difference was there was more of an emphasis on creative work with the beatniks. You had to write ... much less emphasis on drugs.

SLASH: How far does a bohemian or lunatic fringe go back?

JETER: To the Bohemians in the twenties ...

DICK: Wrong! Puccini's LA BOHEME describes people who were poets and singers and who burned their pictures in the 19th Century. The furthest I can remember back is the thirties to the WPA artists paid by the government. They became the bohemian strata of the United States.

SLASH: What prompted you in 1958 to begin writing about this kind of youth culture? Kids with teeth filed to points?

DICK: Yeah, I don't know. It wasn't until '71 in a speech that I delivered in Vancouver that I was consciously discussing the rise of the youth culture. I got severely criticized for the eulogizing of the youth culture. I glorified punks "kids who would neither read, watch, remember, or be intimidated." I spoke of the rise of a youth culture which would overthrow the government,

SLASH: Do you still think that's the case?

DICK: I certainly do.

SLASH: Have you got a timetable?

DICK: What time is it now? (laughter) Any day now I expect to hear that swarms have entered the White House and broken all the furniture.

SLASH: What comes after that?

DICK: Oops!

SLASH: You wrote in one story about a system of enforced anarchy.

DICK: Yes, I did ... (tape stops) ... of course I grew up in Berkeley and my baby sitter was a communist. She used to give me lectures on how wonderful the Soviet Union was. I would draw all these pictures of tractors and cow shit, but I told her the shit was dirgibles. I was sent to a communist kingergarden.

JETER: Sounds like a Roger Corman film. COMMUNIST KINDERGARDEN.

SLASH: What do you think of communism now?

DICK: ... uh, I've had the shit kicked out of me by the authorities so many times that I no longer have an opinion on that. When I hear the word "communism" my mind goes blank. Let me know when they're in power. Then I'll give you a definite opinion. (laughter) I regard the Soviet Union as a tyrannical dictatorship run by an entrenched clique of old men who are probably the Ronald Reagans of the communist world.

SLASH: These kids that trash the White House would probably be a bunch of dumb shits out for a yuk. Is that a scary prospect?

DICK: Not for me it's not! I can't imagine how they could be more dangerous than the people that are there now. Carter has spoken of the Russians in relation to the Afghanistan war as atheists. That's holy war talk. And the Democrats are getting the MX missile put through, which is almost like a Warner Brothers' cartoon.

SLASH: A scary prospect is that, though Carter and those guys are fucked, they seem at least able to keep a country going or vaguely protected more than a bunch of illiterate morons, however energetic. Wouldn't Russia take advantage of a White House full of guys telling fart jokes?

DICK: I don't welcome the Soviet Union into this country at all. It seems to be more of a war between young and old. And so far the old are winning. Certainly the Soviet power elite are entrenching beautifully against the youthful dissidents. Like that exhibit of modern art that was literally bulldozed. That's almost like a nightmare. That scared the piss out of me. You talk about vandalism. I've had my house vandalised by kids and robbed, but the idea of government bulldozers to destroy works of art!

JETER: The orientation of the underground in the past is always that it seeks to become the overground. That there's a revolution simmering under that's going to take over ... but every time it takes over, if it does, as in the case of Marinetti and the Futurists affecting Fascists to the extent that Italy did become a Futurist state, but when it became a Futurist state it became the very thing that the Futurists hated. A smart underground might orient itself to staying underground and becoming a permanent subversive pool underneath society.

DICK: I just figured if the kids broke into the Pentagon and smashed all the machines that there would be no workable machines. I have all these visions of these marvelous GHQ consoles in ruins and it takes forty years before they work again. That's my dream. Not that kids would rule, but that they would make it impossible for the sophisticated technology to function. I have this impulse that comes to me when I'm drinking orange soda. That is to pour half a can of orange soda into my television set. I think someday I won't go to Washington and attack them and their computers, I'll just turn on my own television set and go after the stereo after that.

SLASH: Responsible vandalism?

JETER: This is it. I would like it if the people in charge were better capitalists. The problem is that they are shitty capitalists. They seek a social reward rather than aesthetic or financial reward. Most of the publishers would have folded several years ago if foreign and native conglomerates hadn't bought them out.

SLASH: Are conglomerates better capitalists?

JETER: They're going to have to be.

SLASH: The problem with conglomerates is that they are backward looking in that they seem to rely too much on marketing research. Marketing research is what I would like to demolish. How did you come to write stories that are a little bit ahead in time?

DICK: I originally wrote straight fiction but I couldn't sell it, so I recast it in the future. But I've always been primarily interested in the human being as artificer: producing some kind of product. In high school I worked at a radio repair shop and my friends were radio repairmen and I was fascinated by this mentality and later repelled by the salesmen.

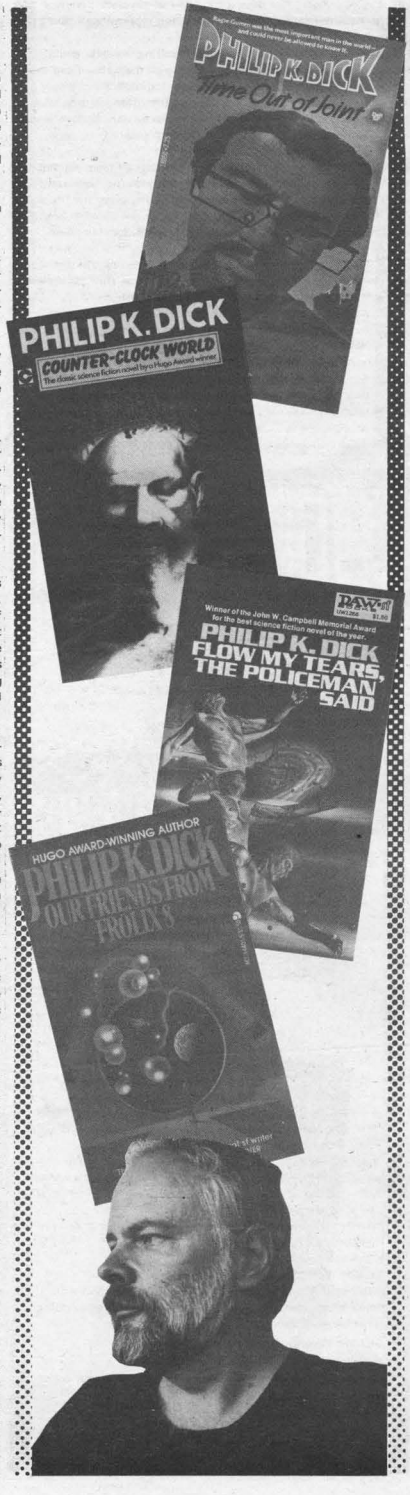
SLASH: A feature of your writing a little bit ahead is the precog or precognitive facility.

DICK: It's one paranormal facility which really fascinates me.

SLASH: Do you have precog ability?

DICK: I wrote one novel in which there was a 19 year old girl named Kathy whose boyfriend was named Jack who appeared to have a relation with the criminal underground who turns out to have a relation to a police inspector, and that Christmas I met a 19 year old girl named Kathy who had a boyfriend named Jack who sold dope but later turned out to be a police informant. There have been other instances.

SLASH: Can you control this ability?



DICK: It just happens.

SLASH: What kind of books do you read?

DICK: I used to read Joyce and Proust. In Junior High I started reading Maupassant, a Nineteenth Century French novelist and a lot of Russian novelists. I don't read fiction anymore.

SLASH: What kind of non-fiction?

DICK: Well research for my ... I've been reading stuff on quantum mechanics lately. Sure you don't want some fruit juice?

SLASH: May I look in your fridge?

DICK: Sure.

SLASH: What's your prognosis for the next 25 years? Do you think things are going to get real dismal?

DICK: No! No! I think things are going to get really good. I think we're going to see a great decentralization of the government, which is good. The government is just failing to solve the economic problems and it will devolve to the state.

SLASH: States? That's what Ronald Reagan is after, isn't it?

DICK: Yeah. I think he's right about that. If you got really sick now it's the state of California that's going to pick up your bill ... not the federal government. We could survive much better without the federal government than without the state government.

JETER: It's like those forces in the Brown administration who want to conclude a separate treaty with Mexico for petroleum products. What the hell! California is the sixth largest industrial nation in the world ...

DICK: I know where my state taxes go. They don't buy weapons with that. I would like to see this country break up into individual states.

SLASH: Wouldn't that mean some pretty piss poor states?

DICK: Yeah, but presumably you'd still be free to travel. I spent years and years studying the war between the states and as much as I admire Lincoln, I think his philosophy was wrong and they should have let the South secede. That would have been a much wiser decision.

SLASH: What would things be like now? Would the South still have slavery?

DICK: Definitely not. Civil rights would be much worse for Blacks in the South than they are now but ... on the positive side ... uh I have books written during the war of speeches made by General Sherman and the ideology of the North was completely rabid: regarding that people did not have the right to self determination.

SLASH: Sounds more Socialist.

DICK: Well, actually they influenced the Germans on that. The North adopted the Hegelian view of state as a real entity rather than an abstraction which has led to this massive centralised government as bad as the Soviet Union. The original model for the U.S. was modeled by Jefferson after the models of the American Indian Federations. There is no doubt that the founding fathers were designing a system of independent and allied states based on these Indian models. Jefferson would have been appalled by Lincoln's contesting of the supremacy of states rights.

SLASH: Where do animals fit into all this?

DICK: I, like John Denver, can't turn down a good taco.

SLASH: Things eat other things and there doesn't seem to be a moral resolution. How do you handle this? Does it bother you?

DICK: No. I'll ... I'll eat any cow that walks past me.

SLASH: Oh!!! I will too!!! ... but at some point I felt like I had to go kill a deer and go through the whole process so that I really knew that meat wasn't just something that comes in packages from the food store.

DICK: I used to raise sheep and we'd slaughter our lambs ... but I developed paralysis of my hands from holding the hind legs of the sheep while their throats were cut ... and I still get traumatic paralysis in my wrists when I'm under tension.

SLASH: Is that empathy?

DICK: It sure is man. I'll tell you ... Shit!!!

SLASH: When you do think about it, how do you resolve it?

DICK: God designed a really fucked-up universe as far as I can make out. I have this friend who had this cat and he was walking the cat and the cat tried to cross the street and a car came along and did in the cat ... turned it into a fur pizza. This friend of mine has managed to destroy my whole theological edifice with this argument about his cat.

JETER: A dead cat is the ultimate refutation of any religious system. It was my cat.

SLASH: I have a feeling supermarkets are sneaking up on people.

JETER: What's a SPAM look like?

DICK: What is that sandwich you've got there ... it looks really good.

END

URINALS

Interview by Craig Lee

It's a Saturday night and one of the friends of the Urinals has talked the owner of a bar attached to a restaurant, in the midst of remodeling, to have the band play. It's basically a party, and the Urinals are set up in a tiny room with dip on the table, a swimming pool outside and various friends and UCLA students milling about. It's kind of a bizarre setting for the band, but then everything about the Urinals is somewhat outside the norm. They practice in a parking structure in UCLA, they have put out three singles on their own, which feature some of the crudest sound heard on vinyl since the days of the Kingsmen and Louie Louie, they are obviously new at playing their instruments, yet their songs have some of the most inventive and unique chord changes heard, and their sound is a strange primitive mixture of Velvet strumming guitar and Syd Barret modality. Crude sophistication — the band are one of the most interesting in L.A. and are in a unique position. Members are Jon Jones Bass and vocals, Kjehl Johansen: Guitar and Kevin Barrett: cheapest drum set ever seen.

SLASH: Let's start at the beginning.

JON: It all started 24 years ago in a log cabin in Louisiana — the child is born.

KEVIN: We were all living in the dormitory at UCLA.

SLASH: You all still go?

KEVIN: I do. I'm in the film school.

KJEHL: I graduated in philosophy.

KEVIN: I was in the film school. We were in the dormitory, and they had this talent show night three years ago, and so we did this band — one guy on acoustic guitar, John singing lead, and 17 people singing backup and we did one song that was about sixteen seconds long, we ran off stage and that started it.

JON: The next time we played we got rid of the seventeen people and Kjehl was playing Emene battery electric organ and I was playing japanese guitar and someone was playing a $30 kiddy toy drum kit and we had one guy who knew how to play guitar and a girl singer in a trash bag — and we sang four songs and everybody laughed at us, so we were successful. Then we got serious because the guitarist decided that punk was not the image he believed in blah blah blah, so Kjehl learned how to play guitar and now we're rich and famous.

SLASH: You never played before the band —

KEVIN: I was gonna play organ, but Kjehl took it, so I took drums. I figured it had to be easy.

SLASH: But you'd been playing guitar before.

KJEHL: I switched from keyboards after that performance so I got an acoustic guitar — went back home to Anaheim for the summer — there's this friend of the family, this jazz guitar player, when he was young he used to play with Gene Krupa, so I took some half dozen lessons from him and in September I got a cheap Japanese guitar in a place in Santa Monica, and we started rehearsing, had our first real performance on our dorm floor lounge on Halloween night.

SLASH: You've probably been asked this before, but don't you think the name is holding you back?

KJEHL: Yeah, definitely.

SLASH: Why don't you change it?

JON: We cannot come to an agreement. Maybe we should have a contest.

KJEHL: It stuck for a long time. There's a lot of resistance to change, but I feel it is sort of necessary —

JON: Not only because it's 'holding us back' — more like it no longer reflects the kind of music we're playing. It's not an accurate name for what we are doing.

SLASH: Yeah, it sounds like slobbering punk rock band —

JON: Actually we are kind of like that because none of us know how to play our instruments, except for Kjehl, who's pretty proficient —

SLASH: But you have chord changes, progressions that are pretty unique compared to other bands in LA.

KJEHL: I think it's because we're really stumbling onto the stuff without knowing what we're doing. Strangely enough John wrote most of our stuff up until a certain point and it was just hit or miss, that's why he came up with some real different stuff . . .

JON: Basically I'd write the song by putting my finger here and putting my finger there and I still don't know what the chords or notes are —

SLASH: Tonight some of what you were doing reminded me of the Velvet Underground —

KJEHL: Somebody said that to me —

KEVIN: I never listened to them —

JON: I like them a lot —

KJEHL: Somebody said my guitar playing sounded like Sterling Morrison — was that their guitarist's name? I guess that's a compliment. I never heard their stuff.

SLASH: I heard you playing "Interstellar Overdrive." Do you like early Pink Floyd?

KJEHL: Yeah I like them a lot, I like all the stuff. I wanted to fit Interstellar Overdrive into our repertoire. I don't know if it would work.

JON: Let's think of something exciting to talk about.

SLASH: I want to know about some of the lyrics. I can't figure out the words to "Sex" from your single.

JON: "I feel I'm wilting — Ground is writhing — ground, glass, consolation — addled snake — tie me up, knock some sense into yourself — turn out the lights —

SLASH: What about "Black Hole"?

JON: "Three feet of gravity — Tearing lengthwise, rip me up — Stars dissolve above down to black below. Gouge my eyes, leave me blind — inside you no hope for me, in a void of complacency."

SLASH: How come the vocals got so buried on your "Sex" single?

KJEHL: It happened when the acetate was cut. We had a pretty good mix of it I think — and when they cut the acetate they put a booming bass in "Go away, girl."

SLASH: Why did you put a test pattern on the other side?

JON: We wanted to put the single out as cheaply as possible. So you could buy it for a dollar at a store. So that's why there's two songs on one side, and nothing on the other, but they pressed in the test pattern at the factory to keep it from warping, I guess. It is kind of neat, though. .

SLASH: What is Happy Squid. Is it a label?

URINALS: Three of us, it's our label.

SLASH: Where do you get the money to put out these things?

JON: These things don't cost anything.

KJEHL: Ultra-cheap.

SLASH: Where was the first one recorded?

JON: Vitus's bedroom. And part of his bathroom. (Vitus is their 'producer.' He also plays keyboards for the Last.) He saw us at our first show and liked us for some peculiar reason, and took us under his wing, and nurtured us. The Sex single was recorded in a weight room, with real weight guys lifting weights in the background.

KJVIN: Macho, macho.

JON: We're gonna make UCLA famous.

JON: On the new record we recorded "U" in the parking structure where we rehearse.

SLASH: It's not that you're consciously going for a primitive sound.

JON: We can't afford anything else.

KEVIN: I like it.

KJJHL: We started with that concept — minimal.

JON: Because we didn't know how to play our instruments, you have to make do with wiatever knowledge you got. So we were born with a minimalism attached to us and it's pretty much stayed minimal.

KJEHL: (There's a struggle on my part to get things a little more complex. I've been pushing for a long time for more proficiency on the instruments. I think it might be the way I was addressing the problem — instead of — I was pushing for it the wrong way — I think everybody would agree on the idea that we get better. I think just the way we do it was the problem.

SLASH: Do you have an idea what you want to do in the future? Do you want to be a professional band playing on a club level —

JON: We want to be like the Knack — It would be nice but I don't think it's a feasibility as far as what we're doing is concerned. That's why we're putting our own records out, cause no one else is interested.

KEVIN: Someday it may be feasible.

KJEHL: Kevin and I went to Europe over the summer and we talked a lot about the band and direction — some kind of tentative ideas we came up with was to really work on a live show and try to get a really good 30 - 40 minute set.

JON: With smoke bombs and laser beams.

KJEHL: Seriously, work towards a live performance and let some of the record stuff slag a little bit, seems like we've been putting out a lot of records, but we haven't come to any kind of agreement.

SLASH: It's something you've thought about — before it was just for fun?

KEVIN: I hope it will always be fun.

SLASH: Yeah but it's serious fun —

JON: Well it's not so serious that it's a pain — for a while I think it was because we were all pretty much tired of doing what we were doing.

SLASH: Do you all have shitty day jobs?

JON: I work at a bookstore.

KJEHL: I'm starting law school Monday. I'm real weird about that.

KEVIN: I'm a busboy.

JON: We get Slash at work, so I want to say it's not a shitty job.

SLASH: Your last gig, at Polish Hall, you were playing with hardcore punk slam bands. How do you relate to that — It seems your attitudes, your feelings go a lot deeper than many of those groups — whose main objective is only to put energy —

JON: I relate to it a lot — on and off — I don't feel that I'm not part of that scene — but I don't feel that we fit into it — I think that we share aspects of what that particular scene is doing.

KEVIN: Sort of like an ugly cousin.

JON: But we fit into the Monitor-Human Hands crowd as well, occasionally.

KJEHL: We've got plenty of room for manipulation in our set.

JON: We're lucky, because we're not locked into one camp.

KEVIN: Hard core —

SLASH: You started totally outside the L.A. scene —

JON: Yeah UCLA is definitely NOT the scene —

SLASH: Jon you write the lyrics — they seem more abstract than your conventional punk stuff —

JON: Well, of course, as all abstract things do, they define a reality. In my case it's a reality of disappointment in the times we live in. I guess that sounds kind of cliched. Just things are pretty shitty.

SLASH: The lyrics to Sex —

JON: Well that's a joyous song, you know, even though it has bondage overtones.

SLASH: "I'm a bug" — I like that.

JON: Real cerebral — that's about —

KEVIN: Dostoyevsky?

JON: Right — that's what Howard Devoto was doing in Song from Under the Floorboards.

SLASH: You have a song where you're sort of rapping about things and then at the end you turn around and turn the bass up full volume and end with a lot of feedback.

JON: "Salmonella."

SLASH: That's the disease you get from turtles!

KEVIN: Him and Cathy have two turtles and one tortoise —

SLASH: What's the song about?

JON: It's really stupid — the song is me rambling on and on about any given situation — it's almost psychedelic —

SLASH: Do you think there's a psychedelic sound in your music — unintentional or otherwise?

JON: I think so — I think it's intentional.

KJEHL: I wouldn't know what psychedelic music was —

JON: We do sound like that on occasion and I don't know why — but I hope we don't go the same route as those people in the late sixties, with nineteen minute extended drum solos.

SLASH: Think you're up to that, Kevin?

KEVIN: Naw, three minutes is max. And that's just the song.

SLASH: Kevin, I remember at the end of a set at the Fleetwood you started throwing your drums around —

KEVIN: I play really badly sometimes, or I feel like I've played really badly — it's hard to — if I feel like I've played badly I take it out on my drums —

SLASH: It was great because you threw them into this pink backdrop that these people had rigged up for filming some of the other bands that night (for the upcoming Slash documentary).

KEVIN: I really enjoyed that. That was fun — I was real pissed that they weren't filming us.

SLASH: If you became successful, if you had fans, how would you deal with that?

JON: I'd turn into a real son of a bitch, I wouldn't talk to anybody, and I'd send out for caviar.

(The band disagrees about whether they could be successful or not.)

SLASH: I need some more song titles —

JON: Long Arm of the Social Sciences, She's a Drone, Horizontal, Hologram, Dyslexsia, Dead Flowers.

SLASH: Jon, have you been making films?

JON: I've made about 39 — most of them are super 8, some are 16 — lately they've been nothing but imagery, no content. It's live action or optical, that's lately. We used to show a film as we were playing. It was called "Doctor Bludgeon, Nazi Surgeon." We were all in it — it's in the surreal mode — I like it, stupid camera angles, harsh lighting, but I'd like to do more of that stuff, but the situation where you play isn't conducive to film production. It doesn't get dark enough, especially when you're doing it with cheap equipment.

SLA*H: Anything else you want to add?

JON: I just hope this isn't too dull. We don't like to be dull. (Friends come in and out, a band Kevin found in a parking lot play, police sirens, talk about the Velvet Underground and Syd Barrett. Later on the Urinals play their second set. Personally I feel they are one of the, if not THE best band in LA. Figure it out for yourself.

JELLO BIAFRA

Jello Biafra/photo: Susan Seager

INTERVIEW WITH JELLO BIAFRA

Jello Biafra is the lead singer for the Dead Kennedys. In July, the San Francisco band played Lost Angeles and Fresno as part of their Turd Towns Tour. This interview took place in my car from L.A. to fresno.

Interview by Greig Stout

JELLO: (Screaming at a pedestrian from the car) God told me to skin you alive!

SLASH: Are you crazy? Should other people act like you?

JELLO: Well if everybody acted like me I'd get bored out of my skull. I'm sure I'd act very differently. Some people when they tell me I'm crazy, I think great; I'm glad they think that way because what they do is totally fucked. It all depends. One thing about behaving the way I do is that I tend to attract as friends and be attracted to other people who are real, real warped and real interesting, rather than just people who you have over and have a few drinks with and watch TV.

SLASH: Do you want to make it commercially?

JELLO: Making it is pretty fucking relative. Making it has a different meaning to me than to a lot of the people who have "made it." If I reached the point where I was putting out nothing but shitty music – slowing down the songs, watering down the guitars, playing nothing but coliseum shows, hiding from everybody – I couldn't look myself in the mirror. Granted I'm real proud to live off the money I make from the band – it took a long time to be able to do that – but nevertheless I don't need to be wallowing in money to do what I want to do. I value self-respect more than money.

SLASH: Would you like to make movies?

JELLO: That's in the cards, that's in the cards.

SLASH: What kind of films would you like to make?

JELLO: Primarily I would like to act in them or write screenplays. I have a couple of screenplays that I am slowly outlining as I get more and more substance, but I am not going to go into that full-blast when I have the band going because that would require total concentration to pull it off right. I would make anti-love story films. Films as warped as our music. Films as warped as the films I like to see.

SLASH: Have you considered selling out musically to have the freedom financially to make films?

JELLO: If you sell out at one end, the only thing you're going to be able to do at the other end is just as sold out, in a way. It depends on who you attract. If you sell out and become a marketable commodity you are more likely to attract filmmakers who want to make either rinky-dinky love stories or movies like "Roadie."

SLASH: Have you seen "Roadie?"

JELLO: No, I don't think I'm going to either. But you either attract that kind or you attract real strange people who are making real, real unusual movies to get under people's skin. Recently I turned up John Waters' address and I'm going to mail him one of our records, from one pervert to another. Not pervert, I don't want to say that . . .

SLASH: Social outcast?

JELLO: From one deviant to another. One person who is glad he is thought of as crazy by 99% of the people he runs into.

SLASH: How do you write songs?

JELLO: I'm really fascinated by things that are considered by most people to be sick, hideous, evil. I look for beauty where there is supposed to be no beauty. I look for ugliness where there is supposed to be beauty – and work from there. I like to immerse myself in different personalities, different personnas, and write that way. I usually work from song titles rather than subjects, pick a song title and start filling in the blanks.

An essential element for somebody whether they are a rock n roller, filmmaker, actor, whatever, to keep fresh requires a really neurotic, anti-social fountain of hate. There are very few people who let their hate work for them for years on end, to let the greatest pain give them the greatest pleasure. It's really important to immerse yourself in Hell for a while, to clean out your mind when it goes stale. A lot of the people who initially started in the San Francisco punk bands and started screaming against the hollowness of the middle class – the horror of the American lifestyle – ran out of things to sing about because they were too cool to go back to where they came from and check up on it from time to time.

SLASH: You mean to keep in touch with Hell?

JELLO: Hell is fascinating. Hell is fun – in short doses.

SLASH: How do you keep in touch with Hell?

JELLO: By visiting hideous places.

SLASH: Like Fresno?

JELLO: Precisely. How else can you get to the heart of the American redneck mentality unless you immerse yourself into the deepest workings of their mind.

SLASH: How long is your creativity going to last?

JELLO: It's so hard to run out of ideas when people are so stupid. They constantly give me new ideas by their absurd and ridiculous behavior.

SLASH: Is it important to document a band's history?

JELLO: Very very much. You got to leave it behind you so you can infect other people with your disease years later.

SLASH: Is the Dead Kennedys having the same impact now that it was having a year ago?

JELLO: I think we are having much more because we are more widely known, but we haven't had to wreck our music or smile and wear skinny ties at press photo sessions to do it.

SLASH: Even though the people in the audience are idiots?

JELLO: I never said the people in the audience are idiots.

SLASH: But that's what is happening though, as the audience grows.

JELLO: No, no, no, no, no. You get a higher percentage of them. But there are more and more weird people crawling out of the woodwork who realize that this is the best vehicle they are going to have in several years to spew their guts out and infect other people, beat them over the head with the

ideas they need to be subjected to.

SLASH: Do you think the punk bands are going to break through the propaganda and reach vast audiences?

JELLO: It won't be a huge mass audience. It will be a cult following. Hopefully the cult will grow because cult followings are made up of more intelligent people who had to hunt to find you and that means they are more interested in finding something good and they'll stick to you longer. That's what keeps people like Iggy Pop and Captain Beefheart alive. Their cult following will even forgive them for as many as two or three bad records at a time, to keep them alive so they'll make a good one and won't starve or whither away and die.

SLASH: Is that what you want to be, a cult band?

JELLO: Rather be that than fucking stars who lose all their self-respect in a year or two and have their music go down the drain. Where are you then?

SLASH: What is "Holiday in Cambodia" about?

JELLO: "Holiday in Cambodia" is my solution to the problem of obnoxious American college students. After I got out of high school, I delivered pizzas for a while at the University of Colorado at Boulder. There is nothing but stupid, rich kids.' I figure what better fate for them than to go to the middle of Cambodia with none of their defense — no skateboards, no cosmetics, no fancy stereos, nothing.

SLASH: That sounds like Mao's program of sending the intellectuals to the countryside?

JELLO: Being an intellectual himself, I am sure Mao was laughing his head off the whole time he pulled that. Mao started out as a librarian. My mother is really proud of that; she's a librarian.

SLASH: Did she like Mao?

JELLO: Not a whole lot. But wouldn't you love to see the entire student body of UCLA working in a coal mine? Let's face it, Mao and Pol Pot had their points . . . . My favorite comic book is "Newsweek" because I get to read about the further adventures of such cartoony clowns as Jimmy Carter, Begin, Idi Amin and of course my current favorite African dictator, Sgt. Samuel Cato of Liberia. He led a coup with a party of six and two pistols and took over one of the richest countries in Africa. William Tolberg supposedly had the country under control, but he flaked out. People in high office slowly lose their minds.

SLASH: Is Carter crazy?

JELLO: The Presidency tends to bring that side out in you. Compare his eyes with Charles Manson's and you'll notice their eyes are i-fucking-dentical. Carter's eyes get more maniacal every month. I noticed that when he was first elected that, God, this guy has got really evil eyes.

SLASH: Do you think he is going to lead us into a war?

JELLO: Either him or Reagan. Carter is tied in with the Tri-lateral Commission and the Trilateral Commission and the big corporations want another major war. Reagan is going to be more cutthroat about it, but Carter is just as into war as anybody else. He's provoked it through sheer incompetence in his foreign policy. Who told him to try a Cold War policy? The Trilaterial Commission. War is definitely inevitable.

A lot of the laid-back, prissy college kids are going to get awful political and politics are going to become a fad like they did in the 60's. The only reason there was much of an uprising in the 60's was because it suddenly became a fad and America is governed by fads. All of a sudden they are going to find that they are about to be drafted and sent to Iran to get their balls shot off fighting to protect OPEC. Within one year this is going to happen, within one year.

SLASH: Is the "Less is More" theory a psychological preparation for war?

JELLO: You remember Jimmy Carter when he was trying to get people to conserve energy, he called it the moral equivalent of war and everybody laughed and bought a bigger car. It is a similar mentality. The reason being, I think, is that Americans in particular are so lazy that the only way you can get them to get up off their ass and do something is if their backs are against the wall and they're threatened in a war. Vietnam was not a threatening war; it was just a way to make more money for the oil companies and to try to save the off-shore fields. There are a lot of oil reserves off the shores of Vietnam that have never been used but . . . God, where was I? This is getting interesting.

SLASH: What do you think the American people should be made to do?

JELLO: Not made to do. The reason Carter tried to use a war mentality to get people to conserve energy, that's the only way to get Americans to do anything. Americans: who cares if Hitler is gassing the Jews. Pearl Harbor gets bombed and oh shit, we might not be able to screw around all day long like we usually do. War is the best way to keep the American economy rolling.

SLASH: What do you think about the situation in Iran?

JELLO: All right, coincidence, Carter was rock bottom in the polls; Kennedy announces, he is leading 45% to 25% over Carter. We all know that any political leader can keep in power by asserting himself on the world scene by making himself look strong. Carter knows this.

SLASH: Would you volunteer for the Army?

JELLO: Not unless I thought the war was justified.

SLASH: Is war against Iran justifiable?

JELLO: Absolutely not. I'm not interested in getting my balls blown off or be experimented on with agent orange to help OPEC and large corporations continue to raise prices and fuck me and everybody else in the butt. The people who I do wage war with through my music are the corporations, the mentality and lifestyle they preach.

SLASH: Do you support the government in Iran? Khomeini?

JELLO: No, Khomeini taking over is kinda like if this country were run by Billy Graham or Oral Roberts. Of all the proverbs I've heard over the years, the truest one is, "The more things change, the more things stay the same." The hippies become the new conservatives, which the punks will in a few years if they become too set in their ways and become too complacent. Or in Iran, Khomeini has his own secret police run by the same guy who ran SAVAK. What's changed?

SLASH: Would you like to see a revolution in this country?

JELLO: It sure would be nice, but I wouldn't want it to fall in the hands of the wrong people. Bands when they get bigger, writers when they get more popular, leaders when they get powerful, the same thing happens, either they flake out or slowly go nuts like Indira Gandhi or Richard Nixon, or they slowly get more and more paranoid. If there is going to be a revolution in this country, it damn well better be run by people who are mentally prepared for the pressure, or else be willing to be deposed by another revolution in a few years. If there is going to be a revolution, there's got to be several in proceeding years to keep things healthy and in tune with the times.

SLASH: Is there a model country today?

JELLO: No, in theory but not that much in practice. The American Indians had a good form of government. They were more civilized in the sense that they had done away with real estate, which means no Protestant work ethic, no God helps those who helps themselves. They had moved beyond real estate. The Indians of course got wiped out through lack of greed by the conquistadors and the British. The same way that the Greeks and Romans got wiped out by the Huns. People who are greedier, more willing to butt fuck anyone, are the ones who eventually rule.

SLASH: Who are you going to vote for for president?

JELLO: Good question. Maybe Monte Cazazza.

Units/photo: Rachel Webber

The Units are a synthesizers and drums trio that originated in S.F. a few years ago. Their sets are loud and fast and visually exciting. Usually a combination of films and slides are projected on two or more screens. They have two independently produced records out; a four song EP (HIGH PRESSURE DAYS), and a single (WARM MOVING BODIES/I-NIGHT) and a soon to be released album on the 415 label (DIGITAL STIMULATION).

The band consists of Scott Ryser and Rachel Webber on synthesizers and vocals, and Brad Saunders on drums.

SLASH: How are you doing after your big gig last night?

RACHEL: Well, not so great.

SCOTT: You see, it's the flea season in S.F.

(Units chime in): I have a sunburn ... insomnia ... rash ... lice ... headaches and upset stomachs ... mumps ... chicken pox ... the gout ... spasms ... dropsy ... gas ... parkinson's ... moles ... pimples ... psoriasis ... ceboriah ... sclerosis of the liver ... blockage of the intestines ... cavities ... chronic nose bleeds ... post nasal drip ... heart murmers ... dyslexia ... ghonorrea ... meningitis and general paralysis.

SCOTT: Things could be better.

SLASH: I saw you at Valencia Tool and Die last night and it didn't seem to affect your performance. I also noticed you weren't using your films.

SCOTT: We will be this weekend at the Back DOR. We have some new projectionists and have been working on some new film. Because of all the time we've spent recording the new album we haven't had time lately to get that end of the show happening.

SLASH: Your old film show seemed to be a satirical, broken up combination of home movies, educational training films, industry assembly lines, and porno that seemed to loosely fit the song lyrics. Are you still using that or are you going for a whole new approach?

SCOTT: We've taken the best stuff out of the old film show and turned it into a twelve minute movie with a sound track. From now on it will be shown on its own as a film. A guy here in S.F. has organized a new wave film program that he rents to various places around the country. So if anyone out there is interested in seeing the original "UNIT TRAINING FILM" and other local new wave films, they can contact Richard Gaikowski, P.O. Box 40684, S.F., CA 94140.

The new films and slides are similar to the old in their homemade appearance, but of course as we write new songs the subject matter changes to fit the songs.

SLASH: Where do you get all the footage?

RACHEL: A lot of film is thrown out on Thursday nights in the film lab district and you can come up with some really horrible stuff if you spend a few hours a week in a garbage bin. Friends have given us some good footage and what we can't find we shoot ourselves. Our new slide projectionist is in the brain research program at Stakford and has access to a lot of good imagery. Brad works at a film library at S.F. State and has access to a lot of good stuff.

SLA*H: I saw you perform last year at the Mabuhay with the Dead Kennedy's and at that time you were projecting slides on a carhood and beating them with plywood guitars. Is that out of the picture now?

SCOTT: We might digress back into that someday. It was a lot of fun.

SLASH: Rumor has it that you're putting out an album soon.

SCOTT: We've just finished recording an album called "Digital Stimulation" on 415 records. In fact we just finished mastering it a few days ago. It should be in the stores by mid Sept.

SLASH: How did that come about?

RACHEL: 415 Records contacted us about two months ago and everything seemed to fall into place. We were all concerned about costs. We figured from past experience we'd need around one hundred hours of studio time to record and mix eleven songs. A $200 an hour studio like the Automatt was definitely out of the question. Ken Wagner, a recording engineer friend of mine, just happened to call me at this time and said they (Big Pink West) had just purchased a new sixteen track deck and that they'd give us time for $19 an hour. They have a very nice studio with a good mixing board and other nice equipment and since I'd worked with Ken on other projects it seemed like the perfect place to record an album. 415 was pretty skeptical about the place at first. It was too cheap ... too good to be true. And since we wanted to produce it ourselves they worried that we might end up with a shoddy prodoct. But we were finally able to convince them that with the rates being as inexpensive as they were that we would be able to spend more time experimenting with the sound and getting what we wanted. 415 was very good to us about that ... they gave us complete freedom to do whatever we wanted. Though they never said anything, I think they were quite worried right up until the end, about what we were going to come out with. We heard some suppressed groans in the beginning when we had mentioned that we were doing three instrumentals ... and that one of them featured a guest artist on vibes. You have to keep in mind the other groups on the 415 label. We noticed some rather strained faces when we all went in to master the final mixes ... it was the first time they had really heard the recordings. There were sighs of relief after the first song had played. It came out really well.

SLASH: Did you do the final mixes?

RACHEL: We did it together with the engineers, Ken Wagner and Mike Rosen. There were usually four of us turning knobs during each mix. They gave us a lot of help and support in getting the sound we wanted. They have since volunteered to be our soundmen for live performances. We've had problems in our past recordings getting a good synthesizer sound. It's easy to get a good mid-range sound but the high and low end can really sound like buzzsaws and farts on tape. So we spent a lot of time getting them to have an aggressive, cutting edge without breaking up and hissing.

The biggest challenge was getting a good drum sound. We wanted to get a melodic drum sound in which the toms were out front. I try to use them melodically and it seemed hard to get a warm sound with an edge on it.

SLASH: Did you use any other special recording techniques?

SCOTT: We ended up doing the vocals in the tool room to get a live sound.

SLASH: Do you plan to use the vibes player at any live gigs?

RACHEL: We're hoping to use him and some other musicians around town occasionally to bring some different instrumentation into our sets

SLASH: How long were you in the studio?

SCOTT: About two months. We'd work at our regular jobs during the day and record at night.

SLASH: What are your regular jobs?

SCOTT: I'm a tile setter.

BRAD: I work at a film library at S,F. State.

RACHEL: I work for a graphic designer.

SLASH: Are you doing the album cover design?

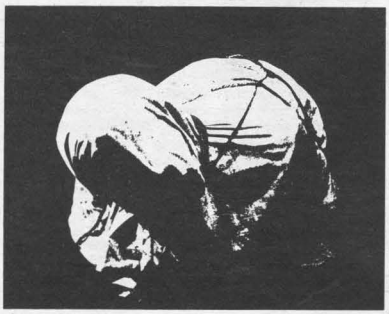
BRAD: Rachel is.

SLASH: How long have you been together?

SCOTT: The Units started back in '78. We had four guitar players, a bassist, a lead singer, a drummer and I played synthesizer. Pretty soon the lead singer and all the guitar players quit, one by one. Someone stole the bass player's bass and I talked him into getting a synthesizer. In fact several of us chipped in money so he could afford one.

But Brad and I were playing together long before that. We grew up in the same town. In fact he lived on the same block I did. Rachel and I met about two years ago. We collaborated on a performance piece in the windows of the J.C. Penny's building downtown on Fifth and Market and have been working together ever since then.

From Texas



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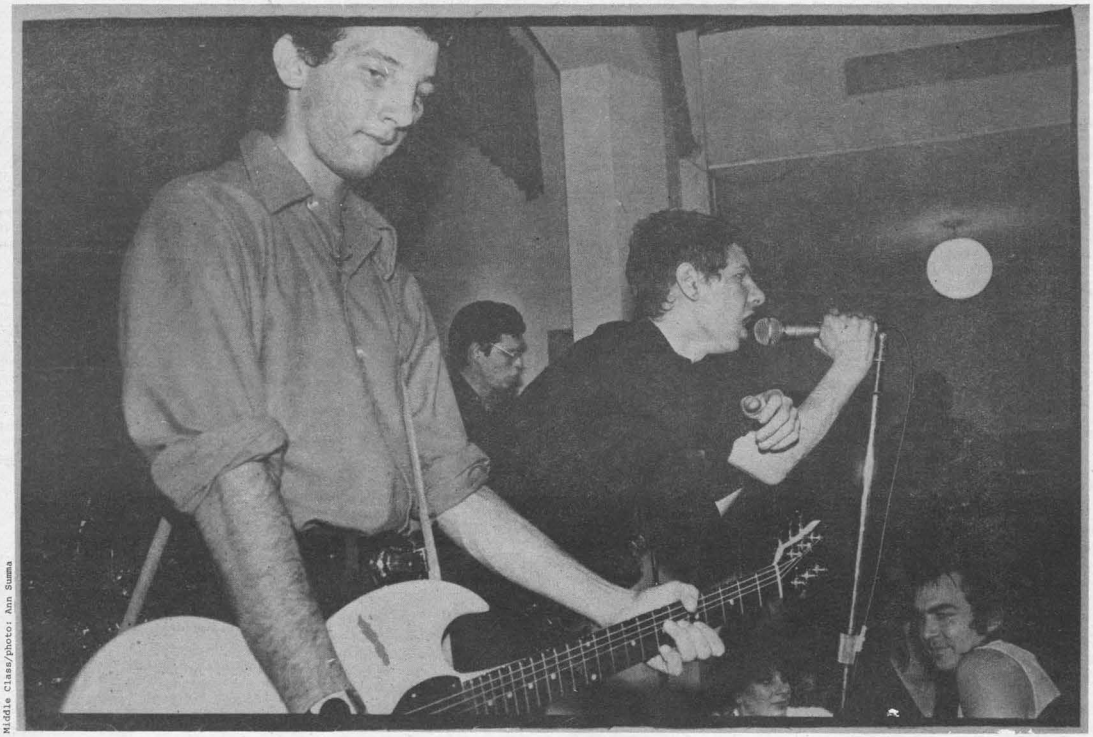
DENNIS BROWN

INTERVIEW WITH DENNIS BROWN
BY RANKING JEFFREY

(Also present were Jamaican and American reggae artist, Larry McDonald, who now works with Oakland-based "Riddem," Byron Malcolm, American distributor and representative for Joe Gibbs records, and Ken Lazarus, one of the original ska greats of years ago.)

SLASH: I saw you in "Heartland Reggae" the other day, wearing a three-piece suit, doing a real slick "soul" routine. . .
DENNIS: Well, you can do so much with reggae. You can get slick, but I am definitely dedicated to reggae, no funky, no disco, but to reggae. That is my root, but at the same time, I enjoy listening to soul music and various types of music.
SLASH: Who were your favorite soul artists?
BYRON: Temptations. . .
DENNIS: No, back before that. I used to sing various types of styles. I had many favorites. . .
SLASH: The Impressions seem to have been a favorite.
DENNIS: Yeah, and Sam Cooke.
BYRON: The Drifters and Chuck Jackson.
DENNIS: Ben E. King!
BYRON: Professor Longhair, Frogman Henry, Marty Robbins. . .
SLASH: What!? Marty Robbins?
BYRON: Yeah, sure. .
LARRY: Well, I'll tell you now. When I was a child, I'd get up early in the morning and listen to the radio, and for the first 15 minutes, I'd listen to Hank Snow & the Rainbow Ranch Boys. You'd be surprised. They do play that stuff down in Jamaica. People come down and expect to hear reggae on the radio. Of course, they play reggae, but everything else too. . .
SLASH: You can never see any reggae in Jamaica, where do bands play?
DENNIS: I played most clubs in Jamaica. Like the Sombrero Club, the Turntable, the V.I.P., all over the country. . .
SLASH: But, there's no steady clubs?
DENNIS: Well, the reason for that is, the promoters will keep all the money and give the artist none. So, less artists will work in Jamaica, because he needs the money. He would rather not do the show.
SLASH: So, Europe is the big market, right? You played the Montreaux Jazz Festival, right?
DENNIS: Yeah. Myself, Peter Tosh, and a group called Steel Pulse. We represented reggae on that night. . .
SLASH: Do you think it might be hard for people, internationally, to understand reggae with all the Rasta ideology?
DENNIS: No. They would love it, because reggae is not only about Jah, even though, Jah is everything. People form their own opinions in life. One might accept it and one might just view it . . .
SLASH: Would you be suspicious of people from different backgrounds imitating Rastafarianism?
DENNIS: If they're just imitating religion and not trying to know the religion, then they should not do it, but at the same time, I am here to condemn no one, or try to rearrange people or make them believe my beliefs. Everyone has their own approach to life. . .
SLASH: Do you feel misplaced when you're traveling?
DENNIS: No, I adjust to traveling.
SLASH: I've recently met up with a few real intense Rastas who were offended by all the liquor stores. . .
LARRY: We have some of the best rum in Jamaica. You grow up knowing rum and herb.
DENNIS: Maybe, you have come across some mad people! (laughter breaks out here)
SLASH: What do you think of the English "ska" revival?
LARRY: Perfect.
DENNIS: Nothing comes before the right time. I saw the Specials on T.V. in England. .
SLASH: Are they like "real" ska bands were?
DENNIS: In a sense, yes.
BYRON: A punkish version.
DENNIS: Two different bags as one. Could you see Teddy Pendergrass playing with the Clash?
SLASH: No.
BYRON: The real reason Bob Marley stayed up there is because Americans were fascinated with Rastafarianism. Like when they come to Jamaica to visit, they see a Rastaman, they stop and check it out. He tried with the Wailers and that didn't work, but for some reason the Rastafarian thing came through. So, all the groups in Jamaica started doing the same thing. Third World? They were a middle-class band and they figured to go like Bob Marley. . .
SLASH: So, do you think Rasta became a trend?
BYRON: Some. There are some who are genuine.
DENNIS: Different strokes for different folks.
SLASH: Reggae was originally street music, right?
BYRON: Early reggae was like that. Rock Steady was like that.
LARRY: The music never was shy of embracing all the influences around it. Even going back to Fats Domino days. Hey! You could pick up a Randy's record show in Nashville. It was Thursday nights. They have this program. Everybody listen to that. So, they all knew what was happening. WWR in New Orleans, WGBS in Miami, so coincidentally the record thing and sound system thing started right after that, and so naturally absorbed all of these influences. Any hit, you can think of in the last 10 or 15 years in America, has reggae version done by somebody in Jamaica. They're still doing reggae versions of American hits.
(At this point, in through the door comes Ken Lazarus, past ska master and lost Jamaican star, who's been hiding out in L.A. over the last few years. He and Dennis haven't seen each other since the early days of Jamaican recording.)
KEN: You know, I've been since 3:30 looking for this place!
DENNIS: Ken! Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!
KEN: So Dennis, it's been a long time mon!
DENNIS: It's good to see you!
KEN: It's been a long time, Dennis. Everything cool?
DENNIS: Everything cool. . . .
KEN: That's nice, mon . .
DENNIS: This is one of the founders of "ska," Ken Lazarus.
LARRY: Ken once had something like five tunes at the top ten of three of four different islands at the same time!
SLASH: Oh yeah, so what do you think of the ska revival?
KEN: So, I hear the ska is taking over England. It sure take a long time to take over. I hope reggae don't take that long.
LARRY: No, by that time they get to it, we'll be starving somewhere else . . .
KEN: You know one problem, mon? Reggae get here now and the Americans try it and they do it like they think it sounds.
LARRY: So, maybe it's a good thing that reggae is a funny and strange kind of music.
KEN: I'll tell you what reggae is like to them. It's too slow to them. We got a phrase in Jamaican life known as "soon come." Reggae is that kind of feeling. You have to wait. That bass drum just soon come . . . .
SLASH: Maybe that's why they're starting with the faster stuff.
KEN: Well, you know, this disco thing has got to go . .
LARRY: It's gone . . .
KEN: That's why "live" bands are coming back. You cannot listen to disco too long. There's no entertainment for you up on the bandstand. No singer singing a song.
LARRY: I could not stand it for five minutes.
SLASH: So, maybe that's why reggae production should be careful not to resemble gimmicky disco production.
LARRY: Wait! It's too early to have purists . . .
SLASH: No, I think Dennis' records are well-produced without being gimmicky, but Third World records are gimmicky.
BYRON: That's because Third World are a gimmick . . . .
(Ken and Dennis start laughing again)
SLASH: Dennis, tell me about hustling your way up the Jamaican music scene . .
DENNIS: Well, at the time, I was being managed by Byron Lee . . (of Dragonaire's fame)
LARRY: As everyone was them . . .
DENNIS: Yeah, using me. He was using me at the time . . .
KEN: The guy played two roles. One for his own benefit.
DENNIS: And one like he was protecting . .
KEN: Dennis was a nice young upcoming artist then. Nice voice, nice style, but he was an artist always kind of clean-cut. He didn't come and get into trouble, he just patient to wait to go on. He was an artist you could depend on. I was leading the band, through fourteen parishes. Dennis was on all the shows. Jimmy Cliff used to do some of the shows. Jimmy Cliff would bum a ride to the country, just to get on the show. And Byron was paying him peanuts. He didn't pay nothing at all. He had a responsibility for Dennis, because Dennis was a youngster and he couldn't afford to be soaking in a very bad influence, however, he paid Dennis like a youngster. Like a little boy . .
DENNIS: After that, I was introduced to Derrick Harriot. My first record was for him, but the first one released was "No Man Is An Island." That took a year before it become popular. That's what you call a "creeper." Then I started with various producers. You name them, I've been through them.
SLASH: Did you get your fair share?
DENNIS: No, but I put down my tribulations as experience. It can certainly never happen again . . .
KEN: You take what you can get. Jimmy Cliff would go all the way to the country to sing for nothing.
SLASH: Where did you guys play out there?
KEN: In theaters.
DENNIS: The Regal, the State, the Palace Theater . . .
KEN: It's not like theaters here. They have a performing stage. You can put an ice show on in some of those theaters. Hotels too . .
DENNIS: Club Marachas!
KEN: Yeah! Club Marachas in Ocho Rios!
SLASH: Have you had your records show under other names?
DENNIS: Quite alot.
SLASH: Ken, do you make anything off those Solid Gold Ska collections?
KEN: No! I saw it in Tower Records! One night I was there and I saw that I was on every one. With Sparrow. I'm on every one of those Gold albums, you check it out.
LARRY: I'm on one of them . . (He is. "Suki Suki" by Larry MacDonald & Dezil Laing.)
KEN: What a ripoff to sell your records like that.
DENNIS: Ripoff . . .
KEN: You've had yours, Russ Shirley. Guys like that. Monty Morris.
LARRY: Did Russ Shirley take you to Europe?
DENNIS: Yeah . .
LARRY: Workin?
DENNIS: Yeah . .
KEN: Do you know some of those guys were even conscious at the time of what they were doing?
DENNIS: I used to learn that artist who knew more than others would hide things from them.
KEN: As a musician, I learned the same thing . .
DENNIS: In Jamaican now, you have people like myself, Gregory Issacs, Big Youth, and Bunny Wailer, who all come together and have this thing called "Roots Foundation," right? All the stuff, like Deb, Solomonic, African Museum, and Cry Tough. All those labels. And love is dear, you know. It's not like years ago.
SLASH: Did you ever make so little that you needed a day job?
DENNIS: No. Since I left school, it's been pure music. You know, you've learned more than any journalist I've ever talked to. You should speak with Ken sometime too . .
SLASH: Ken, you should form another "ska" band now, and all the punk kids will come and see you . . . . . .
LARRY: You ever seen them, Ken. They go crazy, boy!
KEN: I'd start to laugh . . . . .

—Interview by Ranking Jeffrey



Middle Class/photo: Ann Summa

MIDDLE CLASS

Interviewed by Craig Lee

Middle Class is: Jeff (J), singer; Mike Atta (MA), guitar; Mike Patton (MP), bass; and Bruce Atta (B), drums.

S: You guys have been keeping kind of a low profile the past year –

J: Unintentionally.

B: We can't get in playing under people we want to, we can't get shows playing over people we want to –

MP: The publicity we get is bad publicity. The only time we're mentioned in the L.A. Times is derogatorily –

J: It's not even about the band –

S: "Somebody got stabbed while the Middle Class played" –

BAND: Yeah –

J: We got mentioned as one of the bands that got banned from the Hong Kong Cafe because of violence –

MP: The only time we get mentioned is to get slagged off – I'm sure that helps somewhat – we just have problems getting gigs .

MA: We'll hopefully start playing more – We have a couple of gigs coming up in San Francisco in September.

S: You seem to do better up in San Francisco than in L.A.

MP: We've always done better there –

S: Why?

MA: People like us ...

B: It seems people listen more up there –

J: There's not as much hype – so we're not working at a disadvantage. Whereas down here we are – first thing everybody does is "well who are you guys? I didn't see you in the L.A. Times roundup of punk bands!' 'There's none of that in San Francisco, so we're no worse off than anybody else up there.

S: You were like the first of the second generation of L.A. punk bands – when you started it seemed that you were doing well –

MP: Well, for a while we were like everybody's favorite opening act. We were like the only new band around, and all the other bands had been around for a while, and we would play under anybody, and so the Screamers, the Dickies, you know, "Oh yeah, we'll have Middle Class open for us" but when we got to the point when we didn't want to open for just any band, and we started advancing up bills, then it got harder to get gigs

B: We'd like to play under some bands, but we still want to get paid a decent wage! We want to play over bands, but there are very few bands we consider good, who we'd want to have on the bill, that would play under us.

S: Last time I saw you, your music had changed a lot.

MA: I think that's part of the problem, is that a lot of people don't know that we've changed and that we know how to play our instruments –

S: So how has your music changed –

MA: It's a lot more listenable –

MP: It's a lot more complicated –

MA: A lot more danceable –

MP: It's not fast 3 chord punk rock songs –

MA: Now it's one chord –

MP: We used to be the fastest band that was like being fast for fast's sake –

MA: It was a novelty back then –

B: Now it's just boring – there's a lot of people that do that.

MP: We've slowed down a little bit. We still play fast – but the songs just have a lot more to them –

MA: A lot of variety – changes, breaks, other than a barrage of guitar, bass and drums –

MP: 1, 2, 3, 4!

J: It used to be that the major part of our music was energy Now we're trying to make it more than just that –

B: It obviously doesn't come across good on records –

S: What are some of the new songs?

MA: Blueprint for Joy.

J: Last Touch, Home.

S: What's Last Touch about –

MA: It's about nightly bar life, singles life, about how ridiculous it is.

S: Do you think you're at a disadvantage being in Orange County?

BAND: Yeah ... definitely.

MP: Being in Orange County, you're isolated from the Hollywood scene ... the people putting on shows, we're just far away –

B: I think we get pushed into a certain category being from Orange County – if they find out we're from Orange County then we're one of those punk rock bands that are gonna come up and start stabbing people in the back.

J: They're afraid the whole crowd is going to be HB (Huntington Beach) skinheads.

S: What do you think of those guys?

B: They're entertaining in one way –

MP: In a way they're real cool, they stick together when a guy is being beaten up – in the respect I think those guys are real cool, but then when it comes to beating up other punk's that's stupid.

MA: Stabbing a person at a concert for no reason –

S: I remember seeing you play the Fleetwood with the Germs and there was a whole row of people sitting in front of you on the lip of the stage.

B: They get ahold of something – a dance, a fight, that's the center of attention, it's no longer the band –

MA: It appears to be you're background music for fighting, for conversation.

S: Do you see any way out of that?

B: Either they're gonna drop out of this and do something else, or they're gonna have to listen after awhile –

MP: We'll force them to!

B: They'll get bored with it either way –

MA: It'll be something you grow out of – I remember when everybody in Hollywood was looking for fights –

MP: We played the Cuckoo's Nest in Costa Mesa last night and there was hardly any trouble – I only saw one fight and that was between two girls And they had all this extra heavy security, and bouncers, because they had read this stuff

and they believed it – it was so funny because the crowd there was so sedate

S: Do you feel any affinity with any of the other Orange County bands –

MP: I like the Adolescents a lot. I produced their single.

S: How did you get on the "Earcom" (an english sampler record put out by the Fast label.)

J: Jon Savage heard our single, liked it, got in contact with Fast and they liked it.

B: We tried to talk them out of it. We wanted to do something new.

MA: But they had some money for us, so ...

B: We wanted to record new material and have them pay for it, but they said no, we'd rather just release this ... they wanted to release it quickly too.

J: We had a month's notice.

S: Anything come out of that?

MA: Yeah we got a postcard from somebody in Israel! Our first piece of fan mail.

J: Yeah, he had heard it on Israeli radio – said that it didn't bother him to hear it

MP: It's real weird – how did he get the Atta's address?

MA: "Your friend Tomar"

S: Probably identified with the war-like sound.

MA: Yeah, we're the chosen band.

S: What are your songs about?

J: To use a cliche – personal politics. What comes out of day to day living.

S: Where do you get the ideas? From reading?

MA: From where we live! Going to the South Coast Plaza mall There's a lot to write about ...

B: It's not just the personal politics of Orange County, cause we don't just stay there ...

S: What about your song "Love is Just a Tool" – it's saying that no love exists?

J: No – I've gotten a lot of flack about that. I realize now, it wasn't as obvious as I thought when I wrote it, but basically it isn't that love is stupid, or else I would have said Love is Stupid – but it was just about people who use it for their own gain –

S: You all working?

BAND: Yeah .. Licorice Pizza .. office supply store . . .

S: You get any Middle Class singles in Licorice Pizza –

MA: No . . it's out of print . . . hopefully those things are all gone ...

S: Do you get any money out of it –

B: It paid for our Texas tour –

MA: Our stunt ...

J: What we're trying to do with our new recording is wipe out that last single ...

MA: Wipe our shame ... no, no, it was good, it was the way we were then, a year and a half ago, but it's something that we're not like anymore, we don't want to be represented by it anymore

B: That was the big thing with Fast records, they said oh, we really like this and would like to re-do it, put it back out – We said No! it was like extending the sound of that period, when that period no longer existed.

MA: Musically and lyrically we're like ten times superior now.

S: Last time I saw you play, your music seemed more similar to the new stuff in England than most of the other bands in L.A.

J: None of us in this band really like rock and roll, to that extent.

B: L.A. seems to be leaning towards that ...

MP: We don't have any rock and roll roots ...

J: We don't have rock and roll riffs in our songs –

MA: Because we don't know them ...

MP: We never bothered to learn them.

B: We all listened to it, no one can deny that, but we weren't musicians. We all listened to X or the Clash or whatever that people happen to fancy, but it – I really like some of those things but I couldn't see myself doing that, really . .

S: You seem a lot more modern than most L.A. bands. Do you ever feel frustrated –

B: Definitely – I have a constant feeling of frustration.

J: The whole thing is frustration.

MA: We had to get together and talk about it, because the thing was driving us crazy – not getting noticed –

J: We were tottering close to breaking up –

MA: I think that we're coming up with things that are really carchy – I think it's really different because we're not using any riffs that are per se rock and roll riffs – coming up with our experimental riffs – I've been making up chords – and we throw in all these breaks –

S: And you don't feel you get the recognition you deserve –

BAND: Yeah! (everybody talks at once)

J: A lot of the time it feels like we're playing into a vacuum. I don't wish to sound like a baby . . . but even stuff like getting written up in Slash, it's kind of fleeting –

S: So what kept you from breaking up?

MP: I don't think any of us would know what to do if we did – We've been together such a long time – I just feel like a band member.

B: I feel like I get the most frustrated out of everybody in the band. Because I am the furthest away from liking punk rock, like Mike Patton is into the Orange County scene, he likes listening to all those bands, but I don't like many of them. And Jeff likes a lot of things from England – I just feel that eventually we'll get noticed for what we're doing.

MA: Dave Ferguson of CD productions said we would do better in England – he read some of our lyrics and said we were geographically mislocated. We're in the wrong place.

B: It's not just us ,I think anybody in L.A. who's beenn around for any length of time, if they were in England they would have records out on a legitimate label – like the Bags or –

S:Holly and the Italians –

MA: Yeah! look at those guys! And they were nothing here!

J: But even when you get to the point like the Go-Gos or X where you're selling out four nights in a row at a local club, you still have to get over this prejudice that the rest of the world seems to have towards L.A.

MA: Everything New York writes about L.A. is always: "Well X is a good example of L.A.'s 1977 sound."

S: There's lots of other bands that get into personal politics, going against the status quo, etc. How do you keep yourselves different?

B: It's not that we're trying to destroy anything or are against a system, it's saying that it exists –

J: We're not really very conscious of trying to be different–

MA: It's just trying to make people aware –

S: But how much of that comes through when the music is full blast and the lyrics are buried in the sound –

MA: We're working on our sound now.

J: Even if the sound is clear, it's impossible for the audience to know, unless they have the lyrics.

B: That's why an album helps –

J: There's no way you can get even a little bit of what you're trying to get across lyrically on stage You just gotta hope for the best.

S: Jeff, have you changed your singing style at all? You used to sing every song in the rushed monotone –

J: That was the only way I could fit the lyrics into the music. I used to try to stuff in as many words as I could because I was kind of afraid of what I could do – it was a lot easier than trying to sing.

S: Are you trying to change that now, open up –

MA: In our new song he's actually singing now – it's kind of strange to hear Jeff actually sing!

MA: He's enunciating better!

MP: When we first came out, everybody gave us a good reaction, and, "oh yeah, we're doing good," and we started playing faster and faster –

B: We played non stop for two months and then the bottom fell out –

J: We were really naive. We thought that all we had to do was go out, play –

S: Cause a riot –

J: That too –

B: Have all our friends and get more fans –

MA: Get people to jump on stage –

B: Unfortunately it just doesn't work that way.

J: And we put out that 45 which was really stupid –

MA: Before I didn't care what Jeff was singing, I was just concerned with playing my own instrument. But now I'm concerned with what we're saying – I can't write the way Jeff does but it comes out exactly the way I feel –

S: Do you feel detached from Orange County?

MA: I think we're like the band without a country –

J: When we started there was nobody else doing our kind of music in Orange County – this was before the HB thing – and so we were already detached then, and in L.A. all the time – and the Orange County scene started up – and we hardly know anybody around there – like that Huntington Beach scene – we just meet these guys when we play down there –

MP: We're in Santa Ana and there's still no scene –

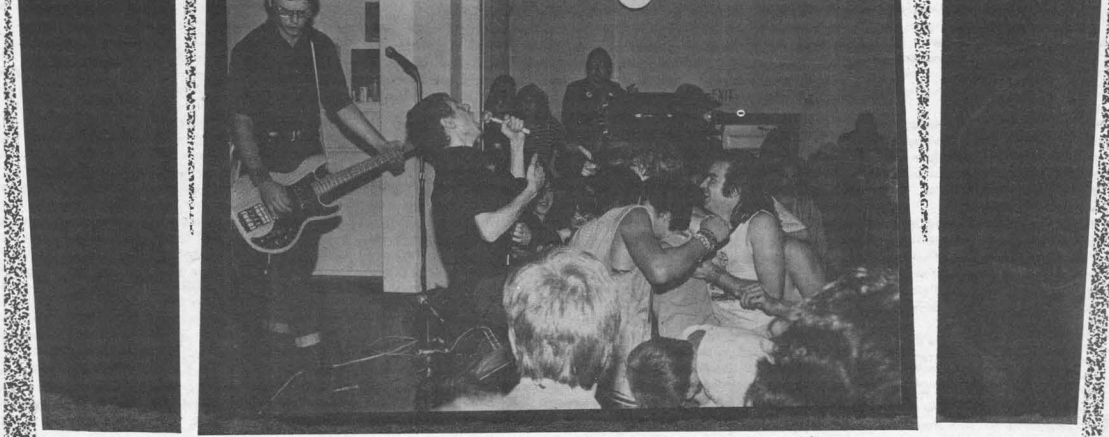
MA: We're the central area – There's one guy who goes around writing "Sid Vicious lives" – on one wall he wrote "Who Killed Bambi," The Germs' "Led Zeppelin" and "Smoke Pot" – the weirdest thing on one wall – that's the Santa Ana punk!

S: What about in your neighborhood – do they know what you're doing?

MA: It's a bunch of mexicans that go "Ponk rock –", then they want to know if you want to buy some good weed and why your girlfriends look like boys.

B: The usual petty harrassment.

THAT'S IT FOR THIS ONE



Middle Class/photo: Ann Summa

MARK PAULINE

"ASSURED DESTRUCTIVE CAPABILITY"

"He's the James Dean of The Junkyard." – Joseph of Factrix

His manic machines are an Urban Nightmare; a modern day Dante's Inferno.

His menacing machines put together in ingenious fashion from salvage yard scraps are running wild . . .

For the past 18 months he's been staging public shows in the Bay Area of S.F. Mark Pauline of Survival Research Laboratories.

–Interviewed by Monte Cazazza/Tana Emmolo

SLASH: How did you get started building your machines?

MARK PAULINE: The whole business of making machines was a response to coming across a huge factory that was being disassembled and afforded me the possibility for an unlimited supply of mechanical components. I changed the locks so I could get in and out easily and started collecting equipment. I figured out the functions and what I wanted to do with the equipment, and ended up with that first big machine "THE SHREDDER."

[THE SHREDDER – automatically demanufactures up to 5 small objects at a time, and ejects the remains. Equipped with noise making paraphernalia. Also with capability for self-locomotion, and electrical treatment of objects to be demanufactured.]

This was at the beginning of 1978, after I was trailing off on my altering of billboards. I came to the whole thing without any real kind of understanding of what I was doing, despite what you would think about how complicated the machines have become. I just had a basic understanding about how machines worked and I combined that with how my mind works, which is uncomfortable.

I've learned a lot from my involvement with the construction of these machines. I can get a better welding job now. I just rebuilt the transmission on my motorcycle last week. So I'm a new man.

SLASH: So you bettered your mechanical skills?

MARK PAULINE: Absolutely!

SLASH: Can you describe how you feel about your machines?

MARK PAULINE: I hate making them. It's awful. They really bother me when I have to make them. I like to do things with them. If I was as lazy as I want to be I would have rather bought them, but that's not the way it works. They're instruments that fit into the way my mind works. They enable me to get out ideas.

SLASH: Your machines evolve and go through personality changes; like in your most recent performance, "THE SHREDDER" started doing that circular dance.

MARK PAULINE: They get more talented every time I do a show. I want to keep it that way. They have personalities.

SLASH: You've used the symbol of the cat a lot in your work.

MARK PAULINE: Yes, there was a 6 ft. by 6 ft. article that I stuck on a few banks in the area that had some cats fucking on it. It was a response to my feeling that no one ever really sees cats fuck, because they always fuck in the dark, or they always hide when they fuck. I just wanted to involve banks in it in the daytime.

SLASH: Tell us about your mechanical cat.

MARK PAULINE: The mechanical cat was a stupid idea that ended up working.

[THE CAT – A metal facsimile of a cat, with capability of playing electric guitar or grasping with claw objects, and penetrating them. For purpose of penetration, with knife positioned in loin area, like a penis attachment.]

SLASH: He's a great guitarist.

MARK PAULINE: He is. He weighs about 150 lbs. Doesn't move too much. He's got perfect pitch. He can repeat a lick. He's so hot he burned out his insides at one show.

SLASH: Your shows all have elements of Sex Violence and Politics in them.

MARK PAULINE: I look at things in three different ways. The possibilities for violence in it. The possibilities for sex. The possibility for some type of political subterfuge. That's the one dimensional me. So the shows are the same way. Genet said: "That those persons who are truly possessed of genius speak seriously from the heart about two things – sex and death." Maybe he was just trying to cover up his inadequacy too. Maybe he couldn't even get it up . . . Try Kraft-Ebbing you sexual psychopaths.

SLASH: How long has Survival Research Laboratories been in existence?

MARK PAULINE: Well the original S.R.L. was formed five or six years ago by some right wing radicals who advertised in Soldier of Fortune. I didn't make up Survival Research Laboratories I stole the name from them. They stopped advertising around the same time that I needed people to think of me as an organization. It was important enough for me to steal someone else's name and con this stupid magazine Boulevards into giving me a full free page because I wouldn't pay to get into that piece of trash. I just did an ad for S.R.L. and from then on I tried to maintain the front/facade of being an organization and all the advantages that appearance has. In all the dealings I've had with the establishment and businesses you have to have that and someone's tax number or else you won't get answers to important questions, and you won't get response from people. As soon as you have real name, stationary, etc., it really helps. It also helps avoid the star thing. The name – I am the name. It defers things more to an organization which can be as impersonal as organizations can be.

SLASH: Do you think audiences appreciate your sense of humor?

MARK PAULINE: Well as that Avant Garde Filmmaker Gordon Stevenson said: "All that's really important is to make people laugh." For me a person who is trying to extend himself beyond audience boundaries I think the only way to get people to swallow ideas that are unusual and not especially pleasant is to make them think they are funny. If you can shade anything with a hint of laughter then they can take it. They can take a lot more of a beating if one relieves the tension just a bit. I want to drive into people like a nail. It's going to go in a lot further if they relax. It's like trying to stick someone with a hypodermic needle when their muscles are tense. It is a lot easier to do when they relax. The laughter softens them up and lets me get by their defenses as I want the most extreme effect possible. I like to make people unsure as to whether they did or didn't like it. Keep them off balance. People see these events and say "God it happened so fast." "I don't even really know what happened." I can't seem to make the events last more than 20 minutes anyway. If you can't rivet them in their place for 15 minutes then forget it. Most people run into problems, not because what they're doing isn't interesting or exciting. It's just that they try to make it last longer because there is something about time that means more, and it's better if it's longer and that's really crazy. A lot of things just shouldn't be long.

Let me get this in. "I need help because I hate to do the work. Willing Slaves apply at the address and phone number at the end of this interview. No experience necessary, except the ones they receive from the master. Just follow orders to the bitter or better end. Photo and S.A.S.E. required."

SLASH: Well maybe this interview will be worthwhile after all. How many of your machine performances have you done?

MARK PAULINE: Eight so far. The first one was Machine Sex which was during the Gas Crisis. It was held at a gas station in North Beach. We chopped up live pigeons in The Shredder. They were dressed in little Arab doll costumes. It was all to a song by The Cure based on the book The Stranger called Killing an Arab. We had to bribe the gas station attendant. The second one was Food for Machines done in United Nations Plaza. The machines tore up and mutilated food. All kinds of food. It all got wasted. There was a big mess which we didn't even clean up. I forged permission to do that one. The third show was a little benefit I did when Jello Biafra of The Dead Kennedys was running for Mayor. We just defaced some of the other candidates running against him and some other political murderers from S.F. who had enough clout to kill the mayor – like Mr. Twinkie; defaced them with The Stabber.

[THE STABBER – device with mechanical arm featuring a hand for grasping objects. With variable speed settings and a system of rollers designed to pull a length of 2 dimensional images along and expose them for striking by the object held by the mechanical arm.]

Then was "Noise" done in Golden Gate Park, a real psychedelic show. Images, ideas and sounds all thrown together.

The fifth show was "ASSURED DESTRUCTIVE CAPABILITY" a stab in the face for Leonid Brezhnev of the Soviet Union; where we did anything you can imagine to Mr. Brezhnev's body and image in Union Square. We invited people from The Red Chinese Trade Commission, but I don't know if they showed up. I hope they did. Then was "USELESS MECHANICAL ACTIVITY" which was at the Palace of Fine Arts and nothing worked. It was a flop. Then I did a show at Project Artaud with Factrix, Non, and Zev. I came on with the machines, all mostly about sex and girls. That was the first time the Robot Pounder was used.

[THE POUNDER – remote controlled mobile platform, featuring six mechanical arms that are capable of holding and striking out with different objects. Also

objects or images can be mounted on machine and mechanical and electrical treatments applied.]

The last show was at Cabrillo School with Monte and Tana, conflict of interest here since you're doing the interview, but that's the way the world works readers – better grease your own gears. That was a real nightmare ride, one that I hope I can someday improve upon.

SLASH: Want to discuss any future plans?

MARK PAULINE: I want to take advantage of past work in order to create a new kind of spectacle. Operate on the level that football does for millions of people in U.S.A. I want to plug into that vacuum filled by T.V., Crummy Hollywood Movies, Football Baseball, Drag Races, County Fairs. I want to give mass audiences something they can sink their teeth in. I try to do everything in a professional manner and yet remain unconventional. It is just a way of making fun of it all. I try to conduct myself as a business yet still say the unbusinesslike things I do say. It ridicules the whole effort. It does not ridicule my effort because I admit that all of this is ridiculous. There are people out there who conduct themselves no differently than I do but really have to take themselves seriously to get the job done. That's one thing wrong with the U.S.A. People are afraid to take chances to lead this country anywhere besides the dump. It's heading for the dump because people have forgot the whole meaning of what they are doing. None of this stuff is holy or immaculate. All of the work is dirty. It's all dirty work. None of it is precious, and it can be changed to make it work better.

SLASH: What is the main problem concerning your work now?

MARK PAULINE: I've always been able to get by and do the most with what I can round up. But I need a lot more each time around to get the same kick just like everyone else does. I could really do something with more booty. I have to set myself up and latch onto the attention of the news media so that I can attract the interest of people who will contribute money and/or materials so I can end up doing what I want. I'm competing against football and baseball. I could provide a stiff challenge to those people with thousands of dollars against their millions. I've done well with just hundreds of dollars at this point. Looking at it in terms of the next 5 or 10 years, it's going to take money to have Survival Research Laboratories develop worldwide clout. Try to do the things that can't be done. It can only get better for people who have a genuine experimental outlook. The fact is that the structure is desperate for new ideas and input in every area.

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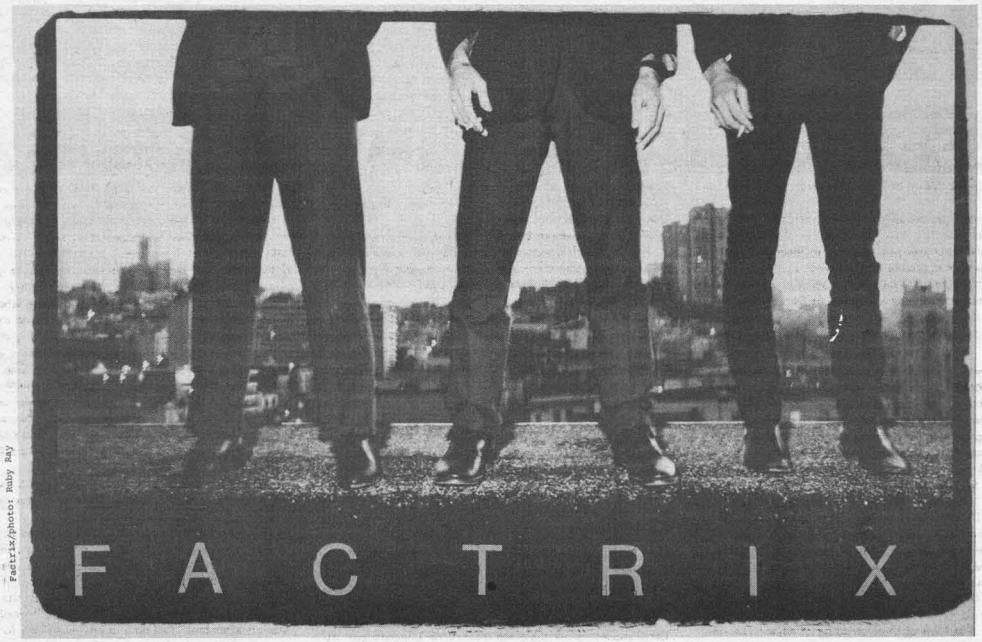


Factrix/photo: Ruby Ray

"SLOW MOTION SOUNDTRACK IS FLESH"

FACTRIX: Cole Palme, Joseph Jacobs, Bond Bergland
Tribal Trio
Electronics gone tribal.
Tribal gone electronics.
Automatic Writing.
Spontaneous Human Combustion.

Released: "Live At Target" LP, Subterranean Records, w/ FACTRIX, NERVOUS GENDER, UNS AND FLIPPER.

Forthcoming: FACTRIX 45, "Empire of Passion" B/W "Splice of Life". Trans – Time Records, FACTRIX LP, Trans – Time Records.

Aside from recording their new LP. FACTRIX is currently working on the soundtrack for Roman Polanski's new film, and researching the specific frequency to trigger Spontaneous Human Conbustion. Representatives from NASA are interested in establishing a FACTRIX "think tank."

—Interviewed by Monte Cazazza/Tana Emmolo

Our interview began with Joseph talking about an extra-sensitive subject, SPONTANEOUS HUMAN CONBUSTION.

JOSEPH: I happened to read an article in a magazine one day which had some very interesting photographs of the flash charred remains of people's bodies . . . actually just their clothes were left. The article was about SPONTANEOUS HUMAN CONBUSTION. There was one photograph in which just the feet of the person were left – still in the shoes. Just this big flash outline where the body was, and this pile of clothes. The person ignited, so fast and so hot that it didn't damage anything except the person.

SLASH: Do they have any good theories on why this happens?

JOSEPH: There are so few documented cases of actual SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION that they don't have a whole lot to go on. In the cases that have been actually documented in America, which are only a handful, they found that the people were heavy users of alcohol. Apparently the few people who have witnessed these S.H.C. victims going up say that a blue flame starts somewhere then quickly spreads over the clothing, not burning the clothing, just flaming on the outer surface; an intense blue color then suddenly there is this brilliant white flash, and the person is just gone . . .

SLASH: OK, let's talk about Entertainment?

JOSEPH: From my perspective, if there is any intent that we have in doing a live performance it is to bring a different kind of experience to people to alter their state of consciousness and their awareness of themselves.

COLE: To take a razor to the mind's eye.

JOSEPH: Which is why I feel that what we do is different from various forms of entertainment. The traditional band popular music format where the whole idea is to distract or to create fantasies. It's like drinking a lot of booze, or taking narcotics or taking the consciousness of yourself from yourself. I think our music has the opposite effect.

SLASH: Yeah, from the many times I've seen you perform I've noticed that a lot of people have trouble dealing with that, they don't want to do that. They don't want to have to think.

SLASH: Let's talk about your records.

BOND: Well let's talk about entertainment more.

SLASH: Good, I like to trash entertainment.

BOND: There's this other thing I've been thinking about lately . . when I've gone out I get really –

JOSEPH: DRUNK (laughter)

BOND: I get really drunk and offended by these people who haven't thought their thing through enough to disect it enough . . . because I don't want to go out and see someone's whole life or what they construe as their life, which is not even their whole life but just what is conscious to them. They don't get into the subconscious aspect of disecting or getting to the root of what they're trying to do or put across. And it really makes me physically ill a lot. Like I really get sick a lot when I go out. Especially this whole performance artist thing . . . I mean it's just . . .

SLASH: Monte gets sick too, that's why he doesn't go out . . .

SLASH: I want to become a homicidal maniac sometimes I'm in clubs and I think I should just set this place on fire. All these people should be incinerated.

BOND: Whenever I go out and see these bad performances I think about how in the far east like when a thief gets caught they cut his hand off. I am really curious about how in that kind of law, what you'd do to a bad performer.

SLASH: Break their instruments.

BOND: Right, but not instruments, like a theatrical person, just break the ribs in their body, and just crumple them up into a ball and roll them down the aisle or something. I think if people are going to perform they have to be ready to be killed for a bad performance. I think it's thumbs up or thumbs down all the way!

SLASH: Cole, tell us about "Phantom Pain" are your lyrics the result of painful experiences which occur in day to day existence?

COLE: I'M not sure where the words come from. I'm in a trance-like state when they materialize. I'll later do some editing and rephrazing. I select words for their sound properties . . . their magnetic properties. Pregnant Words. We'll work and rework until the words and music mesh . . . sort of a symbiosis. Elements of disturbing surprise, off color juxtapositions which trigger pops and crackles in one's nervous system.

SLASH: Do you see your music as an outcome of modern day industrialization?

BOND: I see that as an aspect of our music but that's too easy . . .

JOSEPH: I think that to a certain degree our music is an outcome of modern industrial noxiousness. It is in a minor way a pictorial of industrialization and its ramifications. What is more significant is that our sound would not exist in its current form without the machines we use which are a product of industrial consumer society.

BOND: There was this period about three months ago when none of the machines worked. I think it was good for us because it definitely made our music change insofar as the way we approach it because now we don't have half of the tools that we used to have because they're broken. Sometimes they work and sometimes they don't. It's made us try a lot harder to utilize the tools we have. That was a big turning point for us. When the machines revolted our music got good.

SLASH: Yeah that happens a lot and its good because it forces you to invent new approaches. I think that what the future is going to be . . . Sometimes you'll have electricity and sometimes you won't.

SLASH: Perhaps that's the beauty of the tribalistic sound you have.

COLE: Our sound invokes phantom pain.

JOSEPH: We're really involved in conjuring. There's the idea of the fourth musician; the other bandmember or whatever a real entity. A lot of times in the things we do each of us will be doing very little, but the total combination will really seem . . .

SLASH: The sum is greater than the parts.

JOSEPH: Exactly.

BOND: (to Monte) When I talked to you the other night I was reading DEAD FINGERS TALK. The last seven pages are so amazing there is this one line where he ends up breaking everything up and putting the whole thing back together at the end. There's this one line: SLOW MOTION SOUNDTRACK IS FLESH. I though that was so perfect for our music because like you slow things down and just put sounds into this stagnant situation because I'm really into the idea of taking a time oriented medium like music and stopping time with it, because I think that's a real challenge, to bypass time in that sense and if you do that it's very physical and very sensual and that's what that line is, totally, you break it up and you override the obvious and its . . . SEX. (laughter)

SLASH: We ll get into sex in a moment Mark Pauline told me a good question to ask.

JOSEPH: I think that effect is only disorienting if you're not willing to let go. We really are time travelling. We use time travel and manipulate time in our music.

SLASH: Well all the times I've seen you . . . every single time you've been really different from the time I've seen you before, and personally I like that because I don't know what's going to happen.

JOSEPH: Neither do we!

SLASH: Especially the last time I saw you. It was so fast but it really wasn't because I got really relaxed and I felt very good and it went on for a pretty long time but actually when I thought about it it seemed like it went by so fast. But it didn't and I like that type of feeling.

BOND: Because that makes you think about your life and time. I mean imagine how you're going to feel when you die. When you realize that you ve just lived for however many years and it's over and it barely happened at all.

SLASH: Well sometimes your life is like that too. It seems like its going on. It's really boring for a long time then all of a sudden something happens, but then when you get to the end of your life and look back it'll have gone by really fast.

THE SKIDS

THE SKIDS were in some dressing room of the BBC building waiting to go and tape a song called "Circus Games" (a single off their latest lp) for TOP OF THE POPS, the main british tv showcase for pop and rock n roll. Over the built-in speakers of the rooms that are connected to the sound stages you could hear the Selecter taping their segment of the show, pariently (or not – hard to tell when you're not there) going thru one version after another. After the interview with Richard Jobson, singer, guitar player and opinionated spokesman for the band, I failed to catch the Top of the Pops machinery in action as journalists (even humble ones) are not tolerated on the sets. Anyway the BBC could keep its little secrets as far as I was concerned, I had seen the band the night before at the Hammersmith Odeon and there was no way they could be as exciting and powerful on the tv screen as they had been that night. I must admit that liking the Skids after all was one of the big surprises of my summer. And I still cherish the "bleak, depressed, industrial noise" they are so in contrast with.

THE SKIDS have three lps out (The Absolute Game being the brilliant latest – most of it) and only started playing live again after a long period of inactivity and some line up changes. Also it must be pointed out that Richard Jobson's accent is as strong as his views. Definitely the grand winner of this issue's Transcriber's Nightmare Award.

(the band's relationship to the audience):

RICHARD: . . . . . we're not as close to the audience as we used to be, and I am pleased about that because once you get too intimate with them you tend to relate to the first hundred people and forget the rest. But we're still very much part of them, the dressing up thing as opposed to wearing jeans and jackets. One should dress up. There are too many bands in England into that doomsday attitude, real depressive. We relate to people's problems but you got to do it with a smile. Not going "this is the end . . ."

SLASH: Speaking of which, the Simple Minds really reminded me of The Doors.

RICHARD: There are so many bands in Britain that do, a million of them, Echo and the Bunnymen, Joy Division, Stranglers ... We sound like ourselves. We call in Northern Soul, Scottish soul music.

SLASH: Are you all from Scotland?

RICHARD: Yes we all are. And not too proud of Britain at the moment.

SLASH: Why are there all these children's voices in the record?

RICHARD: Have you heard of an Italian director called Rossellini? I read about a film of his, it takes place after the war in 1945 and it's about the reactions of the children. The songs are about the children's attitude towards the adults, the problems of innocence.

SLASH: Do you think your music and your image are suited for mass acceptance in the U.S.?

RICHARD: I think we're going to concentrate on Europe for the moment. And we've never got any vibes from America. Our record company in America, Virgin, is so bad, it's dreadful. I think we're going to be relased from our contract there. And we're not so fashionable in Britain right now either, it's much more a sixties revival type thing now, like the Specials. This ska thing changed the whole market again. I think we make better records than those bands, much more ... aware, but I'm not bitter. I just don't like revivals ...

SLASH: I didn't expect a version of Sloop John B in your set, it was a bit of a shock . . .

RICHARD: It's not exactly the Beach Boys, is it? Don't even need a beard and a fat stomach!

SLASH: In the past you've been accused of being some kind of fascist propagandist, starting with the cover of the 1st album and some interviews, and during the show yesterday you seemed to confirm all of it by saying something about your stuff being "better than jungle music" . . .

RICHARD: That's right. What I meant there was a criticism of this Fad, like Eno, David Byrne, all these Americans doing what we call savannah music, XTC do it as well, they're all getting into this afro jungle rhythms. We're saying that what we're doing is much closer to the heart, their stuff is completely contrived, they don't know anything about it, they'd have to go back in history to really understand that tribal music. We're scottish, we got our own tribal music like the pipes, percussion instruments, everything, and it's very militant as well, and we brought that into OUR songs, which is why I'm saying it's closer to the heart. We got our own jungle music, our own soul. People like David Byrne have no heritage, and we have such an abundance of it. I am quite knowledgeable with the past because I am nationalistic and in love with our country, and the only reason for that neo-nazi reputation was because of being nationalistic and in love with our country.

OTHER BAND MEMBER: It was the british press that started it.

RICHARD: Days of Europa had a strong sleeve and they just didn't understand it. Especially since England is socialist. It's horrible.

SLASH: What is "the absolute game"?

RICHARD: What does the absolute game mean to you??

SLASH: Survival?? Being faster and smarter than everyone?

RICHARD: Yeaaa. That's what Days of Europa was about, surviving, being strong, because that's the only way to survive. You can see it this way: Imagine a diver on a board – Scared to Dance was him taking a leap. Days of Europa was him landing. The Absolute Game is the presentation, afterwards. Once you survive you have to watch for other problems. But the only way to do that is smiling. Like last night it could get very tense, but it wasn't that tense that you can't smile. I can't go see groups because I get bored with singers being grim and depressed. We also write about depressing subjects, but we can do it with a smile, with a laugh. I get fed up, I get depressed, I want to kill myself too, but on stage I'm smiling. Like it says in our song "we're so happy to be with you," we cannot die, we gonna keep on going because our hearts and our souls are in it. If I get angry I do something. I use it for myself. I get intense but soon it's over and I can smile. Like when doing that song about that potato farmer, a very sad song about how the English destroyed the Scottish race and the Irish race – it's very bitter and intense – but when it's over that's it. That's different from dressing up in black, and being nihilistic. It's so simple to be extreme. Just like musically it's so simple to be avant garde, it's nothing. They pretend to have that difficult approach, like "we don't want to be rock n roll, and we don't want to be this, we don't want to be anything, just ourselves, just bizarre . ." but I think that's contrived. All they're doing is using something with which they could be heard by two million people and instead are heard by a cult. Like I like the attitude of the Pop Group, but I don't like the end result. They're saying they want one million people to hear them but they'll never get there. *We* will be heard by a million people, in our own manner. Our attitude is similar but our music is just not as difficult.

SLASH: So you think that being taped for Top of the Pops like you will be in a few minutes is a valid way to get across?

RICHARD: It's the only thing there is in Britain, that's why it's valid.

ANOTHER GROUP MEMBER: It's all very well for the Clash to refuse to be on it . . . .

RICHARD: As I said, it's very simple to be extreme. Energy and intensity does not come from speed, we've done slow songs that are as aggressive as anyone's . . . . . And we're not interested in racial or religious problems as a band. Anyway i am Catholic and the rest of the band is Protestant, and in the U.K. there's a Catholic-Protestant warfare and bigotry and we don't deal with that, we don't write songs about Catholic bastards or Protestant bastards, it's not that we're scared of making a statement, we just think it would be suppositious on our part.. . . . . And I don't explain what the meanings of our songs are, I'd rather leave the interpretation of the songs to the buyer of the record, he can see in it what he fuckin wants to. He can do what the fuck he wants to with the album itself, he's spent his five quids, he can use it as an ashtray, he can bake it, he can read the lyrics a hundred times or wipe his ass with them, that's my position. The connotations of any lyrics, from my point

of view, is made, and Joe Bloke, in Los Angeles can feel the same. He can pick up all right, and he doesn't need this information. He can look for anything he wants as far as I am concerned. That's why I don't get upset about reviews, like someone who thinks the lyrics are pretentious has obviously approached them in that mind, all black and white, like "they've got to have a statement," either my baby has blue eyes, I love her I do, or then "why don't you fuckin shoot the nazis" or whatever, it's got to be like that for those people, and to me they're boring people, unexcited by anything. And they can't even read either, like the standards of their english is preposterous. I mean if everybody slags me I'm going to read it and criticize the way THEY write down, if they don't use the proper adjectives and stuff. And the state of the press in Britain right now is ... like we told one guy from Record Mirror who came to interview us last week, a very serious guy, very much intense and involved in ... severe subjects, we told him that we WERE intelligent and aware but that we were not interested in talking about severe subjects because we'll get bored by anything, from Tolstoi to ... Harold Wilson . . I mean we've used these people, we've used Sartre on the 1st album, but we don't want to talk about it. There's no real interest in it. Where you buy your clothes, that's what people are interested in. If I read an interview by a group I want to read nice little things, I'm fed up with reading about severe things. I still think I'm clever, he thinks he's clever, but I ain't prepared to tell people how big my ego is. Just little things teenagers are interested in as opposed to these fuckin middle class nomads who only want a semi-detachement in the end. I ain't prepared to talk like these people. The end result was that in the article the guy came on as not liking

us, he found us to be frivolous. And he found me to be dressed as some fuckin caricature, and he had been sitting there in some fuckin overall jacket, the real "proletarian" look! And the questions he had asked we had not avoided, but we had treated them casually. What we had done is we had a conversation between the group members and just spoke about things that interest us. We were not about to answer all his severe questions.

SLASH: I was quite amazed at your concert last night to see what a variety of audienceses had come and were really

of weeks, then people tend to come back and not be as bothered by the things that are annoying the first time around.

SLASH: So one of the drawbacks of touring is that you are bringing totally new concepts for playing live, and hitting them once with it?

ARTO: That's why we like to play a few times in each city. It's also good to get out before the press gets out, and even before the record gets out. It's more exciting for us that way, because once the record is out —

SLASH: — people expect the visual equivalent of the record —

TIM: Right. But it's always been like that. Of course it's easier to just market a more saleable band, and put a record out which gains an audience, and then go out to meet that audience. It's harder for a band to rely upon simply word-of-mouth.

ARTO: But so far the tour has been pretty successful. From here we go to Texas and Georgia.

SLASH: How do you expect to be received there?

ARTO: Well, it's a new wave world!

SLASH: . . . oh god, don't use that word . . .

ARTO: (laughs) But it is, let's face it. And it is that which is creating the opportunity for us to play, because all the jerks are now saying "Hey, it's time to change fashions." They've created a space for us to slip into.

SLASH: Do you feel that DNA could be accused of over-intellectualizing their approach to music?

ARTO: No. I try and keep it from getting that way, because if you play for hours then you have no choice but intellectualize, what else is there to do for hours?

TIM: If we were to extend those songs past the enjoyable length, the length we have them at now, then we would be intellectualizing, because we would be thinking that our music is, you know, intense, but people into the music. From mohicans to smooth dressers to skins to industrial and bleak young men . .

RICHARD: We even had guys with long hair and headbands, I've seen them. But I don't think the Skids are an international band like others, I think we're very european.

SLASH: Do you think of the Skids as a pure rock n roll band?

RICHARD: Well musically we're using conventional instruments, but it's more the approach and the attitude and how it's played that makes it different. And it's still young.

are slow so we should make it longer, but then after a couple of minutes we would just be like waiters and waitresses serving out of rhythm. The question of brevity is not really an issue for DNA listeners, because they don't come to concerts for 12-song packages, they come for this thing that we do.

ARTO: I still think it's a live issue. Only a couple of people have said it to me, but it's been a considered thought. Maybe we'll write one long song in the next six months just because it sounds like a good idea to us.

TIM: We'll have a long song when we can make one sound good.

ARTO: It's these other bands who play really long songs that are intellectualizing, because ... fuck it (pause) ... I lost my line of thought. Well, when I play a long jam, I just feel like some kind of rhythm machine. It acts like hypnosis, like a doctor hypnotizing you. But I know that is one of the better accusations of what we are trying to do, that our songs are too short. But one thing we try and do is put so much information in our songs that they reek for a few minutes. We want our songs to last longer than when they physically end.

SLASH: But isn't it a bit awkward playing under the new wave banner?

ARTO: Sure it is. Still, it doesn't much matter what they call it as long as we can do what we want to do. Alot of people are using the scene to try and find themselves. They're saying, "How am I going to blank myself out?" It's pretty horrible. But on the other hand, it's all a big joke, this whole fashion thing.

SLASH: What's your next record project?

TIM: We cut some songs at Vanguard Studios in New York.

ARTO: It'll be a 12" EP.

SLASH: Do you think of your music as physical music?

ARTO: Yes, definitely.

SLASH: Do you think of DNA as a dance band?

ARTO: Yes, I think so. Obviously, we don't sound much like a typical dance band, but I've seen people at our gigs crashing around quite a bit. I guess that's a kind of dancing. Also, in a way, I think that if you hear us you should be able to dance better afterwards. But I think that loud music too generally forces people to dance, bands tend to use pure volume as a means of exciting their audience. I think it's a drag to immediately reassure the audience that they will never get ouf of this coded rhythm. African music is good because it has a lot of rhythms, different rhythms, so you're not forced to dance a particular way to it like some machine. But sometimes I do feel like playing longer songs.

DNA INTERVIEW

SLASH: What has been the reaction to DNA so far in California?

DNA: So far it's been pretty good. No one's come up afterwards and told us we suck ... they yell at us during the show but no one follows us around afterwards and tries to hit us. People seem to like it. I don't think we're unlikeable as a band, we're not trying to be deliberately unlikeable.

SLASH: Is it different from New York as far as audience or clubs go?

ARTO: Well the clubs are so standard here. You know, it's like Tuesday and Wednesday are punk nights ... all the clubs offer the same thing night after night. In New York it's varied, some nights it's jazz and some nights it's rock.

SLASH: How do you see the so-called "underground" music as changing in direction?

ARTO: This may sound weird on paper, but alot of the underground stuff is exactly the way it's thought of, as indulgence, as decadence for decadence's sake, as weirdness. On the other hand, I've heard some good music, less pretentious, and sometimes it is good.

SLASH: Do you see rock and roll as kind of a dead means of expression?

ARTO: I don't see rock and roll as what's left of Gene Vincent or what's left of Eddie Cochran. The energy is still there between the audience and a performer that's what I call rock and roll.

SLASH: At the Polish Auditorium gig, there were a number of people yelling "Bullshit" and "Who are you kidding" at DNA. Is that a reaction particular to California?

TIM: We get that everywhere.

ARTO: But even the people yelling are having a good time. They come back for the second show to yell some more. But I usually watch the crowd, and even with a really bad band, the audience is still trying really hard to . . . .

SLASH: . . . relate . . .

ARTO: Yeah, relate.

SLASH: There's an unspoken feeling on your part of kind of redefining what a live gig is all about, while the audience is still waiting for the old "1-2-3-4!"

ARTO: There is a song about three-quarters of the way through the set which is kind of a relief from the tension the rest of the music builds. It's a song with a constant beat throughout, and a melody.

TIM: Any place where we've been around for a couple

WHOEVER YOU VOTE
FOR, GOVERNMENT
WINS

CRASS

CRASS: MORE THAN EVERPRESENT LOGO ON LONDON WALLS AND FENCES

"I warn you, the nature of your oppression is the aesthetic of my anarchy."

quote from an issue of INTERNATIONAL ANTHEM, –nihilist newspaper for the living – a Crass affiliated publication

Met Crass somewhere outside London in their headquarters right next to some sort of radio antenna network that criss crosses the fields. Picked up at the station by one of them and driven to a renovated farm type of thing they live in, met two more on the patch of grass outside, then others just appeared. Many. Think there are as many women as men, and they all wore black loose things which made me think of VietCong although I never showed up for that party. Explained why they should let me tape our conversation even though they were not exactly agreeable to the idea. They very rarely talk to the press so I stressed the differences between THAT press (british, corrupt and powerful) and US. Meant every word of it they believed it and that was that. Inside heard a demo of a coming single, weird sound explorations with Japanese voices and other oriental surprizes along with the more familiar Crass raw wall of noise. Four of them stayed to talk and asked that whatever was said be collectively attributed to Crass. All four took turns answering the questions and progressively warmed up to my presence although there had never been a feeling of hostility. Just watchful, and very cautious.

SLASH: That's a long single.

CRASS: It's three tracks. It's about seven minutes a side.

SLASH: What is the first side about?

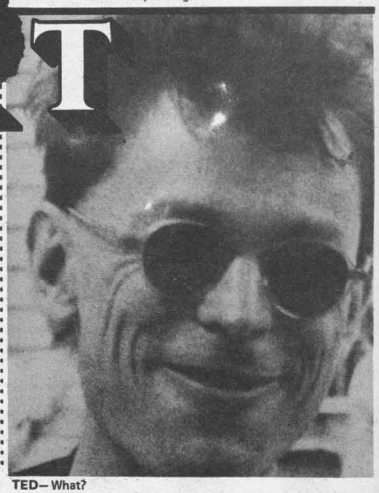
CRASS: It's about Nagasaki. It's called Nagasaki Nightmare. The verses are really short, sort of like Haiku, and we have this song called "Bomb" which is supposed to be an anti-bomb song.

SLASH: How long has Crass been together?
CRASS: About three years now.
SLASH: Have your goals changed at all since you've started?
CRASS: No ... we don't really have any goals.
SLASH: What started the band?
CRASS: Well ... you see, the goals already existed. It is an expression of what we are all feeling, and that was how the band developed.
SLASH: How many people in Crass?
CRASS: Um ... there are about ten of us.
SLASH: And it fluctuates?
CRASS: Some do some recordings and some do others. But the number stays about ten. The band doesn't alter, it's always drum or guitar or vocalist.
SLASH: If you have no goals, how do you define your existence?
CRASS: We set out to question existing systems, and formulas for existence. We don't in any way plan to give any answers. As individuals, we have our own answers, obviously, because we exist and survive. But we don't, as a band, choose to offer ours because that seems the first step towards becoming sort of teachers. Our stance as a group is to question, and to offer other people doubt. But we have no aim ... we don't want everyone to end up as anarchists, more that everyone should end up with the life they choose, as long as they have chosen it, and not simply accepted a given formula. But, we tend not to use the *progressive* confrontation as an approach to life ... as is evident in California. (In background: "I don't know if I agree.") Well ... I'm talking as a band, obviously as individuals we differ, as individuals tend to do, but as a band we do not touch upon, you know, issues.
SLASH: Your name and logo are all over this city. Do you think that, the people who wear your badges are as questioning as you?
CRASS: No, not necessarily. The band and the music go toward creating a space to think in, but how the public uses that space is up to the individual. I'd prefer people to be superficially promoting peace than to be superficially promoting a sort of fascist's doctrine. And alot of people who wear logos or spray things on their jackets, they need something, they need a support, a prop. They're looking for something in life. And they're going to find something, but, inevitably, the one thing they are not going to find is themselves. I'm not necessarily supporting these people, I'm just saying that I think it's better to be superficially adopting us than the other options around. But I think the people who easily adopt our symbols would just as soon adopt a swastika, because they have the same sort of appeal.
SLASH: How do you react when, for example, people at concerts have your name on their jackets next to some other band's which may represent opposite views?
CRASS: Well, the difference between us and other bands is obvious. For one, if they come to see Crass, they pay one pound, which is half what they would normally pay. And we make every gig an occasion, not just another pop concert. The difference is obvious. I mean, we don't exist in the music world, we don't know anyone in the music world at all We don't know other bands, and we don't go to their parties. Occasionally we go to Rough Trade to pick up mail . I think that's why we have the following we do. There is a large superficial following, but also a large serious following. People who genuinely try to understand and deal with our music are in turn helping us to understand the questions we come up with. None of us could imagine our position now three years ago because none of us are musicians, we aren't pop stars. We're interested in meeting people, sharing ideas, and learning.
SLASH: Do you see yourselves as being a political band, in any sense of the word, and your music as propaganda?
CRASS: Certainly we are a political band, but it's not propaganda. We have no affiliations with any anarchist groups or anything, and no sufficient interest in that. And we don't question their motives .
SLASH: Is the group the main outlet for Crass?
CRASS: Well, there is a newspaper, and some film. People are getting more interested in the band, and so there is more exposure. And people align with us. For example, when we went on tour two guys from Committee for Nuclear Disarmament were handing out pamphlets at the gigs, and they were as much a part of the gigs as we were. Again, we don't wholly support their cause, we only totally support the ultimate goal. If anyone broadly agrees with us, they can use the space of our gigs for distribution of literature.
SLASH: Do you still find a dominant passivity in the youth?
CRASS: Yes, but there is hope. Drugs have been much more prominent, and that fucks up the energy completely That wasn't the case at first.

SLASH: Do you run into criticism for living out here away from the city and the scene, for being removed and out of touch?
CRASS: Well, the desire to criticize is always present, and those people really have no understanding of what we are doing musically. But the real attack against us is being pushed by people who've never met us, never come to see us, and never even rang us on the phone. They attack us as being elitists, and being standoffish, and we're really not that way at all. Also, they attack us for living outside the city, for being hideaways, and it's not true, we just happen to live 20 miles outside London, and we've lived here, on and off, for about 15 years. We're not going to move to London just to lend ourselves some credibility.
SLASH: Are you coming under any kind of pressure from the authorities, I mean, for being troublemakers ?
CRASS: Well, we have alot of pressure and alot of trouble. Records are difficult to distribute because of that, and gigs are very hard to get together.
SLASH: Didn't you have some problems with record stores?
CRASS: Some stores decided they weren't going to sell any of our product at all. And that was because a case developed surrounding one of our singers where the police were investigating us for criminal blasphemy. For about six months they hung that over our heads, and then dropped it. After that police started visiting record shops all over the country, putting pressure on them, and so alot of people stopped stocking them. At the same time the police started contacting clubs, and gigs started being cancelled. There were periods when the police would even come here, to our house, and search us.
SLASH: Is there actually a law against criminal blasphemy?
CRASS: Yes. It carries a life sentence.
SLASH: Is it like fucking around with religious symbols
CRASS: It's a very difficult one to take through the court. But basically it is slandering the name of Christ, or god.
SLASH: You have a very strong anti-organized religion stance .....
CRASS: It's like carrying a walking stick around with you. Mostly, our objections to organized religion in this country are because the effect of that point-of-view is almost all-embracing, at least far beyond the apparent size of the religion. Everything is based around the Christian ethic, it's all tied up in that. And so, by attacking that, you not only, you know, breech your obligation to god almighty, but you also go against the morality, the moral basis, for this country.
SLASH: But wasn't that one of the promises of organized fascism? To free people from the Christian ethic and replace it with more Pagan ideals. Isn't it letting go of one, giving people a chance to embrace the other?
CRASS: Yes, it is, and that's the problem with any liberating force. But, I think that the actual depth we go to in our songs and public statements I don't think puts anyone at that risk. Because our statements are not that explicit, or if they are explicit, at least the logic and reasoning behind it isn't put forward and wouldn't be put forward because then you would be running that real danger. We effectively say, "Bullocks to that!' 'and then run away. And we just leave the echo. We don't actually take an individual who happens to believe in Christ and put them through all this mind-fucking experience which will lead to them not believing in Christ. We don't offer a package which is that powerful, although we might make them feel uncomfortable and question that about themselves.
SLASH: So you do believe in the individual's right in making their own choices
CRASS: Yes. Whatever the choice is, one has to accept that that is the right choice. Again, beyond what we do as a band, as an individual I believe that one can only make that right choice. If you go back to a position of having no definition or no idea and go through a totally nihilistic process and end up with nothing, then you can really make the right choice, the absolute choice.
SLASH: You have also criticized some of the liberal groups, like rock-against-racism, for being escapist?
CRASS: Absolutely. We have attacked it on those grounds, that it doesn't actually confront the realistic. That's something we constantly attack — liberal thinking on that sort of level. If you go out and attempt to act on a sort of socio-political level like people in rock-against-racism, you are doing nothing but harm. They're not confronting the issues, they're glossing over the issues. They're buying people out for a cause, and it has no effect at all I don't even have the time to talk about organizations like that, because they do nothing and they really set back any development in that area. And we all have different attitudes about how the race problem in this country could be solved.
SLASH: Do you see yourselves as an english entity, or is your music valid for other places ?
CRASS: Of course each place, each country, has its own characteristics, but I think it's pretty universal .The music is similar in America, for instance. I think what we would prefer, though, is bands contacting us from all over the world who have gained inspiration from what we are doing here and they've gotten on doing whatever they are doing. It is more important to us than flying all over.
SLASH: I was going to ask if you ever thought about flying to other countries and giving concerts ...
CRASS: We went to Holland, and from the mail we received since, it appears that it was a very positive tour. Our method of doing gigs is that generally people who like us get in touch with us and ask us to play somewhere. So if a big following developed in America we could get someone to sort it out and hopefully we could visit. If we could help open up new situations in other countries as we do in this country . . . it's just a problem of communication, that's all. We're just not into promoting ourselves. I think most of us hate rock and roll, I hate what it represents and I hate the people in it. It just stinks. We went up to do a cutting of a record the other day and there were some other bands there recording and I just felt really sick. Even when we're doing a gig, because it's our gig — we set it up, we're not exposed to the other elements. It's frightening. I mean, we are a part of rock and roll, which never occurred to me until finding myself in the sitting room making coffee with rock and rollers I.wondered if I look like one myself.
SLASH: Do you ever get the feeling that the whole medium might be entirely useless?
CRASS: I would feel that if it wasn't for the fact that I walk out onto the street and bump into someone who confirms that Crass is like nothing else they go to. Partly because we don't have a dressing room, we're right out there with the crowd, before and after the show. I don't go to many gigs, but those I hear about ... well, they're just rock and roll, and it doesn't matter. But if rock and roll has given us the opportunity to extend to other areas, then it's worth it just for that. And it's worth continuing with the band and even if we started being able to play less and less we would still do it just for the other areas which it gives us access to. I think the challenge is that it IS fucking shit, this music, but to go ahead and try to do something WITH it. Not change it, not be escorted by it, just do it. Another magazine is doing an article on us this week, and we said we wouldn't do an article with them, so now what I believe they did was make it up out of bits and pieces of fanzines .They haven't gotten in touch with us to ask if that would be alright. . . They're going to do it after we specifically told them we did not want to be in their newspaper. And they will profit on it greatly, because there's no commission. Now I don't know how many thousands of young kids who have believed in our statements "We won't do this, we won't do that" and now it's destroyed.
(Two days later the article did come out — in Sounds — and it was certainly no rave-up or comprehensive appraisal. Somehow I don't think the Crass logos will become less popular for it, or that Crass themselves will start reevaluating their p.r. policies.)

BLURT

Blurt/photos: Philcosta



BLURT INTERVIEW

Blurt is a music/noise/words trio that is raising a few eyebrows all over the present english music circuit. Of course they had hardly started to blurt out their crazy stew (daddy-o) that comparisons were immediately thrown about (quite favorably, at that) and names like James Chance or Captain Beefheart dribbled out of most critics' cakeholes when speaking of their sound. But, as one darhma bum said to another, "comparisons are odious, man" and we shall not play the game of whom sounds like whom, whom really influenced whom and whom thinks he was there first. In the uncharted regions of wild unchained music there's no social ladder and no Who's Who. Besides frontman/saxman Ted Milton, Blurt includes his brother Jake on drums and laconic Pete Creese on guitar.

We met with Ted in a Covent Garden pub and after refreshments walked about the teeming tourist trap (complete with flocks of gentle mimes, puppetteers, chamber music quartets, dishevelled poets with no reasons to exist and dozens of super expensive super quaint super old England souvenir and crafts shops). Ted not only unloaded on us anecdotes, reflections and incoherent strings of lyrics (very useful as on stage no one is able to understand any of the words) but kept observing the surrounding traffic, stopping a while to quiz two mimes, literally buzzing thru the area like a mosquito on a vital fact-finding mission.

(Technical info for all of you collecting consuming midgets, Blurt are vaguely part of the Factory records harem cept their first single was just released on a label called Test Pressing. They will be featured on an upcoming Factory LP sampler and can be seen on the Factory video package which Slash would just love to bring over to L.A. for repeated showings, just pray we can get it together.)

TED— In this area of Covent Garden, within the age of photography, somewhere in the last hundred years, there are photographs of guys with bears on the street, along with other performers. Apparently any day they would get up to a hundred performers just in this area. And every one of those people was a star. Now if you show up here and decide to perform, or show off, they cart you off to jail! ... It's probably bad for record sales. There is a control thing to raise the level of anxiety, and get the rats anxious, and then you say . . "this way chaps . ." and everybody goes "hurrah! . . . only two pounds off this album? I'll have it." The frustrations people feel are very real frustrations, and without being cynical or paranoid you could think they were deliberately created.

SLASH— Do you feel cynical or paranoid most of the time?

TED— O yes, simultaneously!

(after an interruption the conversation is quite suddenly revolving around the subject of esperanto [universal language for basic shopping — understood by absolutely no one on the planet])

. . . I totally despise esperanto . . absolutely revolting.

SLASH— Despicable! The lowest of the lowest common denominators. Goes with the Legalize Cannabis campaigns.

TED— It does. Thou Shall Smoke. . . (still thinking esperanto, easy languages . . .) You learn pretty fast when you've got a black and decker under your pillow at night.

SLASH— ? ? ? ? ?

TED— It's an electric drill that they use on kneecaps in Northern Ireland . . . .

SLASH— Do you still do any puppeteering?

TED— No, I abandoned it totally. I was so fucked up, the state I got to with it was totally screwed . . . cos of that show I was doing at that time (which was a most wonderful thing really) . . . fifteen years I was in that medium. See this pub here? I did two shows above it once at lunchtime. The Blue Show it was called. And . . . . and I fell upon a saxophone.

SLASH— Had you played before?

TED— I hadn't done any music before. I picked up the saxophone in July last year.

SLASH— Why the saxophone?

TED— Well I picked it up and blew it. I have been playing it a lot since, but I don't read any music. I went to a teacher so he could help me out on the appropriate way to work out the reed. Then he showed me a scale. That was it. He was very helpful by telling me he knew a lot of jazz players become very boxed in very quickly by the knowledge of what they are doing. He thought he would be better for what I wanted to do not to know any more, and kicked me out. "Don't ever darken my door with your masonic sound again!" (insane giggle burst)

SLASH— Then what happened?

TED Well I had already been doing voice things, rhythms, along with my brother Joe, the drummer. We had one or two guitar players to jam with us, it wasn't very satisfactory. I often felt very stupid standing there running out of words while they played, but then the saxophone came. I started playing it instantly. Our first public performance came six weeks after I obtained the instrument. The guitar player was of course totally horrified by my ineptitude. I could not play anything. It was the final straw for him, and he fucked off ten days before the world premiere of Blurt. I rushed around town asking people "do you have a guitar? Would you come and play it with me?" and then Pete did succomb. He's never been a musician before either . . . (noticing a duo of renaissance troubadours on a street corner) They're letting those buskers work here! You have to go and apply for a license to busk here. They audition you, and if your musical standards are high enough, if it pleases them, then you are allowed to play here, the only place in England where it is allowed. Only here, for a certain length of time, at a definite period, in a certain place, position, as long as you agree that if the manager of any of the shops comes out and tells you to stand on your fuckin' hands you do that instantly! This is cosmopolitan England. (noticing a mime doing his mime thing) Vile! It's like . . . silent grovel. Worse than silent bloody night. (bending down to a couple of guitar players getting ready to croone) You better put a hat out. (searches his pockets) O God I haven't got any money (screaming) the famous Covent Garden pickpockets! Let's go and talk in that graveyard. (we are here at Slash very proud of our touristy travelling interview. Now, along with wisdom and fun stories you get a bloody sightseeing tour. Stick with us folks we'll revolutionize journalism yet.)

SLASH— I think it's depressing.

TED— What?

SLASH— Those goons pretending to be in the Middle Ages cept they need a permit for each and every wild and nutty thing they do.

TED— It's a bit like the Arts Council situation.

SLASH— (getting into a deeper depression) Do you yourself feel like that sometimes, just munching on token bits of freedom, nice and within limits?

TED— Do I feel like a trustee? No, I can't imagine anything being . . trustworthy. Every performance could be the last performance is the way I feel about it. I don't feel I have a *right* to do it. I rather *like* to do it, I *have* to do it, but it always seems it's a miracle there are people at the front there who react . . . it seems fairly extraordinary.

SLASH— You did a gig last night . . . .

TED— It wasn't very good. My sax is falling apart at the moment. All the pads go, all the springs burst, I play it so hard it just rots the inside. Last night it was one of those when you can't hear anything you're doing, because of fallbacks or whatever. I quite liked it while I was doing it, but then afterwards somebody came up and said it had been a load of shit, and I thought "o god, he realizes it's a load of shit!", and then someone else came up while the first bloke was still sitting there and said "great, it was great!" and I thought "yeah! Thank god there is someone here who's got taste and realizes where it's at," and I started to swell

up again.

SLASH— What are your own feelings about your stuff? Like when you are walking by yourself deep in thought?

TED— When I'm walking down the road followed by newscameramen, stroking an apple . . . . I actually I think the truth of the matter is (in a whispered monotone) that I am like so many other contemptible creatures you will have encountered in your equally contemptible career . I am just a performance junkie. That's it. And when one kind of performance or one mode of showing off loses its attraction and it no longer gives you a big buzz or a big charge you go around for months or years desperately unhappy until you find another fix which gives you the big waoooeehh and up you go again.

SLASH— Should we want young innocent puppeteers to stop now before it leads them to the harder stuff?

TED— They should become mercenaries in the Congo right now and not mess around.

SLASH— As well as the young poets who will end up like you blurting out undecipherable words and noises if they don't stop flirting with pretty words and phrases?

(hysterical laughing and rolling on the graveyard's grass thinking of the fate of baby puppeteers and poets . .)

TED— I mention this "addiction" because the kind of performance I am interested in is one in which I am transported. You know the economics of doing that are ridiculous, you just couldn't be doing what we do for *that* reason, you couldn't. It's no wonder the few that do make it are so unbearable. Getting there is so rare. Even so-called successful bands. Like one member of a very big group which is touring right now is making between sixty and a hundred pounds a week. Which is 60 or 100 more than you or I are making but before that when he was laying concrete floors in Birmingham he was taking home between 250 and 300 pounds a week!

SLASH— To get back to Blurt, isn't it a bit strange to do away with the bass? Cause there's a definite element of funk in the sound, wouldn't you say?

TED— Yeaaa. It's the facet that I like least. I guess it's the carriage of rhythm, all that business. I don't like the word funk, reminds me of "get up and dance" . . I had a couple of albums by some sax player for a while, but they vanished . . . . fortunately. He is an ex jazz player trying to go mainstream . . . like the Crusaders. You know I hear the Crusaders and I think "fuck, what incredible horns." It sounds exactly like early Coltrane, it's fresh, it's great, but then the lyrics come on and it's baaahh, then the rhythm section starts getting eeecchh. Ever heard some of those ska bands, like the Ethiopians? Hong Kong Flu? (starts singing the tune) . . all those components, such incredibly driving music. That's not what I would call funk.

SLASH— Do you think there's a bathroom in that little church over there?

TED— No. Better go that way. (bathroom break)

SLASH— Let's talk about your lyrics, their importance in the Blurt overall?

TED— I haven't done a vast number of them, it's quite hard to get it so . . . all the things we do, someone listening from a certain distance would say they all sound the same, only the drum, saxophone and the guitar. But I think they all sound incredibly different even though they are probably all in the same key. Very different indeed, more different than say PIL. I bought that album, and it's so . . samey all the way through. And the tempos . . . early Miles Davis on the left channel without the right channel coming in . . . my we do move don't we? But I'm incapable of doing any of our numbers in the same way twice, because I am . . . bad.

SLASH— What's the message of the song off your single, "My mother was a friend of an enemy of the people"?

TED— I'll tell you the words . "My mother was a friend of an enemy of the people / translate my tears / with this saxophone I thee shed / in the land of the living dead / where it's better to be red / cherry red on the double bed / cos we're here / cos Blurt means Blurt means Blurt means Blurt / De pig ran over de little boy squealed / de pig ran over de little boy / dere goes my meal / I used to be a plunky / a foyer freak / you could see me on the oval / when I made my streak / Humpy Dumpty sat on a wall / little Alice ran out and called / fall, Humpty, fall, fall / the suspense is unbearable / my mother was a friend of an enemy of the people." Then sometimes there's another series of lyrics afterwards, starting with " , . My brother was a drummer in a band called Blurt / liberate my ears / with this razor I shed hairs from the (undeciphered word sorry) and / ears, cos they're ears, cos they're ears / The desire and the pursuit of the whole is love / that's why they're selling turtle doves / why did the chicken cross the road / cos I touched it with my electric goad . . " and so on and so forth.

"My mother blah blah . . " was actually a headline in a women's magazine. And "translate my tears" is about Khrushchev who was such an incredible ham that although he spoke many languages they had to translate everything, even his tears. Where did you find the toilet?

(instructions follow. Then the ants-in-the-pants trio aims for a coffee shop.)

TED— Did you know I lived in Orly Airport for ten days? (We didn't. We ask Ted about the town Blurt is based in, Stroud. Stroud is some sort of drop out heaven for hippies, bikers and other go-getters.)

TED— The scene in Stroud started a few years ago when a story came out about how if you lived in Wales you only had to sign on the dole (unemployment) twice a year. Not every week, but only twice a year, because if you lived in the country and there were no buses it was so difficult to come from your country place where you were growing your plants and hanging limp in the rain. So THEY all set out, hitching and driving, as though they were headed for a cross between nirvana and Woodstock, they got out there on the M 4, and they only got halfway to Wales when they realized they needed to score and had run out of dope. They found themselves in Stroud where they could score quite easily, and so they all moved in, and opened up "real food" shops and alternative plumbing agencies and that's it. The place is absolutely full of them.

SLASH— Where were you in the 60's?

TED— Sixties? God I can't remember. It's very hard for me to put things together like that. I think I was a poet. The flag I flew was one of poetry. Which reminds me , "except for a few, the physical fitness, bugles, on the waves. So tell me the story your mother once told, about the mermaid changed into seaweed. Which is how she will remain . . ." (end of poetry bit gets hopelessly drowned by two secretaries chatting at the next table) . . . That's an example of the sixties and me. I was living right around the corner from here. I shared a very gorgeous and understanding lady's apartment, and income. That's how I lived.

SLASH— Does Blurt make anything at all by performing?

TED— Well for example at the Rock Garden tonight I got a guarantee of 30 pounds. And that's a lot for the Rock Garden. At the 101 last night we took twenty pounds. And he was very pleased with the number of people that had come. Out of that there is the cost of transportation from two hundred miles away for three people. It's okay to say well you should have another job, but if you have to get there at six or seven o'clock in the evening and you're not living in the area you gotta be free. We live in the ages of philistinism and it's very difficult to make any sense, or even cover expenses. Now performing is regarded as promotion. But our single sold 2000 in ten days. Anyway I am going to insist on being able to feed myself and my family without sinking deeper and deeper into debts as a result of this weakness of mine for making noises in front of a public. One day there will be a live recording done in Japan. "Blurt kazes in Tokyo!"

SLASH— Why is Blurt called Blurt??

TED— I had millions of names. One was Kybosh. Or Stroud Airport . . . . Blurt is a very powerful syllable. (everyone spends the next minutes saying the word in various vile manners. A few people nearby are wondering if we are reacting to the taste of our cups of coffee.

(Later, after someone has said something about the Slits)

TED— They had Don Cherry travelling with them, and that said something to me about the Slits. A certain good taste — If they'd had Ornette Coleman then I would have been there. Ever heard his record called "Dancing in Your Head"? It's the last album I actually bought, about two years ago. It has two almost out of tune electric guitars going apeshit, the mix is dreadful, very tinny, plus this almost infantile percussionist who must be banging teacups, and one whole song goes ti ti, ta ta, ti ti, ta ta, ti ti, ta (getting more frantic) like that for half an hour, and then there's Coleman over the top going vvvvrrrraaammmm. Me I can take just about 3 minutes of it then I have to go out of the room. But my kids, they start taking their clothes off and leaping about the fuck-in room naked, and the neighbors' kids come and take THEIR clothes off, and they ask me to put that record on again and again. And they don't like jazz, really. The other day we were in a CBS cutting room, this is where we cut our single, it's all computerized and they're supposed to have the loudest cut in the country because the computer reads the notes and it gives it a groove that will contain that sound. The width of the groove changes with the sound, anyway this guy there was saying that the dynamics of punk music are absolutely ppffttt, all the way thru, same groove, one number after another. But you can imagine the computer blowing out trying to contain Archie Schepp's sound . . . He wasn't talking as a music, critic, just as the man who measures the bloody stuff on the instruments. Punk music got no dynamics.

& THA'S IT

FLOWERS

All the way up to Edinburgh, Scotland to visit with the Flowers (Hilary, vocals; Simon Best, drums; Andy Copeland, guitar; and Trash, bass) to run under the rain, talk about the state of the industry, the charts, the playlists, the corruption, the alternative culture, the hypes, the roles of women, the secret U.S. bases in the wilderness of the remote Scottish landscapes, the prejudices of jaded London crowds, the origin of the word "marmalade" and God knows what other topics we tossed back and forth during our short stay in the land of glenfiddich and grown men in skirts. Some of it even gets mentioned in the following interview.

SLASH: We were talking earlier about these people who've got it made because they're part of the alternative scene.

HILARY: Oh yeah. Well, first of all it is important to say the independent record companies did take a lot of business away from major record companies, but, the record companies have now stabilized again, they've accepted that this has happened, they've absorbed the shock, pruned the dead wood out, they're back in action, well oiled and well functioning, probably better than ever before.

SLASH: Hip.

HILARY: Yeah and they're on the ball now.

SIMON: And they've hired a lot of people who were involved in the independent plans.

HILARY: Not that many, a few people who realized the market was bad managed to successfully intervene in the major businesses. And now you have all these people who set up their independent records and they think that to make an independent record is doing something really outrageous and different and new and exciting. But the do it from a very naive standpoint because they're just trying to set up an alternative culture, and as I see it you've got the major culture of the big businesses, and the big record industries, then you have the alternative culture and you can walk from one culture to the other without asking any questions, with no conflict, no challenge, you can just step from one to the other, then when you grow up, like all hippies grow up, you decide to settle down and be mature, you just step straight

Flowers/photo: Philomena

back and nothing changes and the two cultures move along on parallel paths. Or even worse, a major organism and the big major companies are just like um, er . . .

SLASH: A big amoeba?

HILARY: . . . A big amoeba that comes and absorbs them and they disappear , you know, and it's as if they were never there at all. If you're lucky you might get a mutation.

SLASH: So what's the alternative to the alternative?

HILARY: Well, first of all to recognize that music is not just art, it's a business, it's a multi-million pound or dollar business and if you want to change anything you first and foremost have to understand the basic structures and machinations of the business and why it functions the way it does and it functions the way it does because it's interested in profits, it's not fucking interested in art or artists . . .

SLASH: Or consciousness . . .

HILARY: Or consciousness or anything else . . . and profit's not a bad thing to make, you know, but the way they make it is obnoxious. And the first thing you ought to do is find out the way they operate and to intervene in that and to rip-off from them, to use the techniques they've developed over the years so that there's more of a challenge, there's more conflict and if there's more conflict then there's more of a chance of change.

SLASH: So that leads to what you were saying, which is that it's kind of a waste to refuse to be distributed by a major company and say, "Oh we don't deal with these kind of people."

HILARY: Yeah. Because ultimately if the message that you have to say is so important, then all you're doing is preaching to the converted . . . that's the situation now. If you are an angry young man or woman and you make a record and you stick it out on your independent label, you're guaranteed sales between 1,000 and 4,000 records, but you're merely reaffirming a state that everyone knows exists. I mean, you know, life is tough, life is hard, tories are cunts, the music and the radio's shit, people make records saying all this, other people who already know that buy the record, so you sit around wallowing in your own misery and you've got the soundtrack to go with it and nothing changes.

SLASH: So how do you see your band doing it differently?

HILARY: Well first of all you have to be honest about what you want to do. We write songs, we want as many people as possible to hear what we're doing. It's vital, it's vital for our survival, it's vital for the survival of pop music. We believe in pop music, we're a pop group. None of us are particularly interested in being an avant-garde group, although our methods are probably just as avant-garde. But the end product may not sound as weird and as exotic as the avant-garde groups.

SLASH: It doesn't exactly sound like the Bay City Rollers. What about you Trash? You were in another group before right?

TRASH: Yeah, right, an all girl band.

SLASH: And what moved you from one group to the other?

TRASH: Hilary's sister was in it, and then she went down to London. It was just never the same after that. It got very apathetic.

SLASH: And were you one of those bands Hilary was describing — just one of the angry bands - preaching to the converted?

TRASH: I suppose a bit. We were always classified as feminists. We were very rough, none of us really could play when we started and we didn't really progress that much.

SLASH: Also, according to Hilary, you really challenged the scottish macho concepts . . .

TRASH: I don't know, we never really meant to, it just came out. It wasn't really aimed at anybody in particular.

SLASH: Do you agree with Hilary that Scotland is more puritan than the rest of the U.K.?

TRASH: I suppose so. I mean, I don't know. I've never really been anywhere else.

SLASH: What about you Andy. I hear you get stopped quite a bit when you're going home late at night?

ANDY: Yeah . . .

HILARY: He hasn't got a mustache and a beer gut so he's not a real man.

SIMON: A lot of the men up here go out in groups by themselves as a sort of ritual. The figures for wife beating and rape are much higher than in the rest of the island.

HILARY: You can get married younger in Scotland, in Gretna Green you can get married at 16 without your parents' consent.

SLASH: What's the relationship between Fast or Pop Aural

and the Flowers? You've recently been accused of using your label connections . . .

HILARY: On my back! Well it's my fickin' label, you know. Plenty of other people have their labels and start their groups.

SLASH: Were you with the label since it started?

HILARY: Yeah! I started it with Bob (Last). At that time we were both working full time so it was only evenings and weekends, we always agreed from the beginning that Bob should be the sort of spokesman, for various reasons, not so much because then people would think I was getting on Fast to get the Flowers ahead, whereas it's my fuckin' label as much as anyone else's. And I didn't actually want the Flowers on it. But when he started Earcom Bob said you really ought to do something for Earcom and he kind of forced us into the studio. We were very dubious, but he said "come on, you can do it" and it was true. When we were there we were really taken aback at how much fun it was, and we could do it, there was nothing that mystifying about it. Even Bob was surprised at what we did for Earcom, he said you can do it as well as anyone else and with the experience and knowledge you've got you should be able to do it without making as many mistakes as other people. I had seen all the shortcomings, all the mistakes that all the other groups on the label had made: You know, I saw the Gang of Four sort of going up a blind alley when they were churning out textbook marxist songs and the Mekons disintegrating into sort of hippie jams and 2 point 3 disappearing off the face of the earth and the Scars falling for the glitter glamour cocaine razzmatazz that comes with new contracts. And also the more I started working with the group and taking it seriously we realized we were as fucking good as anyone. You do have a tendency, working up in Scotland that far north, away from the hub of the action, to think that you're not as good, then you see the groups that come out of London getting ahead and you think Jesus Christ, we're better than that! Now Bob has decided to work directly with the groups so that they don't fuck up the way the Mekons and all those other people have.

SLASH: So it's a change of policy in the way the groups are handled?

HILARY: In the early days, with such little money, we could only go so far with the groups, then we had to let them fend for themselves. We couldn't get records on the radio. We got to the top in the alternative independent market and after that there was nowhere left to go except to move on to the big commercial market and daytime radio, so we decided Pop Aural would be a company which would go for a pop market. And it would help us all to find out how it worked. We started with Drinking Electricity . . .

SLASH: Who are they?

HILARY: We don't know, at their request we don't try to find out anything about them. People fiddling about with their instruments . . . When the Boots for Dancing record came out I did a lot of research into all the radio stations and the DJ's who were most likely to play it. I mailed the record out and started phoning them up to ask them what they thought, but I couldn't get ahold of them, they wouldn't talk to me. You know, like, who the hell are you? They just weren't interested unless I was there personally sticking cocaine up their noses and giving them free satin bomber jackets and taking them out for expensive lunches the way the beg record companies do.Theydidn't have time to talk to me on the phone and that was it. Once when I phoned up Radio 1 I got a crossed line, I had been trying to get ahold of this big DJ, his secretary had said 'I'm sorry he is away for the week' and on that crossed line I hear this other radio promotion guy talking to him. Things like this make me laugh now but at the time they made me angry. Then we thought we would have to employ the professional talkers. We got a professional radio plugger who went around and came back with a report. It cost us a fortune but it was worth it because that was the first realistic feedback, and the first indication we had about the difficulty of getting our stuff on the radio.

SLASH: What did the feedback show?

HILARY: Well, some of them sort of liked the record but they didn't want to play it because although John Peel was backing us up as well they will not play a record if they think it's an independent label. They won't say this is my single of the week because then people go and try to buy it but they can't get it.

SLASH: A nice excuse to stick by the people who are feeding you. Don't you think that if you're supposed to be hip and into new music you shouldn't think twice about the availability of the record?

HILARY: John Peel explained it to me by saying that if they have a record and they make it their single of the week it is a reflection on them, that they are great DJ's, if in two weeks time they can say: "Former single of the week on my show, now at number 9 on the charts . . ." It makes them look like great guys. So they're not going to pick a record that might be a flop commercially because it reflects on them.

SLASH: They don't want to be DJ's, they wanna be living charts!

HILARY: Yeah. this is when we discovered how you get your records in the charts. First of all, you have to be a member of the B.P.I., the British Phonograph Institute, and, to put it bluntly, it is a sort of record business mafiosa. Now to join this kind of cartel for the record industry for a company like us is very hard, it would have cost us between 500 and 1,000 pounds a year, and we couldn't afford that. In return the B.P.I., makes sure that your records get counted. Every sale that gets made of your record in the chart return shops gets ticketed and counted for the charts, they make sure that the chart-return shops are aware of your existence. And . . . the chart return shops are meant to be top secret, but you can buy the list . . .

SLASH: . . . and flood these shops with the goodies?

SIMON: They're the ones that get the picture disks, that's where their reps give the bottles of whiskey, all the promotional items . . . Like the Photos' album that got straight away in the top of the charts, they were giving away cameras with it to the owners of those stores.

HILARY: And they slip money into records and do deals like you get ten records which you pay for and get five records free. And the B.P.I. gives you amazing information like computerized statistics of what income brackets buy records, what age groups buy records, what time of the year people buy records, all this info which of course big companies use. We thought about joining the B.P.I. but decided that was just going too far because we're fundamentally opposed to everything they stand for, a mafiosa to protect the interests of the major record companies in terms of prices and everything, and they stink, we don't like them.

SLASH: So none of the Fast product ever reached the charts?

SIMON: Yes it did. What happened is that if you join, your records get listed like Fast 12 or whatever, if you don't they don't prevent your record from being sold in those stores but the stores have to fill in all the details themselves on the lists. Like the Spizz Energy single "Captain Kirk" sold enough to get much, much higher in the charts but at the time Rough Trade was in dispute with the B.P.I. over bootlegging and secondly the record was never on the chart return thing.

HILARY: then you have the playlists. Radio 1 and most of the commercial radio stations have playlists. Radio 1 has a playlist committee which consists of all the D.J.'s and their producer, and so-called "members of the public," there's one woman who's old enough to be everyone's grandmother, and they supposedly listen to all the new records that come in. Of course they don't. Again this is where your plugger comes in, cause he goes and corners a producer and says "get this on the fuckin' playlist," by fair means or foul. Once your record's on the playlist, you've got A, B, and C. A playlist is every show, B is 3 to 4 times a day and C playlist is once or twice a day. Your record is unlikely to get in the Top Forty unless it's playlisted. Playlisting is the most difficult thing of all. Even the Human League records have frequently gone into the Top Fifty but not gotten into the playlist which is dominated by geriatrics and record companies who can afford to take the producers out for big flash meals and all that stuff. The BBC claims they're getting rid of the playlist, but I won't believe it until it happens.

SIMON: Well, the whole record industry is spiralling down, and at the moment we don't have Top of the Pops, which is the greatest exposure a pop band can get (this television program is now back on the air after a few weeks of interruption due to labor disputes. Ed.) Now you only have to sell a quarter of the records you had to a year ago to be number one.

HILARY: And I know for a fact that you can buy your position in the charts, W.E.A. regularly buys positions in the charts. They handle Sire, which has the Undertones and the Pretenders. The Pretenders and the Undertones had singles out at the same time. One week the Undertones sold more than the Pretenders, who had sold hardly at all. The Pretenders went up ten places, the Undertones went down. W.E.A. had more money invested in the Pretenders and it was more important to break the Pretenders. They just gave money to the Undertones and said "tour!" and they kept going around England still selling, they didn't need that chart place. The Undertones were broken-hearted, they could see that they were selling.

SIMON: It gets very incestuous, like the manager of so-and-so is going out with so-and-so . . .

SLASH: How does it feel trying to survive in the midst of all this?

ANDY: I'm not going to be bribed!

SLASH: You're the one who is supposed to bribe them, not the opposite!

HILARY: We'll just publicize it all the way. When we get to be number one, people will know how we got there. Even if people buy our records they can assume that these things are going on as well.

SIMON: To me selling out would be to carry on from this point having found all this out and trying to play the game better than anybody else without publicizing it. I want to make good records and sell lots of them but that attitude isn't that prevalent when you're faced with all these problems.

HILARY: When McLaren and the Pistols were happening the product was sufficiently strong that the record companies ended up selling a testimony to their own corruption, and we're going to fuckin' use that. Like what McLaren has got at the moment, having E.M.I. bring out a record that totally denies their stand on cassette piracy. (The "C-30-C-60-C-90" single by Bow Wow Wow Ed.)

SIMON: All the record companies, even if they are members of the B.P.I. and it's against their interest want to make profits and sometimes it is actually going to make a record company a lot of money to put out something controversial and sell a lot of it, more than by putting out something safe. It's about making a fast buck.

HILARY: We could make good records and the record companies could make profits off our criticism of what they stand for.

SLASH: The old race for who's going to have the last laugh . . .

HILARY: We are not idealistic, we are realists. Christ we know what we are up against. But even then bob has to get his hands dirty a lot more than we do. He has to negotiate and fight battles with these people nearly every single day. When he talks to these people about the Flowers they think "yeah, interesting group," they don't give a shit about our lyrics or what we are all about, "interesting group, bankable . . ."

SIMON: "Girl singer, bankable."

SLASH: What are your projects as far as live gigs and stuff?

HILARY: We've been offered lots of gigs in London like THE PLACE, go South young man and make your fortune, we've been offered horrible, horrible gigs like playing with Hawkwind. Just because of the fuckin' name Flowers.

SLASH: Who's Miss Demeanour?

SIMON: She's the person described in the song. It's about a lot of activities that a modern miss might get in advertisements.

HILARY: The media are very smart, they latch on to an alternative culture very quick. A certain type of perfume makes you siddenly a "liberated woman." Use our tampax, use our knickers, use our bra and you will be liberated. The song is about the girl that believes it all. Things that make me angry.

SLASH: What else makes you angry?

SIMON: Things like the whole culture adjusting to being miserable.

HILARY: We all get miserable all the time, everybody does, but nowadays everybody wants to make misery a banner.

SIMON: "Isn't it interesting all the traumas I go thru" attitude . . .

HILARY: And people go in, pay two pounds fifty, feel miserable (especially after paying two pounds fifty) while some cunt is telling them how SHE feels miserable, BAH!

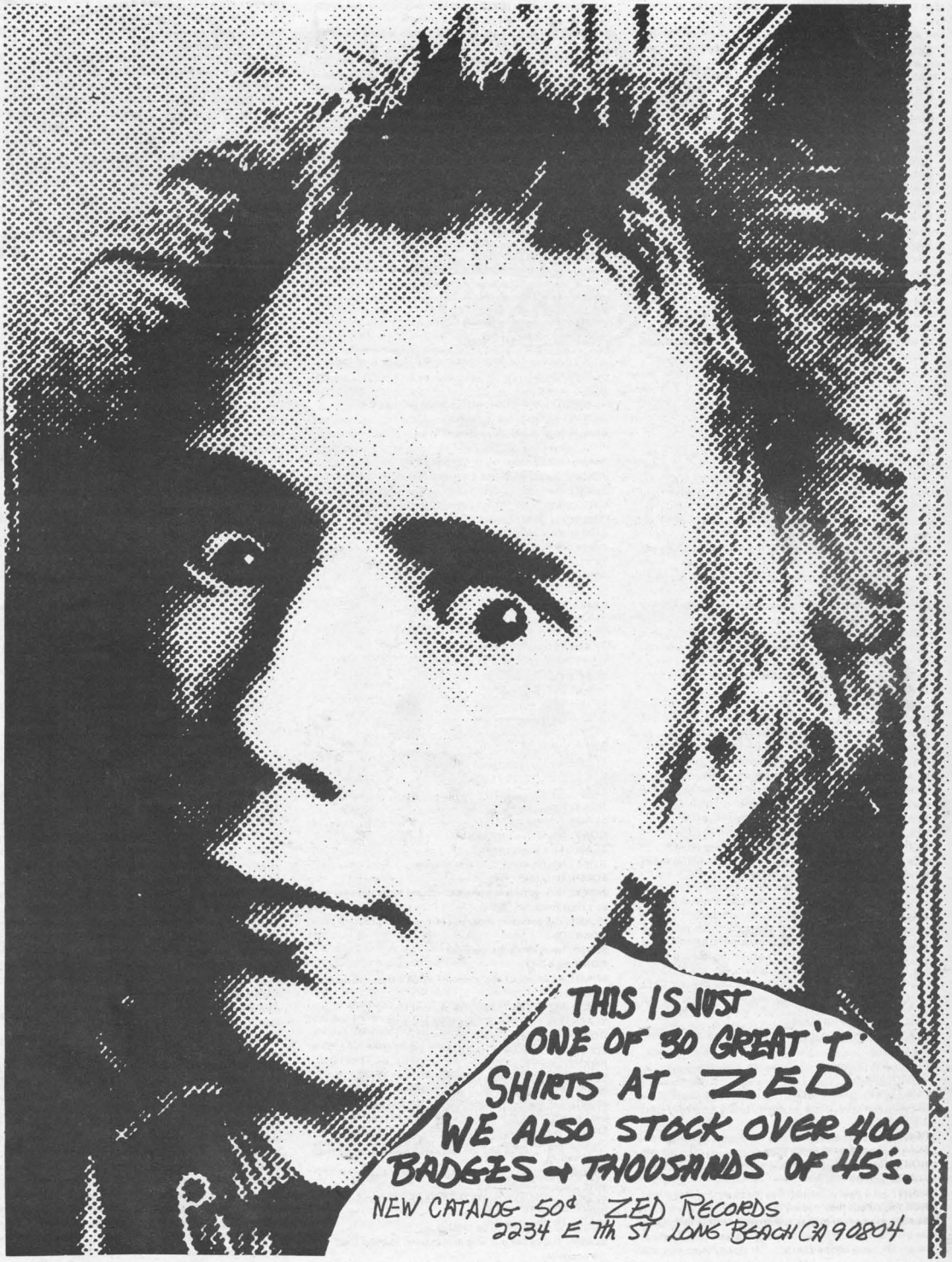
ANDY: It's that or they pay the two pounds fifty to see the UK SUBS, jump up and down and get told to get angry with the S.P.G. Nobody knows what the fuckin' S.P.G. is . . .

SLASH: What is it?

HILARY: The Special Patrol Group. Glad you mentioned that Andy, cause you do have these two groups, on one hand the group that goes "Misery Rules" and on the other hand the ones that picked the leftovers from the Sex Pistols. And we get slagged off cause we are kind of in the crossfire.

SIMON: The rule now is to go to gigs to be gloomy. Because we tell people they can enjoy themselves we have been accused of being fascist!

There was more, much more as we spent half the night drinking tea, wine and whatever and talking while the wind and rain were rattling the windows and sweeping thru the narrow medieval streets of the ancient turreted city — (just thought I'd let you have a peek at my poetical underwear, shaddup). But other groups are standing below waiting for their turn on the soap box. Anyway the last section of the tape is heavy on the giggles and the esoteric jokes and the blood-curdling screams that mean everyone is having a good time but don't necessarily make good "relevant" copy. I just want to say that the Flowers not only make great pop music, they're also great people and that, my nuevos waveros, is more unusual every day. It's also the only fuckin' thing I am starting to care about, and I hope you agree that this is the most unprofessional way to conclude any kind of interview. I'd like it to be that way.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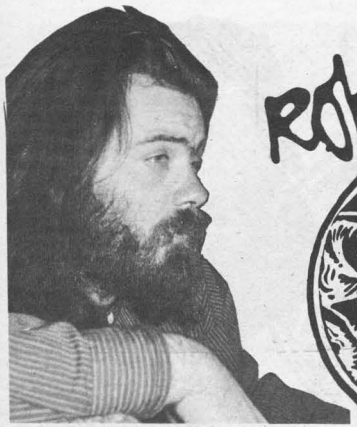


ROKY Erickson

Roky Erickson/photo: Philomena

ROKY ERICKSON SPEAKS WITH PIERCED TONGUE

I talked to Roky Erickson at the end of August while he was spending a few days in London meeting the press. He has been around almost since Lucifer himself took that nosedive straight to the bar-b-q basements after having blown his cool in the creator's penthouse but he (Roky, not Lucy) was not acutely keen on uttering any incantations or flashing his well known connections with the bosses of Doom and Darkness, not for me anyway, not quite. His wife sat in an all knowing grin across the room while I searched for clues and devilish marks. Here it is, it's not exactly rush hour in the words and phrases district but who knows what lurks beyond? Like the man says, "Ultimate knowledge theorizes null / it dissolves before it begins / Spelling your theory / Knowledge of myself / Before myself / Spelling your theory / Alien I creator". Which is most certainly one way to look at it.

SLASH: So, you're going to be playing in San Francisco soon?

ROKY: (long pause) What'd ya say?

SLASH: You're going to be playing in San Francisco?

ROKY: I'll be going there.

SLASH: You're not sure that you'll be playing?

ROKY: No, I'm not sure.

SLASH: What about Los Angeles?

ROKY: I don't think so.

SLASH: When was the last time you played on the West Coast?

ROKY: It's been a long time.

SLASH: Is it because you just don't feel like doing anything?

ROKY: Yeah, I just don't . . . I got other things going, you know . . .

SLASH: Would you rather be recording?

ROKY: (pause) What'd ya say?

SLASH: Would you rather record, or do other things?

ROKY: Well . . actually I'd rather be going to horror movies.

SLASH: What was the last one you saw?

ROKY: Friday the 13th.

SLASH: You liked it?

ROKY: Yeah, I liked it.

SLASH: How many do you see a month?

ROKY: Huh?

SLASH: How many? Horror films?

ROKY: Oh . . . as many as I can.

SLASH: You see them in a theater, or on late night TV?

ROKY: Ah, Different places.

SLASH: And they still inspire you, as your past interviews say they did?

ROKY: Inspire me?

SLASH: Yes.

ROKY: Yeah . . . they inspire me.

SLASH: Are you going to write a song about Friday the 13th ?

ROKY: Ah . . . probably so.

SLASH: Do you want a cigarette?

ROKY: No . . . Yeah, I'll have one of those cigarettes

SLASH: So tell me, how often have you been in England before?

ROKY: What's that?

SLASH: How often have you been here in England?

ROKY: This is the first time I've ever been here (hiccup).

SLASH: Really?

ROKY: Yeah.

SLASH: This is the first visit? How do you like it?

ROKY: I like it. I love it, really.

SLASH: You've been here 3 days?

ROKY: 3-D?

SLASH: No, 3 days . . . you think it's 3-D?

ROKY: Yeah . . . looks like it.

SLASH: Did you see that 3-D Kung-Fu movie that played a while back?

ROKY: No, didn't see it.

SLASH: Do you like Kung-Fu movies

ROKY: I . . . I never have seen one.

SLASH: Are you still writing alot about the devil ?

ROKY: I'm writing alot about the devil . . .

SLASH: What about?

ROKY: Well . . . that he's my friend, and . . . he's real scary.

SLASH: Do you see him regularly?

ROKY: Hm?

SLASH: Do you see him regularly ?

ROKY: Yeah, I see him all the time.

SLASH: Does he live inside people?

ROKY: What'd ya say?

SLASH: Does he live inside people?

ROKY: No, I never see him in other people.

SLASH: So the devil is separate from mankind.

ROKY: What'd ya say?

SLASH: He's separate from mankind? The devil?

ROKY: Yeah, I'd say he was.

SLASH: Doesn't live inside people?

ROKY: No.

SLASH: Doesn't try to?

ROKY: No. Doesn't try to what?

SLASH: Live inside people?

ROKY: No. He lives inside you, maybe

SLASH: Only Me?

ROKY: He's got his white shoes on and his white coat and he's right there.

SLASH: I've got white shoes but I've got a blue coat.

ROKY: Oh.

SLASH: What about the demons?

ROKY: Huh?

SLASH: What about the demons? What's their relationship to Lucifer?

ROKY: Well ... they're here, the demons are.

SLASH: Are they smaller? Are they as scary?

ROKY: Yeah, they're scary.

SLASH: But they don't scare you?

ROKY: I didn't hear . . .

SLASH: They don't scare you?

ROKY: No, they don't scare me.

SLASH: Why? Because you're familiar with them?

ROKY: Yeah, they're my friends.

SLASH: You said in an interview once that you're more familiar with Lucifer and the demons because you are from Texas . . . . .

ROKY: Where'd ya get that ring?

SLASH: A biker gave it to me. A long time ago.

ROKY: How much was it?

SLASH: He gave it to me.

ROKY: I like it. Where can I get one?

SLASH: I don't know. I guess you'll have to find a biker to give you a ring.

ROKY: Oh.

SLASH: There's not many bikers left.

ROKY: Huh ?

SLASH: There's not many bikers left.

ROKY: Can I see it?

SLASH: Sure.

ROKY: I'd sure like to buy it from you. Will you sell it?

SLASH: No, I wouldn't.

ROKY: Oh.

SLASH: It doesn't fit anyway.

ROKY: Well, it fits on this finger but not anywhere else.

SLASH: I'm sure you could find one.

ROKY: How much do you think it costs

SLASH: An arm and a leg.

ROKY: An arm and a leg?

SLASH: And maybe a finger. (pause) But you seem to be the only person in the music world to have this subject matter, about the devil and demons. Pretty much straight-on. As straight-on as, say, Dylan does singing about Jesus. Do you see yourself at the opposite end of the spectrum?

ROKY: What'd ya say?

SLASH: Do you see yourself as the opposite of what Dylan is doing?

ROKY: Yeah. Completely opposite.

SLASH: What do you think he's doing?

ROKY: Who?

SLASH: Dylan ... with his music ...

ROKY: Well ... I don't think he's doing much of anything.

SLASH: Well it's quite a turn from what he used to be doing.

ROKY: What?

SLASH: What do you think provoked his change?

ROKY: Well, I don't know. I ... I don't think Dylan knows anything about anything. But that's just my ...

SLASH: Do you think that one day you will be brought, by something that happens to you, to stop singing about Lucifer?

ROKY: No. I don't think so.

SLASH: Do you think that you are the devil's advocate then?

ROKY: I'm his child.

SLASH: Are you Rosemary's Baby

ROKY: No ... I ... I don't know.

SLASH: Are you trying to make him more popular?

ROKY: He doesn't need to be more popular.

SLASH: What do you think is his goal?

ROKY: His what?

SLASH: What do you think is the goal of the devil, what does he want?

ROKY: He doesn't want anything, he has everything he wants .He has me.

SLASH: And you're his spokesman?

ROKY: His what?

SLASH: Spokesman.

ROKY: Yeah. He has me for sure .

SLASH: Have you made a pact with him?

ROKY: Have I made a pact with him?

SLASH: Yeah.

ROKY: Well, I have to be his .

SLASH: Did you sell your soul?

ROKY: Huh?

SLASH: Your soul ... did you sell it?
ROKY: I didn't have to. (pause) He came and got it.
SLASH: When did that happen?
ROKY: Oh it happened ... oh ... it's been awhile.
SLASH: In the sixties?
ROKY: No, it was a long time ago.
SLASH: When you were a baby?
ROKY: Oh, probably before I was born.
SLASH: So you didn't have a choice.
ROKY: It was my choice.
SLASH: Do you feel that you're possessed? It must be a burden ...
ROKY: Am I possessed? Yes, I am possessed.
SLASH: You don't find it difficult to cope with?
ROKY: Fine what?
SLASH: Difficult to cope with ...
ROKY: Not really.
SLASH: Do you feel that you could be describing the states of mind that you describe in other ways than through rock and roll songs ?
ROKY: No. What's that?
SLASH: Are there other ways to get your point across Obviously you think it can be done in horror movies if you think they have a similar meaning to your music.
ROKY: Well, you know, I just ... I just like horror films. That's what I like .
SLASH: What about comic books?
ROKY: What'd ya say?
SLASH: Are you still influenced by comic books ?
ROKY: (long pause) Ah, sometimes I am.
SLASH: How about just plain novels?
ROKY: Plain novels?
SLASH: Yes, like science fiction novels and horror novels Like Lovecraft.
ROKY: Sometimes I read Lovecraft, but not all the time.
SLASH: Do you think his description ...
ROKY: Lovecraft?
SLASH: Yes.
ROKY: I think he's a fake.
SLASH: You don't think that the way he describes evil is accurate?
ROKY: No, I don't.
SLASH: Is there any other person alive who describes what you see?
ROKY: Ah ... the devil.
SLASH: Has he written anything?
ROKY: What?
SLASH: Has he written anything?
ROKY: Has he written anything?
SLASH: Yes.
ROKY: He wrote two holes in my tongue.
SLASH: Can you read them?
ROKY: Can I read them? You can't read them.
SLASH: Would it be the end of me ?
ROKY: I don't think anybody would want to
SLASH: How do you think people react to what you say about the things you see and write about?
ROKY: I don't think they have the mind to understand what I believe in.
SLASH: Why do you go on talking about it to them?
ROKY: Well I don't, I'm just saying that there's no way they can understand me when I do but that doesn't mean that I can't go on saying what I want to say.
SLASH: What about the people that like your records and your music. Do you think they'll ever understand?
ROKY: No I don't think they'll ever be able to get it.
SLASH: So don't you think it's hopeless trying to present your vision?
ROKY: Yeah I don't think they can ever ... ah ... find out anything about what I'm saying. I just don't think they ever will.
SLASH: Does it depress you sometimes to know that?
ROKY: No.
SLASH: That what you have inside is never going to get across to people?
ROKY: No.
SLASH: What about the musicians that work with you? Do they have any idea of what you're talking about?
ROKY: Um ... no they don't. I don't think they're smart enough to understand what I do.
SLASH: Why do you think they are with you?
ROKY: Well, I don't know, they just, I just ... I think they can't understand me, that's all.
SLASH: Alot of people have said that they have seen god or the devil and they were tripping out on drugs Do you think they saw the real thing?
ROKY: No.
SLASH: You think that it was just an illusion.
ROKY: Just an illusion.
SLASH: So there is no recipe, no shortcut, to seeing it.
ROKY: No there isn't.
SLASH: Why do you sing your songs if they can never get across to people?
ROKY: It's not that they can't get across to people, I just think that tthey can't understand it.
SLASH: So what do you get out of singing?
ROKY: Well, it's just ... what I get out of it is what I get, you know, out of it.
SLASH: Do you think that when people ask you what your vision is, do you think they walk away thinking that you are totally crazy?
ROKY: No, I don't think that.
SLASH: What do you think they think?
ROKY: I don't think they think anyone is nuts or crazy.
SLASH: But they don't undetstand what you are saying. .
ROKY: Well ... they aren't intelligent enough to understand.
SLASH: You think it's a matter of intelligence?
ROKY: Huh?
SLASH: You think it's a matter of intelligence?
ROKY: Yeah. Could I get another one of those cigarettes from you ?
SLASH: Yes. Is there more than one name for Lucifer?
ROKY: One name? (long pause) Yeah, well, they're the same guy.
SLASH: What about the two-head dogs, and the zombies and . . .
ROKY: Huh?
SLASH: The zombies, are they on some kind of scale? Like you have the devil, then the demons . . .
ROKY: Yes.
SLASH: What is the lowest of these creatures?
ROKY: I don't think they have one.
SLASH: How often do you see these things?
ROKY: The devil?
SLASH: All the things you sing about.
ROKY: I ... I have to see them all the time.
SLASH: Have you seen many since you've been in England?
ROKY: No.
SLASH: Are there more of them in the States?
ROKY: Oh ... I don't know. I think they're just with me wherever I go.
SLASH: They're like a little crowd surrounding you.
ROKY: Yes.
SLASH: That would make a nice picture, if one day we could capture all these things surrounding you. What about earthly things, like politics?
ROKY: No.
SLASH: You're not interested in that?
ROKY: No I don't get into that.
SLASH: Do you watch the news, or read the papers?
ROKY: Um ... well I never do except sometimes I do read the papers.
SLASH: What do you think you'll be doing in ten years?
ROKY: The same damn thing.
SLASH: Which is?
ROKY: Reading alot, and seeing lots of movies like Friday the 13th, 1-2-3-4-5-6-6-8-9-10-12-Friday the 13th.
SLASH: Is there anything else you want to talk about?
ROKY: No, I'm just ... I'm ah ... I'm .. myself. Two holes in my tongue Friday the 13th.
SLASH: Do you draw the things you see?
ROKY: Huh?
SLASH: Do you ever draw the things you see?
ROKY: No. I draw one called Human Fly.
SLASH: The Cramps have a song called Human Fly. Have you seen them?
ROKY: No, I never have.
SLASH: They are supposed to be vaguely into voodoo. What do you think of voodoo?
ROKY: What do I think of voodoo?
SLASH: Yes.
ROKY: I don't really think about it.
SLASH: What do you think of witchcraft?
ROKY: Well I don't really talk about it.
SLASH: Do you think there are witches?
ROKY: No I don't.
SLASH: What about the record that just came out, do you pay any attention to the way it is received by the press ?
ROKY: No.
SLASH: You don't read the reviews about it?
ROKY: Well, I didn't like the last review.
SLASH: Where was that.
ROKY: It was in .. I can't remember the name of the magazine. It's an English magazine.
SLASH: Will you ever sing about anything else besides devils — will you sing about love?
ROKY: Love? I don't think so.
SLASH: Or revolution?
ROKY: Naw.
SLASH: Anything else you want to say?
ROKY: No that's it. I sure do thank you.

AND ADAM

ADAM AND THE ANTS,
LEADERS OF THE SEXY WARRIORS

This conversation with Adam and his new Ants took place while the band was recording their upcoming CBS album in Wales. Besides Adam the new line up features Marco Firroni on guitar, Kevin Mooney on bass plus Terry Lee Miall and Merrick both on drums.

Adam is not only one of the pioneers of the punk thing, he is also the most fanatically loved performer amongst the british spikey troops. There are also many from slightly different social circles who vehemently hate him or resent him. Adam is not exactly heart broken.

(talking about the Ants going on stage as the Village People)

ADAM: I am the Indian, Terry's the construction worker, Marco's the leather boy ...

SLASH: Still do Y.M.C.A. on stage?

ADAM: Yea, we call it A.N.T.S. ...

SLASH: What was the song you were mixing this afternoon?

ADAM: Jolly Roger, it's about Blackbeard. It's a pretty interesting subject. When you get into it a bit you realize they were quite noble, quite romantic. That's what drew me to it. We use quite a lot of that live, presentation-wise. Blackbeard was really crazy, mad, really fascinating. It's a ballad.

SLASH: Do you foresee the ant soldiers dressing up in pirate costumes?

ADAM: I don't know. Anything would be an improvement on the scene over here at the moment. It's so fucking ... Forget it! Somebody's got to do something a bit flamboyant.

KEVIN: There's fuck all in this country.

SLASH: What happened?

TERRY: Time. What might have been right 3 years ago is not now. It's 1980, it's gotta change as well.

ADAM: The austerity taking place in the music business world-wide gotta reflect on the bands. It's very hard to get a contract nowadays, the record companies are just not signing bands they used to for credibility. When punk started they signed every fuckin punk band they'd find as long as they'd do what they were told. Consequently they did not sign the real punk bands cos the real punk bands would not do what they were told. It took 2 years to get the Banshees, and 3 to get the Ants to sign.

SLASH: How did it happen?

ADAM: It's simply Howard Thompson (CBS A&R man who is also behind The Psychedelic Furs and Roky Erickson – Ed.). He came to the Empire Ballroom, he said he came in, looked at the crowd, listened to what we were doing and thought, "right, let's sign the band." It was very direct. The fact that we already had recorded "Kings . ." really sold it. He hadn't heard it.

SLASH: Tell me about the Ants audience. You said they are not like the rest of the kids following other bands.

TERRY: There are kids who go and see the Antsand wouldn't go and see anybody else.

ADAM: They are the Mohican kids.

SLASH: Who are these Mohican kids?

ADAM: It's not an unusual thing. I think David Bowie once had a mohican. It's just that they adapt this stance, nobody fucks with them, they're real tough.

KEVIN: They're the best looking kids right now, they're incredible.

ADAM: They put colors in their hair, many colors. The good ones are really clean-looking, proud-looking. Sadly the scene has become very drug oriented over here amongst the punks, and bands like Crass who are just hippies have just latched on and cleaned up because there are none of the original bands left. They are preaching this kind of crap like "fight war, not wars." Big fuckin' deal! And kids are swallowing this theology stuff, and it's getting fuckin' sad. Now kids are squatting and growing their hair long and it's sad. It's just tacky. We got no time for that.

KEVIN: On their record it says "all the money from this record is going toward an anarchist centre," which is a joke. It says "you can come down and have a cup of tea"! If I'd started an anarchist centre I'd say you can come down and have a sten gun, that's reality.

TERRY: And who's gonna make the fuckin' tea?

ADAM: It's pathetic.

SLASH: So what's the Ants' message to the kids?

ADAM: The reverse. The emphasis is on looking good, moving fast, being proud, being honorable and being very very fuckin' sexy. That's nothing new, Elvis Presley was about that. Gene Vincent had that. That's why Jolly Rogers will be on the album. I found some strong connections between the romantic image of the pirates and the historical truth. They were anarchistic, but in a very realistic way. Everybody over here talks about anarchy and goes up King's Road and buys it, whereas a lot of the Ant Kids really make their things. They never come the same twice, and they really stand out amongst these Crass kids and all these little punks who've been just taken for a ride. Those kids look as common as skinheads do, they look uniformed in their nappies and terrible Boy bondage trousers and badges everywhere. Whereas an Ant kid, a Mohican, a real Ant person or Sex person come at the gig dressed as if they were going to go and see an opera. It's like a big event, it takes them hours. I've never seen two the same. It's like with leather jackets, everybody wears one, but when Brando wore a jacket that was a bit of a different ballgame. It's very clandestine, the kids got dances of their own, and a language of their own, all sorts of things. And the kids who come with their Angelic Upstarts or Pursey badges get a bit shaken up. It's a very warrior outlook, but not in a violent way. It's noble. Warriors in a tribe can be very individualized, they wear different paints . . . . .

SLASH: But by encouraging all this playing and cult forming and putting so much importance on style don't you think you could be accused of taking the danger out of the youth, making them tame and harmless?

ADAM: Yeah, you're right. But do the Clash – well, not

THE ANTS

necessarily the Clash, I quite like the Clash — but Sham 69, I mean, all they did was recreate the skinhead movement. That's all Pursey's done for music. The kids gotta have something to look forward to, they got to know they can acquire a look, some individuality within a group . . . . .

KEVIN: They gotta feel proud.

SLASH: Do you feel responsible for your followers?

ADAM: We know our audience pretty well, but you can profess to know everything about your audience and it's all crap because they're down there in the dark while you're up on stage, you can only go by the reactions at the gigs. We consider them in positive ways such as trying to get really good venues, try to get really good promotion so they know we're in town, try to get a really good sound, good lights, a good security system that's there to protect them, not fuckin beat the shit out of them. In those ways we do consider them. But I wouldn't profess anything else . . . . . .

SLASH: Do you still plan to do Nick Kent in?

ADAM: I see him in the CBS offices actually. I've come to the conclusion that he is such a pathetic little creature — he wears the same clothes I do, or he tries — he's never got over being kicked out of the prototype Sex Pistols. Malcolm used him early on. When I saw the guy I thought it'd be cowardly to belt a guy like that, he's just an old junkie, he can't fight back.

SLASH: He's the one who claimed you were a nazi, is that right?

ADAM: One guy who wrote for Ritz reviewed the Marquee gig, they did a great review, and Nick Kent, you know what he's like, he did a big piece, cos he's a very hard working journalist, he does his research, anyway he came down, and he was standing with Jordan and he told her that he really liked the band. But a week before he came out with his piece a guy with Sounds brought something out saying how great we were, seeing is believing and all this crap, and of course Kent, wanting to be different, does a whole slagging job but goes further than that by really playing up on one track, "Deutsche Girls," which is on the Jubilee album, and really does a hatchet job. At the time I was negotiating with this company and it scared the shit out of them because a lot of people in the business are jewish people and it offended them — fuckin' offends me too, but what can I do? — but you tell readers so and so is a fascist and they believe it. People did it with Siouxzie too but in a way it didn't quite rub off. It's taken me 3 years but I've put out "Press Darlings" (the B side of "Kings of the Wild Frontier" — Ed.) which is my answer to it. He goes down as an asshole, on vinyl. So is Bushell. And to me, when I do something and lay it on an audience, on the world or whatever, I try to think of the pitfalls, of the things they're gonna say, the criticisms they're gonna make especially with this tribal thing, which is not an image, it's no fuckin' image, it's identification. Not from the point of view that we want to be black people running around in fuckin' loin cloths — which is all right — but I got tired of western music, I got tired of rock n roll four years ago and I got tired of taking forms of black music like soul or reggae or disco or the whole fuckin ball game and I got interested in tribal things, technique-wise and reference-wise. Not just African tribal stuff, not just the clothes and the culture, but the techniques, the structures, and "Kings of the Wild Frontier" was the result on one record of all this interest and research.

SLASH: So was that the new single we heard in the studio? ("Dog Eat Dog," — Ed.)

ADAM: That's the development from "King . ." which got in the Top Fifty from nowhere, with no hype. We'd like every track of the album to have the quality of a film soundtrack because film music is a main influence on Marco and me, writing-wise, stuff like James Bond music, they are classics, everybody knows the James Bond themes, and very rarely does pop music achieve that.

SLASH: Are there any other elements from pop culture besides films that influence you?

ADAM: It's ninety per cent films really, for the lyrics and other ideas ... not tv, tv over here is fuckin' awful, there isn't any tv over here and there are no clubs really, unless you're really loaded . . . . the idea behind Adam and the Ants right from 1977 was to create an audience, not steal somebody else's ... And that takes time. Now people are saying "well, it's been three years . ." like, you haven't made it yet . . . There's no way you're gonna top the Sex Pistols, which were my favorite band, so you have to get down and get ready for a long term thing, it might be another 3 years, or five, I don't know ... To create an audience is very difficult. Bands like the Jam, their record goes straight up to number 3 because they've got that many people buying their records, it's very old-fashioned the way it works.

SLASH: You seem to have a very special following with the street fanzines . . . . .

ADAM: Well we do mostly fanzines cos the press won't talk to us and we won't talk to them. On the whole they love the Ants. They want to know about us signing with CBS, why, is it going to make a difference to their feelings about the Ants ... A lot of them have been taken in by this crap about independent labels. Well I have been on an independent label and they've ripped me off. They sold my album but I never saw any fuckin money because they owe so much and they can't support themselves, which is pathetic. On the whole the kids are listening to the wrong people cos the media get behind the wrong people. In my opinion the Angelic Upstarts belong in a football team, not on the stage, they're cunts. Just wankers, blockheads, nothing at all. And I don't want them shoved down my throat but I get them shoved down my throat anyway.

SLASH: Are there any groups that you wouldn't mind sharing a bill with?

ADAM: Dexy's Midnight Runners, they've got balls. The

Stray Cats, we're trying to get them for our next tour. We want our show to be diverse, like the Stray Cats are trying to do something that is fresh. It would be nice to give them a try. In the past couple of years I personally got bills with Joy Division, Echo and the Bunnymen, A Certain Ratio, all the bands that everybody is creaming about now, I had them supporting the Ants. It was very obvious to me that they would get signed and popular. But i think they were signed much too late, especially Echo and the Bunnymen, because they've done away with the drum box, which was bad, and as soon as the press loved them they got really snobby . . . . . .

SLASH: Sounds like you could be quite an A&R man . . .

ADAM: I would have signed a few bands by now. I told EMI to sign Bow Wow Wow. I did! I really believe there's one big fuckin' gap in the music right now, and if somebody can get it together, somebody credible enough and entertaining enough ... We also had the Psychedelic Furs supporting us, the Monochrome Set, all the bands that are now with big record companies settling down and maturing and making their own music and which have become legitimate bands in their own right, bands that are about to produce a catalogue of quite valid work ... I saw the Psychedelic Furs at the Moonlight and I thought, hey, they're all right. I didn't think they were serious at all, I thought they were doing something humorous, and I liked that. That's why I love the Stray Cats. We had the original Dave Berry on the last gig. Now we're trying to get Mud. Really! (we can't help laughing at the idea) The kids liked Dave Berry, they did. A few kids were throwing bottles but he did his old show so they must have liked him, cos if they didn't like him he would be fuckin' dead. Our ambition, Marco and I, is to get Link Wray to special guest with us in London.

SLASH: Any other "heavies" from the past that you would care to acknowledge?

KEVIN: New York Dolls, and the Sex Pistols.

ADAM: And Roxy Music, Marco is a Roxy Music fan. And The Doors. I was also very influenced by Jonathan Richman. Last time I saw Rotten, ages ago right, two years ago or more, we were talking about the records we used to listen to, and there was this shop in Camden Town, Rock On, where you could get this record by this guy Jonathan Richman and the Modern Lovers. That was the ablum to me that – like I had never heard or seen Iggy Pop, and when I did I wished I never had – anyway Richman had everything for me. Brilliant songs ... he really sounded like Lou Reed but I liked him better than Lou Reed because he didn't take himself so seriously with the decadence – I liked him a lot, so did Rotten, so did everybody around 76-77. "Pablo Picasso" is ... fuckin' hell, it's brilliant. He's never done anything since, right, but that one fuckin record ... Then there was nothing else cept the Dolls. I saw them when they did a support for Rod Stewart and the Faces. They did a twenty-five minute version of "Frankenstein" cos the audience didn't like them, and I thought fuck, the magic of them ... Half the audience went out of the door. Malcolm told me all about how he first ran into them at his shop Let It Rock He told me how Arthur Kane the bass player was so out of it one night he got the roadie to stand right behind him, hidden by the curtain, and Kane was leaning back with his arms by his side but these two arms came from behind him and played the bass. That's Malcolm's mentality. I love that.

SLASH: What's your relationship with Malcolm like now?

ADAM: Malcolm? Bow Wow Wow is his thing right now, and you gotta bear in mind that he does one thing at a time. Whatever he does, everything else is a load of shit. When I was working with him he was telling me what I was doing was really good. When I stopped working with him it was suddenly very bad. But basically I still like him. He just can't appear to be a pussycat. He can't say I'm nice! He is a very very clever man, he just has to have an unusual amount of control, and he likes other people to do the fancy work. But he is very clever.

SLASH: He certainly motivated a lot of people . .

ADAM: He fuckin' motivated me!

SLASH: There's something I've been wondering about ever since I saw you in Jubilee and would like to ask you: why were you giggling in the scene on the rooftop while everyone else was so serious?

ADAM: That is true. It's probably the only thing by which any of your readers would know me, that movie. It was the original Ants in there, we did it for a fuckin laugh, didn't have any money. Jordan was managing us at the time and said well if I do the movie the Ants gotta be in it, and Derrek decided I should be in the film, acting, so I did that. I am not an actor, right, and I didn't have any lines cept things like "I don't want to get ripped off" and things like that and that scene you mentioned was actually already written into the script. Now you gotta bear in mind Jubilee was a film made by a very sweet but very arty guy. There were all these people that didn't know their ass from their elbow, saying things like "it's about all these young punks who live in a studio, ooops I mean a room" whenever asked what the movie was about, all with a phoney cockney accent, the whole thing was really down the toilet starting with that cockney accent point of view, it was supposed to be "street level" and all it was King's Road. That roof scene was like, I was supposed to be standing there and he was going to tell me the story of his life. So – I'll never forget it – he comes and goes, looking at a council block – and *I* come from a council block, my mom still lives there: "I never saw the ground til I was thirteen" and I thought, oh no ... then he says ". . . my mom had a plastic Xmas tree . .". Well, my mom *has* a plastic Xmas tree, but like he was making it out to be really bad, and I *liked* my mom's Xmas tree, my mom's got a lot of sense – and he was going on with all this terrible dole queue type of dialogue, and I fuckin pissed myself laughing. And that, what you see in the film, was the 13th take! It's the truth, I'm not shitting you.

SLASH: I thought it was the strangest bit of acting I had ever seen ...

ADAM: They were all Shakespearean actors those guys ... Derek had to get all these legit actors to please the backers. A lot of people thought the non-professional actors were the best thing in the movie, like Jordan. I thought Wayne County was great, he was really fuckin about and didn't care. It was a really low budget film. It got really arty with that Eno music and all that, I wish I hadn't put "Plastic Surgery" on that album, it all got mixed down to the level of Eno's cuts, so his stuff was perfect but "Plastic Surgery" became a bit pussycat. When my mom saw the movie, she thought I was the bloke with the black lenses! I asked her, I said "well, what did you think of it, mom?" and she says (Monty Python voice): "How did you get them black things in your eyes?" She went thru the whole movie watching somebody else! She's really sweet. I said, "I was the one who got killed," and she says, "I saw that bit too, but I didn't like it because there was swearing in it!!"

SLASH: Do you have plans to be involved again in something visual, either a movie or whatever?

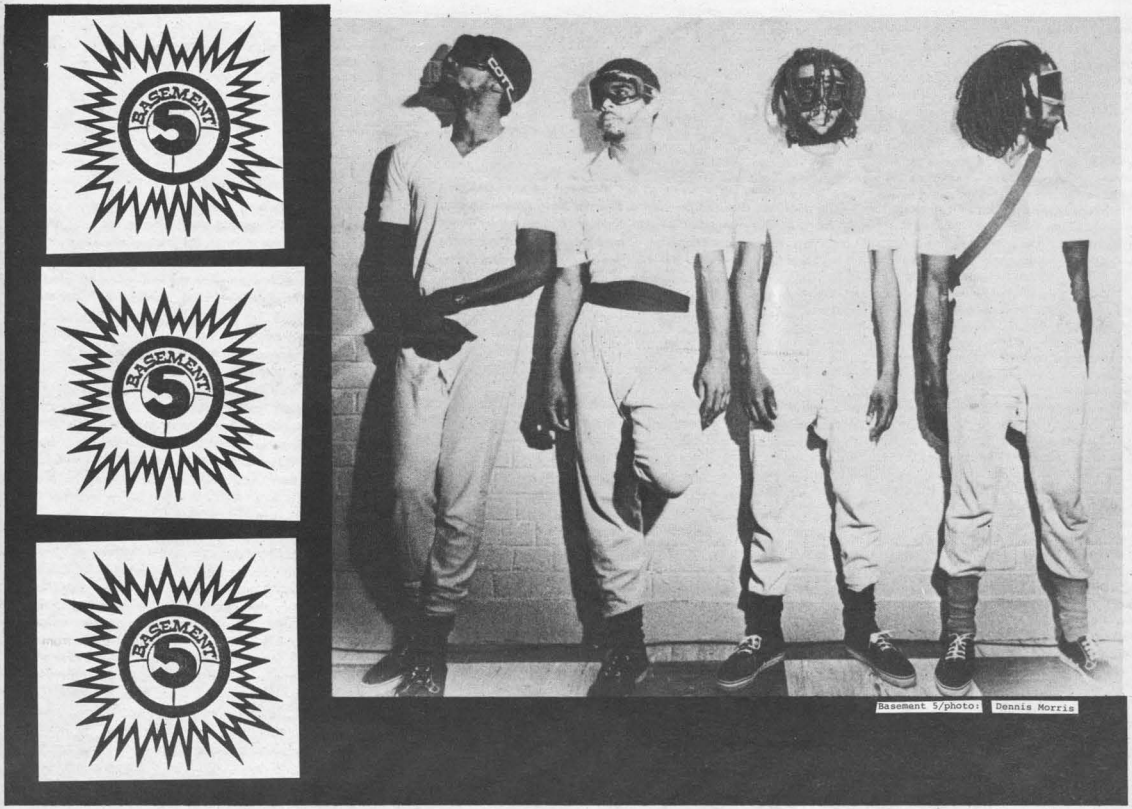
ADAM: I'd like to do a movie about the Ants, talking to people involved with the band, all that. But it would have to be really humorous, really funny.

SLASH: Do you think the scene right now lacks humor?

ADAM: It must be lacking something, or Malcolm wouldn't be in there. If Malcolm is coming back there must be a big gap. Also the bands that get signed get signed either too early or too late. Joy Division is the only one I know that was signed before they peaked.

SLASH: When is the Ants banner going to be taken to the States?

ADAM: The usual thing to do for bands is to go and play a few "showcase" places ... I'm all for that, but I also want to play the USA, the real thing. I'd much rather take up a challenge like being on support for a very large group, Kiss or somebody like that, for a totally different audience that would probably hate us. We want to *work* when we are there.



Basement 5/photo: Dennis Morris

Basement 5 are a new London-based band fronted by one of England's best known rock and reggae photographers and graphic designers, Dennis Morris. Their sound owes as much, if not more, to punk and avant-garde noise combos as it does to reggae in spite of all four members' Jamaican heritage. This summer a single was released by Island that does not really convey the uniqueness of their approach, being more reggae/dub impregnated than most of their live tunes. Dennis Morris is also designing sleeves and posters for Island and still freelancing on photo assignments in between gigs in England and on the continent.

SLASH: What motivated you to move from the side lines of the business where you had reached success and recognition and decide to join the crowds of struggling bands of today?

DENNIS: Well, in the beginning when I was working with all the bands taking pictures and later on doing more on a concept basis, like with Linton Kwesi Johnson, he would work out the music and I would be with him in the studio and would get an idea of what he had in mind and was trying to formulate, then it was my job to translate it in a graphic manner in which to sell it. At the end I thought, well, if I can do that for someone else, I can do it for myself. And I knew the business, knew the way it was run. I wanted to do it a long time ago but never found the right musicians until now. We knew each other for a long time, they're also into graphics as well. They wanted to get into the music when I wanted to finish some of the things I was doing in photography. They went to Portugal to get themselves together, then we got back together and thought, this is it! While working at Island I disappeared for two weeks . . . no one knew where I was, which was on a farm in the countryside where we spent two weeks writing 20% of the material and working out the sound. We knew what we wanted the rhythms to be like in our minds, but had to hear it on the instruments.

SLASH: At your concert a few days ago I realized everyone was moving like they do to reggae except that it doesn't sound like it.

DENNIS: Yes, but the reggae is there. You can pogo to our music if you want to, it's all the rhythms we've been influenced by, there's reggae, rock, punk . . .

SLASH: Whatever press I have seen about the band always brings up Pil. Is it because you used to work with them?

DENNIS: I did all their graphics, yeah. But I think they say that because what we are doing is as extreme as what Pil did to rock. We do it to reggae and rock.. And basically England being what it is they've got to put me down, put me in a slot.

SLASH: Do you take it as far as they did, announcing a deep hatred for rock 'n' roll and boasting of destroying it, in your feelings towards traditional reggae?

DENNIS: Bob Marley can be seen as the kind of reggae music, he opened the doors to reggae music. What went wrong is that the musicians misunderstood him, and rather than take different directions and work with rhythms they thought, "Right, he is making a bag out of it, that's the way they like it, let's all do it . . ." Which they did, and it killed reggae. It stifled Marley as well, huge as he is, because people hear Marley then buy another record not by him and see where it's coming from. There's no variations. And they feel cheated, seeing they got that one record and this one sounds just the same. Yeah, it is getting boring.

SLASH: Just as in punk the Pistols motivated countless imitators who never got the message . . .

DENNIS: The punk movement in England died the death because they took it as a fashion. But, to me at least, it was the first cultural youth movement. A cultural movement like rasta. Now they see a band on stage and just because they don't have the straps and stuff, they think they're not punk. But they don't realize punk is a state of mind.

SLASH: Do you agree that your sound is now harder than on "Silicon Chip?"

DENNIS: As we're getting better the rhythms are getting harder . . . "Silicon Chip," it sounds a feeble song but it's very serious. This country has lots of economic problems, and it's very hard for the working man to accept the fact that a machine can do the job as well. At Ford they have ten people painting a car but in Italy they have a machine that does it better. What people don't realize is that it's better to let the machine do it so they can have more time. Man has to progress, he can go on putting nuts on screws or stupid jobs like that. "Silicon Chip" just tries to explain that, to say "Don't be afraid." It's the modern world.

SLASH: There was a dig at your message somewhere which charged you with just listing problems and offering no solutions.

DENNIS: Somebody else asked me about that the other day. The lyrics come from observation. I'm not telling anybody what to do. We say what we see, then it's up to them. We can't change the system, we can only show what's going on and then see what to do. there was an opportunity before where they could have changed things but they took another direction. Now they get into a fashion 'cause it's really hip . . . But they could have changed it. They frightened everyone, the media, the government, and if they'd kept on . . . Many things went wrong. John was a figure in the movement, but a very reluctant one. In the end Sid was the figure. Sid was quite "punk" I think (laughing).

SLASH: How do you relate either personally or as Basement 5 to rasta?

DENNIS: I don't think people in England can truly be into rasta, it's something that came from an island, yet people born here who've never been to Jamaica associate with something they know nothing about. It's why it's so difficult for audiences here to take it seriously because they don't see any honesty in the bands which are just acting out something somebody else like Bob showed them. All those that became rasta overnight and jumped on the bandwagon and killed it.

SLASH: Does this point of view get you some negative reactions from rastas here?

DENNIS: Yes. Very Negative. Like our badge, which is red,

yellow and blue and they ask why not red, yellow and green? I say "Well, it's time for a change." I mean red, yellow and blue could mean as much as red, yellow and green. But they are not too pleased about that. Then they are not too pleased about the way we dress . . .

SLASH: I was going to ask you about that. It's more like Beefheart and His Magic Gand than ethiopian biblical culture . . . are you influenced by Beefheart by the way?

DENNIS: I'm into all kinds, not like the punks that saw everyone as boring old farts. I think people like Beefheart had a lot to offer and still do. They're the backbone of it all and you've got to check it, 'cause that's where it's coming from. It's not coming from now, it's coming from before. And the mistake they made is not checking the music from before, and people soon got bored with punk 'cause it was the same two chords. The bands that made it are bands who listened to the old music, bands like the Police, who I thing are very good. Bands like the Boomtown Rats, which are not a band I'd pay to see but you can't knock them on the head for wanting to make lots of money. They all want to make lots of money. Rotten wants to make lots of money. I think if you're honest in life you will achieve. Like the Police admit it, they're honest: "We like pop, we're going to do a different kind of pop, or we like reggae, we're going to play a type of white reggae." And they made a success of it. But the other bands going on about they don't want to go beyond two chords, they don't get anywhere. Right to the end when Pil broke up, which is significant I think, but I might be wrong, because they broke up right when we started. They had lots of problems but we could have been part of why they split up. What Pil was trying to do is what we are trying to do; a certain utilization of reggae. John is really into funk and disco, and reggae. He is into Beefheart — everything. For some reason they couldn't get it together.

SLASH: Maybe they're just too lazy . . . which you're apparently not. You're still doing photo sessions, designing, touring. Are you going to have to make a choice soon between these activities?

DENNIS: I only do photos or a design if it's a band I am interested in, if I have time, 99% of it is for the band, the last 1% for those things.

SLASH: It must be much easier making a living with your previous jobs, so I suppose you will have to keep doing pictures and stuff to be able to go on.

DENNIS: Well no. Someone was asking me about that, you see I came from nothing, I worked my way to what I was doing. So to go back to nothing is . . . nothing. I am not from a wealthy family, I had to achieve my own money. I am used to peanuts. It's good to eat peanuts again.

SLASH: Where you born here?

DENNIS: No, I was born in Jamaica. I left when I was eight. I used to go back at least once a year on assignments or when I wasn't working just to get the vibes.

SLASH: Perhaps you can tell us better than the musicians we have asked so far what is going on there right now?

DENNIS: Well, Jamiaca's motto is "Out of many, one." And that might be the problem! They seem to be trying something which is quite impossible there. There is a karma about Jamaica, and in a way it's good, because that little island's achieved a lot.

SLASH: The size of the palce compared to the output of music — there must be no equivalent in the world.

DENNIS: What has held back the music, though, is that the government refuses to accept it or recognize it as a proper industry. That's because most of the people into music are Rastas, and the government does not particularly want to see Rastas driving big cars.

SLASH: Why do you think Jimmy Cliff never made it?

DENNIS: He's huge in Africa. He's very big there. One of the things about Jamaican musicians — I think a lot of them never reap the rewards of what they do. People like Jimmy Cliff write really good songs with great lyrics, but because the music hasn't taken off yet internationally, people start scurrying in the files for those lyrics to the songs.

SLASH: Like Eric Clapton making "I Shot the Sheriff" a hit two years before Bob Marley became known. Do you see signs of your music influencing young bands in England, or is it too early to tell?

DENNIS: I think that young black bands in this country are still a bit scared of changing, because they've really got themselves on the line. They say that they're Rastas, and they say they're this and that . . . it's very difficult for them to change overnight. Because, for one, they'd lose their friends and social group, and they're not that brave to make such a move.

pic by Philomena

SLASH: Isn't it also a matter of joining a movement to give yourself more reality? It must be very scary to start at zero when you have very little to work with.

DENNIS: It would be great if they would though. What's happening right now with reggae music with bands like U.B. 40 is they're basically using the same old rhythms and just making it a little more general. they want to sound like Bob Marley. They've taken the successful line which is to use the old rhythm and make it uptempo.

SLASH: If you were a concert promoter, how would you describe what you are doing with reggae to people who have never heard it?

DENNIS: In Germany they call it "new wave reggae." But that's just the way they see it there.

SLASH: You've been involved in the other side of the business, the graphics end, putting together concept packages. You do take the pictures of Basement 5, don't you?

DENNIS: Yes.

SLASH: I thought of it as Outer Space Reggae when I saw your pictures, with the goggles and stuff . . . Were there five in your band to begin with?

DENNIS: No, just four. Basement 5 is another place where music comes from. It's the name of the band, but its also this place of music . . . an imaginary place. Like, bands always start by rehearsing in a basement, and Basement 5 is some other basement.

SLASH: We thought there were five people, like Dave Clark Five.

DENNIS: Aud 5, to us its more a mystic number.

SLASH: You've been accused of being some kind of an opportunist; workin at Island as a graphic designer, then your record comes out on Island. What's your reply to the people who say, "It's a bit easy, isn't it?"

DENNIS: Well it wasn't easy at first. We almost couldn't get a deal . . . the way that we go a deal is we did the pictures first. It was hard for us to get a deal because most bands who get a deal play first. We did it in reverse. We got ourselves the pictures first, then went into the studio, and we had demo tapes, and played the demo tapes. The record companies said that the tapes were good, but they wanted to see us play, because the companies had always been used to signing bands after they'd seen them play.

SLASH: So you had never played live before?

DENNIS: No, just the demos we did, that's all we had. And they thought, "Yeah, great demos. But can you play?"

SLASH: So, you haven't played out of London so far?

DENNIS: No, tomorrow we do. Actually, the first gig we ever did was in Liverpool, at Eric's. That was very strange. Before we got on, everyone was away from the stage, and then we started and everyone rushed up to the stage.

SLASH: They probably expected the old reggae shuffle . . .

DENNIS: Yes . . . and when we finished some guy came up to us and asked how long we would be away from America!

SLASH: Some people think that you might be taking the piss from the white bands . . . the hard, aggressive aproach. Do you think that you're a satire, or parody of that music?

DENNIS: Yeah, it is. Part of the problem with the situation in this country and worldwide is that people haven't learned to be less serious about it all. They are too serious, like if you're into Rasta, you can't eat meat. But God it's cold in England, if you don't eat meat you could die. In Jamaica that's fine, there are plenty of fresh vegetables. But here everything is flown in so you can't get anything fresh. It's all grown with chemicals.

SLASH: It's probably healthier to eat beef.

DENNIS: Yes. And also if somebody calls you nigger you can't just automatically fight about it. Blacks are very serious here. There is no humor, and in the music no matter how serious the subject matter — whether it's about the government or whatever — there should still be some humor in the music. The bands before us never had any humor. Like, no matter how depressing a gig might be, we always smile about it afterwards.

SLASH: Your band does seem to have more of an 80's orientation . . .

DENNIS: Like the bass player, he has locks and wears a top hat. And sometimes we all wear hats. Like the guitar player will have a cowboy hat on and we have to do that to have humor. I think a top hat is ideal to put your locks in. Life is a game and you have to play it or you won't get anywhere. Part of the problem with the reggae bands in this country is that the English way is very cynical . . . they ahve a darker, more witty sense of humor. And a lot of the bands don't fit because they can't see the funny side of things that other people say to them.

SLASH: It's like you said, a lot of the bands are green and haven't had enough blows yet. They're still too young.

DENNIS: Yes, but by their lyrics you'd think they'd been shot at every day!

SLASH: By the lyrics you'd think most bands had been in the gutter for ten years, but actually they just moved out of dad and mom's . . .

DENNIS: And this country is a very easy county. In what other country could you not work and still get 60 pounds a week in your pocket and a place to live. In Jamaica if you're not working then you're not working. In this country, lots of people live off the system, they abuse it. Otherwise the system might work, but they abuse it. Then the government gets pissed off and abuses the people. But to a lot of people — a lot of blacks — if they heard me taling this way they'd call me . . .

SLASH: A traitor?

DENNIS: Yeah, a traitor.

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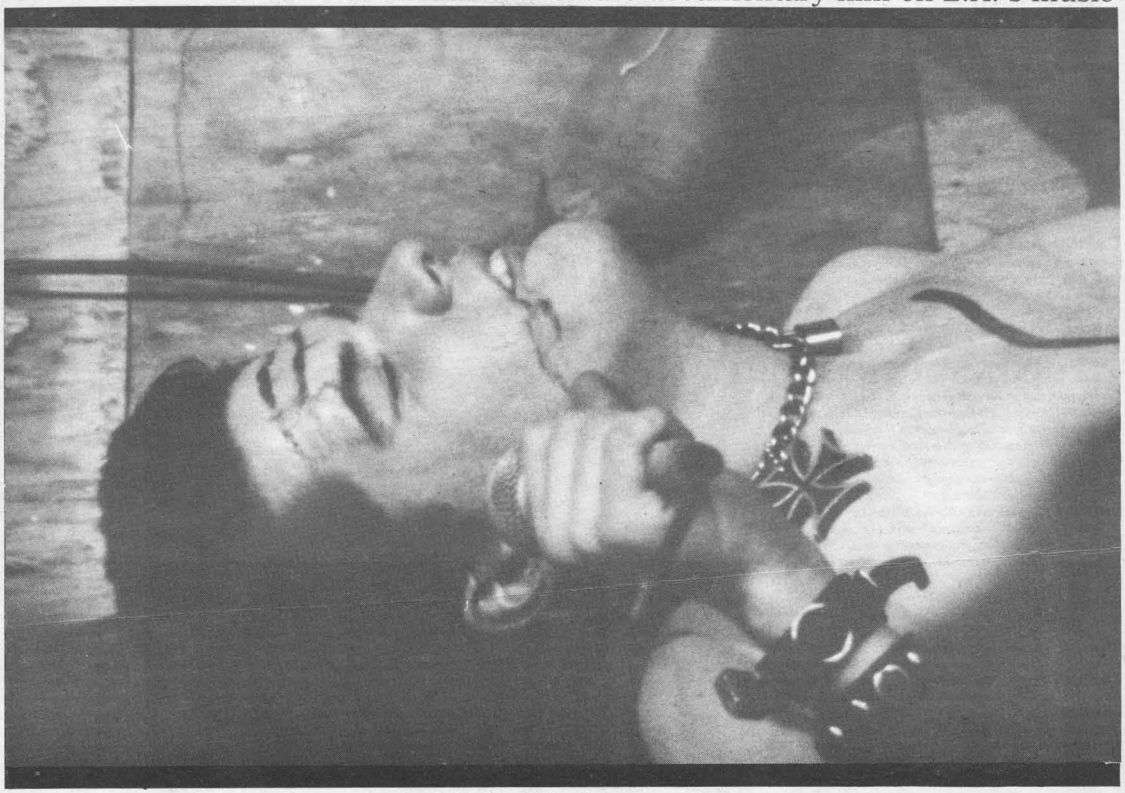

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POP GROUP

When we met the Pop Group it was obvious that once again we were the victims of media bullshit and slander. They were not at all the pompous, righteous and humorless bunch of militant politicos the British press has described . No party line, no dogma, no slogans. They arrived one by one, the first one to arrive was also the first one to leave, and the most impatient one with the interview situation. His name is Gareth. Bruce (Smith), their American raised drummer, cooked for everyone while remaining quite vocal throughout. At the same time, the rest of us hesitantly circled around various topics. As most of the time everyone was either shouting all at once or keeping quiet and uncommunicative, we haven't tried to single out who said what. Each indentation indicates a different band member, and the Slash questions are indicated as such.

POP GROUP: As long as people are going to get upset by it, you gotta keep on doing it. We have arguments sometimes because I always think I am not going to play what I ought to play. If that night I feel bored I won't play much. All these groups that can jump about trying to look excited when they're not feeling like that, that's just shit....Cash on Delivery, just like anything else in this fuckin world....

SLASH: You're about to play a concert in Finland, aren't you?

POP GROUP. We're not going with anything prepared or anything — we'll just react to the way things are.

SLASH: You also played New York recently, didn't you?

POP GROUP: That was the worst thing we ever done. We just got into a syndrome, the placed dulled us so much, the whole thing was so false that it really started affecting us. We were not really prepared for it, we almost gave up trying to give people the jitterbugs. I hate going somewhere and feeling British, but then the stuff gets to you, the news, everything....I try to be in other groups as well, but it never gets off the ground because you always end up where you can do the most and obviously The Pop Group got a name for itself....

(TWO MORE POP GROUP MEMBERS ARRIVE)

— I had a dream last night about being arrested for being rude to somebody.

— I went shopping in my dream last night over to this cash and carry place. I can't remember what I bought.

— How old are you?

— He means how many vibes have you collected. He's asking because it's his birthday this week-end — he's gonna be twenty.

– What do you think can be done?

SLASH: I don't know. I think 95 percent of people are idiots

– And the other 5 percent does not give a shit. There does not seem to be anywhere that works better. ...

– But why be interested in fuckin Valhalla?

– I am not saying that. But everybody's got a kind of Utopia.

SLASH: And meanwhile, everybody's still leading stupid lives.

– We are them. And everything is so absurd everybody knows it's a joke.

– And they realize that we are in a situation where you can't get anywhere near the people who are manipulating everything, the people in power. We don't count. Everyone knows that. My parents know that.

– And the whole thing is set up so that people do not communicate at all.

– Total isolation. Which makes you grab at strange things to protect your security. You grab a room and decorate it to make it as nice as possible....But you're not really living. It's really weird, I just don't feel I am living.

– And I can't get enough money for horsebetting....

– (SINGING WITH A TWANG)..."On a warm summer evening/on a train bound for nowhere/I met a pretty gambler/la la la la la la and I spent my life reading people's faces/knowing what the cards were/by the way they held their eyes/If you don't mind me saying/I can't see you're out of aces/please bring that whisky and I'll give you some advice....You gotta know when to hold them/know when to fold them/know when to walk away/and know when to run/you never count your money/when you're sitting at the table/there'll be time enough for counting/when the deal is done."

– Do you like country and western?

SLASH: Can't stand it.

– Oww, come on!

– We sing it because we're gamblers.

– Kenny Rogers plays to 50,000 people.

– Yahooo!

(SOMEONE STARTS HUMMING THE THEME OF "THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY." THE REST JOIN IN.)

SLASH: How the fuck did you get your reputation of being very serious young men?

– Marc is very intense. (EVERYBODY COLLAPSES LAUGHING.)

– Come on, Marc.

– His problem is that the jokes are not funny when they're not his. When it's his jokes he kills himself laughing!

– Marc, how did you become the voice of doom?

– Is that what you thought of us when you heard the records?

SLASH: I didn't think you were exactly a laugh a minute!

– It's not doom, it's just things as they are.

– Bollocks!!!

– Not bollocks.

– It's not doom, it's pretty groovy.

– If you really think it's bad, you're not going to commit suicide. You are going to try to do something about it.

– Do as you would be done by. Let that be the rule.

– I'm going out, see you later. This end of the world conversation....

– Don't go.

– Weed! Sissy! (SOMEONE EXITS)

SLASH: Let's talk about your image some more....Do you find it hard to live with, would you like to shake it off?

– Why should we want to shake it off?

SLASH: Because it seems to bother even members of the group.

– It bothers me, too. I don't like it, it was never my intention to create it. It happened because of the media fuckheads, basically. And they want to keep the divisions that exist between politics and pop music, like "this stuff has its place, it doesn't belong here."

– If you use the word "exploitation", the New Musical Express immediately goes booohh...

SLASH: The concept makes them nervous....It's not a fun idea.

– But what we play is fun to play. (WE TALK ABOUT GOOD MUSIC TO DO THE DISHES TO)

– Who gives a shit about all that stuff?

– Why don't you do things in SLASH about Mexican bands instead of the Gang of Four?

– Have you ever heard the Champs?

– Our main influence, along with Glen Campbell....

– ... and horseracing.

– Bruce is late because he is betting on the races.

SLASH: Why didn't you want to release that retrospective of the earlier stuff?

– Retrogressive!

SLASH: Why did you change your mind?

– Money. We got thrown off the social security.

– It's a hard life.

– Give us the guitar, baby.

SLASH: What is your relationship with Rough Trade?

– They don't like horse racing.

– We have our own label, Y. We make the decisions as to what we're going to release. And we don't have any money to release it.

SLASH: Do you consider yourselves....

– (ALL TOGETHER) Consider yourself...at home, consider yourself part of the family....

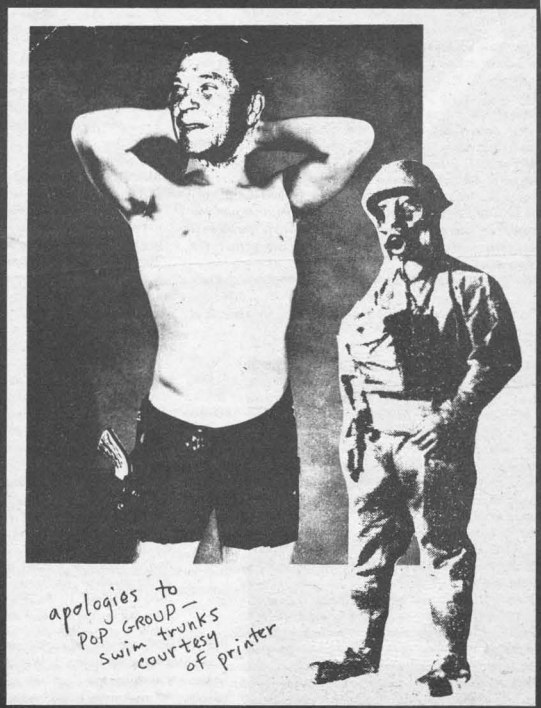
– Just remember Saturday is only a day away, and then we can get down to the race course.

– Come on, ask us something.

SLASH: What do you think of James Joyce's "Ulysses?"

– I read bits of it.

– Books are poisonous.



apologies to POP GROUP — swim trunks courtesy of printer

SLASH: What a reactionary statement!
— Burn the books.
— Yea, burn the books.
— Can we do a montage for your magazine?
SLASH: Like what?
— A Ronald Reagan montage.
SLASH: I don't know if it's right to let foreigners do that.
— One of the things about Britain is that a lot of the politics are decided by America. It's more like a satellite state.
— The tuna, rice and corn casserole is ready!
SLASH: How did you feel about the nastiness in print that greeted your "How do we tolerate Mass Murder" album?
— They're just not into horse racing.
SLASH: Please, no jokes.
— There's nothing more serious than fun.
— Most people don't want to know, they just don't want to know. They're just into the rock 'n' roll fantasies. The question is what to do next. We don't think violence is going to get anything. The only thing to do is hope that enough people keep their head together and try to change something. Trouble is, individually people are not very together, the way they relate to other people....Bruce, was this cooked with the tuna?
— No!

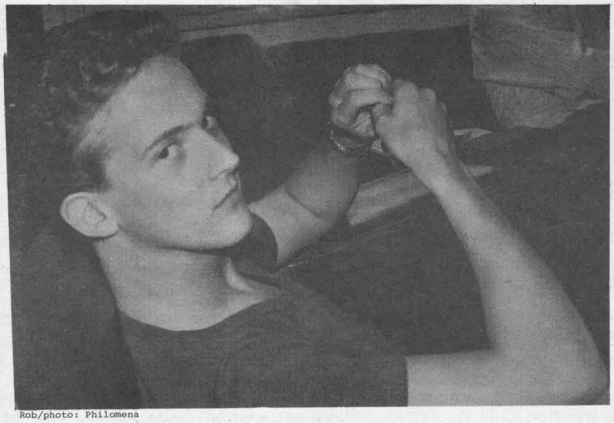
SLASH: I just can't do the dishes to the Pop Group music.
— We used to think about that. When you start to think of your music in that context, it starts to get really weird. We thought how can we try to get over that so that people cannot play it while handling their cooking gear. The reason a lot of people hate our music is that you can't do that, it's vile noises.
SLASH: It sounds great in a car stuck in the traffic!
— The guy who was working with us at Radar Records said that, too. We had never imagined it in that context.
— What do you think will happen when we play Los Angeles?
SLASH: Depends who's president of the country. You might not get visas.
— Reagan is no problem. Reagan's worked in the business, he is a pop star. He will do anything to get the presidency. It's all promo.
SLASH: What's going to be the title of the next lp?
— Maybe there won't be one. What's the point of making another record? What do you see as the point of it?
SLASH: I don't know....(LONG SILENCE) Do you think we've got an interview?
— I don't know. Does it matter? ? Does it?

wah! heat

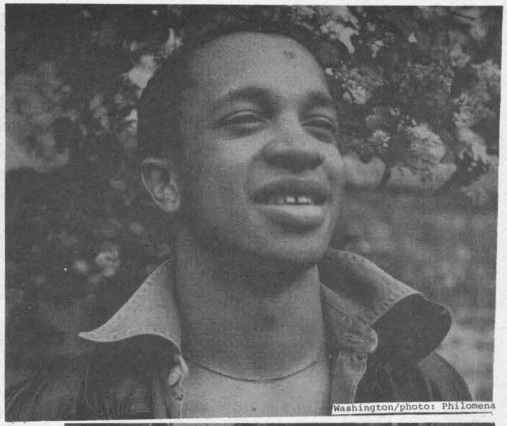
Wah! Heat are two from Liverpool, they have a single out on inevitable/Eric's, the local independent label which is also the home of Pink Military and Nightmares in Wax. We met Wah Heat at the office of the label and talked while the musical "Oklahoma" was on the telly. Well, Pete (singer and guitar player) did most of the talking, Washington only showed up later and ROB mainly listened. And Pete talks A LOT, gesturing and moving about and still unable to release all the energy he seems exceptionally loaded with. We also spent the evening with him in a pub right across from where The Cavern used to be (not a parking structure) and later in an after-hours club where that night the Mersey beat was quite muffled and low key. Still, it's a change from The Hong Kong, eh, what?
(See Wah Heat record review in the Record Review section.)

(Talking about their second single, still being worked out at the time of the interview)

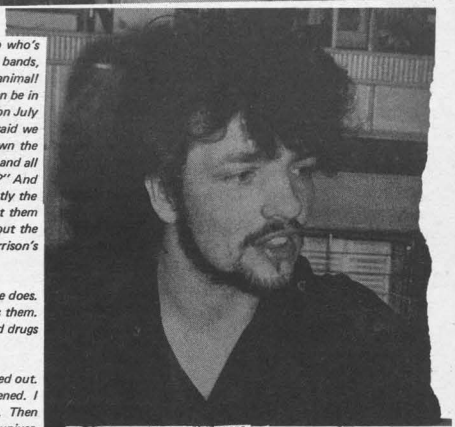
PETE: *We want to do as good a single as the first. There were certain things that because it was so clean, and we could get so much separation with 24 tracks, it loses a lot of atmosphere, and no matter now hard you play and how hard you try, it didn't come out quite the same. It will be a good single, but most people won't notice the things I have noticed. Our standards are a little bit higher than most people. Most people's standards are pretty low, you know.*
SLASH: *And when is this album you were talking about going to be done?*
PETE: *January or February.*
SLASH: *Also on Inevitable?*
PETE: *Yeah, Inevitable/Eric's. We can stay that way. As long as we don't starve.*
SLASH: *And you plan on staying based in Liverpool?*
PETE: *As long as we can, probably indefinitely. We were all born here, it's our hometown. Sometimes we talk about going to stay in Manchester or Wales, or London for a week, just to get away from the routine of hanging around with all your mates. When you start doing the same things you start thinking the same things, there's not much stimulation. But this will always be like the base.*
SLASH: *Have you played many live gigs yet?*
PETE: *Well, we did one or two gigs last December as a three piece with a different bass player. It was OK but it was not going far enough, so we got Washington in. He is ideal, he is perfect . . . . last gig this year was in Newcastle. We decided in advance that instead of going on playing the same gigs doing the same songs every couple of months we'd take a break to rearrange our stuff, use new stuff, try new ideas you know like different rhythms, different effects on guitar and stuff. Don't want to get like those bands that plod on forever and ever with one idea.*
SLASH: *What does the name of the band mean?*
PETE: *Wah is, you know, Reggae records, we just picked up that word of Reggae records. Me and Rob used to share a flat in Penny Lane, yeah that Penny Lane I am afraid, and all the guys hanging out around there used to say Wah!, just an exclamation of shock or interest or something. One day I went to Eric's with a pushbike I borrowed from me brother, and it was really hot with me leather jacket on, and when I walked in I said to Roger Eagle (Eric's owner) "Wah! Heat" and he said use that. We going to build up a catalogue of myths about the name and next time someone asks we're going to use another one. Like maybe that we all had the same dream and when morning came we confided this in each other . . . but I mean we're not Patti Smith yet . . .*
SLASH: *Do you listen to lots of Reggae?*
PETE: *We listen to lots of everything. I haven't listened to a lot of Reggae recently, the last month it's been Captain Beefheart and Funk.*
SLASH: *There's not much happening in Reggae at the moment is there?*
PETE: *There's nothing particularly militant about it anymore.*
SLASH: *And loads of re-recordings of old stuff.*
PETE: *It's not only in Reggae. After the Punk thing which excited people and shook things up it slipped right back to where people are getting away with rubbish and the audience thinks it's great. We don't want to get like this. The press has gone mad at the moment writing things about us, ridiculous things, making claims for us . . . we got the potential to live up to them, but at the moment we're just a young band, we can't fulfill it, like claiming the single is a classic, and we did a gig in Scotland and the reviewer had us on the same level as Pil, saying "As long as there are bands around like Wah Heat and Public Image . . . " You know, we were a bit stunned by that, you know. It wasn't even a great gig, we just played as hard as usual but usually I talk a lot more, I improvise words and I had not even done that. The guy went just wild . . . (we talk about Manchester, where we just had come from)*
PETE: *Most of the bands who come from Manchester are all very grey and dismal you know, while Liverpool bands seem to be quite forceful and jolly, like Teardrop Explodes are a really happy band, not grim. Liverpool went going thru its best phase for a while. When we used to go to Eric's and even when the band was no good and it was empty there still would be a good feel, you know. That level of energy is gone. At Eric's we didn't even drink so much but you'd feel good. When Eric's closed down they had like two marches and it was horrible, the people that went to the marches we people that never went to Eric's, just out to get their photo in the papers. They didn't care about the club or even understand what it was about, which was a breeding ground. Without Eric's there would have been no focus for people . . .*
SLASH: *What is the Fanzine situation here?*
PETE: *There's one called Mersey Sound that's pretty good, pretty honest. Once they put us on the front page and did an article with us, but in the same magazine the live review said how awful we were once which is great, it was really fair. Cos the press tends to make out that one guy's opinion is everything, and obviously it isn't. Also the writers want to make themselves a name by discovering a new thing, like a lot of guys made it thru punk, now some guy is trying to start a Psychedelia revival. Sounds is the worst for that, like Gary Bushell raving about "the new wave of Punk," it's rubbish, it's not true, and Dave McCullough taking care of the "sensitive side" of it. Some guy from New Music News, Marc Ellen, did the best article on us. Rather than go for "the grim, concerned young men" image, cos obviously although we are interested in a lot of things and feel strongly about them there's also a funny side to our personality, and it's only that interview which captured it. He knew what we were about. Not only the dark side, but the humor of Wah. We're not all that . . . bitter. I mean, we are bitter but . . . what a terrible thing to say, "we are bitter." Bleak and unemployed!*
SLASH: *What music have been influenced by?*
PETE: *When I was quite young, say 1972, it was Bowie, right until the Punk thing. Bowie was my man. Then thru the Punk thing The Clash were my favorite band. I can see a lot of their faults but I think they'll come thru. I know they care. They're going thru a bad time but they'll come out of it. Another favorite band of mine are Dexy's Midnight Runners, not just the music, but their attitude is great. Cept when they*



Rob/photo: Philomena



Washington/photo: Philomena



Pete/photo: Philomena

say all Rock is dead, and that the charts should fall for Soul music. I mean OUR music is Soul music in a different kind of way. Not Soul in the sense of Otis Redding Soul or horn, but our motivations are the same as Dexy's. Like if there are two bands that musically I like equally the motivation of one band will make them my favorite. I think it's important if a band is motivated by the right things . . . I am not even sure what the right things are but I know it when I see it . . . instinctively. Like the Pop Group, they are trying to take things on a bit, you know. Chic and The Pop Group are the best bands I saw last year, but I haven't seen many bands. It's hard to tell what's happening, besides what the press is saying. We just don't get to see bands now unless we go to Manchester or London and you can't always afford to do that. In a way the divergences in the music make it easier for us as a band, we're not pigeon-holed as one kind or another, but obviously if we were part of a really strong movement that captured the public's imagination it would help in terms of publicity and getting to people. But that's not always the important thing, maybe the fact that we're not part of a movement, at least a movement with a name, makes it easier for us to develop . . . very confused young band, this Wah Heat! What we want is just to get rich . . . no, that's not it.

SLASH: *Is there any club here now replacing Eric's?*

PETE: *It's going to open again, but under a different management. You see Eric's was run by Roger Eagle and Pete Fulwell (of Inevitable Reocrds Ed.) and if they had wanted to make money they would have run a disco, but they love the music so they ran this Rock club. Now these guys who have taken it over see it as a business thing, they've seen the marches after it closed and they think there is support. But it's not true, Dexy's Midnight Runners played there and they were really good cept they wore satin suits, but their music was the same, great striding music with all those horns, and there were about ten people the first time, the second time their manager offered me a fiver if I could get my mates to come down, cos I got a few mates (like half of Liverpool Ed.) I got a few mates down but he never gave me the money, and there were still only about thirty people there, and that was 6 months ago. They played Liverpool again a week ago, everyone expected a thousand people and only three hundred went, they lost money. And that's a band with a hit single. People are getting funny. It seems really weird. There's such a shortage of gigs here you'd think people would go just for that.*

SLASH: *Are there any bands you especially like to share the bill with?*

PETE: *Where we can we like to say who we want to be with. We've done some gigs with Pink Military, which is great because we all get on so well, the music comes from the same place but at different ends. Our music is at the . . . severe end of it, theirs is more . . . film things you know, and it makes a good balance. In the future we want to play with people who we've met and felt something about, kindred spirits. We feel Wah Heat is going to be a special band, so we might as well start now making certain rules for ourselves. Like we got offered to do this festival in Holland, good money and stuff, but we didn't want to do a festival. Doreen thinks we did it to be clever! But we don't want these festivals.*

SLASH: *Who wants to listen to constant music for 12 hours?*

PETE: *Yea. I talked to a guy a couple of weeks ago who's going to the Reading festival and he's going to see the bands, he's going to drink, and roll around in mud, an animal! They're all waiting for the next Woodstock so they can be in the film. We were advertised playing with Hawkwind on July the 13th. We met the promoter at a Clash gig and said we wouldn't do it but he phoned up and we laughed down the phone at him. But he advertised it anyway in N.M.E. and all our friends said "How can you play with Hawkwind??" And we had to tell everyone we weren't going to. Apparently the group that replaced us got bottles and cans thrown at them for half an hour so I'm glad we didn't. Ask me about the morning I woke up on the anniversary of Jim Morrison's birthday and I felt his spirit move into me body.*

SLASH: *Okay, I just did.*

PETE: *It didn't happen. But Washington sees ghosts, he does. He drinks a lot and smokes a lot, that's when he sees them. Lately he's gone very weird though, refusing drinks and drugs and women. He says we're all corrupt.*

SLASH: *What did you do before the band?*

PETE: *I went to university for two years then dropped out. October the 3rd 1976 was the first night Eric's opened. I went to that, it was The Stranglers. It was great. Then October the 4th, the one day after is when I started university. My university career was was kind of doomed, Eric's was more interesting.*

SLASH: *How do you see the future of the band?*

PETE: *If we can get enough money to live on, it's good. We don't have to be rich. I am still getting unemployment, now they know I'm in a group, they saw the papers. They said well if you're making money you can't come by. I said what if we're losing money? I hope it's not a choice between packing in the band or signing to a big label. That's when the trouble starts. We want to build independently, not just for us but for other bands to be able to do it, make them aware that they can do other things besides signing to majors. I wish Dexy's had stayed independent. Now they have to do things like steal the tapes back from their company because of some argument.*

SLASH: *Inside the sleeve of your 1st record there are the words, "I better choose which side I'm on"—so, which side are you on?*

PETE: *We're on our side, it's us against them, it's that vague thing again but you know who THEY are when it's happening. It's us against Thatcher, Callahan, the Liberals, anybody, it's us against all of them parties. It's just that most people don't even . . . care. (Someone rings at the door) could that be Washington? (Washington is the drummer) . . . no, it's not.*

SLASH: *Who is it?*

PETE: *Someone who used to play with the band. A good fellow. Hey Brudder, you're looking very casual. Are you still forming the Disco Terrorists?*

BRUDDER: *That's not the name . . .*

PETE: *Listen we'll get you a name. (Turning to me) That was going to be the name of his new band . . .*

BRUDDER: *It will be the Fantasy Boys.*

PETE: *That's too L.A.*

SLASH: *I hope I get everything you say when you're barking a mile a minute.*

PETE: *Doreen told me when we went to London: "Not talk slowly or people won't understand you" . . . they don't understand me anyway . . . I'm so misunderstood.*

(We talk about Dexy's Midnight Runners and their references to Kerouac and Frank Sinatra.)

PETE: *The very first review we got started with a Kerouac quote.*

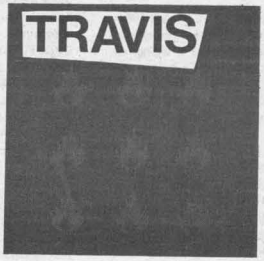
SLASH: *Is there a Beatnik revival taking place?*

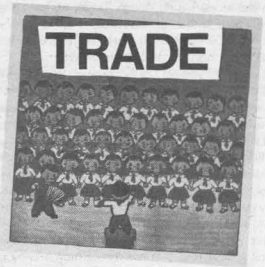
PETE: *Not really it's just a lot of people share attitudes with the ones those guys had, no one is consciously being beatnik you know. I told you I like Bowie. Well when he was at the height of his Pop thing he reread "On the Road" and that changed his attitude. I've been trying to reread it too. Like running around doing things seems very apt, I couldn't ever have a stable relationship with anybody. I am always trying to do different things, it just seemed to fit.*

SLASH: *The Holy State of Confusion . . .*

PETE: *Yeah! But you'll never catch me wearing sandals.*

KING BLUFF





Rough trade should need no introduction to any Slash reader since a sizable section of the latest singles and lp's from the U.K. which get reviewed in these pages are on their label or are being distributed and promoted with their help. Stiff Little Fingers, Cabaret Voltaire, Pop Group, Young Marble Giants, Pere Ubu, The Fall, Red Crayola, Metal Urbain, Essential Logic are some of the most obvious names of music makers that started with, stayed with or decided to join their company. Dozens more have released singles or EP's thru them or with their support. It is also the leading force behind the independent distribution network throughout England and other countries, handling the catalogues of some of the sharpest vanguard labels like Factory, Industrial, Zoo, Object Music and it's even a record shack with regular hours and the best selection of "alternative" records from Yugoslavian punk to obscure pre-release 12' reggae platters at some of the best prices. Oh, they also do mail order for everything they got and that includes just about every fanzine published under the sun. Then there is the latest underground shortcut to instant fame, direct cassettes from bands to buyers screw the usual channels well they can help there too. No they don't repair toasters or make house calls.

Geoff Travis founded Rough Trade, works there every day, has produced records for his label (Stiff Little Fingers) more recently the upcoming Fall new lp, goes to a lot of concerts and does not drink (which has fuck all to do with the state of the arts really cept once I spent a long time staring at him for a long time as he sat with some of us dainty boozers in some rowdy pub clutching some heartbreaking little lemonade or something and wondering how he did it).

SLASH: Any new projects on Rough Trade?

GEOFF: Red Crayola are recording a new LP, Raincoats have recorded half of their new album. The Pop Group are going to record a single in a couple weeks, and Cabaret Voltaire have done the rhythm track for a new single, which is really fantastic, the best thing they've done so far. And a James Blood Ulmer LP, which should be out in a few weeks.

SLASH: From the outside, it looks as if Rough Trade is starting to compete for world domination of the record business.

GEOFF: I don't see it like that. It's more a drive toward being efficient creating better working conditions for the people here, and a better product. We're not interested in competing with the record industry, and really Rough Trade's effect upon the music industry is nil. Nothing will be changed. So we're not really here to change things inside the record industry, we want to do our work outside the record industry. But the problem is that, because we are moving and expanding, people think that we're expansionists, and so they think that we are changing our ideals more and more. But the move is meant to create more space for us, which could only make Rough Trade stronger. It really has nothing to do with ideals. One of the main functions of Rough Trade is to dispense information, to provide access to the kind of information which is normally not available. People who do their own projects should have a means to distribute their records.

SLASH: So you see the handling of records and the distribution of records as just an extension of the information process?

GEOFF: Yes, although it should not be reduced to just a message. We're very wary of expanding, we don't want to lose our ideals. But we don't want to remain a sort of small, elitist ghetto of good taste, we want to be efficient, and powerful, but not abuse that power. I think that Rough Trade is in a better position not to abuse its power because of the structure of the organization. For example, all our wages are the same, and the effect of that is far-reaching. A person working in the shop has the same wage as me. Also, we all do alot of physically hard work, like packing records in boxes, which is really just another step in the process.

SLASH. Is the expansion of Rough Trade to America an experiment, or is it part of . . .

GEOFF: It's a very conscious attempt. As far as we're concerned there is no parallel organization in America in the kind of music we deal in.

SLASH: At least not on your level . .

GEOFF: There are a vast number of independent companies in America, such as Slash, the Rounder. But most of the independent labels do not have aspirations of dealing with popular music, it's just not being done. We have two choices, either we license our records to an American record label, in which case we will probably be treated in the same way that IRS treats its bands, which usually happens when you're dealing with people who don't understand the ethics of advertising, like trying to sell some sham "new wave" kind of advertisement. or the other alternative is to develop some kind of friendly relationship with someone like David Geffen. Trying to distribute in America ourselves has been a dismal failure ... the basic difference is that although there are a lot of people whose work we respect in America, none of them seem to put in the number of hours of work it takes to do these things. Anyway, the plan is to develop an efficient distribution in America, and it might take from one to five years before we can tell if it's making any difference, if it's successful. Obviously, we would want to have American bands on the label, which could in turn generate energy and influence to the American underground. A band like Pere Ubu would be in a much better position today had there been an efficient distribution system. And a band like the Screamers would have had records out three years ago, and made some important records. That is what we want to do, whether or not we can achieve it is certainly an open question. It's worth a try.

SLASH: How far do you take the matter of agreeing or disagreeing with what the bands on Rough Trade are saying?

GEOFF. In a way, we don't disagree with our bands enough. I think we've been a victim, to some degree, of the "inalienable right of the artist," to say and do things which we wouldn't tolerate from anyone else. There are some bands on Rough Trade that annoy us, but most of the bands have an excellent relationship with the label.

SLASH. Has there been any case of a band that you've already put on your label coming up with music which you couldn't go for, which you disagreed with strongly?

GEOFF. Yes it has happened. It happened with the Pack. They made a single which we liked, then we went to see them play and it was a real depressing experience. So we sat down with them for three hours, and told them what we thought the problems were. And finally we said, "If you can't do it this way, then we don't want to make any more records with you." And they accepted that. And the Last Words, we did one single with them which we liked, and we went to the studio but the other things they were doing were pretty awful. So those were the only cases of bands that we've had to say no to. What's really surprising is when a band does something we like, and then the next recording is even better. That has happened also. But we definitely do not believe in being completely liberal, like saying to a band "anything you want to do is fine." We think that is rubbish. We need to provide a critical function. But it's hard to do sometimes, when a lot of personalities are involved, but our criticism comes from a desire to be helpful, not to be destructive, so it's usually taken well by the bands.

SLASH. What do you think of the current state of the recording industry in England?

GEOFF. I think it's in a terrible state, and I'm glad. I hope it dies away.

SLASH. Do you think it will?

GEOFF. No. Well, there's not much left of the English industry. It has all been bought up by American and Dutch companies. E.M.I. was the last great English company, and it's just been sold. The English record industry, which used to be the pride and joy of the world record business, hardly exists anymore. There isn't anything which people see as an alternative, but that's the challenge we set for ourselves.

SLASH. How do you see the situation in America, as far as the record business goes? Do you think it is similar to England?

GEOFF. The thing that has changed in England is the mechanism by which people can make music and have it distributed. This change doesn't really exist in America. So a band like DNA, who are making potentially very exciting music, subversive music, their only access to making records is to, say, go to Lust/Unlust and make a record, probably a very fine record considering the freedom which that label gives its artists, and it would sell maybe three to four hundred copies. The other alternative is to sign to Ze, and be a victim of a sort of ... what's the name of that magazine ... Wet, you know, Wet Magazine cocktail nuevo-rich advertising campaign which would tout them as being the latest fashion. It's pathetic. And the only other choice is to sign to CBS, and of course CBS wouldn't have them because Arto can't sing. Had there been a distribution company with the same aspirations and motives as DNA, I think they would be a fairly important band in America today. Until that exists it's difficult to describe the situation in America. At the moment, not enough opportunities are being provided because of a deep-seated cynicism of people measuring their success in the conventional way in which success is measured. Because there are no alternatives. And all the role/models from the sixties, like Rolling Stone, and all the things which were once thought as alternatives are about as authentic as the Wall Street Journal. And when you meet these people, they're all apologists. They apologize and they say, "Well, I really am very radical but I'm forced to write for this paper because there's nothing else." That's why the woman's movement has been a biginspiration to me personally. It is an inspiration because it has been such a success, especially in the organization of magazines and groups. The movement is more a reality in Italy, or France. Even in England, where lots of women still lead very sheltered lives. And it's that kind of change, and way of working and way of being which could act as a model. Anyway, that is why it's important, because it forces an awareness.

SLASH. An awareness of change?

GEOFF. Yes, well like in Angel Johnston's book *Lesbian Relations* she said that when she was meeting people whose work she respected, she was usually brutally disappointed. That's a horrible lesson to have to learn, and it seems pointless working in any medium where that is a continuing reality. I think that it's important that people don't use art in the way that it has been used for centuries — as some kind of crutch to hide themselves behind. I don't believe that art necessarily gives license ...

SLASH. You don't think that artists should behave as holy madmen ...

GEOFF. No, I don't. Certainly there are one or two authentic madmen, but we're talking here about 99% of the people we come across ... and we're also talking about rock and roll, which as a medium is, well, pretty pathetic.

SLASH. Having such high standards, how do you feel dealing in what could be seen as the scummiest medium of them all?

GEOFF. I'm very aware of it. But I don't spend my whole life worrying about rock and roll, or talking about it.

SLASH. How do you feel about the audience which rock and roll attracts?

GEOFF: Well, there aren't people walking around with

Rough Trade tee-shirts and badges. We've never been involved in marketing Rough Trade, we keep a very low profile. I have faith in the audience.

SLASH. Do you have as much faith in the professional press?

GEOFF: I read the press for information.

SLASH. Do you get the information that you want?

GEOFF: I get a small amount from the press. I get much more feeeback from the people I meet. But I wish the press was better.

SLASH. How could it be better?

GEOFF. Well, the people writing the press could have some historical sense of their own context, and be less involved in fighting their own personal battles. Most of the press people are so naive, they think that things they find out, they think that they were the first to stumble across. They don't really have any ideas or beliefs besides those based on some mystical idea of rock and roll. It has moved away from the classical, Keith Richards-idolization of old rock and roll to a kind of elevation of the modern, popular, danceable music, and the press think it means alot but they don't really know what it means. It's stupid anyway, because what does it really mean ... nothing. It means nothing at all. But what I'm asking for is a much nicer transformation, that rock and roll is going through all by itself. But I do think that it's a viable medium, otherwise I wouldn't be involved in it. And I'm not trying to use it, it's not like a toy in my hands that I'm trying to mold or play with. Rock and roll would go through this change with or without my help. There's still enough music coming along every day which I'm really excited about.

SLASH. In America, people think of rock and roll as a very particular kind of music. Would you call Cabaret Voltaire rock and roll?

GEOFF. I don't know. What Cabaret Voltaire does I call Cabaret Voltaire.

SLASH. But what would you call what Cabaret Voltaire and Pere Ubu and the Fall do? Come on, I'm trying to start a new label like "Punk," come up with the ultimate term ...

GEOFF: Well, the phrase rock and roll is just a universal cliche.

SLASH. And do you think these cliches are crumbling?

GEOFF. It's not really my place to think about such things.

SLASH. But you listen to enough of it ...

GEOFF. But I'm not really worried about it. I spent a lot of my time wondering if the novel had played itself out, and I discovered it was a waste of time. Some people will continue to write novels and some people will be proved incapable of writing anything which has any of the qualities of a novel. Just as some people will never be able to hold my interest by playing the kind of music epitomized by the Rolling Stones.

SLASH. When you said earlier you were still interested in the Clash, is it because you want to see how far they will go?

GEOFF. Yes ... actually, I'm more interested in seeing how far Joe Strummer will be pulled down by his fellow musicians before extricating himself.

SLASH. How long he can justify the early claims?...

GEOFF. Yes, it's very sick game watching that go on. It's depressing.

SLASH. And it's a lesson to us all.

GEOFF. It is, definitely. But I feel Strummer must be realizing it, more and more. Subway Sect were really important when they sang their songs, in 1976 and 77, and they said "we hate and oppose all rock and roll," and that was a great kind of slogan-like way of putting it, and certainly PIL have taken on that position again, saying "we hate rock and roll." Perhaps it is worthwhile to say that, look we're not really interested in rock and roll, certainly not interested in ordinary rock and roll, that should definitely be destroyed, once and for all. But the thing that annoys me is how easily the industry is capable of marketing anything. It's like being in school, if you're a naughty boy in school then naturally all your peers will like you because it provides some light relief from the boredom. And it's the same way with the Clash being marketed by CBS. Basically, the industry, just as any large monopoly, has a great capacity for soaking up anything that exists and has a possibility of changing it and turning it to its own ends. So you've got Hollywood movies now about how boring Hollywood is. And you've got Sex Pistols records, with Malcolm McClaren telling us about how he swindled the public, I mean it's total hypocrisy. I don't even find it very amusing.

SLASH. So we shouldn't expect a Rough Trade movie?

GEOFF. No, maybe about the bands, but not about us. At least not until after we start lecturing at American colleges. Like Ginsberg.

SLASH. You only recently started producing records ...

GEOFF: Actually I did the first Stiff Little Fingers. That was the first. I started producing because I knew what I wanted it to sound like, and I didn't know who else could do it. But basically I'm trying to push the band toward their own limits, to get them to sound the way they agreed they should.

SLASH. In the case of the Fall ...

GEOFF. That's a complicated issue.

SLASH: How did you feel about that particular job?

GEOFF. I really enjoyed it, but I wish that, as a band, there was some sort of unity, some voice coming from them, other than Mark.

SLASH. The Fall does seem to be mostly Mark Smith, it always has.

GEOFF: That's true. And in certain situation that can work. Sometimes democracy produces utter mediocrity. Actually, it works fine in the Fall, but it does produce some difficulties.

SLASH. Do you see the Fall as eventually being one of the important bands?

GEOFF. They are already. I just find it funny the way everybody misinterprets them.

SLASH. Either you know them or it just doesn't make sense at all.

GEOFF: That's it, really. I mean, that understanding between people who become friends, not just people who are nice, because there are an infinite number of nice people, but people who have an idea of what they are doing. When you work in a situation like that, the things that exist in, let's say, a factory — the way in which a person relates to his fellow workers and to the whole structure of the organization, by which they're governed —that just doesn't work anymore. So you can be yourself when you are working, you don't have to play a role. And that kind of a situation clears a path for real progress. That exists at Rough Trade. It's an enlightening experience to be involved in. It is like that moment when you occupy your university, and you discover that you can do what you want. That experience of liberation is an epiphany. So I never wanted to be involved in a work experience where I couldn't just be myself. I want that to be evident in the music, and I believe it's there, in a large amount of the music — it's in the Fall, and Cabaret Voltaire, and Pere Ubu. And it's not like being some kind of academic observer, I mean, we don't say that what is going on is a movement of working class youth toward enjoying themselves. I just have optimism that people who have experienced similar things can do some decent work. It sounds a bit mystical, I know.

SLASH. On a social level, yes. When everyone else is stressing the differences, you are stressing the things in common among people. And the future goal.

GEOFF: Well, the goal now also. Because it is exhibited in everyday work. But we're not trying to monopolize upon this narrow situation. We're not going to build a wall around ourselves to protect our interests.

SLASH. How do people start working for Rough Trade?

GEOFF: They hang around ... for a long time.

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FILMS

THE BIG RED ONE

I happened to see this before it was released at one of those gaudy affairs known as press screenings, packed to the brim with "members" of the press, 2/3 of whom I'll wager just became aware of director Sam Fuller a week or two before. Yeah, but no need for me to get smug, right? Just because I used to watch all his old movies like "China Gate," "Forty Guns," "Run of the Arrow," etc., when they came on at 4 A.M. as far back as 1972 and would always fill out those dipshit request slips at the local revival houses to plead for a rare appearance of "Shock Corridor" or "The Naked Kiss." As "The Big Red One" started, I thought how fucking great it was that Fuller was again getting the attention he deserves AND for the first time is receiving that bullshit critical "aesthetic" recognition. I wanted to see "Big Red One" again before I set this down on paper but there's no time to do anything anymore. A doughboy dogface in WW%(Lee Marvin) is attacked by a rabid horse on a deserted battlefield just after he himself has attacked and killed a surrendering German soldier. The horse smashes his rifle to smithereens under the unseeing eyes of a gigantic wooden crucified Christ. So it goes. Next Lee Marvin is a sergeant in WWII and in effect the man who named the whole division the Big Red One with a piece of torn piping from the uniform of that dead First War Kraut. He's a war machine that seems to be unfeeling, uncaring and merciless but he knows how to fight and keep the boys under him who are literally kids from going off their rockers. This particular squad of four guys is led by the Sergeant through a series of episodes (albeit they're sometimes on a more epic scale) that are just as nightmarish as the first one with the horse. But a grim sense of humor rears its cocky little head at the most unexpectjd moments: a baby delivered inside a German tank, a battle inside an insane asylum that has one inmate so desperately wanting to be coksidered "normal" he picks up a machine gun, starts shooting everyone in sight and shouts, "See! See I'm sane!" Now all this originally went on for four hours, but that didn't go over too big with the studios so two hours were pared off. Whole sequences were removed that are every bit as good as those here. Supposedly if the film does well, Lorimar will be making the longer version available to revival and "art" houses. I hope so because, though THE BIG RED ONE is very good, I came out of the theater wanting to see even more.

—MR. OK

THE SHINING

In case you don't know the premise, the Overlook Hotel is a gigantic resort high in the Colorado mountains. During spring and summer everything's rosy. Come winter and there's snow everywhere, the roads are impassable, and if you're up at the inn, you're pretty much locked up for five months straight. This could suit Jack Nicholson's failure schoolteacher Jack Torrance just fine. Nothing better for writing that proposed novel. He accepts the job as winter caretaker and arrives with wife and psychic son in tow on closing day. The manager offhandedly relates the history of the place built on ancient Indian burial grounds: nothing really weird's ever happened except for old Grady, another caretaker who chopped up his wife and two little girls back in 1970. This story doesn't bother Jack. He's still rarin' to go. Shortly into the movie you realize none of the characters are of exceptional intelligence. This is OK, though, because the more you watch their antics of emotional impotency and degeneration, the more you see the lives of other average, not-too-talented, frustrated-to-the-breaking-point people in your own life. Jack needs to concentrate to write his book and he can't do it when nice 'n sweet Shelley Duval (wife) wants to get conversational. She's surprised and hurt when he first turns on her, especially since he's touched nary a drop of alcohol in months. Meanwhile sonny boy's been catching glimpses of twin little girls walking in certain hallways. Even though *he* doesn't know the murder story, you can tell that he knows things aren't right and those twins are of the no-longer-of-this-earth variety. What starts in both Jack and Shelley as a below-the-surface uneasiness explodes into a nasty something else. Jack has daydreams, then a severe premonition nightmare of killing wife and son. He's so terrified of this dream not even frantically caring Shelley can calm him. Simultaneously, the son appears on the stairway in shock with bruises on his neck. Automatically she thinks it's hot-tempered Jack's doing.

Paranoia feeds on paranoia until Jack starts to wig out. He imagines the deserted bar to have real liquor on the empty shelves and tipples a bit with the ghostly bartender. A passing waiter spills a drink on Jack's jacket and has him come to the men's room for a quick clean-up job. Down in the plush red-walled bathroom (that has more than a passing resemblance to Hell . . . I expected a devil with pitchfork to pop out of a trapdoor at any minute), the waiter is recognized by Jack as Grady, the long dead murderer. Grady at first denies this in his gentlemanly butler way, but soon is instructing Jack on the fine art of wifely/paternal discipline, advising that extreme measures must be taken to reprimand those plotting against him. This is the scariest thing in the movie. Not just from a superficial ghost story point of view but the idea that most mass murderers were once normal everyday people with normal everyday fears and insecurities. The fatal step comes when the rational mind goes on the blink and unbridled emotion takes over. Paranoiac delusions aren't recognized by you; instead you pursue them with a vengeance to their logical conclusion, addicted to the whole idea of imagined transgressions that must be paid back, at least in kind, if not gruesome murder.

Enough of the psychology lesson. Jack becomes what he fears most. When this happens the battle between husband and wife is in deadly earnest. An hysterical woman wields a baseball bat against an out-of-control axeman quoting nursery rhymes and telling bad jokes. The evil in the hotel pulls unconscious self-destruction out of them like pus, accelerating what, under "normal" circumstances, would've taken another twenty or thirty years. When wifey starts seeing the phantoms, too, and the tidal waves of blood cascading out of elevator shafts, it's timeless. And it's irrelevant if it's real or all in their minds. As far as they're concerned, it's really happening. This is Stanley Kubrick's best movie since *Lolita*, and far better than the slick comic book allegory of *Clockwork Orange*. One of the most underrated movies in the last five years.

—CHRIS D.

THE TIN DRUM
(with scanty, slanty reference to Our Hitler)

This could be called a "simply brilliant" movie, good blurg but inaccurate in the first place, the only actual brilliances evident in the movie house were the streaming watts of the projection bulb and the small fire that I conjured to cop a half-way smoke; in the second place, the damned movie is anything but simple.

I hadn't read the Gunther Grass novel from which the movie was adapted, but I know at least this much about it: the novel is told by an inmate in an insane asylum, and that could explain *a lot*. It's not easy absorbing the complexities of this cracked smorgasbord — I've seen the movie twice and have still only half completed the digestive cycle . . . so read on, read on, if you wish to savor this half-chewed cud: otherwise I suggest you see it for yourself and write *me* about it.

Now, movies dealing with "classic fascism" (as opposed to our everyday supermarket variety) have been standard European fare over the last thirty years. The cinematic catharsis reached its peak in Italian "Neo-Realist" flicks of a few years back. The Italians tried to show Fascism's crummy effects on social and personal life by depicting life "just as it was," in all its banal brutality: characters marched off to work with Il Duce ringing in their ears, and returned home to fill their wives with warrior sperm. Il Duchebag did make the trains run on time, after all; even the trains of thought. Fascism makes for well-trained people.

Now, with a new flurry of exploratory probes into this most regrettable past, Germany has come up (not surprisingly) with two big enigmas—Schloendorff's "The Tin Drum" and Syberberg's monumental "Our Hitler: A Film From Germany." Whereas Syberberg went to grandeloquent, bombastic means to perform metaphysical autopsy on The German Dream — using puppets, metaphoric sets and props, rear-screen projection and considerable poetic ingenuity — Grass/Schloendorff has implied it all by twisting the "normal" characters and situations into grotesque shadows of history's physique, and then pointing a snot-tipped finger at a sun that would dare cast such tragic, freakish forms on the German soil. It is a "Neo-Realist" movie of an irrational and lunatic reality.

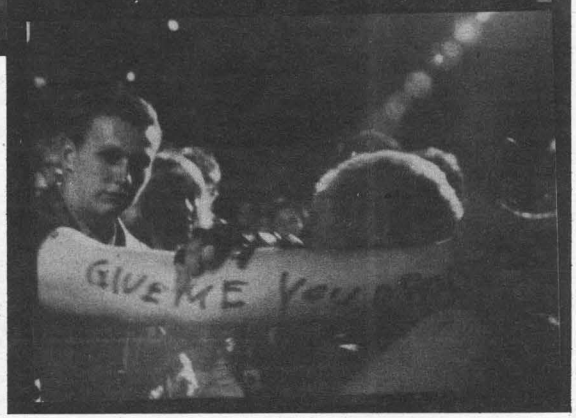
"Cont. on pg. 74"

THE DECLINE
(OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION)

Lotta typical Slash type nepotism on the line in this one because Slash Records is affiliated in a few ways with this project, most notable being release of the spectacular all star live soundtrack (also done in luxurious full color) — I'm just tellin' ya there's a whole lotta pressure on me to DELIVER A POSITIVE REVIEW OF THIS FILM, hopefully even a "rave." Pressure is double on account of I already wrote the press release for it (big bucks) so I'm kinda bought out from the gitgo if y'know what I mean.

Don't get me wrong tho, I fucking *like* the movie, easily the best celluloid big-beater since *The Girl Can't Help It* featuring Li'l Richard as the sawed-off King Kong to Jayne Mansfield's overmammed Fay Wray, 's even *Gimme Shelter* without the cheezy gratuitous knifegut ending (true). 'S got Darby with a real live tarantula crawling up his arm and the entire X entourage except for Billy and Don getting homemade tattoos that could almost pass for "the real thing" (symmetry is excellent). "Unheard Music" is playing over them getting it. Catholic Discipline with Claude singing so clear on "Babylon Must Fall" and "Barbee Doll Lust" or is it love that a lyric sheet is not even necessary.

Back up on the silver screen meanwhile you get to hear a great Derf Scratch repulso about uses to be made of a female's girlholes and SEE (also hear) IN PERFORDANCE: our own Black Flag (!), our own Germs before they broke up (!), Cath'lic Disc. while they existed (!), X (!), Circle Jerks (!), Alice BAG Band (!), Fear (!). All our own plus: actual footage of people putzing around the offices of the mag you now hold in yer hand(s)! Fans (so-called) are in it too, both in the act of kneeing, handing, footing & elbowing each other to the floor of the late lamented Fleetwood and in CANDID INTERVIEW SEGMENTS such as: Michael X-Head saying he don't like girls! Frank! (She's in it too.) Passionate! Genu-wine & f'r real!



You think you're gonna get such shit from that ersatz baloney *Music Wars* or whatever they're callin that megabuck ripoff? Y'ain't even tho X is in it and also Wall of Voodoo so maybe y'oughta check it out after all but only after you've seen this cinematic whatsis presently under review which will probably even play the cheaper theaters altho y'never know (50 cents less f'r sure). This is the real unvarnished true authentic hardcore true & honest rendering of THE SCENE WE ALL KNOW & LOVE so buy buy buy it many times over and send your mother too, tell her you're in it even if you ain't — you won't know for sure tho until you've seen (I — an older person — thought I was in *Monterey Pop* — wasn't but at least I thought). "ALTERNATIVE CAPITALISM" IN ACTION (this film is damn fucking good).

I am smoking a Garcia y Vega English Corona (all us hypesters smoke the big one) and am thinking the "majors" of the movie industry really suck, what're you gonna get from em including the time-o-day? This bold gallant "indie" meanwhile delights the eyeballs and eardrums and gives you hope for this sordid planet's so-called future as a place where fun can still be had that will neither poison ya or cost more than you can con outa your mom &/or dad. Life is worth living and even if you're feelin glum & grim right now this pic is at least (lemme think about it for a sec) . . . the *They Shoot Horses* of THE FIRST REAL *DEPRESSION* THIS NATION-O-SHIT HAS KNOWN. It's an incredibly swell movie and my name rhymes with seltzer (and I got a radio show that's on real late).

—R. MELTZER

"Cont. on pg. 74"

The Tin Drum concerns three generations of a family in Danzig, through the rise and fall of The Third Riech and through the eyes of Oskar, great big BLUE eyes that never shed an actual tear.

Starting in an off-color kinetiscope fashion, we find Oskar's grandmother in the potato fields, cooking. A fugitive from the law begs her for refuge and she obliges him by lifting up her four skirts as shelter. After the cops leave, he crawls back out buttoning his trousers. From this tender escapade Oskar's mother Agnes is conceived. She, in turn, is loved by two men; Jan Bronski, a native Pole of gentle demeanor, and Matzerath, a dumwitted German with a knack for "turning emotions into soup." She marries the latter, and they conceive a child. This child is the narrator, Oskar.

We first meet Oskar while he's still a slimey bald cynic in the womb, watch the birth process from the inside out. The first light Oskar sees is the glow of a 40-watt bulb, and "only the prospect of the drum prevented [him] from more forcefully expressing his desire to return to the womb." Considering that Oskar already looks forty, this wish sounds . . . well, juvenile, and even slightly decadent, as if he just couldn't be *bothered* with birth, much less growing up.

On his third birthday, Oskar is given his tin drum, and on that very day decides to remain eternally stunted — he throws himself headfirst down a staircase and never grows another inch. A side-effect of this wilfull retardation is that little Oskar now possesses a voice so piercing that it can shatter glass, a power he uses with every frustration — especially if one of the Grown-Ups attempt to take his tin drum, the only thing that means anything to him in the whole world. (He uses the voice six times in the movie: first, on a clock; second, on his teacher's glasses; third, on jars holding fetuses and frogs; fourth, on church windows; fifth, to entertain German troops; sixth, to inscribe a heart on a wineglass for the dwarf he loves.) Oskar and the tin drum must never ever be parted, and little Oskar will never grow another inch. You figger it out.

Grass is not setting up Oskar as an innocent opposed to the "German decadence" embodied in "grown-ups" — if a dichotomy exists between Oskar - Not Oskar, it's not a moral one. Oskar is evil and vicious, egocentric to the point of the sublime, totally lacking any sense of morals or ethics, greedy and perverse, a pathetic and supremely troubled little boy for whom we can find no sympathy. Oskar is a freak among freaks, an "innocent monster" in whom the crimes of a people find their last reverberation. Most certainly he is shocked by what he sees about him, but only when it impinges on his ego gratification — Jan Bronski's crude seductions of his mother, a Nazi rally, his father's sweaty humping of the governess, all are disrupted by Oskar, not out of any sense of moral purpose, but simply because they don't suit his welf-image.

Oskar is tormented by the neighborhood children, who make him swallow a swill concocted of mud, piss and boiled toads. Escaping to a circus he meets another self-inflicted dwarf who warns him that *"they* are coming. They will take over the meadows and organize torch lit parades. They will build rostrums and fill them, and down from the rostrums they will preach our destruction. Always take care to be sitting on the rostrum and never be standing out in front of it" — the next time he meets this dwarf, the elder is dressed in a full Nazi uniform and signing autographs for reporters.

Oskar's mama kills herself by consuming pounds and pounds of fish (after being convinced by Jan Bronski's erotic "charms" to eat eels that were pulled, live and squirming, from a dead horse's head). Oskar leads "gentle" Jan to his death in the Danzig Post Office, the official starting point of World War Two. Oskar conceives a child by half-raping his young governess, and then tries to abort it with scissors. Oskar sets up his own father's demise by crucifying his palm with an SS pin right when the Russians burst through — his father manages to pull it out unseen with his teeth, but then has a hard time swallowing it. Oskar's father is blown into bits while gagging in the corner.

At the funeral of the "father," Oskar and his "son" Kirt (to whom Oskar has given a tin drum) unwind the final allegory — Oskar is carried off into the new German night, to recuperate his bandaged head: Grandmama, left all alone once more, feels everything is as it was and ever will be: just like a potato.

And that's Oskar's story — stuffed with meaning and sealed at both ends. All the symbols, metaphors and allegories melt down into a heavy sludge, leaving you satiated but slightly nauseous, wondering: "Jesus, what the hell was *in* that thing." Grass didn't orchestrate a fine dialectic parabal about the "cause and effects" of German Fascism, he ripped the throat out of fascism and shoved it down ours — a maneuver totally in tune with these times. We, after all, are some pretty sick bastards.

The film is a visual masterpiece, no doubt about that. Totally enveloping — rich, sensual and strange. The atmosphere is a cross between erotic nightmare and childhood nostalgia pains, and it's sustained in every shot and visual sweep. Part of the power comes from the miracle casting of David Bennet (who actually stopped growing for a while) as Oskar — his grey-blue eyes are too large in a too large head, as if extra size is needed to register the conceits and perversity around them but still remain outwardly impassive, cold, inpenetrable. It's a remarkable performance in a remarkable film.

(Aw, this review is lame, especially that last paragraph . . . I kind of like Marion K's lame review better.)

—WILL AMATO

photo: Anna

"Dungeon"--New Orleans rehearsal spot

TRAVEL SECTION

"I'm Going Down to Louisiana to Buy Me a Mojo Hand"

—Lightning Hopkins

I'll bet most people think that a Moyo Hand is just more black jive talk about fucking and cocksmanship after a long hard day in the fields. Well . . . . . no way. A Mojo Hand is the actual hand of a dead murderer which has been cut off within two days of his death. In Louisiana voodoo circles it is used as a love potion by pointing the forefinger of the hand at the future mate. This supposedly drives him or her into a frenzied love that cannot die unless counteracted by another spell to get rid of the mate. You're supposed to be able to get one in any of the voodoo supply shops throughout the state, but you probably have to ask since it's most likely kept under the counter.

That's the sort of superstition that Louisiana can breed and so it's not hard to imagine the kind of music that has born out of its swamps and river towns. Its musical track record is longer than that of New York and Los Angeles put together, with at least four different kinds of music invented there. (Jazz, Zudeco, Cajun, and some forms of R&B). New Orleans is among the greatest ports in the world, so subsequently, it most surely attracted every imaginable kind of wandering minstrel possible. Even today as you stroll through the quarter on Saturday afternoon, there'll be some old black cat with his one-man band machine beating on a tin can and playing kazoo versions of R&B hits. There's tap dancing in the street and an occasional West Indian pounding on the bongoes and singing Rastafarian spirituals. (And he did it far better than Ras Michael ever did.) Music literally breeds in the streets and jazz bands play for tourists sometimes right up until dawn. Fats Domino, the Dixie Cups, the Clarence "Frogman" Henry usually still around playing one bar or another just like they did 20 years ago. Frogman Henry is especially still exciting, because his set is spiced with lots of R&B and he's one of the very few singers with a band of young black musicians that know how to play R&N like older blacks did. The Dixie Cups are much more soulful now, with some numbers turning into straight gospel rave-ups. Their "live" version of Iko Iko turns into C minor Madi Gras extravaganza that could last all night, if they wished . . .

There's this place called Jimmy's, which is somewhere in the serene old residentail section of N.O. across the street from a bus terminal. Here is where the current bunch of instigators of new music can be found. The Rock-A-Byes who are the most impressive, are a rockabilly hit machine with a hell of a good singer named Bobby Brennan. His ovice is nothing short of perfect for the style and his looks and general stage presence are in a league with the Blasters. (Who may be the finest rockabilly combination since Elvis, Scotty and Bill.) The Rock-A-Bye's beat is perfectly simple and befitting, while the bass carries over well, but the problem is simply a lack of direction, lack of originals, and a lead guittarist who doesn't understand the style. Rock-A-Billy is not more rock & roll, it's fusion of blues played through pure country mentality. The Blasters understand this. Bobby Brennan does too, but for most people, it's just a 50's revival scene and that's worthless both to the music and us. All Rockabilly attempts should be well saturated with blues adaptions and country instrumentation. Without this, nobody is ever going to understand why this particular music is unique and different from roll & roll entirely. Anyway, you probably will live to see the Blasters master the style and become America's boys next store, but if Bobby ever gets a band that knows the elements of the music, he may become a bad boy not unlike Johnny Burnette, and it's cool to know that both kinds of rockabilly still exist. American music should not only stay alive, but should conitnue with new blood. No music ever reaches its end, it simply drifts in and out of style . . . .

—BLACKJACK JEFFREY

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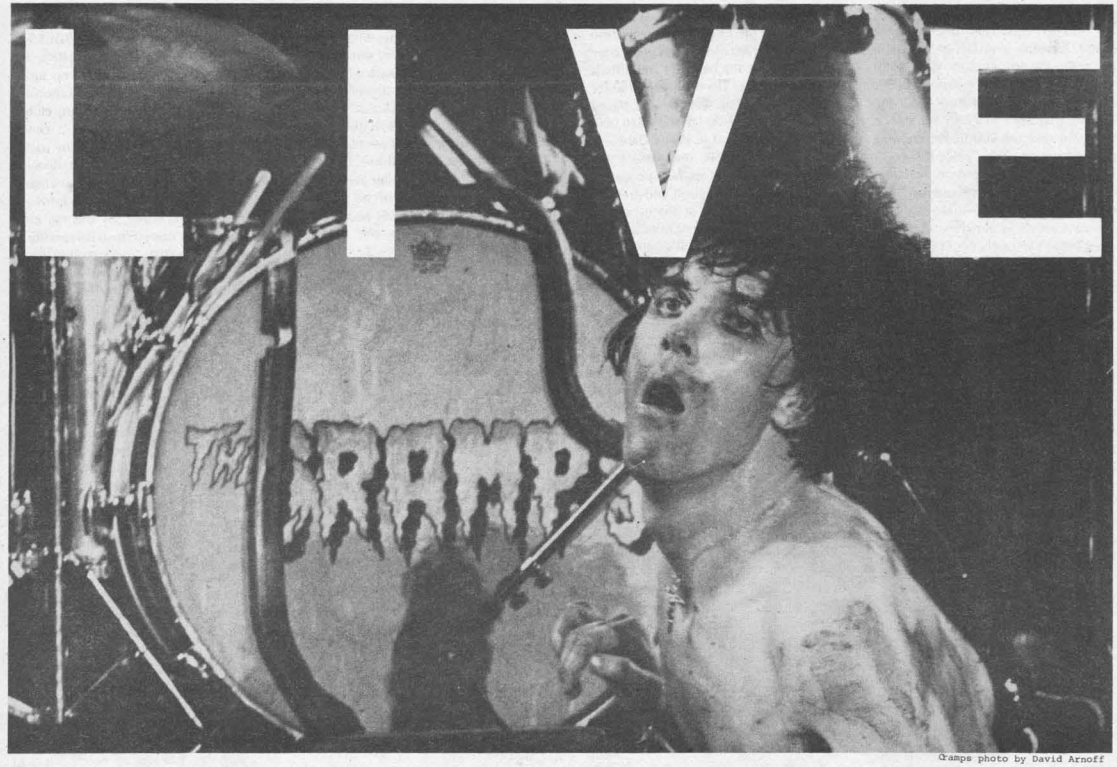


Cramps photo by David Arnoff

"URGGH, A MUSIC WAR" WEEKEND

So this will be filmed and it can be the TAMI show whereas the real film about LA music, *Decline and Fall of Western Civilization,* will be the *Gimme Shelter,* or hopefully just be an entity unto itself, I really couldn't care less who gets exploited and manipulated on what end of the camera lens. Let's document a scene before it destroys itself, I guess it's just another bit of knowing fatalism. . I mean does anybody really expect a band called the Dead Kennedys to be around even five years from now? But then again there are bands called Fleetwood Mac and the Rolling Stones and even Dick Dale is out of retirement, so who can tell?

What one can tell is that there was something slightly wrong with this staged event. Of course, it was the barricade separating audience from stage and providing a shelter for those cameramen with their fancy equipment and also keeping those nasty punk rockers from jumping on stage and messing with the mechanics of the evening. Thus, less of those lovely bouncer smashing punk head encounters that have been such a highlight at past Civic shows.

But also the crowd was strangely subdued. Maybe it was realizing that they could never conquer THIS stage and make it their own that made the spirit of the place seem somewhat dampened. The bands played well and in some cases (X and Pere Ubu) did truly great performances. Some bands played well but the material just wasn't there (Chelsea, glitter goes punk and back to glitter, and the Members, bouncy and routine). Some bands experienced death throes — a very disturbing self destructive Cramps set filled with tension that wasn't being generated through the music). And the new girl guitarist, as good as she may be, is simply no Bryan Gregory. And you might have been amused by drummer Nick smashing his drums around, but backstage it was real, the guy was not acting for posterity. The band, basically, was miserable over the situation it was put in, and its wildly uneven, lethargic set suitably depressed me. And one band, maintaining a cool distance from everything, Magazine, came out for the better, though of course it depends on where you stood. In the middle of the crowd, Magazine, for all their aloofness and pretensions, were exciting and mesmerizing, while on the sides of the crowd people nodded out from boredom.

Look, this thing is basically a farcial set up. X did as well in the big hall as they do in the small club, but if the film's gonna show the world what a band is about, then why put them in a place that is not their natural habitat while fucking their sound mix in the process? Who is this document being made for anyway? Middle America, get your popcorn, relax in your seat and maintain a

Jello/photo: Gary Pearlson

Devoto:photo: Gary Pearlson

David Thomas/photo: Gary Pearlson

safe distance from these exotic creatures, these Exenes and Jello Biafras, these Howard Devotos and David Thomas's, with their strange clothes, and weird singing styles, and odd mannerisms, yes let's look at the musical freak show and when it's over we'll pile into our station wagon and take the kids home, knowing those odd people are only out there on a stage, in a film, but not in *real life.* And we'll roll on the swansdown mattress and snore securely making a somnambulent sound in our throats: urgggh. A music war? I sincerely doubt it.

—Z.

MINK DE VILLE at the Roxy

Spanish Harlem soul was purely the creation of Lieber & Stoller, but to the kids growing up in the Lower East Side around '61 or '62, it must have meant a great deal. The music stressed images of N.Y. while always maintaining that Latin feel, it was at all times 100 proof pure soul music, the kind that makes chicks fall apart at High School dances, its song lyrics or titles carved in some tough guy's tattoo. Willy DeVille was one of these guys. His girlfriends' name is tattooed on his arm and knows every word to every Drifters and Ben E. King hit. He has nothing to do with New Wave.

When the curtain went up at the Roxy, he wasn't there. The band had to prepare for him, and played "Harlem Nocturne" for a few minutes. Then came Willy, strolling across the stage, as cool as the toughest cholo on Whittier Blvd., his suit and pompadour set pin perfect as if it were graduation night and he was the baddest dude in the school. He spun by some John Lee Hooker-styled tunes and then gave 'em what they were waiting for . a ballad.

Willie's ballads are equally as good as the ones that influenced him. "Just to Walk that Little Girl Home" is every bit as good as "Any Day Now" by Chuck Jackson, and "Guardian Angel" is equally as good as "Stand By Me" by Ben E. King. Here's somebody who's not only kept the music alive, but the style too. I don't care who you show me, there ain't nobody in rock & roll who can carry himself with the flawless cool of Willy DeVille.

I loved his first band, but this new one sounds much closer to what Willie has been aiming for. Now he can successfully get a sound as full as "I Count the Tears" and pull it off onstage, a feat the Drifters could never accomplish. On his ballads, he was down on his knees, begging with a passion that would have made James Brown smile. He closed the show with "Bad Boy" an old Jive Bombers hit that tore everybody's heart right out of their chest. This stuff kills me, man, because I always wanted to be like one of those cool dudes in school too. (What do you want to be, Jeffrey, black or Puerto Rican? — Ed.) Anyway one thing is for sure and that's that Willie is one of those dudes . . . . . .

—CLUMSY HILLBILLY RANKING J.

DOORS MEMORIAL PARTY
WHISKY A GO GO

SCENE 1-1967: Let's get this straight. I loved the Doors. I was a teen back East, and when I saw them in NYC at Ondine before "Light My Fire" fame, I convinced my Dad (chairman of the PTA prom committee) to hire the band for my sister's graduation dance. The price was $750 for 45 minutes, and the papers were signed and sealed. Six months later, the $10,000-a-night Doors arrived in sleepy Danbury, Connecticut to fulfill that contractual obligation. Thousands of fans poured in from all over New England and tried to crash down the doors of the gym. The opening act was the school principal presenting "Perfect Attendance" and "Best in Calculus" awards amid sounds of cracking hinges and the ominous rumblings of a hysterical mob outside. During the valedictory speech, Jim Morrison and I sneaked around the back halls of the school and stole some masks and a choir robe for him to wear over his leathers. We did some speed in a lavatory, and when Jim staggered out moaning, "Oh, my head . . .", my mother appeared from nowhere and offered him a couple of aspirin. (Oh REALLY now, Mom!)

The show started with a bang as Jim swung out onto the stage on a rope, slithering up and down it in those black leather pants like one of those snakes he liked to sing about. My mother, in shock, beckoned to me and whispered, "He isn't wearing any underwear, is he dear?"

Jim and I must have spent too long in the bathroom, or else the whole scenario must have inflamed his deep hatred of his own middle-class upbringing, because 2 hours later when they'd done every Doors song they had and several R&B covers, Jim finally lunged for the homecoming queen, grabbed her crown, put it on his own snarled mane, and lay writhing on the floor in front of the hysterical coed, sucking on the microphone with a vengeance. Just picture it . . . the looks on the faces of the faculty, my parents and my dreaded sister made Jim Morrison my hero for eternity.

SCENE 2: 1980-The Whisky. Tonite featured a private, Doors Memorial party. Everyone knew this was really just a publicity party for the tactless book recently published about Jim Morrison, but it promised Doors films and video plus an open bar and surprise musical guests. Sounds good? Well, here comes the sour mash, sorry, Warner Books or whoever paid for the bash.

There were 2 Advent screens on the stage so we could all get a good look at the film and tapes, which was cool. The free drinks, definitely cool. But the musical portion of the evening drove so many people to the bar that they finally stopped serving doubles! The plan was to have musicians and Doors members play the old songs with different guys filling in for Jim Morrison on vocals. Manzarek, Krieger and Densmore all showed up looking healthy and wealthy, and playing in the discriminating style that once so perfectly harmonized with Morrison's mythic stage antics. I can't remember who sang which songs, but at various moments there were Paul Warren (of Explorer) doing some heavy metal riffs, 2 drummers (why not let John Densmore play alone?) and members of the Knack onstage dueling egos in that hideous rock star way. The one saviour in the midst of this mess was Top Jimmy, who, ironically, had almost been forced out of the show by all those chartmakers with the fretboards-up-the-ass who thought his behavior was "too unprofessional" at rehearsal time. This caused a bitter feud (and members of X who were planning to back Jimmy up to withdraw); but he did it his way, and literally blew everyone off the stage. The power of his voice, the strength and guts he used to put all those jokers in their place was like a lightning bolt sent down by Lord Jim from heaven to shake up the heathens worshipping false idols. It was just like when Jim Morrison used to run out on stage and scream WAKE UP! By the time Top Jimmy had whipped through the first two lines of "Roadhouse Blues," people who had been sloshing from bar to bar in boredom literally jumped off their stools. This wasn't no jiveass, whiny kid swinging his skinny butt and mouthing all those voluptuous Morrisonian words hoping the "little girls will understand." Top Jimmy was the REAL THING, with the voice and the soul to sing those songs in a way no one else had the knack for! (sorry) It was instantaneous, it was inspirational, it was . . . A STAR IS BORN! I'm not kidding! The joint was jumping. Backstage, several of those wimpsters who didn't want Jimmy to sing came and shook his hand, and a few people even slipped him their business cards . . . and somewhere, up there, Jim Morrison was flapping those black leather wings, because somebody finally got it right.

—JB

IT'S ALL A BIG BLUR . . .

I didn't actually go out that much durint the summer, maybe once every week or two. But then I only went out to things I really wanted to see. Regret missing CRIME and the V.I.P.s and a few other gigs with bands like the ADOLESCENTS, GEARS and CIRCLE JERKS. I saw X quite a bit and they were no surprise: either good, great, or inspirational depending on the particular night, club atmosphere, sound situation, etc., ... One of the best bands to surface in the past six months is THE GUN CLUB under the singing, guiding, screaming tutelage of fellow SI ASH correspondent Jeffrey Lea. Yet another writer for this rag insists Jeffrey's the nearest visual personality to Oscar Wilde that Anglo culture has today. Rob and Terry, formerly of THE BAGS recently joined as rhythm section and have knit a very solid base to rip things up. Further descriptive aid on understanding THE GUN CLUB's music: imagine cajun and weird country blues about hellhounds on your trail as performed by the early STOOGES and you'll have a fairly accurate picture. I caught TOP JIMMY numerous times, couple of shows at the Hong Kong, one at the Starwood, one at the Whisky, one at the Candeleja. Sometimes if Jimmy has trouble with stoic, staring audiences he might come after you with a mike stand. So you better move when fellow rhythm pig Carlos Guitarlos starts to groove. On a good night (which are often) when Jimmy establishes rapport with the occasionally too-punked-out crowd, the results are amazing. Jimmy sings a rocking rowdy brand of R&B with a lusty voice that roars like a flooded dam about to bust. So far he does pretty much covers but they're all nasty and lowdown. ".44" and "Do the Do" by HOWLING WOLF are the best examples. Known to have superstar line-ups at nearly every gig made up of such luminaries as X, the BLASTERS, Lee and Derf of FEAR, and Steve Berlin. Mentioning FEAR, I was lucky enough to catch what was

photo: Frank Gargani

probalby the best show *I've* ever seen them do at the Whisky following their tour of Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. They're phenomenally tight and as fast on the gross joke dialogue as ever, but I wish they'd come up with some new stuff. SUBURBAN LAWNS supported them and I had little feeling about them either good or bad till Su Tissue took the spotlight for her too few numbers. Su is a most original, frighteningly hypnotic performer. It suddenly hits you like a hammer because her nervous, vulnerably neurotic stage mannerisms are no joke and no put-on. The poor thing is scared out of her wits but she manages to pull burning showstopper movements out of the fire that are hard to catch unless you're watching every step.

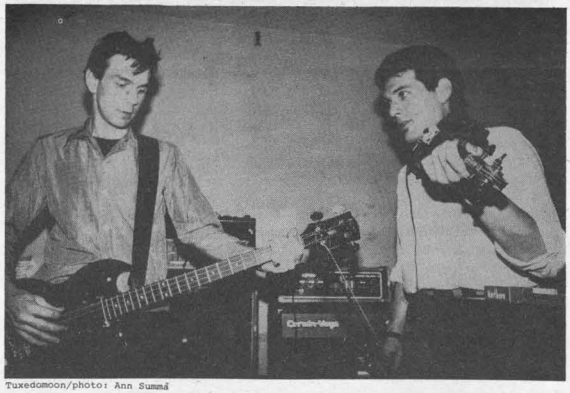
Like TOP JIMMY, the BLASTERS are another band doing songs hard to put into a punk grab bag. They hate being called rockabilly and with good reason. That's only one of their influences. Phil Alvin on amplified acoustic guitar and harmonica sings with a cajun inflection in his voice that has nothing to do with the all-too-familiar hiccoughing crap Levi used to pull. Their original material ranges from countrified blues, hillbilly rock and straight country all arranged and played at breakneck pace that refuses category. The GO-GOs returned in July and I saw the last set of the last welcome home night at the Starwood. They suck you into a dizzying dervish whirlpool. Also saw them the third night of the URGH filming which was done at the considerably smaller (compared to the Santa Monica Civic) Whisky. Also present were the ALLEYCATS. Negligible aspects of the night were supplied by the mascaraed OINGO BOINGO and the mentally deficient SURF PUNKS. Now to contradict a SLASH colleague who put down his thoughts about the Music War show: the CRAMPS, though terrifically slowed-down, were pushing us all to the edge of the abyss. The extremes they went to in their show, particularly Lux eating the snake (real or fake?) and Nick smashing not only his drum set but one of Don's (X) were not done as show gimmicks. One of the most exciting, desperate and honest exhibitions I've seen the CRAMPS do.

—MR. OK

DARBY CRASH, ALLEYCATS
at the Starwood

It's the late sixties and Howlin Wolf and Muddy Waters're making their comeback in front of a buncha hopped up college whiteys who're digging the blues along with their brews, "grooving" on a little prehistoric culture before the worms 've set in. Always great to see there's still something left in those fabled geniuses of yore (really brings a tear to yer eye). Time marches on and the yore's been reduced a tad, it's Aug. '80 and insteada Wolf & Muddy you got Darby in his first post-Germs appearance and insteada college whiteys you got a whole new summer's worth of brand new punkerboys on parade, 75 percent of whom're Darby lookalikes with or without even knowing it (and with or without ever having seen him with the Germs).

Big role model the Darb is but maybe that was then, before the living legend got his real great fucking great Mohawk — how many of em're gonna start copying *that?* Real tall and straight but so narrow at the roots you get to see a whole lotta fresh shaven head, giving the impression his face is fatter'n used to be. Older maybe but not really that much porkier, certainly nowhere as porked out as Brando from the neck up in Apocalypse. Darby's definitely hepper than the 57-yr-old Marlon who never would've worn a Mohawk even in a movie (even for a million bucks). Pat's new hair is pretty hep too (the standard neat stockbroker look), Darby got him to play guitar this gig but who knows if he'll stay, other two guys were whoever they were. No Lorna or Don. Don's just a goddam hippie so needs him but Lorna's absence didn't feel right at all, without her they seemed less human (izzat the word?), anyway less Germsy, more just a halfway competent *band.*


Tuxedomoon/photo: Ann Summa

DNA/ photo: Ann Summa

B People/photo: Ann Summa

Competent and maybe you even might wanna call em serious, at least Darby with his *symmetrical* injun warpaint (can ya believe it!) and all those feathers and black English jumpsuit shit that gotta mean some sort of investment of time and/or money so you figure this time he's going for the gold and his lyrics were never more audible or if they were I wasn't there. Middle period Iggy just after he stopped being anarchic for its own sake and just before he paid a visit to the loony bin? Something like that. Second set he showed just how serious he was when he got real pissed at somebody for throwing a bottle and told him, "If you wanna kill somebody go do it three miles away." Darby fights back! Nice to see him finally resisting the urge to do his usual passive/supportive number just in the name of destructo egalitarianism, everybody was always overstepping the warrant he gave em anyway which is what inevitably led to the Germs ending up persona non grata with every clubowner in town. G-d bless him!

Apocalypse fever was in the air. After Darby/Marlon you got Alleycat Randy as Martin Sheen (right?) and Dianne as a southeast Asian lady (professional), pretty good night of whatever-the-fuck indeed!

—ROLAND MELTZER

B-PEOPLE, DNA, TUXEDO MOON
at Polish Hall

An image: "eyes like saucers." We came expecting a grab-bag of kinks, quirks and preternaturalities — billings like this carry little pickled oddities around in a suitcase, mute little throat clinchers that get brought out when the crowd gets cranky and needs a jolt. LA's B-People, NY's DNA, SF's Tuxedo Moon — what do these creative clusterings share if not abnormality in the face of the field, in-other-short-words: these guys are WEIRD. "Arty," "avant-garde," "bizarro-rococco," call it what you will Mr. Roget, the fact is that these guys are hewn from crooked beams. No use in second guessing them, the "kinks and quirks" they threw us were of the most typical sort: trouble getting in the door, a late start, a horrific sound system. Ah, one would expect laser-beam castration, or a snake out of a nut can at the very least, but ho no, the crafty bastards outarted the most ardent-artiste around.

Maybe the talented triumvirate didn't engineer the triad of troubles, maybe the fact that it was held in the Polish Hall had something to do with all the misery and frustration. This is no slur to the fine citizenry of Polish detraction, it's merely the embarrassing fluster that attends any deflowering of a virgin concert hall. Never having been ... intimate with a band of rogues such as we, the poor little hall was naturally reluctant to let us enter (consider also our sloshy enthusiasm to rip right in'er) and, her walls still hard and unyielding as concrete (which, in fact, they were) one could not find fault in the painful sputtering and garbled groans. So let's not point fingers of indignation: at functions like this, the true gentleman prefers discretion and sensi-

tivity.

Outside, the disgruntled lump seemed much larger, inside our slaphappy squad seemed to shrink between bar and hall and aren't spacial ambiguities interesting? Was the stage the size of a melba toast or how much wood could a wood chuck chuck? Plenty, if he got paid to write this garbage. The point is that people were scattered all around, except during Tuxedo Moon, which should tell you something about something I should tell you about later, in a scattered sort of way.

I don't know why, but only one fourth of one third of the bands really suffered horribly under the cruel law of acoustical irreverence, that's Pat Delaney of the B-People. So subtle and tasty are his aerodynamic accoutrements that the great stone beast swallowed half his licks with nary a belch. Once in a while, almost as a treat, a sliding synthesized staircase would loom out of the fog, beckoning us upwards to 23-skiddo street ... then, again blending into hyperactive obscurity. They may have been missing a "flourished clarity," but the B-People never miss a beat. If you like the Beat, if you're feeling beat, then don't miss the B-People because they can't be beat — one tough combo them have pizzazz, wow man and the cats were jumping crazy on the front and center and the central front where a zillion foot circle was cleared out by careening bodies right and left, smashing n' thrashing and grooving on that Big B sound. Either everyone was drunk as a punk or the B-People attack the central nervous system and the bloodstream at the same time.

Tipsiness wants to topple, and the labia majora was flappin' in the breeze — big invitation, big mistake. Things lead tuh things, y'know, and hell, I got witnesses who'll tell ya how drunk I was, really plastered, and ... OK, I'll admit it, I kinda uh, missed DNA. I feel shitty about it, believe me, but not for you, I feel shitty about it because the two songs I did catch at the end were flabberghasting. Not the same group as on No New York (for which DNA are primarily known), no keyboards now, just guitar-bass-drum fashioning all sorts of textures and tensil strengths, the core of which was still TO UPSET: dissonance, cracked tempos, potholes and fallen branches on every path, fragments that seemed involuntarily amputated from larger poetic wholes. Their songs (at least what I saw) had a lively improv-extempore quality about them, pinned together on "cues" like demarcations on a crumpled blueprint. The singer-guitarist, on both instruments, was playing rather spazz-jaazically, pushin' the catguts ninety-night degrees against themselves for tonal effects: from see-saw depth charge, through outraged catterwaul to low-bridge-everybody-down (and thatsa fine blues throat de boy got). This drummer is really real fine person also, fabricating fluctuating flotillas with hairlip down-beats. Yeah I know that's an oil and water metaphor folks, this was an oil and water kind of music: oil and water and a certain hot spark. The crowd liked them, animatedly, alot and loudly ... DNA seemed a slight bit surprized. Well, they shouldn't have been, they were swell in *my* pool. The crowd we clapped and then clapped and clapped and then clapped, but DNA didn't come back out for a come-back-out-song at all. Boy, they should have come back out and done ten more songs and they should have done all ten JUST FOR ME. I may be a dumb asshole, but I'm not UN-DESERVING.

Urinals photo: Evan Rude

Tuxedo Moon took a rather sophisticated (long and laborious) amount of time setting up their equipments, and while they did that, the audience was busying itself with kinks, quirks and preternaturalities: many of these antics would probably delight and enchant you to hear; these witty little tidbits could make even the sternest of toads croak involuntarily: but I shant relate them, it wouldn't be proper.

One shouldn't have to stand for Tuxedo Moon. Or sit. Ideally, you should float about seven inches off the ground, bobbing up and down in the moody swirls. A large sheet of rice-paper hung from the ceiling, catching projections of gently fluctuating black and white patterns — the patterns seemed to be decals on water, only the borders and the use of sillouettes locked them on the plane.

I had high expectations for Tuxedo Moon and they were more than met. It was the most well *conceived* set I've seen since the Screamers' 122 Hours of Fear: and like the Screamers, it held you entranced from beginning to end. It was very much like a mood — an enveloping sensation of almost palpable character. Dark and romantic, stark, exotic and sensual. Above all, it impressed me with its intelligence and taste. ("Well la-de-dah" my ass.)

The music is lucid and elusive, evocative towards the just-out-of-reach. There are three musiciand plus a pulse generator, and a singer who mostly waited in the wings or projected his shadow on the rice paper screen. The melancholic bassist formed a relay-set with the rhythm generator, playing a repeating riff over and over, on top of which layers of melody would be woven by violin, sax, keyboards or voice. They are all excellent musicians, but more importantly, efficatious — there were no effusements to draw your attention away from the music and on to the player (who thinks of their brain while dreaming?) — the projections had this same dreamlike quality: a slowly burning cigarette, a strobelight anatomy, an anonymous newsreel. The different songs melding like scenes from a movie — a continuity of textures ... like ...

If they deem to play again, go see them. That's all I have to say. I hope you had fun too. Bye.

—WILL

THE URINALS . . . in Who's Who?

. . . dead, just then the notorious Sex Pistols bust upon the scene, turning heads sideways. Fronted by charismatic frontman Johnny Rotten, the Pistols brash band of high-energy rock n' roll was charged with youthful rebellion and harkened back to the early days of Elvis Presley and The Stones, and their brash style of brightly colored hair and safety pins was a semenal influence on a whole new generation of bored, economically depraved young people in both Britain and here, in the United States, who felt that such heavy-metal "dinosaurs" as Led Zeppelin and Billy Joel no longer spoke for them anymore.

Next to me at the concert were sitting two teens — Caroline Anomie, 23, and Horny Ed, 10 — whose bored look and brash styling bespoke of being "punk," so I asked them, I said ... I .... whaa? Huh? Oh, oh Jesus, I must have been dreaming! How horrible .... I thought I was Robert Hilburn reviewing The Pretenders for The Times! Man, I'm *never* going to take acid again ... what a bummer! What *did* I do last night? Oh yeah ... The Urinals at that strange little bar ... and that tiff with the local critic who was heckling that poor garage band ... and that huge cauliflower riding a lawnmower, no, wait, now I got it ...

The Urinals were fantastic, absolutely. Fun fun. They were. Better than The Blasters or Magazine or The Rolling Stones probably, definitely better than the poor garage band before them, yet gracious and humble in their monumental brilliance ... no small feat when you're better than Beethoven, Bartok and Harry Belaphonte combined. Hey, they were hot, but cool too. Really. Fun. Let's see...

Three-piecer with little equipment to speak of, or through, for that matter. Tough and chewey — no trips or tricks or schticks ... nuthin' up these guys' sleeve but skinned grins and midnight desklamps ... in other words, The Urinals speak loudly but carry a small club, or a bedroom, hey they would be swell at a funeral! Unlike most things the urinals don't remind you of lurking death. It's OK to breathe or smile or pet strange little dogs, real or imagined. It's OK not to too. I like that. I liked the way the bassist went off and took a wee-wee and only missed twelve beats, I like an attempt to lessen distance between watcher and weeer, pisser and pud. In fact, I liked The Urinals in this little club better than all sorts of big shots in bigshot clubs. I had way more fun and *so did they*.

Damn it all, we don't need anymore bigshots on this little globe. We need more underdogs, humble underdogs who pee on fire hydrants and not your face. Idolatry is a piss-poor substitute for an honest smile, and cost more to boot. The Urinals made me smile, honest. Just for that they're the best group of the century, or at least this morning ... which is the same thing from here. Coffee?

—WILLIAM

L.P.S

"RESURRECTION"
DOORS
Paris Records (French fan club release — bootleg)

In the desert near Doorsville, a man crawls across the scorching sands. His tongue hangs out, curling, blackened as he calls out. . . Jim! Ray! John! Robbie . . . eee . . . eee He crawls past a copy of "An American Prayer." The sun beats down mercilessly. His belly crushes "The Best of the Doors." His skin blisters. He touches a sizzling, melted copy of "Doors 13" and screams. The pages of *No One Here Gets Out Alive* swirl around his head and catch fire in the sweltering heat. Then, just up ahead he sees Jim Morrison's face glowering at him from a cluster of palm trees. The man pulls himself forward, praying that this is no mirage. He sees blood dripping — it's red letters spelling out "Resurrection." Could it be . . . he gets closer. It's a *record.* He leaps forward, puts it on the turntable, and drives into the pool at the Alta Cienega.

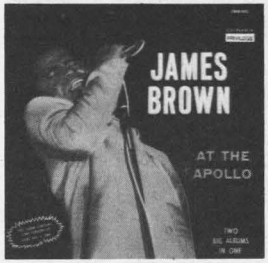
This is what we've all been waiting for. Since Jim Morrison took the "highway to the end of the night," nothing has better captured what it was like to be at a Doors show than this nasty bootleg. These tapes of concerts in England, Sweden, Miami and Jonathan Winters TV Show are full of Jim's poetic rantings, wild screaming, and dirty innuendos that must have struck terror in the hearts of Elektra's lawyers.

The band contributes some great chunks of 60's psychedelic jams — let's not forget acid rock! Densmore, Manzarek and especially Krieger all display virtuoso paisley in revving up the mad frontman. Highlights include a short version of "Mack the Knife" and the historical blunder in Miami where Jim called the audience a "bunch of fucking idiots" and invited them onstage to "love my ass," compounding the traumatic legal situations that were driving him balmy. Hey, he was already a man possessed. Just listen to the chilling laughter at the beginning of "Back Door Man," I mean it could be off the soundtrack of "The Exorcist." One complaint — there are 3 versions of "Light My Fire," the one Doors song I could go without hearing for quite a while — but the cover photos of Jim taunting the cops in New Haven are classic, and the sound quality (pretty good) makes this one of the best bootlegs of all time.

—V.

"LIVE AT THE APOLLO — VOL. 2"
JAMES BROWN
Polydor Import reissue (France)

"Building, are you ready? 'Cause we're sure going to tear you down!" wails "the hardest working man in show business" as he proceeds to melt down the walls of the Apollo with one of the greatest sizzlers in the history of live recorded music. This is a desert island record (you know, if you had to be stuck somewhere and could only bring 3 records. . .) I feel born again since while singing along to my scratchy old copy, I dropped to my



knees a la James and screamed, "Please, please, re-release!" then walked into a record store and saw the face of JB beaming out from the record, gleaming in his gold suit, his same old bad self. Praise the Lord and praise Polydor for reissuing this double whammy of masterpieces of R&B. Recorded in 1967, this set *defines* the word soul. Just listen to the vocal on "Prisoner of Love," and the arrangements of "Let Yourself Go" and "There Was A Time" . . . true "badness."

There are a few minor hitches, such as 30 second teasers of "I Got You," and "Out of Sight," but whatever his reasons, James makes up for it on Side 4 with a 15 minute version of "It's A Man's Man's Man's World" that is the definitive James Brown masterpiece. The man has cut many great songs, but this is IT. He croons the words to the studio version, then, against a background of slow, hypnotic rhythms, he makes you feel like you're drifting on a deep, dark sea as he goes around for hours of the clock, describing what will be going on between him and his woman during the "wee hours of the night." By the time he gets through teasing and taunting his way to six o'clock, the audience is hysterical, and so is James, whose shrill screams pierce the barriers of time, space and race and still give you chills right now in 1980.

You want to know why they call him the Godfather of Soul? This record says it all.

—JB

"KALEIDOSCOPE"
SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES
Polydor Records Import

Picture a spoiled little brat of a girl who wants to sing about crayons and coloring books all fucking day long. And crayons are what she uses for make-up. Here we have her in the flesh of Siouxsie Sue. The image is all a bit too affected to represent anything but the most superficial. Yet Siouxsie's make-up on the inner sleeve IS stunning, no matter what's going on inside. I feel odd about everything I've just said because I don't want to trash her or the rest of the Banshees (now numbering

only two besides herself). But the lyrics should've remained the unintelligible collection of shrieks and moans instead of becoming painfully decipherable with a lyric sheet. The words are pretty much nonsensical crap (that ain't equipped with the redeeming faculty of being funny) except for "Christine," the story of a schizo "banana split girl," "Tenant," and "Skin." For the insipient stupidity of "Lunar Camel" you might as well pull out a Fleetwood Mac or Boston album. The big surprise comes when the tonearm settles into groove. Because the music itself is a big step back towards listenability after "The Lord's Prayer." Not that this has the shrill, bitter intoxicating edge or straightforward rocking of "The Scream." Repititious melodies are broken up, scattered, then put back together again bouncing off each other like some wild animal caught in a hall of mirrors. Don't pay attention to your first impulse to dislike this; go ahead and listen to it a couple of times.

—MR. OK

DARKER SKRATCHER:
LAFMS (LAFMS 12)/MOONLIGHT TAPES (DANCE 1)

Darker Skratcher is a bunch of stuff that crept out of joes and jills connected with the LA Free Music Society. I don't exactly know what this organization does in this world — protection racket or artistic guild — but they represent a substantial chunk of LA's "avant-garde" ... I hate that term, sounds like dead french poets or something, "experimental" ... no, that sounds like they torture frogs, and by golly maybe they did just that on some of these tracks ... well, let's just say that they have a different approach to music than Chuck Berry might have, maybe a different approach towards living — but it's not my place to speculate about life here.

The best thing about Darker Skratcher (aside from the abstract notion of having Monitor, Human Hands, and BPeople on one album) is the prevalent spirit of fun and humour throughout it, totally at odds with the grim (rather shitty) cover cartoon, except it *is* a cartoon, and the tracks in the album seem to be composed and recorded in the same panel-by-panel fashion.

"Platform Swimfins" by the Rick Polts Band, "Cleanliness and Order" by Boyd Rice and D. Miller, "Riboflavin-Flavored, Non-Carbonated, Polyunsaturated Blood" by **45** Grave are really one panel gags of one form or another, from cheezy "continental" romance, to horror-movie consumer camp and psychotic parental lecture. "XXOO" by Jad Fair, my favorite cut by far, is sort of a love-sick greeting card written by a snail-like pre-teen recluse.

There's a few tracks of real gone noise-by-various-means-not-the-least-of-which-is-dumb-luck stuff, of which I've heard more and less interesting examples elsewhere: If you throw everything in the goddamn stew, it's bound to taste like something.

The real bummer of this album is the representative cuts from Monitor (yea!) Human Hands (yippee!) and the BPeople (yahoo!), none of which is very representative beyond a superficial, corner-of-the-eye grasp. (The production itself is

largely to blame, totally swallowing David Lively's already subtle vocal style, and mish-mashing the BPeople's already mish-mashy jazzoidals.) This will hold me off for now, boys, but not forever — if I can hear an album with Monitor, Human Hands, BPeople, Nervous Gender and Bent just once before I die, I will die a lively man.

There's some good things on Moonlight Tapes but it's not the kind of record I would play very often. I don't want to be a little behind-the-page sniper here, taking one-sentence potshots at these bands (real bands filled with living people) Dating Game Style: "Well Jim, I picked number three because his sax squeaks when wet," and I have neither the energy nor inclination to go over it in some analytically ponderous fashion. I can't analyze music anyway, I like some I don't like some, I'm indifferent about a lot — and that's about where I stand on this stuff: I like "Return of the Ice Age" by the Kameras, "Next in Line" by The Edge and "Rat Up a Drain Pipe" by The Members, I didn't like "Complex" by Sore Throat and "Shaftesbury Avenue" by The QT's and I'm indifferent about the rest. But that's only me. You might feel completely different about every-

thing. Who's to say?

(Actually, hearing an album with Monitor, Human Hands, BPeople, Nervous Gender and Bent won't make my death, or life when I get right down to it, any better at all. It wouldn't change a fucking thing. It sure would be a good record though.)

—WILL

"INSIDE/OUTSIDE"
CHINESE PUZZLE
Rebus Records

It could go either way with this much as the title indicates. A lot of semi-funk covered with the great shroud of the avent-garde is let loose. Some of it works and some of it doesn't. Offbeat chord patterns and time signatures might put you off, but the discordant guitars and solid-as-a-rock drumming bring you back.

Not much vocal, but alot of instrumental. It all depends on if you like this kind of music. I don't have any particular beef with these guys, I just find listening to this record frustrating. The songs are wrapped up in elliptical spirals that go nowhere, keep coming back to the same starting point and everything collapses in on itself. Maybe that's the point. If it is, they don't make it very clear.

—CHRIS D.

"ROCKIN' AT GROUND ZERO"
THE GEARS
Playgems Records

Except for my usual complaint about vinyl, under mixed and underlayered guitar, this is pretty close to being fantastic. No matter how enjoyable the Gears are live, you might never know they had this finished product in them. If it was the sixties this'd be at the top of the charts, fast hummable rock 'n roll with the pop feel of Paul Revere and the Raiders and Standells but without the smell of sell-out. Comparable in energy and attack to the Undertones first album, nearly every song is good, simple, self-contained and straightforward. Best are "Baby Runaround," "Wasting Time," "Rockin' at Ground Zero," and "The Last Chord" (about who'll play the last bars of guitar on Judgement Day).

—CHRIS D.

"CRAZY RHYTHM"
THE FEELIES
Stiff Records

The title is a bit misleading because there is nothing that all out crazy on this album. In fact everything is played in such an extremely well thought out manner that you wonder if this band has any spontaneity at all. It's so incredibly clean. Then I hear reports that this is no indication of the band's live power, that in person they generate an incredibly dense Velvet droning wall of sound. Well, whatever, this is probably the most unique American album that came out last year, will be duly recognized and probably resurrected in ten years as an American classic, by which time there will be no Feelies band at all. Maybe that's what they want anyway.

The sound of the band is strangely hollow, all surfaces, smooth, seamless with seemingly little center, but it's there. You see this is the true sound of suburbia — quiet complacency with the eruption always just ahead, yet strangely always in check. A vulnerable emotional thrust lays underneath those pretty strumming guitars, those bland backing vocals, and any minute you think all the self absorption will break through and all hell will break loose, but of course it never does and never will. That this album avoids that ignition says more about the band's remarkable sense of control, than a lack of power — by maintaining everything on such an even keel there is a sense of expectancy unfulfilled creating a thin as a wire tension that no other album in recent memory has even come close to.

Now don't get me wrong, I go for full throttle display as much as the next smash head, but there's also something to be said for those who avoid the obvious, take isolated specific moods and can draw such a variety of experience from them. All life is not a jack hammer. Neither is it a pillow, and the Feelies are as natural as tires spinning smoothly down the expressway. Subtle but relentless, this is one of the few albums of the last year that I haven't burned out on after the first two weeks of absorption time.

—Z.

THE VELVET UNDERGROUND —etc.
Australian Bootleg — available at
Vinyl Fetish

I'm fifteen and I'm stuck in this fucking school in the middle of Michigan and I've snuck this pretty girl into my room and it's snow for months outside and I can't turn on a light or the dorm supervisor might come in, so we light a candle and we listen to the third Velvet Underground album. I'm seventeen and I'm on acid and I've been trying to find the right song all day and I put on the first Velvet Underground album and I play "all Tomorrow's Parties" four times in a row. I'm eighteen and I hate the music on the radio and I just sit in my room, having nothing to do with the world and I listen to "Sister Ray" or "Loaded" but you see ever since I got the first Velvet Underground album I've listened to the band non stop for over ten years. And they're still my favorite band, because their world, despite the horrors in it, the wastedness, the paranoia, the times when it burned itself out of existence, their world still offered redemption, there was always the light out of that tunnel, and even if I had never shot junk or whipped my girlfriend or turned to Jesus in desperation, it was still an intimate and personal world, from the distorted amphetamine white heat days to the soft introspection of the third album. Ramones — Stooges — Dolls — Pistols — the Velvets were the first, and to my mind always the best.

O.K., so I've established myself as fan number one, I might as well say this is a fantastic bootleg collection of rarities. Side one is pre-Velvets Lou Reed recordings done with such studio outfits as the Beachnuts, the Roughnecks, and the Primitives. They are basically party songs with lots of people whooping and hollering in the background, but they all have that distinctive Lou Reed voice, the arch lyrics, that neurotic tinny guitar, maybe he wasn't a technical expert but the guy had a style, that's for damn sure. And it's still great dance music even if the dance is fifteen years old. Side one ends with the plexidisc from Warhol's "INDEX" book when Reed, Nico and gang were the house band at the Factory. The first album plays in the background, Waiting for the Man, while some people, including Nico idly talk about the book the record is going to be in. Not very exciting, but a glimpse into the everyday lives of underground legends.

Side two has four songs recorded around the same time as the Velvets' third album, one of the most personal statements any band has ever put on record. One is the Velvets' rave-up called Foggy Notion, one a dance tune called "Inside Your Heat," sounding remarkably similar to the early Reed stuff on side one. Then there's "I'm Sticking With You," famous among hardcore Velvet fans for being one of the few songs drummer Mo Tucker sang in her pretty, off key voice. The song starts off as a slight ditty, then suddenly shifts gears into one of those perfect pieces of street doo-wop the Velvets had a unique handle on. The last song is a light piece of lunacy called "Ferryboat Bill," with Reed offering an off the wall tale about incest with a midget. These songs are a lot more light hearted than most Velvets fare, though all Velvets songs had a strong dose of irony in them, something that often threw fan and critic alike. It's good hearing the band having fun at a time when things were not looking so great for them. Side one ends with "Noise," appropriately named collage of murky guitar tunings over a soundtrack of Luci Johnson's wedding that was a part of a recorded 'newspaper.'

If you're not a Velvet fan this probably won't mean shit to you, and you can collect your Bowie bootlegs, or Roxy bootlegs, or Siouxsie bootlegs, or whatever the hell you think is so precious, but this band was a big part of my life and fuck the Beatles, the Velvets were the greatest and this little slab of history is indispensable.

—Z.

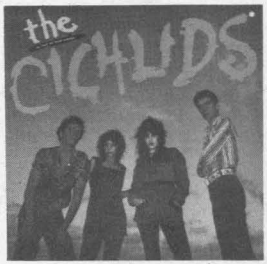
"SELL OUT"
THE MUSICAL JANEENS
Plurex Records (Amsterdam)

A few U.K. geezers making their bed and board in Holland as of the recording of this live record. Drummer and bassist begin with a random rhythm, then guitarist and singer take it from there into the only truly successful, totally improvised band on plastic. Mostly jagged rock reminiscent of the Velvets careen noisily head on into strange bits and pieces of jazz and pop melody. The singer induced a pretty infectious fever in himself, exhibiting a frenzy much like J. Lydon on Public Image's "AnaLisa" but beyond that. These performances are like unexpectedly coming up against an open blast furnace and, in person, must've been close to the self-immolation level.

—CHRIS D.

"BE TRUE TO YOUR SCHOOL"
CICHLIDS

K.C. of K.C. and "shake your booty" fame has gotten this new wave formula together thanks to an upper middle class brand of tepid smartaleckisms ala the Cichlids. Yes, indeed, the situation must be in a sorry state when otherwise credible Florida fanzine "Mouth of the Rat" (now defunct?) raves defensively about said wimped-out local combo. Empty poturing without even a trace of slick technique to make it palatable to the gullible, "oh-yes-I-love-New-Wave-but-punk-scares-the-shit-out-of-me" public that's so obviously its target. The Cichlids can't



even pull off lightweight camp cover "14 or Fight," making the original by "Wild in the Streets" Chris Jones sound like Johnny Rotten, Iggy Pop and the Monkees all rolled into one.

—CHRIS D.

"CLOSER"
JOY DIVISION
Factory Records Import

Claustrophobic, unbearably tense and neurotic, and at the same time somehow at peace. Music with its mind made up about life, love and death with no humor whatsoever. This is the tranquility of absolute resignation, absolute knowledge of one's self, the few virtues and few tragic flaws. No matter how strong the virtues, they may not be near strong enough to overcome the flaws. That's when it's all over, at least on *this* earth. By all over I mean death. So what causes this kind of death? Betrayed trust and an obsessive, all-encompassing love. A love that destroys. Behind the calm resonance of Ian Curtis' voice, the flowing lyrical lines of the synthesizer, the nervously modal guitars going quietly apeshit, the steady heartbeat of the drums is one of the most brutal spiritual landscapes you'll ever hear. If ever the deluded, purple-prose cliche song title of all time "Killing Me Softly. . ." had meaning, it finds its truest definition here. What gives this a frightening potency is the way Ian keeps chanting certain lines over and over again. Repetition is meant for exorcism. But the obsessiveness there won't let any poison escape. Songs like "She Lost Control," "Love Will Tear Us Apart" (neither included here), and "Means to an End" etch into your guts like caustic acid. "I put my trust in you. . . I put my trust in you. . ." He doesn't even have to say what happened to that trust. Every time Ian opens his mouth he straddles the border between

honest-to-God testifying and inadvertently self-fulfilling prophecy. Is this all a nightmare you have no control over? Or the more you concentrate on the horror and negativity, do you bring it on yourself? It's so uncommon, though, to see and hear this kind of truth put on record by someone who held it as their life's only tenet. Everything released in this day and age is usually so superficial or, if true to life, so uncompromisingly cynical, the admission that the reciprocating emotion to hate called love actually exists, is unthinkable. The few recent exceptions, Throbbing Gristle and X are about as diverse (to the naked eye) as you can get. This kind of admission is also what makes Joy Division so precious.

–CHRIS D.

"THE VOICE OF AMERICA"
CABARET VOLTAIRE
Rough Trade Rough 11

Within seconds you know the party's been cancelled. The faceless bullies who're being paid to ruin "life as we'd like to live it" have shown up uninvited and taken things in hand. Communication systems are being used for control and repression and greyness is seeping under every crack in the flat. Welcome to the world of Cabaret Voltaire.

As the bastard on cut number one puts it, "we won't tolerate any dancing" and you can kiss goodbye to innate *joie de vivre* – "communication" and "repression" being also the main theme of the cover with its various shots of riot-equipped policemen, electronic gear and religious allusions.

If you've any doubts left as to the atmosphere and message these are relentlessly offering, perhaps the song titles will set you straight. "Partially Submerged," "If The Shadows Could March?", "News From Nowhere," "Premonition," "Kneel To The Boss," etc., etc. If you can bop to this kind of stuff you were lobotomized the same day you were baptised or circumcised.

Don't shrug and turn away in search of more benign pleasures because I'm not through with you yet. Some things have to be accepted and faced up to. One of them being Cabaret Voltaire's music and message (which should be in one word really, the separation of the two concepts being one of the great problems of modern sounds), as it is steadily, relentlessly growing more precise, more obsessive with each new record.

I still get stunned every time I listen to their incredible 'Three Mantras' package, even though I'm definitely not the kind that shudders with anticipation when I find an LP's made up of only two songs, each one some 20 minutes long. As a matter of fact, I normally resent this sort of approach, no matter which corner of the alternative spectrum it hails from, but now this record certainly seems about to have the same undefinable effect on me, the music oozing through the interstices between my centers of interest, to trigger the most deeply buried paranoia sensors in my usually happy-go-lucky constitution.

How horrible, you say. Not really, silly. First of all, this sound not only keeps you on your toes, it awakens you attractively to the existence of the ever-present underwater layers of fear but, what's more, it also suggests that a certain familiarity with the nightmarish undercurrents of the real world need not be unbearable or suicide-inducing. It has its own beauty and it can even reward you with its own peace.

And it's not the peace of the dreamless sleep, either. Cabaret Voltaire are steadily discovering new ways to describe the undescribable without indulging in any of the immature games most other "experimental" dabblers can't resist to slip under their fans' feet. Big words and mucho abstract, I agree, but partying and giggling on a 24 hour basis is for retards only. Even the jolliest fellow needs that solitary walk in the middle of the night.

You too.

–KICK FACE

"NO QUESTIONS ASKED"
FLESHEATERS
Upsetter Records

There are some who read History, Philosophy, Poetry and the daily paper to get a grip on the world; there are others who read their own guts, roll their own bones, chart their own nightmares – seeking truths behind the arid, garrish landscapes of "personality and circumstance," scratching the skin and surveying the far horizons. What you don't know *can* hurt you, but only rats jump ship. The inevitability of Pressing Moments can bring about paralysis.

"No Questions Asked" is not an easy album: not easy on the ears, not easy on the stomach, not easy on the sleep. It is a nervy nervous album, a screaming baby in thick darkness. It is the product of a singular, isolated vision, a private abortion of guilt. It is more visionary than poetic.

Desjardins looks beyond the "street life angst" of X and the pseudo-Marxist "observations" of Gang of Four. Desjardins is grasping for the soul in a hurricane of sickness, brutality and indifference – lowering himself down towards the end of the rope. A redemption not to be found in a nice home of bible bookshelves, or in the feverish grasp of secular ideologies, this is a deliberate self-exile within life, a ravaging vertigo toward purity:

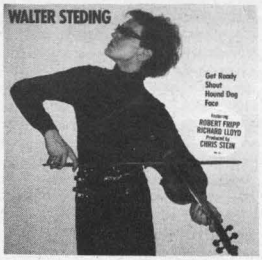
"Poison doses grow in your lungs
There's something else
Creeping through your head
That scares you even more
It's the story of standstill
Paralyzed, Paralyzed
Misunderstanding what you've become
Self-hate gets so sweet"

These are the delusions of a brain too long in the desert: torture, blood and fire, death, these are the visions of man who wakes and sees Hell in the streets. Desjardins doesn't have the humor of Crash's agit-prop fairy-tales, or the scope of Mark Smith's torrential fire-and-brimstone. Desjardins is more intensely personal, writing narratives of a prophetic and re-occurring nightmare. Images pared down to their bones, that begin suspecting language at precisely those points where it forms their structure.

Desjardins cascades across the syllables like a baby carriage down the staircase, watching . . . pausing . . . turning over, a crashing cascade of steel against stone and stone against flesh – the syllables catch in his throat like unchewed beef and he spits them out in slimey shreds. The production is grey, the instruments submerge into each other, into a din, a grind hum of traffic from which the guitars shriek out like occasional sirens and the drums march on like troops towards war. The whole set is deliberately devoid of obvious hook and tried true cliches, expectations are subverted at every turn: rhymes disappear, downbeats get beat up, inflections get infected. Like living in a trench, one gets used to the shocks, expecting them and letting them ring in the ears, like the Flesheaters Tooth and Nail set, there are phrases here that won't let go: "I gonna set I free/untill the day I die," "success can be learned/so you just keep going," "every minute alone/a crime against life," these are the opaque spots in the X-ray, emergency warnings for the damned.

This album is not for the squeamish or the self-satisfied.

–WILL AMATO



WALTER STEDING LP
Red Star records

The Manhattan avant-garde marches on. Nights at the Mudd Club and days at the Museum of Modern Art aren't enough to occupy talented Mr. Steding (a personal friend of Andy Warhol!) so it's off to the studio to make musical mudpies ga ga goo goo grow up already you fool I'm not impressed. Jazzy-fusion-synthesized claptrap. Robert Fripp adds his own unique annoyance. Walter wails "I woke up mixed up today/Glad I never learned to pray/There's so many people to be/Instead of living my life I'd rather watch it on T.V." What's the matter Steding, bad cosmic vibes, man? My cure for your existentialist nightmare, dear Walter, is to take a fistful of quaaludes and SHUT UP FOR GODS SAKE SHUT UP! ... but why fight it. This record succeeds wonderfully for those lost souls still arguing about who is the better group: Yes or King Crimson. Ah yes, almost forgot, produced by Chris Stein of Blondie fame in a pair of stunning Calvin Klein jeans. Next please . . .

–DAVE

"I AM LIVING"
JIMMY CLIFF
WEA K99089

Right after Jimmy Cliff created an overnight sensation in "The Harder They Come" he did a showcase at the Roxy for the record companies. With so many bigshots out there, Jimmy sang for a solid 3½ hours and gave it everything he had ... and he really *had* it, too, it was like Otis Redding, I mean people were crying. Why he makes such weak records is a mystery to me. This is the latest, and it makes me upset. I can't blame Jimmy for writing about the earth, the sun, peace and love, and I wouldn't care what he sang about if he'd really use that voice of his. But why have Tom Scott do horn arrangements? Would Winston Rodney have Barry Manilow play the piano on his records? This is just as bad a mismatch, and the production is so slick the needle practically skates across it. I know Jimmy ain't a wild Rasta, but whatever happened to that Soul Rebel in "The Harder They Come"? Maybe he wants to change his image, but he lost something on the way. It tears me up, but Jimmy Cliff has forgotten how to get down.

–V.–

"SEARCHING FOR THE YOUNG REBELS" E.M.I.
DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS

Condescension is the order of Dexy's day. To whit, intro to "Burn it Down" with the lumping together of Deep Purple tripe, a Sex Pistols gem, and some lame-ass Two Tone ska shit as examples of "soulless" crap we have to get rid of, "bro," if we want to find the "new soul vision." Sorry, Dexy and bummers but I've all of James Brown, Otis Redding, Etta James, Little Willie John, Hank Ballard, etc., and John Lydon aka Rotten is the only *white* singer besides maybe L.A.'s own Top Jimmy to come along with that fire-and-brimstone gut "soul"

since Eric Burdon or Jim Morrison. You guys are wimps! And I'm calling you out on the midway to expose your faggy "sincere," overly literary soul vision once and for all! That said, there are some fun things here such as the already released "Geno" and the last three or four songs on side 2, one of which, "Thankfully Living in Yorkshire," is fucking great. But if you want to search for the genuine young "soul rebels," at least of the UK variety, you'd be better off getting Blurt's first mind-rending single.

—CHRIS D.

"LOVE OF LIFE ORCHESTRA"
GENEVA
Infedelity

For some reason this group is supposed to be hot poot in New York. Are people there really that bored? This homogonized instrumental music is completely bland and uninteresting, I don't care how many elements are fused and combine, how excellent the musicianship is or how clever the rhythm changes are. Dull is dull. I didn't like Don Ellis either. Now high snot know it alls can pooh pooh and comment how the little philistine has no taste, how groovy and clever this discojazz-rock-electronic fusion is. All I can reply to those idiots who go in for this kind of stuff is: DIE!

—Z.

"LIVE AT TARGET"
FACTRIX, NERVOUS GENDER, UNS, FLIPPER
Subterranean Records (SF)

Factrix delivers the two best cuts on the album right off. "Night to Forget" is, if you have to draw comparisons, Black Sabbath meets PIL. Wonderful dirge guitar that isn't the familiar experimental jerk-off groans through a blasted mental nocturne. Likewise "Subterfuge." Never went much for Nervous Gender except when Phranc was in the group. However, "Miscarriage," "Scandanavian Dilemma," and "Poet Confession" aren't bad. Side 2 isn't as intriguing. Uns is formless and, even now, I've no definite impression of them except for somebody doing nonsequitor arty jokes through what sounds like an airport P.A. speaker. Flipper closes things out. Never much liked them either. I thought "Earthworm" sucked, cutesy, smart-aleck stuff undeserving of the pseudo-cult status built up around it. What's on this is the same psychic sludge, but I liked it, especially "Low Rider." "LIVE AT TARGET" doesn't quite live up to my expectations. But it remains a shadowy trip through the underworld, the kind of thing you'd enjoy listening to on Halloween around midnight.

—MR. OK

"BEAT BOYS IN THE JET AGE"
THE LAMBRETTAS
Rocket Records import

Unbearably average mod revivalist band with a record on the same interest level. The production and performance is uninspiring and devoid of any personal fire. Out-of-control and delerious passion are not in the Lambrettas' vocabulary. Empty, strained attempts at songwriting here can at least be given credit for the effort. Last song "Face to Face" is the best thing on "Jet Age" but still boring.

—CHRIS D.

"DIE KLEINEN UND DIE BOSEN"
DEUTSCH AMERIKANISCHE FREUNDSCHAFT
Mute Records import

Not by conscious design or trend but this seems to be the direction any "enjoyable experimental music" is heading. "What direction is that?" you ask timidly, a bit confused over all these different bands with indecipherable names putting their own claptrap theorems to the test. A return to the comprehension of alchemy and the logic of medieval thought processes? Could this be the 21st century's answer to white boys playing the black urban blues of the fifties? Screaming voices take up alot of Side 2. These guys are kidding but it doesn't sound like it. Appropriate sonic preparation for heat death of the world.

—CHRIS D.

"POP ART"
ELTON MOTELLO
Passport Records (Jem)

Not as bad as back cover pix of Mr. Motello in red nail polish would lead you to believe. Nevertheless, a nerve-wrackingly bad lapse of taste and judgement. Once in a while the lyrics pull through only to be capsized by Devoish vocals and music. A wash-out.

—MR. OK

"SOUNDS OF THE GULF COAST"
"KINGS OF ROCKABILLY VOL. 1"
"KINGS OF ROCKABILLY VOL. 2"
Ace Records imports (Chiswick)

These three 10" albums, 10 songs each that are more reissue stuff from the fifties and very early sixties, are terrific in every way, shape and form. Each one is worth having with Rockabilly Vol. 2 being the cream of the crop. Look out for "Penalty of Love" by the Velvetones on "Gulf Coast," "Shadow My Baby" by Glen Barber on "Rockabilly Vol. 1". Virtually all of Vol. 2 is a rowdy party rave-up dealing with an extreme style of life that would put most L.A. skinheads to shame. For instance "Switchblade Sam" by Jeff Daniels and "Bugger Burns" are the storytelling rockabilly equivalents to a good Clint Eastwood spaghetti western. And get on the stick with "Swanee River Gal" and "Bandstand Stomp" by Tommy Hudson, two of the wildest rock 'n roll songs ever.

—CHRIS D.

"STRANGE BOUTIQUE"
THE MONOCHROME SET
Din Disc

I suppose there's a market out there for suave, coy, fey, pseudo-intellectual pop music, but considering how impressed I was by this band's debut "Alphaville" single, I was decidedly underwhelmed by this collection of studio trickery and too too sublime mannerisms. It's a shame to see a group give in to its own worst instincts.

—Z.

THE RATS
Whizeagle Records

Didn't like this when I first heard it, but I've now grown fond of its clumsy, underproduced zeal. Not that this is one of those excitable smasheroo Ips that leave you bewildered in the ashes of a punk holocaust. The recording sabotages nearly every vital moment but the songs, however simple and tarnished with beginners' generalizations, have an unstoppable conviction at their heart. The entire second side especially, even the slower tempo songs, grind with a relentless emphasis on baring the soul that's too rare lately.

—CHRIS D.

"TEO"
ROKY ERICSON
CBS Records import

I don't know what the hell to say about this. Maybe I shouldn't have read Roky's interview elsewhere before listening. How can I sum this up in one nice neat little parcel? Roky's horror story anthology? Rural folk tales as inspired by monster movies and comic books in an extremely talented acid casualty? "TEO" comes out of nowhere, following no trends. Roky retains his Texas 60s rock roots in both singing style and selection of musicians. "Two Headed Dog," "Night of the Vampire," "A Cold Night for Alligators," and particularly "Creature with the Atom Brain" create an absurd sense of idiot tragedy. Strictly on the comic book level, but I'm sure Roky'll be glad to know they got under my skin.

—MR. OK

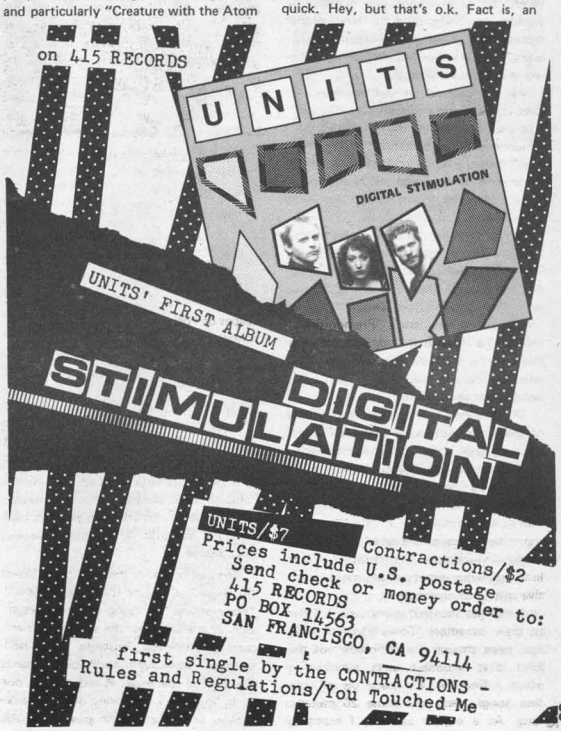
JOHN OTWAY
Stiff Records

Another looney with a reputation of swallowing microphones and acting the general cartoon character for our jaded bemusement. A pity it does nothing for me. This guy not only can't sing (no particular stigma there) but he can't write particularly witty songs either. I never thought I'd say this, but where is good old Wild Man Fisher when we need him?

—CHRIS D.

THE RETURN OF THE DURUTTI COLUMN (FACT 14)
Factory Records

I don't know how it is that a reviewer for Slash Magazine ("the magazine of discrimination") was given this particular record to review — could be for no other reason than it's put out by Factory Records, which is part of "the movement" of which we are all small "flakes in the turd." Maybe I'm too out of it to know Vini Reilly's connectiok with us all or whatever. Hey, I'm just surprised, that's all. I mean, this album is practically *all* solo acoustic guitar, and the compositions are *really* compositions — not squeaky-squawky experimental drone music of some avant-garde sort, but jazzy, classically pop guitar — nothing on it that, say, Jose Feliciano on acid couldn't do. It's relaxing and pretty. Mr. Reilly plays some *beautiful* passages here and there, though he can get corny pretty quick. Hey, but that's o.k. Fact is, an



album like this being reviewed in a magazine like this is just great. More power to Industry! (Maybe I can review "The Grail and The Lotus" by Robbie Basho next, now that's a *really* good solo acoustic guitar album.)

—WILLIAMSBURG 15 MI.

"BLACK AND DEKKER"
DESMOND DEKKER
Stiff SEEZ 26

It's so rare when comebacks live up to the myth of the resurrected artist. Things change so fast, fads start smelling so quickly and make up runs so easily under the glare of the spotlights, especially when you've been away from the "scene" for so long and a bunch of young upstarts have been squeezing your stuff all over the place, making it near impossible for the original thing to demand our respectful attention and sympathy.

It's so rare, but when it happens in such an undeniable manner as it does here it's indeed time to rejoice and bring out the champagne. And when it's the kind of joyful, feet-tickling music Desmond Dekker (*Mister* Dekker to you kids) effortlessly wraps around your heart and waist it's also time to gracefully leave the profound comparisons, aesthetic exegis and super literate allusions aside, and do what should come naturally: dance and have fun for God's sake.

Therefore don't expect an expert analysis of the old versions compared to the new ones, dissecting nitpicking about Sixties ska vs Eighties ska; every song on this album is first rate stuff that owes absolutely nothing to nostalgia or trends. The new versions of either "Israelites" or "007" are fine and dandy, thank you.

There are lots more horn outbursts and bouncing bits than in the Dekker I remember, which no doubt will make few pompous idiots with fat asses go on about the master imitating the pupils and yielding to the demands of the trends. Fooeey to you mates, if that's the way you want to look at it, move out of the way and let us dance, you hypocrites.

—KICK

N.O. EXPERIENCE NECESSARY
featuring the MEN IN BLACK,
THE MECHANICS, THE SHIT DOGS,
THE BACK STABBERS, ROOM
SERVICE, MANDEVILLE MIKE &
MENTAL BLOCK, DRIVEWAYS,
CONTENDERS
Oblique Records (New Orleans)

If you can't say something nice, don't say anything, right? I say bad press is better than no press at all. It's too bad because I don't like most of this New Orleans sampler lp. Whoever produced it has made virtually every group sound like each other. Then again maybe they performed this identical twins trick themselves. The sound is good in the low-range area but get into the high end and you find too much vocal and not enough guitar. And if you're going to play this brand of MOR college student punk then you'd better crank up the decibels somewhere in the pain threshold, neighbor! SHIT DOGS and the MECHANICS (one song) come off best, getting nearer uninhibited regions than the strained and coming-up-against-dead-end remainder. Even if there's not any good "punk rock" down yonder Bayou way, there must be some asskicking cajun blues or hillbilly voodoo that beats this. So where is it?

—MR. OK

"PETER GABRIEL"
PETER GABRIEL
Mercury

Yep, this is the third Peter Gabriel album which also makes it the third in a row to be titled simply PETER GABRIEL, and unless Pete has a drastic change of mind/heart, all subsequent solo efforts will pack the same moniker. But while the titles stay the same, the music within does not. Gabriel's first on his own was a mishmash of themes and styles, some successful, all interesting. The following one was more attuned to the plastic ear of AM consciousness and stayed well inside a rock format. But number three bristles with violence — it's what John Foxx would call a catalogue of fear. It all but turns its back on commercial values and goes straight for the throat with slivered dirges of doom and destruction. An album could be full of recorded niceties and ring like a clanked brandy snifter, but it would mean very little if it didn't squeeze your brain a bit and make you feel like a population of tiny daggers had come home to roost up and down your spine. And this third record does just about all the way from start to finish.

Side one begins with Phil Collins' mighty drum thumpthuds soon to be joined by eerie stringscrape jumping from speaker to speaker before well-computed chaos heralds Gabriel's entrance as the "Intruder," a hoodlum and petty thief who silently hangs around in dark houses watching women whose husbands aren't yet home; a nearsighted peeping Tom whose wire cutters allow him to be more personal than if he used only binoculars. He takes on the part of an hallucinating insomniac in "No Self-Control" before becoming completely alienated ("I Don't Remember") and finally killing a public official ("Family Snapshot") hoping that it will bring him fame, but his mind ultimately snaps like brittle glass and he lives and rest of his life as a child.

Breaking the tension for a moment is "And Through The Wire," a spunky rocker with one of Gabriel's best vocals and some touch up guitar work by Jamboy Paul Weller. The lively stride is picked up on the second side with "Games Without Frontiers" (the English 45), a sharp-tongued jab at international prejudice and warfare which features for your entertainment the delightful Miss Kate Bush (THE female artiste of the eighties/nineties) cooing seductively in French.

A couple more musically imaginative and characteristically out-of-touch tracks surface before the haunting chant of "Biko," the album's epic, chills the blood. Over a heavy beat and an ominous drone of guitar and bagpipes, Peter Gabriel emotionally pays homage to Steve Biko who was killed last year by South African police in a brutal display of apartheid. Two lines stick long after the song's done — "You can blow out a candle /But you can't blow out a fire." After a listen to this, you'll either be glad you're alive or want to blow your lousy head off. Or maybe both.

—RORY HOUCHENS

EDDIE NOACK
Ace Records import (Chiswick)

Eddie used to write songs for quite a few of the country immortals like George Jones, Hank Snow, Hank Locklin and had his own career on the Gold Star and Starday labels during the 50s, sometimes cutting rockabilly under the AKA of Tommy Wood. I'd never heard of him til this reissue of his best Starday stuff but he's undeniably one of the greatest country western songwriters who ever lived. His voice has an uncanny resemblance to Hank Williams but there's no imitation involved. Try out "Take It Away Lucky," "It Ain't Much But It's Home," "For You I Weep" and wonder why he never made it as big as Hank. I'm sure it all has to do with the realistic machinery of show biz, emphasis on the biz.

—CHRIS D.

"BOUQUET OF STEEL"
ARTERY, B TROOP,
COMSAT ANGELS, DISEASE,
FLYING ALPHONSO BROTHERS,
I'M SO HOLLOW, MUSICAL JANEENS,
NEGATIVES, REPULSIVE ALIEN,
SCARBUROUGH ANTELOPES, SHY
TOTS, VEILED THREAT,
VENDINO PACT, de tian, Y?
Aardvark Steal 2 Records import
(Rough Trade & Red Rhino)

One of the best compilations to come careening down the pike since TOOTH AND NAIL or the upcoming DECLINE soundtrack. Most of these groups seem to have originated in the Sheffield area of England and show some different influences from London and Manchester combos. Not too much straight by-the-book pogo here but a hard edge remains that's strong, to the point and manages to be melodically different without any bullshit frills. Of special note: B Troop's "Peroxide Romance," Comsat Angels' "Ju Ju Money," Repulsive Alien's "Say and Do," de tian's "Chorale," Y?'s "End of Act One," Vendino Pact's "Secret Thinking" and Disease's "Psychobin." If there's any justice (which we know there isn't unless you make it yourself) all of these bands should have more vinyl out ... the sooner the better.

—MR. OK

"PISSIG"
PAUL TORNADO
Plurex Records Import (Amsterdam)

A stubborn nationalistic guy who sounds like Tom Petty singing in Dutch. I don't know any Dutch so I don't know what the hell he's saying. But the music is run of the mill with only an occasional hook to snag interest.

—CHRIS D.

"HEATHEN EARTH"
THROBBING GRISTLE
Industrial Records import

The most cohesive statement yet from Throbbing Gristle. We're strapped down to our electric chairs by invisible handcuffs (courtesy of our own brains) and set upon by one real-time live performance clocking in at a little under an hour. The monster is non-stop, the whole lp being one great song interrupted only when you flip sides. There's very few words sung or spoken here. Gen tells a sad story about an old junkie that seems to be modeled on Jean Genet's/William Burroughs' exploits in North Africa (by the way, William Burroughs has just completed an lp for Industrial!). Cosey does a sarcastically effective dialogue with herself and Gen? Sleazy? mimicking the cliche lines men come up with when euphemistically asking for a fuck. Gen comes back in with a shatteringly oppressive "Do what you're told ..." repeated over and over. Music (they don't like to call it that, you know) runs from synthesizers doing modal saxophone lines ala John Coltrane/Eric Dolphy to Gen doing a more extended bass-guitar-as-Eastern-tabla-drum run that outdoes "Six Six Sixties" on the last album. A slick effort that actually benefits from the polished edges instead of the reverse. All the more impressive because this is live and melodically accessible to the "general public" while not compromising ideas in the least.

—CHRIS D.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

SUICIDE
Ze records

Tenacity certainly is one of this duo's virtues. Anybody else would have packed their portable junior synthesizer, their shades and their pancake make up and given up the music hall life once and for all, back to the cosy elitist art world or the computer programming school by correspondence teaching post or whatever slots are available in the modern jungle for people like Alan Vega and Martin Rev. Their brand of flash gut level musical techno street poetry for college girls who dream of the gutter and whores who'd loved to get an education didn't exactly set the rest of the world on fire and their brave live performing didn't help with the popularity sweepstakes either. But all hope is not lost, cos album

number 2 just may, if not turn them into the heartthrobs of the nation, at least get them recognition and a following of sorts. There is now, much more so than when they first started, a definite public for the offbeat sounds, and their stuff is much less formless and nerve twisting than most of the other dabblers. This lp is loaded with melodies, hooks, and certainly less dehumanized than half of the new combos with guitars, drums and so-called traditional line ups. The freak outs that popped up on the 1st have been flushed down for good, and given the right mood you might even decide this is more easy listening than experimental. Deliberately easy to grasp techno bop which this time around might work on the restless 1980 public.

—KICK

"MONKEY BUSINESS"
Trojan import

"REGGAE JAMAICA"
Trojan import

"CATCH THIS BEAT"
Island import

Let's move thru this quickly, compilation packages are really clogging the review channels, this is the age of recycling and refurbishing soon there will be specialized publications that deal with nothing but this stuff anal retentive collectors are going to look pretty foolish when their prized possession hits Thrifty's! "Monkey business" is excellent Trojan offer, ten tunes on each side, good variety from bushed out silliness to rootsier attacks, big names obscure ones not a dull groove in sight nifty cover you cannot go wrong by grabbing this. "Reggae Jamaica" is somewhat sleazier looking, you know the tourist pamphlet look of some of the reggae sleeves, sun shining water sparkling heaven on earth happy islanders not a care in the world with most often than not a hilarious string of Hilton reggae turds performed by uncle toms in Hawaiian shirts anyway you got the picture but somehow it does not fall in the dreaded category in spite of the presence of the Pat Boone of reggae John Holt along with zany combos with names like "the in-Crowd Band," comes close to shlock but just pretend it's a commercial, in between the fluff there's some kooky sweaty antics by Slim Smith, the Ethiopians, and an insane instrumental by Winston Wright (?) that has become my theme song of the week. Finally the "Catch the Beat" number, Island's most recent (there are most likely 2 or 3 more comps on their catalogue since, they've got ants in the pressing plant!) bid for your bucks, they can't fail with such a worthy variety of toons and musicians, the accent is on Rocky Steady I can't always differentiate with ska, same musicians same singers but I never went to Juillard, it's dancable it's hummable and it's inspirational in a friendly way. Vintage stuff, even Pete Tosh (then known as Peter Touch) had decency and talent, those were the days. Shed a tear, skank a while.

—KICK

CAN YOU HEAR ME
MUSIC FROM THE DEAF CLUB
Optional/Walking Dead Records

I was in that San Francisco hot spot while it was around, both as a spectator and a performer, and I can tell you the acoustics in the place were not what made the place popular. So I was surprised to hear how clear the sound is on this album. Among live recordings of new bands it's one of the best. As a sampler, it's an excellent example of the divergency of San Francisco music ranging from hard core professional punk rock (Dead Kennedys) as opposed to basic street punk rock (KGB) as opposed to semi-professional punky reggae or whatever the sloppy but jubilant mixture the Offs play is. Then on side two we have the legacy of the dreaded 'art' band, though the Mutants, the first of the breed, seem like fairly straightforward hell rockers compared to the goofy cartoon glop of Pink Section and the formal pretentiousness of Tuxedomoon. The only marring factor on this excellent slice are the comments of dj Johnny Walker doing a perfunctory San Francisco put down of LA as being Mc Donalds and Fleetwood Mac. Self righteous provincialism is such a bore no matter how cool the people perpetrating it think their own little scene is. Regardless, as a record of a certain scene at a certain place in time, this record is invaluable. Maybe not always great entertainment, but as a document it's essential.

—Z.

"GERI REIG"
DER PLAN
Warning import

More Kaotic Kraut Kultur, same as D.A.F. check the german article for the thoughtful stuff here in record review town we don't think or analyze we overload the sensory mechanisms stick our head and ears in the fryer and see how the old brains and nerves feel when it's over and if anything remains imbedded on the spongy matter in la cabesa. Which is why we're such connoisseurs of the Throbbing Gristle combo, their way of attracting the reviewer's attention has not yet been equalled. They literally do it all for you. Submission is the word. I didn't go on this T.G. tangent just to name drop: Der Plan dabble along the Gristle's grimy grooves, not especially

"Perhaps the most uniquely exciting band to emerge during this year. Wholly distinctive, totally absorbing"—**SOUNDS**..."The Furs generate a manic intensity in each song they deliver"—**MELODY MAKER**..."Can't take the damn thing off the turntable or get the tunes out of my head"—**RECORD MIRROR**..."Strangely impressive—**SMASH HITS**..."Their sound is exceptional. Make no mistake"—**NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS.**

THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS

A NEW ALBUM OF BEAUTIFUL CHAOS
ON COLUMBIA RECORDS AND TAPES.

9/25	Hurrah, New York, NY	10/7	Bookies, Detroit, MI
9/26	Irving Plaza, New York, NY	10/8	Stages, Chicago, IL
9/27	Emerald City, Cherry Hill, NJ	10/9	Merlynn's, Madison, WI
9/28	930 Club, Washington, D.C.	10/10	Duffy's, Minneapolis, MN
9/30	Center Stage, Providence, RI	10/12	Showbox, Seattle, WA
10/1	Paradise, Boston, MA	10/13	Commodore, Vancouver, CN
10/2	J. B. Scott's, Albany, NY	10/15	Waldorf, San Francisco, CA
10/3	Broadway Live, Montreal, CN	10/17-18	Whisky, Los Angeles, CA
10/5	The Edge, Toronto, CN	10/22	The Ritz, New York, NY
10/6	Cedar Lounge, London, Ontario, CN		

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imitative but with everything on a minor key, more melodic, more hypnotic on the surface, more clever and presentable. They most likely are very clean young men, while T.G. is made up of kinky demonic cultural hoodlums who don't "experiment" so much as conspire and plot their next foul deed. Hence I feel more affinity for D.A.F. . "Geri Reig" is most impressive though, multi layered whooshes and zings and boing boing boing into echo-filled hallways, psychedelia at its most pernicious the brain settles like an old camembert the stomach is the source of semi pleasant ripples and the bloody music becomes a world with very very top secret physical rules. What I want to know is, do the players participate in all the major twists and turns their noise follows? Cabaret Voltaire do, T.G. most certainly do, PIL did. Dabblers? True pioneers? You tell me.

–KICK

"CHEZ LES AUTRES"
STARSHOOTER
EMI/Pathe import

The french band with the dumb name but the very sharp pop sounds and image, the cover is real euro-techno-flash, of course one look you know it's the Kiki Picasso (or is it Loulou) Bazooka school of graphics by now the style is getting famous, and thank god the music inside keeps its own so often the French combine great packaging with bland contents, but Starshooter dabbles with a very unfrog like nonchalant virtuosity. It's that far from music hall here and there but so is Madness. It's all sung in french but it won't stop anyone from bopping and clowning about to all this super catchy pop noise that simply annihilates 99 per cent of the anglo pop wimps with similar ambitions.

–KICK

2X5
FLESHTONES, REVELONS, COMATEENS, BLOODLESS PHAROAHS, STUDENT TEACHERS
Red Star records (Jem)

Promotor/instigator Marty Thau talks about how ". . . everybody seemed to have $$$ in their eyes and the kids' music grew stale, pretentious, and sadly self-indulgent," in his liner notes. He could be talking about the groups on this N.Y. sampler album. He also mentions his management of the N.Y. Dolls and how people weren't ready for them, just as record company executives today aren't ready for these bands. Yeah, if Marty could've come up with EVEN ONE band with the destructive subversive energy of the Dolls in their heyday then this would truly be a record worth buying. Don't hold your breath. Songs here have the general consistency associated with today's fun-loving "New Wave breed," minus the fun. Monotonous. This is yet another compilation where one band seems to be a twin of the next. Once again I'll ask the question: should we lay the blame at the foot of the bands or the producer? In this case, despite the run-of-the-mill banality of the bands, I'd say the producer. Jimmy Destri, keyboardist of Blondie fame, has turned everyone into guitarless eunichs suffocating under anemic, ineffectual arrangements. Whenever possible keyboards are emphasized, sabotaging dynamics and the microscopic amount of talent in evidence. Exceptions are the Fleshtones' "F-F-Fascination" and parts of the Revelons' "Cindy."

–MR. OK

U.X.A.
"ILLUSIONS OF GRANDEUR" LP
Poshboy Records

I don't own any U.X.A. buttons, I've only seem them once live (very recently, and they were very VERY bad) and I don't know any of them – never even met DeeDee what's her name. So don't call me biased or prejudiced ... elitist maybe, but that's where I draw the line. Now that that's settled: I LOVE THIS RECORD! (the following review of grave and thoughtful tone) Let's get serious a moment because U.X.A. play some serious stuff. Don't look for funny jokes or silly music or babbling studio nonsense. This record means what it says. Unfortunately, Poshboy has yet to realize that alyric sheet is MANDATORY especially with a band such as U.X.A. whose lyrics are so obviously BRILLIANT and HEAVY (in the best sense of the word). Anyway, with a few spins I managed to figure out most of what Dee Dee is saying and you can buy your own copy and figure them out because I'm not telling. (Social Circle and U.X.A., two songs on the Tooth and Nail LP – an excellent little album, a lame little plug – are fairly representative of the lyrical content of the U.X.A. LP ... sound tasty enough?) By the way, the song U.X.A. is also on this album as well as seven or eight other great songs, all of them of the straightforward rock n roll variety no experimental shit and NO SYNTHESIZERS (hurray, fuck you) just drums bass and guitar, oh yes, and vocalist extraordinaire DeeDee who ranks right up there with the best (choose ten) she's about as mellow and sedate as a tasmanian devil and twice as smart as you I'll bet. I probably should run through each song one by one and describe them but I'm not going to. No way. Suffice to say that they are all equally hypnotic, dangerous and MEANINGFUL, yes. Now for the technical shit: the porduction is kind of screwy. Best part is the stereo separation which is very good – DeeDee screaming out of one speaker then jumping to the other, actually it's kind of scary but I recovered. The worst part is the drums ... recorded way to high, way to trebly, interfering with the vocals. Guitar could also use some help out of the midrange swamp. This review should be much longer but it's not. BUY THIS ALBUM OR YOU'LL BE SORRY.

–THE NEW GUY

"Cont. from p. 19"

A Certain Ratio/Blurt night at the Moonlight. Wall to wall black second-hand threads and orphanage shoes, A Certain Ratio being what they are set things straight by marching on in Afrika Korps chic, baggy kakhi shorts matching shirt infantry footwear and Hitler Youth streamlining on the hair with emphasis on the spot where sideburns usually hang out. The drummer is a black guy, I kept thinking he was their prisoner of war, but prisoner or not I bet they treat him decently cos his banging and double banging with a hoopla sure gives some extra killing power to their slightly unhealthy oinks and shines and drones. They're incredible, you come away from their gig with an entire musical genre in your mental files, the mood makes it stick real solid and all the inventive oddball bits they come up with (some atonal rhythmless trumpet blowing that can nail you to the floor until they set you free by ending the song). The singer looks like a fanatic without a cause, he occasionally gets all croony and motive but I wouldn't trust it for any length of time cos his specialty is ballads and chants that taste of serious fever and unclean air. Before A Certain Ratio took psychic control of the crammed sweat-pit other Factory elements had already showcased their goods but Blurt immediately rattled the cozy atmosphere of sardines in-the-know (who ten minutes before grinned and nodded enigmatically while old Durrutti Column himself Viny or Vince bored me stiff with neo classical weavings too delicate and elusive for words) and elusive was not the accent the 3 Blurt chose for the occasion, no not a bit elusive. Hysterical is the genre, Andante Con Hystericale and easy on the technical virtuoso arrogance, this audience threatens to be appreciative. Now some weeks later, having seen/suffered Blurt 3 times I can be smug and blabber about they-do-this-then-you-feel-that-then-nothing-makes-sense-then-it-almost-does-but-they-stop-it-before-but upon initial contact I must have done the mouth-wide-open-unlit-cigarette-held-forten-minute routine because when I started *thinking* about what I was watching it was coming close to the hiccupy ending. Blurt ain't your average collective of pained seekers with cheap instruments, Blurt is imagination with no underwear and madness with no background, the bro of Blurt Uno is discreetion and accuracy in the service of the absurd and the guitar chap only bothers with the chord succession that do something and do it quick there's not much time with wild mouth daddy-o at the wheel they're getting towards the final crash fast if not smoothly. They can leave the thoughtful type of audience in knots of unresolved judgments. Dumb audiences have it easier they pick elements at random and that keeps them busy until the next one. James Chance handled the sax like a kept bitch Ted Milton copes with this like a chimp getting hold of its first machine gun. Hilarious until you got to duck real fast. The confused state of the music we've been moaning on about will *not* benefit from that sort of clownish divebombing in the midst of a cultural tragedy. You should start to see why every gig started to feel like one more unique direction to the underground sounds. A sort of theory of the expanding musical universe could be worked out, like the end of that cycle then the contraction of the countless styles until Bam! everything meets, no more punk, blues, calypso . . . just the old howling at the moon while banging the old lady on the skull with a bone. Personally I'd rather go outwards, couldn't cope with the idea of getting closer every day to Ravi Shankar and co. But I have a feeling I might be slightly disgressing so back to the ranch for the last gig, actually *that* was the biggest disgression of them all, more than new directions it suggested other *dimensions* for the discriminating music addict to look to. All the preceding dislocation dancers are earthbound compared to Creation Rebel, a heavily psychedelized dub combo that has thrown its lot in with genuinely gone, neo-psychedelic proponents and theoreticians at 4 D records. The white dudes that run this hotbed of high-flying activities also put on the shows, do the mix (Adrian started the Carab Gem label, has done Prince Far I albums, produced "Starship Africa" lp on 4 D). He and Chris (other white dude at the controls) are planning to turn the whole music field upside down with their updated psychedelic sabotages. An upcoming album on that same label by mysterious combo "The Mothmen" makes me think that altho undoubtedly wacko, they could be right as far as triggering an average earthquake in the hip underground circles. The night Creation Rebel tiptoes thru the outer space tulips in that Fulham pub another 4 D relative opened the show, the young and ill-defined London Underground. To be helpful I could say: Public Image/dub injections/industrial noise, they catch your attention but lose themselves in the wilderness, not having learnt to separate the approximate stuff from the effective parts. It left you on the edge and thoroughly ready for masterful noise stretching and twisting. Creation Rebel came as close as you can to the dub open spaces outside of a studio; dub is not the most obvious form of music to stand in a crowded room for but Rebel ain't the mellow self-indulgent groove advocates and repeatedly threw the pattern away to get that hard-hitting edge which lashed at the swaying spectators, everyone eventually gets wrapped around the bouncing of the bass or the snaps of the snares. Trance time. An awful long way from the initial babble this started with, I suppose the point has been made: confusion, trends overlapping bla bla bla, no big aesthetic surprises are to be expected when everyone has been busy sticking their finger in everyone else's dip. Punk on hold, post punk mish mash everywhere, no direction too many directions, the singles are greater than ever the industry fears bankruptcy, it sounds like anarchy to me. Isn't it what they wanted? That and chaos. Anything else I could add would make it even more confusing. Confusion prevents conclusion.

Folk & Ethnic Section . . . . . .

BLACK MUSIC THAT WON'T GO AWAY

This section would have been completely devoted to reggae as usual, but due to the incredible low quality of recent Jamaican records, (a horrible couple of Lee Perry albums, a fair Marley album, an over-indulgent Bunny Wailer epic, and a lot of other stuff that doesn't deserve mention), I've decided to include this time, some other non-Jamaican records which are every bit as good as reggae's finest moments. There's no disco or soul here, but rather some little known ethnic black music that few, if any, have ever heard, most of it equally as primitive as Burning Spear. And so,

Two deaths in the last few months of very important Caribbean figures. One, Jacob "Killer" Miller, famous Jamaican singer and leader of Inner Circle and the other, Professor Longhair, Mardi Gras master from New Orleans whose influence has been critical in black R&B for years. (You may even hear his name thrown around in the Dennis Brown interview as an influence.) We'll deal with them both here briefly.

None of the Inner Circle albums are particularly satisfying, but the four Jacob Miller solo albums on Top Ranking records, (2125 Opalocka Blvd., Miami, Fla.) are usually consistent and generally good music. Unquestionably best is "Wanted" which is fluent sounding in the same manner as Dennis Brown's best work. Clear, but well echoed production which is especially suitable for Miller's voice. His vocals are graceful, but with lotsa soul elocution. He's even a good enough singer to handle a Heptones tune ("I've Got the Handle"). Other songs like "Sinners" and "Bionic Skank" are wonderfully fluent recordings in a tropical pop vein, not too arresting but really sweet to listen to. This is the kind of stuff that's most popular on the island, because of its lazy sexual mood and extra special dance quality. A style that goes easiest with the lifestyle of the island, especially in the most beautiful places. The other extremely classic L.P. is simply called Jacob "Killer" Miller and is much more of the same (like Brazilian jazz, you listen to it forever). The best cuts here are "Big Stripe" and "Lamb's Bread Collie" in which Miller really gets involved with his stuttering vibrato trick. (It's too bad he died. I would like to have heard him do a rockabilly song since he can quiver his throat at least as well as Charlie Feathers or maybe Lux Interior.) On this latter track his voice is lost and almost unintelligible at times which is o.k. since it's just a big rhythm mess anyhow. "Tenement Yard" is the album of the hit, which you may have heard in Rockers, but the best song on the album is actually "Susie Wong." Although I've never cared much for his live shows, I'm quite impressed by these records and recommend them to anyone.

Professor Longhair has been a staple of New Orleans R&B since the early fifties at least. He's responsible for some of the classic Mardi Gras songs as well as having something to do with the Hollywood Flames whose "Buzz Buzz Buzz" is among the greatest doo-wop hard rockers ever recorded. (You may have recently heard the Blasters do this.) "Baldhead" is my favorite, but there's a multitude of good material, some of it available on a recent collection of Mardi Gras black music I saw somewhere the other day. Buy this because the Wild Magnolias are on it, another musical Indian tribe like the Wild Tchoupitoulas who released a classic album on Island records a few years back. The Indians are actually blacks who dress up like Indians on Mardi Gras day and go wild in the streets singin' these songs, been going on for years and years.

Black Creole music is an undiscovered secret in American music. Buried down in the swamps of Louisiana for years, the music hasn't changed in over thirty years. It uses accordian and fiddle mediums as well as guitar, bass, drums, and washboard to frantic extreme. Most of the lyrics are in French, but are usually totally incoherent since they are being screamed, shouted, and chanted over the mess. It's moving music full of adrenalin that bears much of the late 50's R&B/Little Richard influences, the drummers pound on almost anything they can find while the whole band shouts various Cajun catcalls around the singer.

The most perfect collection of Black Cajun artists presently available is "ZODICO" Louisiana Creole Music (Rounder Records, 6009) which includes recent recordings by presently working Louisiana bands. Standouts are ',Chant de Mardi Gras" by the Ardoin Family which is a huge neanderthal mess of shouts and melodies interacting, it almost outclasses anything this year except for "Sunglasses After Dark" by the Cramps. There's an English song, "Lucille," by Mike and the Soul Accordian Band, which is pure rock & roll in a Clifton Chenier vein (Clifton is the best-known artist of the style). "Colinda" by the Lawtell Playboys and "Bonsoir Two-Step" by Wilfred Latour and his Travel Aces are more traditional French dance tunes which use triangles and vest foittoir (chest washboard) for busy rhythm effects. Sampy and the Bad Habits play a blues variation while the Carriere Bros. (personal faves) play continuous melodies that are common to the white Cajun styles.

Most Cajun musicians only release records on local labels and usually work at some other job to pay the bills. Many are farmers, field-hands, factory laborers, and anything else you can imagine. The music is played in roadside dance bars along the highways inbetween Houston and New Orleans. They usually call it Zydeco, Zodico, Zordico, or Zologo music, meaning "snap-beans" which they've used to describe the music for years. It's most entirely black, but white Cajuns can be found in some bands. Although the blacks speak Cajun French, they maintain that they are Creoles and the Zydeco is Creole music. Older recordings of this music are available on Arhoolie record collections, but current bands are almost exclusively available on Rounder Records (186 Willow Ave., Somerville, Mass., 02144) and Swallow Records (P.O. Drawer 10, Dept. RS, Ville Platte, Louisiana 70586).

Buried even deeper into the swamps of southern black music is "Traveling Through the Jungle" by various black drum and fife bands of Mississippi and Georgia. It's a compilation of music carried down through generations of families since the early days of slavery. Most of the album was recorded around 1972 or so, so the music does still exist. Basically not very different from most African drum records, except lyrics are in English and there are versions of "My Babe" (Little Walter's hit) and "When the Saints Go Marching In," none of these sounding anything like the originals.

There are no string instruments, horns, or "real" singing. It is mostly rhythms played on washtubs, wastebaskets, kettle drums and body-slapping while a slight melody is played on the quills or a fife. At its best, it's pure voodoo soundtrack, and you can almost hear those Catholic missionaries being cooked in the background. Outstanding cuts are "Late At Midnight, Just A Little Before Day" by the Othar Turner band and "The Death March" by Sid Hemphill's band, two frightening excursions into the world of escaping KKK henchmen in the marshes of the Deep South. But the unquestionalbe classic is, "I Love Jesus, Yes I Do" by J.W. Jones, James Jones, and their brothers and sisters. This song says it all. Everything you ever needed to know about rock & roll is right here. two or three people beating out one frenzied beat while another screams "I love Jesus! I love Jesus! I do!!!" sounding as if the Devil had him by the ass while he tried to convince himself he was still righteous. This is a good illustration of black man's Baptist damage, and it's available from Testament Records (no address given).

Getting even further into the land that time forgot, there's a new Burning Spear album called "Hail H.I'M." on E.M.I. records (folks, I tried to understand what he was saying when I interviewed him, but it just ain't possible no way). This record was reviewed briefly in the last issue about 2 centuries ago, but surely not sufficiently. It's not quite as visionary as "Marcus' Children" was, but it's still better than any current Jamaican music being made at present. The production is thinner, but the instrumentation is uniquely sparse, leaving more elbow room for Winston Rodney's voice, which is as good as it ever was. On "Africa Cry Blood" (you know he's serious) the vocals alone are an emotional experience. I still think that he is the best and most intense singer living in this day and age. Although not as hard-hitting as a James Brown or Iggy, his voice carries more experience, more darkness, he sounds like a man wrestling over his own impending doom. I hope he is not, because we need him. Burning Spear music has transcended reggae and entertainment, it's more like a message left on a stone by some explorer on a definite path to somewhere. (I smell mysticism! – Ed.)

Also out now is the new Marley album. With the exception of "Bad Card," "We and Dem" and "Pimper's Paradise," there's nothing really happening here.

Island has been releasing other reggae albums by Black Uhuru, Pablo Moses, and Linton Kwesi Johnson, as well as more "ska" reissues. So far, the only one I've heard is "Sensimilla" by Black Uhuru and it's much more intense than anything they've ever done. Great rhythms strong production and flawless harmonics. The only thing missing here are good musical hooks that you can hold on to, but Black Uhuru is much more hung up on style than melodic aspects of songwriting. However, it works out because of the insane rhythmic quality. Just like Bo Diddley, it doesn't matter if it's a good song or a new song, as long as the hypnotic beat holds you there.

Other Island releases like "A Song" by Pablo MOses, I can't afford yet, but should be well-covered next time. Pablo Moses hasn't made a record in years since his "Revolutionary Dream" and a new album is certainly an occasion. Bob Marley's Tuff Gong label has some excellent new acts, especially Fred Mc Gregor, Iya Creeks, and the I-Threes. Last note: James Brown's greatest record ever is "Live At The Apollo Vol. 2" and it's now been reissued by French Polydor, having previously been quite rare. Get this record at all costs, as it is one of the five greatest records ever made (see review elsewhere) . . . . . .

–RANKING E. LEE

NO ONE GETS OUT OF THIS BOOK ALIVE

What can you make out of a sleazy, puffed-out item like this? A best seller, of course. National Enquirer will always outsell Slash, and this book will outsell The Asshole: these are the grim ratios of the consumer univers. They are formulated not towards truth or art, but towards the Alchemy of Fads – an ancient practice of continued profitability.

Morrison's hallowed corpse was bound to be eaten right up – Morrison is "in" this year the same way he's "in" this book – as the superficial stroking of an itching pink stump. If you're a nostalgiabator with "romantic" flutters, this book will stain your dirty heart's sheets in no time at all – just the bare-chested magnetism of the cover should do the trick; if you need more to get off, then get your licks right in the Forward, where you'll not only be told that Morrison's poetic way was paved by, uh, let's see: Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Dylan Thomas, Jimi Hendrix, even James Dean (they left out Janis Joplin, I guess cuz she's a girl), but that Morrison himself was "a modern-day god. Oh hell, at least a lord." Yes indeed, and it was sure tough on him – muses, demons and hobgoblins plague our hero with every swig of Jack Daniels, and everybody wanted into his pants when he probably didn't have all that big of a weiner anyway. It sorta gets you right *there,* don't it?

The best part of the book is actually before Morrison formed The Doors, as a demonic, mysterious and disruptive poetic enigma in UCLA film school he seemed to really be "on to something BIG," but after that, everything goes downhill real fast – from mysterious metaphysical realms straight to the six-feet-under. The authors slathering flat prose strings together facts in a way guaranteed to nail his coffin tight – whether or not Morrison was actually in

it. Thank God for that, who knows what they would have done if they had tried to wring any *meanings* out of this short and bittersweet legend – oh brother!

If you respect Morrison, or respect death or art even, don't buy this book: instead, send $6.95 to me care of this magazine and I'll send you the heart-wrenching biography of Scrappy the dog, who was always a loner, and could drool the I-Ching before meeting fate under the wheels of a bakery truck.

–WILL AMATO

"CROCODILES"
ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN
Korova Records Import

The first time around this gave me a good impression, second time not as good. What I thought might take shape as songs came out as still nebulous, skeletal and undefined. Even that stuff is listenable, but when Echo and the Bunnymen are good and sink their teeth into a subject, you see just how fun they can be, kind of like Dwight Twilley meets Joy Division! The prime example of this is "Rescue" with all the earmarks of a hit, eyes on the Top 40 without the accompanying offensive symptoms.

–MR. OK

"EIN PRODUKT DER DEUTSCH–AMERIKANISCHEN FREUNDSCHAFT"
D.A.F.
Warning Records import

For historical and aesthetic info on the band see special report in this issue, this earlier effort bears little resemblance to their recent Mute lp, first of all it's strictly instrumental meaning one less element to yank your nerve endings, less dangerous and more art ghetto bound although it's not exactly the Durruti Column either, there's a respectable percentage of steel factories-bopping-metal mayhem, crude banging on every part of the drumkit and ominous clankings and screechings like an entire infantry division of rusty somewhat disabled war robots coming over the hill in erratic waves of attack, teutonic machines full of short circuits and overcome by metal fatigue. It's nice to know D.A.F. has put the humans in charge now, they (the humans) are still god's niftiest device for total terminal aggression. I'd like to add that if this is, as the title suggests, the resulting product of US involvement in Germany, I hope they get their little soldiers and marines and MPs in many other corners of the globe. Amazing what unique outbursts of creativity any moronic army and politician can generate. More. More. (Will Reagan as president signify an aesthetic american renaissance of lasting value??)

–HERR KICK BOY

JOHNNY OSBORNE
(FALLY RANKING/ TRENCH TOWN SCHOOL)
Greensleeves import

A side has a good bounce, b side a bit feeble, usual format of 12 inch stuff singer goes home half way thru the rhythm section stays until closing, on this one no toaster to whip some enthusiasm into the tune just snatches of the singing with echo. Jah jah predictability, Selassie I Routine.

–KICK

BLURT
(MY MOTHER WAS A FRIEND OF AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE/GET)
Test Pressing import

More essential matter. Solid and awesome, more awesome than solid but pretty solid, of course musically questionable, I tell you no flaws. For boring precisions see english report where you get the whole picture. Next step is hearing the record, which you ought to. I think modern noise is going in the right direction, I know it is when I hear this (many times a day it's not bad at night either don't believe the neighbors) brief bliss on both sides too late you want more. It appears there will be. For lyrics see interview. For bookings call . . . kidding of course. Can't we like something without our integrity shoved back on the witness stand again? This is just so great (not good) that it hurts. So does your skepticism.

–KICK

"GOING HOME"
THE BIBLICAN GOSPEL SINGERS
M&K Realtime Records RT-200

These are new recordings of some of America's oldest Gospel tunes like "Wade in the Water," "Swing Low" and "Only God." The singing and arrangements are all very lovely, as is the digital recording; and if you've never heard any Gospel music, this is as good a place as any to start. To me, though, it is too slow and traditional, and compared to Aretha's monumental "Amazing Grace" LP or the Staples Singers "Hammer and Nails," this record is like slow, Southern molasses.

–V.

BADGES

THE BEAT

COSTELLO

ENO

CLASH

GERMS

PIL

X

PERE UBU

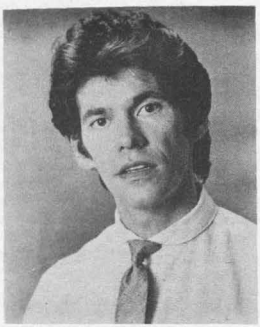
JOHN LYDON

SIOUXSIE

JOY DIVISION

RANNEY 545 1/2 N. SPAULDING L.A. 90036
WHOLESALE AVAILABLE

We give great head!



Photo's Ron Patris

For Everyone
Midnite Coiffures
1123 N. Vine St.
Hollywood 463-6010

"JAMAICAN SKA"
(COMPILATION)
Rhino Records

I see half the class raising its eyebrows to the ceiling, the jaded contingent lost interest a month after it started the two tone world domination has fizzled and, ultimate and final sign of the end of a trend, there is now a fair amount of actual goddam yankee white ska bands in the provinces, the hip cult is finito, understood, digested, assimilated and treated in the most undiscriminate manner. If that's your credo sweet one fine do move on to whatever, hurry you'll lose the others. If you do like the sound of mid sixties jamaican whoopee the trend factor don't mean shit to your civilized appreciation and you don't mind how many compilations or reissues the industry indulges in no more than a rockabilly fanatic resents the reappearance of forgotten goodies, the more the merrier and all that. There are probably 3 or 4 more ska packages in this issue but this deserves a special notice, not only because the stuff on it is most certainly dandy and as fresh as the day it squiggled out of the Kingston studios but because this is a bloody american effort and such a brave cultural move is heartwarming in these days of narrowmindedness. Also it's quite cheaper than the usual brit package. So horray to the Rhino bunch I knew they could do better than kazoo orchestras and burnt out joke relics of the past. Now all is left for them to do is let the clientele of the record store they run SMOKE ALL THE CIGARETTES their lungs crave while browsing for vinyl. The interest of this last bit is, I know, rather limited. Nil?? Say no more.

–KICK

BEST OF BIG YOUTH
by Big Youth

Here we have already a reissue of prime reggae circa 1972 thru 1975, and I had no idea that it was already history. I thought people were still buying copies of Big Youth's "Screaming Target" and I thought that he still had some kind of an active following. I'm just not ready for K-TEL oldies collections and Trojan "History of Reggae" packages from the golden days of the 70's when Jah really was going to come take them back to Africa. I should detect some lost hope, except that this is an English collection and English people will exploit anything and can be trusted about as well as rich Jews, rich Japs, and people from New York. As long as they have the power to tell you what is hip, you'll never have a chance to grab on to something meaningful for yourself.

Maybe reggae is stagnating. I don't know, only Jamaica knows for sure. But, if you still dig it, go right on ahead and soak up all you can find, because you have the right to listen to any goddamn thing you want. Whether it be reggae, punk, glitter, psychedelic, surf, rockabilly, blues, folk songs, work songs, negro field hollers, or Gregorian chants. It's all hip. It's got something in it and if you haven't discovered it, you better start looking. If you just go and dump something for its stagnant periods, you'll never learn anything from it, and will be committed to a life of rent, sex, and car worries. There are bigger things in life and may be able to find them out from wise men like Winston Rodney, Robert Johnson, or Howlin' Wolf. Don't stop listening to them, because they are no longer hip or because some of them are dead. Don't go and listen to something that is shallower and so much less in passion.

So, thanks to the English failure to stick to any one style, there will be lots of reissueing and lots of repackaging. Meaning that all this good music is available always for you to listen to. You may have missed the classic Big Youth tracks while you were being inundated with reggae a few years back, but now the songs are back for you to hear again. Everything on this album is a classic good record that you will enjoy as much as whatever made you pass it up last time. It isn't really any kind of a sin to miss good music, but it is not very intelligent. You would feel much better today if you had one of these songs to sing to yourself while on your romping journey to hell. That may sound foolish, but I'm the sort of guy who will bring his cassette player to Judgement Day. That way I'll have something to listen to while watching the world get destroyed.

(It may even be a tape of Funhouse, wouldn't that fit just fine . . . . .)

MISSISSIPPI RANKING JEFFREY

"WAS, IS, AND ALWAYS"
SOUL SYNDICATE
Epiphany Records (S.F.)

Easy listening "reggae" Muzak courtesy Santa, Chinna, Tony, Fully, etc. . . As bland as bland can possibly be. Homogenized to the point of non-existence. The Crosby, Stills, and Nash of the rasta set.

–CHRIS D.

"VISIONS OF LOVE"
EARL ZERO
Epiphany Records (SF)

"NONE SHALL ESCAPE JUDGEMENT"
12" Dub EP
Epiphany Records

Not as boring as the Soul Syndicate album (who back up Earl) maybe because master Augustus Pablo contributes some piano, xylophone, and melodica, maybe because Earl occasionally gets a little crazy. Little is the key word here. Side 1 is fairly useless with a couple of so-so offerings on Side 2, the best being Earl's Jamaican hit "None Shall Escape Judgement." Now the dub 12 incher is a bit more exciting. "None Shall Escape" comes off best again nearly reaching the limits of what is downright good.

–CHRIS D.

CRY TUFF DUB ENCOUNTER, CHAPTER III
(PRINCE FAR I & THE ARABS)
Daddy Kool import

DOME
(G. LEWIS & B.C. GILBERT)
Dome import
V.S.E.P.
(JAH WOBBLE)
Virgin import

What these three musical forces have in common is beyond me frankly something from above simply instructed me to treat them as one and to shut up. Since that incident I do play them in group formation, shuffling the playing order through and introducing random volume drops or rises while spinning around the room and looking to all concerned (very concerned) like a bothersome idiot. Fooey on them, this music is too good for this period and should have waited for improvements in the race. Wobble, Lewis, Gilbert, The Arabs (Far I frankly don't do shit cept a bit of mike testing) are not to be confused with your old music banger and his formula soundtracks for tolerated animalistic group behavior. This is a bit more advanced. Not even that weird either if that's your big hang up. Close to two hours of solid class, are you evolved enough for it?

–RADIANT KICK

SINSEMILLA
(BLACK UHURU)
Island

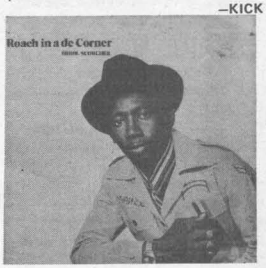
It must be said: this could be one of the best reggae albums ever put out by a non Jamaican label. Island is making an incredible comeback on the reggae front, Yabbu U, Aswad etc. but this goes right to the top of the pile. All the songs are good with melody and rhythm that grab you first time around, rich playing goodies all around, old Dunbar and Shakespeare produced and laid the beat down and this time they don't do it with one foot outside the door, must be the company of these three singers. Two men and a lady is Black Uhuru's current line up, they've got voices that wail and moan and mesh til you're all inside out with knots in the throat, it's a very subtle group singing style with no gaps between the three, just a constant whirling and harmonizing right around the main voice, I wish there was more of that guy's voice when it gets all weird half purring half howling almost like a Middle East desert wail like you can hear it on those two albums before which got put out on the local market but the music itself is better this time around and the singing is still the most soulful thing you can bump into these days, it will grow on you and with that kind of noise humming in your head you're gonna have a superior grin on your face that will get you busted for being high as a kite. Island records will of course bail you out.

–KICK

STARSHIP AFRICA
(CREATION REBEL)
4 D records import

The cream de la creme in contemporary dub music, I tell no lies. If my memory is correct I mentioned the band in the English report and said what a fine sound they made together, anyway this is the record, psychedelic dub the folks at 4 D call it it does get pretty ethereal at times but nothing indulgent there's always that rhythm to keep things in line. Note the absence of guitar, or slick Jamaican studio musicians of renown. This is the new wave of dub music, plays live gigs experiments and gets away from formulas which exist even in dub although from the outside it does look pretty loose, it's still not loose enough for this band and here it really breaks away. Space is the place as Sun Ra used to say.

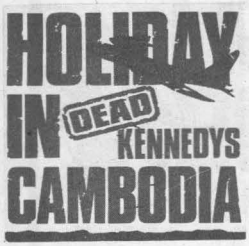
–KICK



ROACH IN A DE CORNER
(ERROL SCORCHER)
Scorcher/V.P. records

As the liner notes say "many will be asking for more of this hit from Scorcher not only has he shown a capability to make hit after hit to let one aware of the versility seldom you will find comes out of one individual in such sensational manner of relax composement . . . " An then it gets rather obscure in the analogies but you already know that that raving grammar didn't get slammed on there for old Scorcher's mass following in America! Below much more of that critical delirium there's a drawing of the man spraying the living daylight out of enormous cockroaches (don't faint ladies) conking out on their backs all over the place, and this is *not* what Madison Avenue thinks of as a superb selling factor, but "Roach in a de Corner" was a hit in Ja, not only everyone could relate to that epic theme but the way it was served by this great toaster (DJ, talkover artist) was as funky and cool and funny as you can get in the field, a really minimal rolling bass, crackling drums, a bit of reverb on the occasional distant guitar and Scorcher babbling on and on and also doing the spray can sound effects, it just couldn't fail. Rest of the record is not as striking but it cooks along fine, hot melodic lines great rhythms and Scorcher's raspy voice and slightly out of breath delivery, a record to get before loads of others. And if you do have a close encounter with roaches you now can go on a rampage in a musical fashion and make it an exhilarating experience. I've heard that this started a fad overthere and now they've got the equivalent for rats, tarantulas, and whatever creeps and crawls in the shantytown shacks.

–KICK



DEAD KENNEDYS
(HOLIDAY IN CAMBODIA/ POLICE TRUCK)
Cherry Red Records (U.K.)
Optional Music (U.S., Berkeley)

Never been overly impressed with the Dead Kennedys' live antics, but on record so far they always pull something peculiarly devastating out of their hats. "Holiday in Cambodia" is a wickedly depressing excursion into heavy metal psychedelia that manages a few laughs at all our expense. "Police Truck" is a paranoiacly accurate depiction of police behavior that is unfortunately not just restricted to San Francisco. If their first two 45s are any indication, their album is going to be a truly enjoyable article.

—MR. OK

NEOBOYS ep
Trap Records

A personal disappointment. Because the Neo Boys are a personal band, like the Velvets, or the Fall, they don't hit you over the head with their statements, they insinuate, leave spaces for you to fill in. Mystique is a much overused word, but this band is one of those that has the elusive quality that separates the special from the mundane. Unfortunately this ep doesn't convey any of that. I guess fault could be accredited to the production, but really the band would sound horrible overproduced, and the recording is fairly straight. But the vocalist Kim, who looks slightly haunted and vulnerable on stage, merely sounds flat on this single, and the subtle underplaying of the girls seems merely amateurish. I guess it's attitude that makes the Neo Boys special and attitude is hard to put on a piece of black wax, how do you convey that this is an all girl band that never plays up on their femininity yet manages to maintain it in an honest, non-artificial way, without superficial theatrics or indulgence in fashion, and while the Neo Boys might be a bit too insulated for some they don't indulge in over precocious soul searching like the wildly overrated Raincoats. But this routine recording doesn't convey any of that, and if I hadn't seen the band I would have probably listened to it once and forgotten it immediately. Needless to say, the Neo Boys are a special, unique band. They owe themselves a second, and better chance to get that word out.

—Z.

THE GO-GO'S
(WE'VE GOT THE BEAT/ HOW MUCH MORE?)
Stiff import

Call the administrators of the estate and the executors of the will because the Go-Go's are inheriting the mantle of the 60s great girl groups. There's no copycat style going on just five people who love this kind of music and know what they want. They've cut their teeth on the school of Shangrilas, Ronettes, Crystals, and even the Supremes, then thrown it out for a completely different approach. Contrary to popular cynicism the Go-Go's are not strictly of the bubblegum variety of fun, fun, fun. Another much worthier crop of candidates for the new "soul rebels" than Mr. Dexy and his wise guys.

—CHRIS D.

SUBHUMANS

Last single I heard from them was real heavy-gutted iron-age gruntrack with a "Fuck off shitface" ambience. Now, this new one is "modernized" and "educated" though still not quite "civilized." They retained their fierce heavy-gut even while jumping a few notches on the evolutionary scale. They are a band to watch for, but I wonder if contact with these isolated pockets of retained primitivity is always for the best.

—BEADMAN

JACKIE MITOO AND WILLIE WILLIAMS
(ROCKING UNIVERSALLY/ UNIVERSAL ROCK)
Warrior Records?
Ziggy records? import

Taking the by now famous Armagiddeon Time riff of Willie Williams these two pull a classy redecorating job that should please all reggae rockers that like to sway and skank to the beat of dread music. What he does lose in emotional poignancy it makes up in extra dancing time and super thick waves of booming sound to wash over you throughout the steamy night. So if the heart does not get the message the body will.

—KICK

TOOLS
(THE ROAD FOREVER/HARD WARK) (sic)
Subterranean Records

The best out on Subterranean so far. A little hard-core jewel about taking your bike out on the road and opening throttle beyond any limits. Study the mod-looking fellows on the insert photo and you'll wonder if these are the same Tools who did this monster of a biker anthem. "Hard Wark" 's got great dynamic punk tension but the same old anti-war lyrics that kill interest pretty quick. Can't anyone think of any new way to say "I don't want to go to war," if only for the sake of modern protest (ha, ha) music traditions?

—MR. OK

MONTE CAZAZZA
SOMETHING FOR NOBODY EP
(DISTRESS/MARY BELL/KICK THAT HABIT, MAN/ FIRST LAST)
Industrial Records import

Monte does it again, and at the same time opens up a whole new world of possibilities for the recorded warped sensibility. "Distress" is one of the most frightening/funniest sound collage pieces ever put on record , a documentary recording of a father teaching his infant son how to shoot a rifle at a gun range. The gun recoils and hits the boy on the head, bloodying him. We get a tape loop of the child's screams while Monte sings in a deep, jokingly patriotic voice militaristic theme songs. "Mary Bell" is a nursery rhyme, psychic news bulletin on the child murderess who was jailed before she even reached puberty. "Kick That Habit Man" is a permutation poem by Brion Gysin cut up even more by Monte then set to some epileptic, electronic dance music. Definitely the most mesmerizing thing here. "First/Last" is a long piece with Tana Emmolo on guitar dealing with the obvious subject of being first, being last. A hilariously entertaining record that manages to be serious at the same time and has none of the pomposity of most experimental bands.

—MR. OK

BOB
(THE THINGS THAT YOU DO/ THOMAS EDISON)
Dumb Records

Sure this is a ridiculous record. That guy's silly voice, those gurgling chunky rhythms, most of all the vibraphone taking the place of rhythm guitar. And let's face it, this single is not all that great but BOB definitely are onto something, they just haven't quite found it yet. "The Things That You Do" is another in a series of biting satires on urban relationship games. Thomas Edison is an ode and a bitch. (Why pay more?). Obviously eccentric with the capitol E, but with better songwriting and not so much affectedness in the vocal department, this BOB could be the bizarre and wacky cartoon they yearn to live in.

—Z.

CRIME
(GANGSTER FUNK/MASERATI)
B Square Records

A diluted Crime sound that almost amounts to a crime on the funky one. I've listened to this alot, you guys, and I call bullshit. Not a bad riff, not a bad sound, but it's too forced and clean for what it's trying to be. "Maserati" is the killer, a funny piece of jive chic that turns the foreign status emblem on its subliminal sexual ear with a bizarre man/machine metaphor. "This is the coup de kill." I liked this record a lot more before I listened to "Hotwire My Heart" again right alongside. This is bathwater to the touch compared to that boiling oil. Also ... why the name change! Frankie Fix and Johnnie Strike were PERFECT! Valentino and St. John can't come close. Also why is everyone on the sleeve copping that look that falls somewhere between Devo and the Screamers, backed up against the ole Two Tone ska checkerboard? A cheap shot that Crime definitely don't need.

—CHRIS D.

BONUS BOYS
(I WANT TO WORK IN A BANK/ CONFUSING OURSELVES)
Tsunami Records import (UK)

Happy-go-lucky we're-so-goony-we're-cute-but-we-play-so-wimpy-we'll-never-make-the-finish-line music. Some OK melodies here and a nice hook on the A side gets too frail a treatment courtesy the man at the controls. Sorry boys, no bonus.

—MR. OK

COCKNEY REJECTS
(WE CAN DO ANYTHING/15 NIGHTS)
EMI import

Their first LP made me think they COULD DO anything but my sentiments aren't quite the same after this. Pretty unimpressive, though they still have the power in their amplification and one of the best punk rhythm sections. They

aren't tuckered out, but there's a level of excitement that isn't here at all to the degree of "Greatest Hits Vol. 1." Hate to say it, but ho-hum.

—CHRIS D.

PINK SECTION E.P.
Modern Productions

Pink Section was one of the biggest contradictions I'd ever seen — the band was brimming with ideas but it could hardly carry them off since half the musicians were crude amateurs. Pink Section also had the dubious distinction of having the most obnoxious performer I'd ever seen — a young girl named Judy (or Kitten of Love, already off to a stomach churning start with a stage name like this). This Judy creature's neurotic housewife on a rampage routine, her screamy-meemby mannerisms and distorted physical appearance struck a major blow against the group before they could even start. One could also accuse them of gross pretension, but then as I said the band were so ridiculous they came off like artist in the sandbox, silly cartoon figures playing musical Dada. Thus it came as a surprise to hear this. Whatever the band's shortcomings may be they've put out a highly listenable ep. It even sounds somewhat polished — even PROFESSIONAL. And for a band that seemed to be intent on getting away from normal structure as much as possible, it even seems ACCESSIBLE. True the Judy creature still has that nasal voice, like a telephone operator from Queens, but I always liked Matt Todds' inventive guitar playing, and his quirky lines are a lot more fluid and interesting on this than their last "Tour of China" single. Also it was fun watching drummer Carol struggle to keep a consistent beat but on this thing she actually sounds pretty good — only a few botches here and there to remind you that the girl's only been playing a few years. On the two big production numbers, "Wine World" and "Francines List" (one only has to hear the live version of this on the Deaf Club album to realize what a drastic improvement the group has made) the band sounds like the Magazine orchestra (if you discount those vocals.) But even weird Judy seems toned down and I guess Pink Section decided to stop screwing around and deliver the goods. They have and it's quite pleasant. And just to make things relevant, wouldn't you know that now that they've delivered this fine recording the band's gone quits. At least they've left an attractive corpse instead of a hideous memory.

—Z.

TOXIC REASONS
(WAR HERO/SOMEBODY HELP ME)
Banit Records (1471 Deerland St., Dayton, OH 45432)

The standard idealistic punk bash with heavy emphsis on pedestrian anti-war sentiments that would be fine if we hadn't heard them before in almost exactly identical form. The production on these, though, is exceptional. The guitars have the ability to melt asphalt and are played with more than the usual abandon. "Somebody Help Me" is already a good tune, but benefits from the most potent studio work I've ever heard out of the Midwest.

—MR. OK

SEWERS OF PARIS
(LOST LITTLE GIRLS/PUNK ROCK)
KGB Records

Get a load of the sleeve. It looks like strictly small-time power chord hard rock. But "Lost Little Girls" cooks in the non-perjorative sense of the term. One of those nice-young-guy-who-takes-out-your-daughter-and-you-never-see-her - again songs that manages to shoot a genuine shiver down your back. Didn't think it could be done as this type of cliche subject is usually handled with all the subtlety of a blunt instrument descending on your skull. "Punk Rock" is OK, too, despite the title. These were recorded in early '77 and this tells the story of what happens when all the kids hear their first helpings of punk rock. A nasty, sneaky pair that deserve searching out.

—CHRIS D.

U.K. SUBS
(TEENAGE/LEFT FOR DEAD/
N.Y. STATE POLICE)
Gen Records import

Standard fare but done with the gritty hanging-by-the-fingernails feel that the Subs seem to be able to turn out at the drop of a hat. I never thought I'd say this but much more interesting and entertaining than the Rejects' latest effort.

—CHRIS D.

SCIENTIFIC AMERICANS E.P.

Johnny Guitar is dead, and Chuck Berry is forgotten. The boy with the glasses isn't Buddy Holly anymore, he's got a synthesizer and every girl wants Peter Parker. It's a modern world with buzz buzz drum machine reggae disco drum. It's a modern world it's cool and dark and sex is a sensation you take for granted, it's all part of the atmosphere. Kids play video Galaxian, the pinball machines lay useless in the arcade, ignored. It's a new world, it's futureworld — at least everybody wants to believe it and they strive, oh how they strive, afraid to be left in the dust. Yesterday an erector set, tomorrow the world. People so desperate to keep ahead of themselves they suddenly find all those thought waves imploding, and they wander, burnt out shells, craving something, newer, newer, newest, their hollow eyes and boney fingers. Scientific Americans .....

—Z.

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WILLIE LOCO ALEXANDER
(GIN/CLOSE ENOUGH)
Varulven Records (Boston)

Willie does his good voice bit for king and country. The cocktail synthesizer music however has got to go. "Close enough to rock 'n roll!" All right! Get down! You're too groovy for words! Blechhh! A Lou Reed imitation monologue reminiscent of "Murder Mystery" surfaces on this side.

MR. OK

SWIMMING POOL Qs
(THE A-BOMB WOKE ME UP/
RAT BAIT)
Chlorinated Records

The singing on "A-Bomb ..." is unlistenable with the girl trying on her It's A Beautiful Day/Grace Slick shoes and coming off the worse for wear. "Rat Bait" 's to the other extreme. It's impossible to tire of the hard-edged Magic Band boogie guitar. Hilarious lyrics also worthy of Beefheart on this, but an equally effective vocal delivery that is Jeff Calder's own. This side is worth it.

—CHRIS D.

EPICYCLE
(DEPEND ON YOU/DANCIN' SHOES/
IT'S YOU/UNDERGROUND)

(RESIDENTIAL AREA/SCHOOLGIRLS)

(COLLEEN/YOU'RE NOT GONNA GET IT/HARD CORE PUNK)
Cirkle Records

Three records, six sides out over the last couple of years. Epicycle is supposedly one of the premier bands in Illinois. Well, no one can be too bad off in Illinois. Teen angst that's a sugar-coated pill for the most part. If these kids hadn't been in diapers at the time (1970) I'm sure the Raspberries would've been their faves. Though at least Epicycle doesn't employ the melodramatically faggy yelps that were so characteristic of Eric Carmen. "Residential Area" has surprisingly smart and sarcastic lyrics about domestic bliss, and "It's You" actually strikes up a few missing beats of the heart. The rest is pretty uninteresting power pop with an edge, but not much of one.

—MR. OK

BOB BELAND
(STEALIN' CARS/I CAN WALK AWAY)
Deli Platters

Lame hard rock with ELO synthesizers running through it. Mind-numbingly bad similes: "Stealin' cars/is like stealin' hearts" Yech! Oh, and the synthesizer wimpily imitates a police siren near the end. This particular brand of white music is the epitomy of what's wrong with Western civilization today.

—CHRIS D.

GEORGE JONES
(HE STOPPED LOVING HER TODAY/ HARD ACT TO FOLLOW)
Epic records

THEE mammoth single (any musical style) of the last few years. Fuck your C&W prejudices 'cause George is gonna rip you up inside. A slow hymn to a guy who carried the torch for his true love to the grave, didn't stop loving her till they put him in his coffin and "put a wreath upon his door." The B side's a throwaway. So what when you've got an A side like this. For a whole album of love/hate/death trip psychoses pick up Porter Wagoner's 1972 lp "The Cold Hard Facts of Life."

—CHRIS D.

VOMIT VISIONS
(PUNKS ARE THE OLD FARTS OF TODAY)

Great title, great name, great sound: they grate on the nerves. I love it. They musta been inspired by listening to "Forming" on a Zody's Delux Mono Stereo, or by too many frankfurters on an empty stomach — it has the superb production values of "Forming" (a compliment, really) but the 'dogs sound more probable. It sure emptied my tummie quick.

—WEENIELESS WILL

IMPLOG
(HOLLAND TUNNEL DIVE/ ON BROADWAY)
Lust/Unlust Music 12"

The grooviest thing out of Lust/Unlust at the moment, more than worth its salt. "Holland Tunnel" is a ridiculously harsh offense on the eardrums, spooky, subterranean tour that starts, stops, starts, calms down, stops, starts again. "On Broadway" is one of those cold-ass, emotionless reworkings of a hot, emotional song. It's a rare one 'cause it works. You can somehow picture the stupefying, killing deadness of what it must be like for a great number of "sensitive" people to walk down that avenue these days.

—CHRIS D.

JILL KROESEN
(I REALLY WANT TO BOMB YOU/ JESUS SONG)
Lust/Unlust Music

Terrible crap by one of those "intellectual" chanteuse types who travel in certain equally pompous circles, steal stylistic vocal shticks from girls like Edith Piaf and Nico who knew how to do it right, then come off sounding like Patti Smith or worse, Laura Nyro on qualludes; slum a bit more with songs like "Bomb You" (no not about her 45) about lesbian desires to buttfuck some naive virgin with her "greased-up missile." The creepy Love of Life Orchestra is also involved here to some extent. Too awful for even my severest attempt at contempt.

—CHRIS D.

LIPSTICK KILLERS
(HINDU GODS OF LOVE/ SHAKEDOWN U.S.A.)
Voxx Records (Bomp)

The Lipstick Killers are turning things upside down down under. Or should I say right side up. An out-of-control brush fire sucking in everything in its path. Swallows fire engines up whole then spits out normal human beings turned to hisses of scalding steam. Non-stop and deadly like the Saints' first album so long ago in '77.

—MR. OK

THE SEQUENCE
(FUNK YOU UP (SHORT)/FUNK YOU UP (LONG))
Sugar Hill Records

Have you noticed the sudden influx of toasters disco records? Some are shit ("Rapper's Delight"), some go so much further out that they go beyond mere bad to SuperBad. This is one shining example. Sequence is three girls, Angie Bee, Cherl the Pearl, and Blondi, who deliver the most absurd slice out of the whole rotten disco pie. They even yodel on different sections of this marathon. The lyrics are ... well, judge for yourself: "I watch TV on my own/A Yabba Dabba Doo, a Fred Flintstone"; "When I get real hungry I get on up/go down to the liquor store and get my Reese's Cup" and Angie Bee's mysteriously cryptic "I feel like a millionaire in outer space." They've had a couple of other things out since, the most notable being something that I think is called "Body Rock" which is even wilder.

—CHRIS D.

YOUNG LIONS
(HEART OF THE MATTER/TO THE SURFACE/GUARANTEED/LAUGHING IN THE ROCKING BOAT/SPACE REVERIE/MARIE AND JANE)
Plurex Import (Amsterdam) 12"

One of the few times I'll come right out and say it. And I hate to do this, believe me. Sounds like the Talking Heads with electronic experimental treatment and totally annoying on every front. If that appeals to you, you're in for a treat.

—CHRIS D.

SOCIETY DOG
(WORKING CLASS PEOPLE/ BAD DREAM)
(Subterranian 2)

Has that Fast, Raw, Angry Feel we've come to love so numbly. It comes with lyrics, so you can read them yourself — even if there's no music playing. If you can't afford a stereo, you can still buy the single — if you can't afford the single, you can always steal it. I can't figure out if they're Stalin for time or just Mao-Tse Tung in cheek (yeah, bad humor gets bad Marx — but who says politics is funny anyway?).

—WILFRED THIRSTING HOWL III

BRIDGE
(ASSAULT ON BASE 4/ UNDERGROUND PT. 1/ UNDERGROUND PT. 4)
Independent Projects Records

Recorded live in L.A. underground utility tunnels. A wonderful natural wall of reverberation is set up by a minimum of instruments (a bass? a guitar?) with maximum distortion. Completely instrumental, it catches the very weird confined and nocturnal world of being underground. A morbid soundtrack for the paleface ghosts amongst us who would like nothing better than to walk through endless iron, steel and concrete corridors cadaverous flourescence or no light at all. A mournful sound that is oddly comforting.

—CHRIS D.

BOW WOW WOW
(C-30, 3-60, 3-90/ SUN SEA AND PIRACY)
EMI import

Essential. Malcolm Mc Laren speaks again thru a 14 year old medium. Unchained kiddy tribal fun with a message, the industry once again fronts the bill for anti-industry propaganda, the lyrics are inspiring and the sound is what punk could be but rules are rules Mc Laren returns as the most ethical man ever to work for the industry: when unable to remain in England and do what he does, exited to France and worked with the porno industry. No qualms, it's all the same o what an inspiring life, the man is Buddha. The singer is burmese, the rest are Ants and everything he says has a double edge. The fact that it sounds fuckin great and alive is a bonus no one had any right to expect. Now expecting to see the band goddam perform live just like any old 9 to 5 rock n rollers is ludicrous, secret weapons don't get shown off in county fairs. If nothing else I am happy that Malc is now able to walk english streets with his head up high and hope he enjoys it while it lasts. The burmese little thing has all the time in the world to recycle herself and the others can't expect miracles every day. Still pray with me that they go as far as anyone could considering the odds, because we do need a bit of zing and adventure in these new wave days. And it IS fuckin' great music. Now someone just ask Rodney to spin it a few times if he hasn't done so and tape it. Like it says: "sometimes in bed/I get a hit twice as fast/cos I press my playback/to make it last/I breathe with the sleaze/on my cassette/I got the affirmative Magnolia/Now . . . "

—KICK

THE STEVES
(MAKING TIME/ MECHANICAL FRIEND)
(NR 11689-2) — Hundreds Records

Side A is a punky sorta spunky sorta electric sorta thing — personally I don't get a kick from the Star Warrs dweewewewewewzzw sound — effectedness, but a lot of other people seem to get a kick from it. Side B is like Magazine without staples, or staples without Magazine — whichever image is more drab.

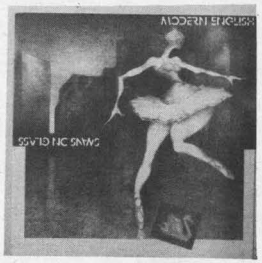
—WILLEYE

CAPITAL LETTERS
("BREAD AND WATER" EP)
Greensleeves import

ROCKERS EXPRESS
(PHOENIX CITY/CHINESE BRUSH)
Korova import

Two for the road. The ska road, now turning into a five lanes freeway. Capital Letters had an lp a while back of modern urban reggae but the economy dictates so here they do 4 tunes that bop and hop and they do it smoothly, efficiently and melodically. It does not hurt at all but then it does not exactly leave the Z of Zorro engraved on your forehead either. Rockers Express I know nada about possibly old studio fixtures who can do that stuff in their sleep, Phoenix City is one of those songs to raise the dead from the underground worm barrios nobody can fuck it up they serve it presentably warm and edible but nobody's really inspired back in the kitchen, they do their job well enough to stay out of trouble. B side is slightly more interesting thicker stew same efficiency it fulfills its function. End of report.

—KICK



MODERN ENGLISH
(SWANS ON GLASS/INCIDENT)
4 AD records import

I want to like this because these days I like the oblique and I like people to cringe when I play music and I really like obscure sleeves with modern art it saves a trip to the museum, I DON'T like heavy lyrics with no weight though and Modern English fall for that one. Bad point. Wire can do it because they REALLY do it and the sound is REALLY the mystery the words are parables or secret stories here the words just hang around for significance if you get me, and, bad point 1, the music just hops and rolls and does ominous things cept grab you or disturb you or scare you. It bugs you, all these bits and pieces and changes of beat, all these "modern" elements that are just going to have to be returned to the store.

—KICK

THE FALL
(HOW I WROTE ELASTIC MAN/ CITY HOBGOBLINS)

If you pull something out of one side of an equation, you gotta put something in on the other side. On this single, they've discarded the structural and poetic dynamics of their earlier work and into the gap rushed a great big MUSCLE. They got a new punch using an old form: hybrid rockabilly stomp. The power of predictability lends mixed results — on the one hand an almost prehensile beat that allows the slightest percussive variation (a cymbal smash, a shift on bass drum) an outsized effect, like a single red slash on a big grey field, this counterpoints Mark Smith's vocals (which have never had more confidence in their guts) and gives the choruses a psychological "jump" out of the cut.

What's been lost in the anti-scramble is something harder to define — that elusive emotional quality that still has me playing "Live at the Witch Trials" five days a week. Maybe it's the howl of invisability, which is some the Fall can no longer afford. Sometimes assault is the luxury and maintaining ground, the mark of majesty. Mark E. Smith: King of the Beggars. Three cheers then smash your glass.

—WILL

DANIEL BROWNFIELD
(WHAT AM I?/HEALTHY ATTITUDE)
Zoo Food Records

Daniel asks the most basic question of all while big chunks of rhythm guitar, bass, drums back hmim up with catchy dance music. "Healthy Attitude" has the general aura of R. Crumb meets Geza X.

—MR. OK

VAST MAJORITY
(I WANT TO BE A NUMBER/ THROWDOWN/GOD'S GROIN)
Wild Dog Records

Who cares about being number *or* name? Numbers have been here since 1943. Where were you? "God's Groin" I think is about Jesus being nailed to the cross. "Throwdown" is the closest to being tolerable, about somebody getting shot (behind a billboard?).

—MR. OK

RADIO FREE EUROPE
(IT LIKES YOU/A COUPLE SCREAMS)
MiG Records (Austin)

Concise funny lyrics about the FBI's friendship with a humanoid from outer space comes off as more than just another art school one-liner in somebody's garage thanks to competent production and a non-snobbish attitude.

—MR. OK

NIGHTMARES IN WAX:
BIRTH OF A NATION

Along with a rather theatrical name, there's a singer who looks like phantom of the reggae fest — absorbed in the liner photos I put wax on the spinner at 45 rotations per minute. Imagine my surprize: chipped and splintery beat and vocals reeling like a brain-damaged chipmonk. What a great, bizarre new band I thought, but naw, the single plays at 33 and the extra 11 and two thirds revolutions make quite a difference — which is not to say it won't grow on you at normal speed. Nightmares straddle the fence between proto-funk brood and sixties pop rocks and manage not to puncture their scrotum into irretrievable falsetto (read: trendiness). A great KC and The Sunshine Band send up in "Black Leather" (who's tough sentiments are really a lot like Elton John's "Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting") and a subtle Kinks' reference in "Girl Song" — whose stop-and-merry-go-round feel has the same sort of charm that early Kinks did. "Shangrila" is my fave, cuz the hook catches some skin.

—WILLIAM

WAH! HEAT!
(BETTER SCREAM/HEY JOE)
Inevitable Import

This doesn't bluff-threat you with lobotomy or incite you to riot, the politics are here (how can they be escaped?) but they aren't of the "This is how it is, bub, and this is what you better do about it" ... a lot more questions than answers, a lot more poetic than pedagogue. Nevertheless, both sides of the disc have a definite "anthem" quality about them — something about the spaciousness of the arrangements and the passion of the vocals (simply oozing with earnestness and compassion). Besides the immediate appeal, it's nice to hear a "political" single that trusts the listener instead of treating him like a cretin, an asshole or a potential running mate.

—PRAYING MANTIS L'AMATO

JOY DIVISION
(LOVE WILL TEAR US APART/ THESE DAYS/LOVE WILL TEAR US APART AGAIN) 7"
(KOMAKINO/INCUBATION)
Flexi-disc 7"
Factory Records imports

(SHE LOST CONTROL/ATMOSPHERE)
Factory Records (U.S. Rough Trade)

Two of these records are just as disturbing as the "Closer" album. "Love Will Tear Us Apart" and "She Lost Control" are songs with the usual now classic Joy Division repetition ad infinitum of upbeat melody, relentless rhythms, and monotone vocals combining to deliver a message of transcendent despair. A sadness so piercing there's no possibility of escape. You can't laugh this shit off. No way. Short phrases, that might as well be novels for all they tell, relate stories of people closest to you giving into their worst impulses. This is terrifying stuff even when Curtis sounds like he has the situation totally sussed out and under control as in "Love Will Tear Us Apart." "Atmosphere" and "Incubation" are somber, droning instrumentals that build a sense of inner peace that go beyond triumph or defeat.

—CHRIS D.

THE V.I.P.S
(YOU'RE FREE/LADY JANE)
B Square Records

Jennifer Miro rises from the ashes of a bunch of dead Nuns and pulls her act together in a heavy metal pop band that pulls a coup on side one, but can't quite pull off "Lady Jane." Yes, and Jennifer still looks like Jackie O with a blonde wig.

—MR. OK

THE WIGS E.P.
World Records

Cute, cute, cute. Somewhere there is this happy land full of bouncing Revillos, cute Dickies and these bunch of Wigs. Silly little darlings kiddie cartoons on amphetamine, bright popsy-sicle yum yum boom boom, goo goo ga ga, baby throw up his brains — look, when songs like Sugar, Sugar were hits on the radio, the majority of the smart folks did not find it cute or fun, but inane and puerile. Just because time has made bubble gum quaint, stupid shit does not get smarter by being nostalgic. It doesn't matter how fast bands play these kind of songs, they're still lame. But in the land of Blondies and B-52s everything is happy and these Wig kinds have the nice pretty clothes and they're from San Diego, real California sun and we'll all be silly little happy urchins in Lidsville before we all die from pablum poisoning.

—Z.

THE JARS
(START RITE NOW/PSYCHO/ ELECTRIC THIRD RAIL)
(SUB 4)

Sunny, funny, nicely done POP TUNES — so why (oh why) the themes of "psycho" and "electric third rail"? Dontcha know it gets ingratiating hearing these gruesome images "drawn from this brutal world"? All by itself, it's brutal enough. Stick to love songs and leave Hip Grimness to the culture vultures.

—WORMY WILLY WORM

PLASMATICS
(BUTCHER BABY/THE LIVING END/ SOMETIMES I . . .)
Stiff Records import 12" single

A group that strives to be trash of the most unredeeming sort, and they succeed on some levels. Depends really on how far you take the trash criteria. Another thing the Plasmatics would dig to no end is being considered the aural equivalent of "the Texas Chainsaw Massacre." They almost make that one except there was, believe it or not, a much more sophisticated and brutally perverse mind at work on that opus than either they or you might realize. What we got here is some downright nasty heavy metal played the way the Stooges used to play heavy metal. Girl singer grunts, endlessly trying to decide if she's nearing orgasm or merely reveling in constipated bliss. Mental constipation. I'm not going into any more detail. I do enjoy this record, though, for reasons I can't even put my finger on. It's irresponsible, stupid and a total waste of time.

—MR. OK

THE STANDBYS
(STANDBY/WASN'T HE HAPPY?/ WITHDRAW/AMERICA IS WAITING)
World Records

Probably San Diego's hard-core punk band, and they're, unless I miss my guess, a bit right-wing to boot. They sing about America in the same tone of voice and a similar style to the Dils. But ... they sing about a weakling America that produces people who are just as unhappy as the Commie dominated Ruskies; people without ambition who can't live up to either family or nationalistic expectations. A very contradictory record that seems intent on trying to make everyone realize that all the other shithead countries on the globe aren't interested in peace and have about as much sense as a bull in heat. At the same time they don't glamorize war or paint anyone as potential hero. To the Standbys it's the inevitable, unavoidable step to Armageddon when you'd better "say goodbye, your friends and neighbors will be gone soon."

—CHRIS D.

ANGELIC UPSTARTS
(LAST NIGHT ANOTHER SOLDIER/ MAN WHO CAME IN FROM THE BEANO)
EMI import

Oh, so we've got the old Upstarts plugging away at it, have we? "Another Soldier" deserves mention for an original approach to a stale subject but "Beano" whatever it's about is shamefacedly nondistinctive.

—MR. OK

COWBOYS
(SUPERMARKET/TEENAGE LIFE)
(TOR 1)

Yes, another single about consumerism and teenie pains. Interesting thesis, but could use expansion – watch those pesky meters and rhyme schemes! (A consultation with "Manimal" will either getcha on the right hoof or put you out of your teenaged misery forever.)

–WILD BILL HOCKSHOP

BUTZMANN AND SANJA
(VALESKA/SPANISH FLY/
WASCHSALON BERLIN)
Marat Records import (Berlin)

If they have sherms in Berlin, herewith find evidence of the consequences. A record NOT to be listened to while on angel dust or any other pharmaceutical product. "Valeska" is very annoying but keeps you going, then segues into the English language with the even more unnerving "Spanish Fly." "Waschsalon Berlin" comes on like a hydrogen bomb whispering an obscene phone call, strays into that old let's-masturbate-with-funny-synthesizer-noises, then goes back to disturbing lines of sound that show these two wack-wacks know what they're doing. Notable, too, because the pic sleeve reminds me of the one-eyed octopus monster in the 50s classic "Atomic Submarine."

–MR. OK

CRISTINA
(IS THAT ALL THERE IS/
JUNGLE LOVE)
Ze records

Apparently deleted because of an "unacceptable" version of Leiber and Stoller's "Is that all there is?". Too bad for the old men's sad lack of humor, this Cristina girl sure gives this ancient tune a new dimension. B side is a sarcastic big musical comedy discoid production that is begging for a zany wacky video disc version, something for a budding Cecil B de Mille with Russ Meyer damage to sink his directorial teeth into.

–KICK

JARED
(SPACE TRAVELER/ALONE)
Varulen Records

Has a nice fast heavy metal guitar with some spectacular dynamics and so-so vocals that cover up the brain damage lyrics about a "space traveler." "Alone" is a ballad with its head in the cloudy sixties. It's sincere, intermittently pretty, and not overtly offensive. Even though these guys are way too clean-cut for my money, I kinda like it. Don't think I could sit through an album.

–MR. OK

THE EMBARRASSMENT
(PATIO SET/SEX DRIVE)
Big Time Records

They're out there, in the most unlikely places. This one is from Wichita, Kansas, but the only corn on this is the sometimes silly lyrical analogy/puns – sex as patio furniture, the novel idea finished before thought through. There is a good guitar player in there, he's got his new phlanger and he knows what to do with it, there's a better than average singer and a somewhat lame backup vocal. Problem is the songs tend to ramble a bit, maybe to build up tension and momentum, but removed from whatever this band may be like live, it just seems like the songs are a bit too loose. But the ideas, the energy, the feeling, you can't fake that. The band's name warned me I was in for a bad time, but these people are nothing to be ashamed of.

–Z.

BAY OF PIGS
(ADDICTION/ALIENS)
Subterranean Records

Sorry, can't really go for this. "Addiction" is almost there with some interesting rhythm tricks but "Aliens" can't dredge anything out of the bag. More guys trying to be weird, but everything comes off too oblique and uninvolving.

–MR. OK

MARS E.P.
(N.N. END/SCORN/OUTSIDE AFRICA/
MONOPOLY/THE IMMEDIATE
STAGES OF THE EROTIC)
Lust/Unlust Music 12"

One of the last efforts of Mars (apparently) and don't look for any traces of the weird hybrid rock 'n roll of that delightfully fucked-up French single. This is very bloated sounding which isn't to say it's bad. Has more integrity and inspiration than many other N.Y. aggregations, also a ragged, coming-apart-at-the-seams-feel that's rewarding if you're the patient type. Pretty good, things considered.

–CHRIS D.

SCARS
(LOVE SONG/PSYCHOMODO)
PRE

Their last one "Adultery" was one of my favorites from last year. This one isn't as attention grabbing – they still have a propulsive drummer and the guitarist still has that biting tinny sound, but even though "Love Song" is suffused with that sort of urban melancholy that the Brits are so good at, the B-Side, a Steve Harley tune, is over extended and bloated out of proportions. Their next outing will probably be the deciding factor as to whether Scars are one of the more interesting new bands or just another tired rock outfit.

–Z.

MANICURED NOISE
(FAITH/FREETIME)
(PRE 006)

This group has got it, could be a *big one,* boys. Nifty Top-Fifty beat with proto-funk leanings, darting sax wailing all over the damn place, nervous singing – a real amalgima ... amalga ... synthesis of catchy, you know, sort o' stuff.

It's just swell. Buy it.

–WILL

HOLGER HILLER
(ICH KANN NICHT MEHR WARTEN/
EIN GANZ NORMALER KUSS/
DINGDONGGEFUEHL/HERZMUSKEL/
R IN SW)
Atatak Dusseldorf,
Warning Records import

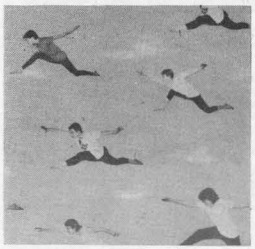
Kissy-kissy noises in the echo chamber with pops, whizzes and wacky goings-on. Comic-serious rather than the customary avant-tragic serious. Many little pieces fitting into a puzzle mysterioso. Holger turns an organ into a cosmic zither on the B side.

–CHRIS D.

BAUHAUS
(TERROR COUPLE KILL COLONEL/
SCOPES/TERROR COUPLE KILL
COLONEL 2)
AD7 Records import, Situation One

Sparse jumpy bit with weird hard rock/heavy metal bass syncopation that engineers a bizarre tension with the sad whining guitar hook and heavy sex vocal that goes totally static distortion on version two. The story of terrorist lovers who kill a military blowhard in his comfy home.

–CHRIS D.



LILIPUT
(DIE MATROSEM/SPLIT)
Rough Trade

A wonderful cover photo/montage – the girls doing invisible hurdles through the clouds. But back on earth I am not so fatally charmed by these Swiss Miss's. Formerly the sexy zanies of Kleenex, with a new sax and vocalist. Side one is Swiss Ray Spex, pleasant, but somewhat undistinguished, save a 'whistle while you work' chorus that achieves the same charming, off-beat effect those great Kleenex yelp and squeals once had. Side two has the girls slamming and shrieking about some unintelligible matter, more like the old band but not quite as memorable. The extreme difference of style between side one and two shows a group in definite transition, so judgement should be saved for the final outcome. Let's hope they don't miss the Mark. Any band capable of being hilarious and erotic at the same time should not be ignored.

–Z.

FROM DEREK JARMAN'S TEMPEST:
ELIZABETH WELCH SINGS STORMY
WEATHER AND YOU'RE BLASE
(IR00 12)

This is just swell. Buy it.

–WILL TO

SLEEPERS
(MIRROR/THEORY)
Search & Destroy Productions

Fly me to the Jung. Valium drippings from the sublime and archaic. Why the Sleepers elude the dread art rock category is probably because they've gone beyond and below the classification process. These are not the same Iggy/Lude/Submerged pain sounds of the first Sleepers ep. More jazz enters into the process, though buried, the vocals are still as rambling and desperate and the lyric totally obscured. A strange beauty creeps through these songs – the perfect adjective would seem to be haunted. But when you're in a dream world like this, simply phrases melt like those Dali watches and year maybe I'm showing my bourgoise culture, but these guys have a photo of greek ruins on the back sleeve so that makes us even. Anyway, a fitting band name, you could go to sleep to the Sleepers, but it wouldn't be from boredom, it would be hypnosis, and I'm sure you'd remember the dreams for weeks.

–Z.

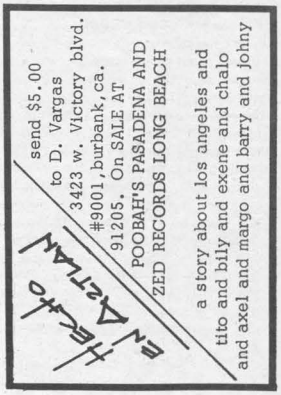
THE PANTHER BURNS EP
(SHE'S THE ONE TO BLAME/
DATELESS NIGHT/DROP YOUR
MASK/TRAIN KEPT A ROLLIN')
Frenzi Records FZ-2000
704 S. Cox, Memphis, Tenn. 38104

THE ZANTEES
(ROCKIN IN THE HOUSE/
MORNIN LIGHT)
Little Ricky Records

Two nutso mutations that use rockabilly as a starting base. The Panther Burns are out-of-their-ever-lovin' minds ... which makes their record one of the most enjoyable wall-of-dirty-filthy noise slabs out since The Cramps' LP. Alex Chilton, Cramps producer, happens to be producer and guitar player for Panther Burns. The Zantees can't compete but they've put out a groovy little 45 themselves. The Zantees coincidentally have first Cramps drummer Miriam Linna.

–MR. OK

MR. BUGS TOMORROW (JOHN HENRY) please contact Margaret / Ritz New York (201) 795-1823



HEADLINE
(DON'T KNOCK THE BALDHEAD/ HIGHWAY HASSLE)

HEADLINE
(CAROLINA/LONDON CITY STRIFE)
Virgin

If five bloods with bullet heads (five spades with spotless domes for the slow ones amongst you) is not a gimmick (never said it was) then it's a cult. If it's not a cult it's a small world and then it was meant to be. There's also a white dude with fur on the chin and hair on top but I bet he let it grow just to fuck up the other guys' scene, there's one in every band. Headline got the ska bug in their pants, one of them was singing with Steel Pulse so he's got a *lot* of energy and silliness to release that and the fact they're a bit behind schedule for that ska train that left a while back and man they're REALLY pumping they know it ain't going to be easy to catch up, minimal hairdo's or not. That pumping is beyond reproach, it's the rhythm of desperation and that solo guitar over there that's just in case the beat is not enough. Saw them live in London they moved and ran and pumped and I danced and danced and forgot all about it. Since they know other stuff besides pumping they just could be the ska band that breaks thru to Middle America if it wasn't for that coincidence about lack of hair. I guess they could say they're a football team.

—KICK

ADAM AND THE ANTS
(KINGS OF THE WILD FRONTIER/ PRESS DARLINGS)
CBS import

I am the shame of the industrial-intellectual set, I have started to like Ants music and play it ay key moments of the industrial-intellectual life and get carried away with those drums and start making cruel jokes about rhythm machines which is where they draw the line. No jokes about rhythm machines, ever. I can't help it if all this whoopee and galloping and war songs make me grin. This is all right, fuck 'em. Ten times better though is the next single, "Dog Eat Dog", a real spaghetti western extravaganza to really bop from wall to wall or floor to ceiling whatever you're into, "do it daddy-O". What a soundtrack! What a party this could be with a different set of friends. Because if my current bleak ones find out about Adam painting his face and shit I've had it, they grab my Cabaret Voltaire badge back and I'm back in the real world. No fun.

—KICK

FREDDIE MC GREGOR/GENERAL SMILIE & PAPA MICHIGAN
(JOGGING/ONE LOVE JAM DOWN)
Tuff Gong/Island import

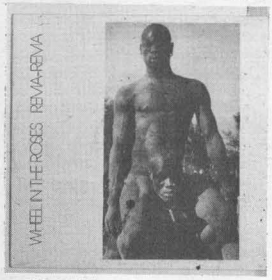
12 inches of very tasty boom boom reggae, craftily designed to spread the thick paste of bass strutting patterns all over your paper-thin condo walls so you can share the experience with half of the uptight neighborhood. From the other apartments they will only perceive the odd half-bouncing half-stumbling bass rumble and conclude that your musical needs are soon going to be a real challenge to the old community spirit of the street. Of course if only they got the rest of the picture they would have to revise their opinions, Freddie Mc Gregor belts out a ditty on the jogging phenomenon, a soulful chorus in back croons "Adidas" in unison and you realize you'll move your fanny and dangle your arms to anything. Once you get over the private embarassment you ought to sample the toasting side, Michigan and Smilie really whip this highly rhythmic mother on your epiderm and there is no way to keep cool and act nonchalant, it drives thru anyone's sluggishness and could get even a New York professional blase to break into a silly war dance. Later on it shifts into cruising output with the percussion at its most economical and that awesome bass playing hide and seek with the main track. It will move you, the flesh is weak.

—KICK

THE WALL
(GHETTO, GHETTO/ ANOTHER NEW DAY)
Fresh records import

If you look hard enough it's still there, stud bracelets defoliated hair and all englobing anger immersion into the live rejuvenating punk lore that by now has been scattered and planted all over the world, Britain had quite an incriminating role in the apparition of the phenomenon and tolerates a few hundred demolition teams a la Wall because over there you naturally respect traditions and anyway you can't let a few hundred practicing punk figureheads loose on society skinheads are easily herded and banged about by law and order but punks are smarter (proven under laboratory conditions) and more apt to hide, separate and improvise. Not that smart though if they don't feel as if the venom has been drained out of their fangs while they were crashing some three day speed run. Saw the Wall in some pub while over there, they were abysmal and it felt like L.A. 1978 all over again, the audio attack was thorough and defiantly ragged as the genre requires, the aggression of the lyrics beyond any communication threshold you might have wished to cross, the audience cozy as hell in the surrounding orgy of rituals and games they had come for and the general feeling was a pretty disturbing mixture of instinctive identification and undefinable paranoia. On record the Wall do their part of the ceremony, no mass behavior hence no paranoia and as far as identification with the form and the contents you know your own particular position in the fluctuating trend tides, you know your needs and you know your weaknesses. Most important though (and most sobering), this definite approach to popular music was a few moons ago one of the bases for my rethinking the various ways down the road to the decay station of my choice. Bang bang bang 1 2 3 4, enough sessions of equivalent ceremonies and things happen. Or did.

—KICK



REMA REMA
("WHEEL IN THE ROSES" EP)
4 A D records import

You get to think you know it all the far out, the weird and all the looned out bizarroid combos on the planet and then wham here it is out of nowhere and it's just what you need for that empty space in the soundtrack of your life. Rema-Rema (whatever they are, or were as they've broken up I was told) didn't exactly get their name in the news, what's the use of rags like SLASH and the other good-for-nothing sheets of hip esoterica if this excellent noise gets totally overlooked, I mean half of this was recorded live in June 79 so they were not recluses or studio jokers, and that kind of sounds in a live context is not something you've forgotten about the next day. Impossible to describe these pulsations of raw metallic waves crashing about, well you could but you get tangled in the analogies and the imagery and then you lose the effect the music has it's a foolish game I've played it enough to know — better to say listen to this ain't that a bitch and the result is the same. I've become really hooked on noise lately not any old noise where you just have to plug in the appliances tickle some knobs or massage some monitor with your guitar up all the way but noise that moves you because it's sad or wicked or pissed off and the people making it are not just killing time til the inheritance sets them up or because they've read too many art magazines and their ego is greedy, there's a lot of that "creative" lot who think the opposite of creativity is having a job, proper noise or proper music don't come from these people, never. But there's plenty of it on these 4 tines. Having missed out so completely on the band's existence (along with the others we ought to look for) I keep hearing the guy's voice on one of the songs in there saying "now we can all sit down and cry" some hip underground we're all part of!

—KICK

SURGICAL PENIS KLINIK
(MEAT PROCESSING STATION)
Industrial IR0011

Here's a fun story: S.P.K. got their name and inspiration from a group of West German crackbrains who set up a "terrorist cell" in their hospital under the slogan "Kill Kill Kill — For Inner Peace and Mental Health" and then blew themselves to shredded hell with homemade explosives. Likewise, S.P.K. (the musical unit) also fractured down to two members — one, a nurse at a mental hospital; the other, a certified schizophrenic, after making the tapes from which this single was culled.

I don't care whether this story is actually true or otherwise, it's a great myth and adds *jost the right touch* to Meat Processing Section, which is one of the most ghastly, genuinely disturbing singles made since 1959. This bastard is diseased from cover to core, a bad virus that only incidently infects plastic, paper, or canvas. Maybe it's the nearest soundtrack available for S.P.K.'s own home movie — the sickly yellow one that flickers incessantly in their raving noodle.

Sure, I'm laying it on thick. Don't take my word for it, you can let it into your own living space and see: if the cover, showing a real live penis with a quarter-inch rod shoved through it, doesn't grab ya, the sounds inside sure will.

—SURE WILL

THE PRATS
1990's POP E.P.
Rough Trade import

Another one that denies its european origins, such pure garage awkwardness streaked by unannounced emergency flares of nervous tension sounds more aligned with present L.A. aesthetics (whatever crumbs of that there is here in the 1st place anyway) than with british super cool existential flash squadrons, no band from there would title a song "Disco Pop" cept punked out toddlers from some forsaken suburban death pocket and then they would hammer it home with the grace of a PCP fuelled riot squad. Them Prats are walking the tightrope of trash surrender, the way they do it is thrilling and involving as long as your feel for the less obvious endeavors is still alive and beating under all those layers of unsatisfying music trends that have caked up inside you. Nothing to shake the nation too but at their age I was a passive kid with no trace of a confrontation in sight besides uncooperative erector sets frustrations. Those little fuckers have a song called "nothing," that ain't especially cosmic but they done it, that's past, they went thru that phase and I'm jealous. Almost forgot the punchline, which is that a good reason for them being unbritish on the ears is that they're not. They're from Scotland, where the same rules apply to almost everything cept when they don't.

—KICK

CRAWLING CHAOS
(Sex Machine/Berlin)
Factory import

The outcasts of the Factory scene, easy to see why my the lads are quite uncouth. I bet they're also ugly and have coarse features and that the most industrial thing about them is grimy fingernails. Good camouflage job on the Jon Savage sleeve but the music don't lie, this is souped up terminal rock with unsavory influences. I don't even play the b side (beware of songs with the word Berlin I have heard enough of them to last me thru two more incarnations of the Third Reich) I don't need to cos "Sex Machine" (not the processed funked out one) makes me feel like I am being tested for risky deep space acceleration experiment, well at least like I am stuck on a dawn freeway with a sulfate desperado at the wheel of the stolen Mustang. To really blow the cool architecture of the **Factory** image bank (don't misinterpret I think that label is an oasis of superior aesthetic experiments as well as a highly sophisticated infiltration center) the Crawling Chaos spokesman spurts out embarassing confessions about gonorrhea and similar gutter observations that still rate high on the california punk credibility meters. Gentlemen, Crawling Chaos just could be a tremendous asset to our lil' ol' scene. I ain't facetious buster, this is hot shit.

–KICK

Other summer record releases that for one reason or another (time shortage, record gone out of sleeve and nowhere to be found, veteran SLASH writers unfamiliar with the concept of "deadline", insufficient bribe . . .) *we were unable to stick it there but mean to* (we are adding this simply for information purposes, keep you in the know and prevent you from making an ass out of yourself when in hip company). Whether they get their own extensive certificate of musicality in the future (that means reviewed, Doorknob) depends entirely on the time factor, if you know what I mean.

ELPEES:

- THE ART OF WALKING (PERE UBU) – Supposed to be their best (Rough Trade)
- JAH JAH WAY (YABBY U) – yabbi who? YABBY YOU . . KNOCK, KNOCK . . OH NEVER MIND Tasty stuff you know Yabby. (can't wait for that upcoming "Thrown in a Bablyon jail for Jah walking" one) (Island)
- NINE MONTHS TO THE DISCO (GLAXXO BABIES) – Should have been raved about in June . . We are pathetic. Get it it's great hope it's not out of print by now. (Heartbeat records)
- HOOSIER HYSTERIA (DOW JONES AND THE INDUSTRIALS/THE GIZMOS) – Got here yesterday, still unopened too late you know the stuff from Indiana though, like it says on the back "Live in Indiana where men are dullards and reptiles are what you make of them" that kind of stuff. (Gulcher records)
- NOBODY'S PERFECT (THE DISTRACTIONS) We're less perfect than most. Poppy sound from Manchester. Mark Smith forgot to send his review. (Island)
- THE GREAT ROCK N ROLL SWINDLE (SEX PISTOLS) – It says Sex Pistols in tiny letters in the corner so you get the drift . . but it has Ten Pole's Bambi. (Virgin)
- HULET (ASWAD) – From a distance it sounded Latin to me. (Island)
- SHEEP FROM GOATS (THE NOYES BROTHERS) – From Manchester one spherical object and someone else, double LP of experiments and odd haunting and still depressing music. (Object records)
- SKY YEN (PETE SHELLEY) – Pete talked about it in his SLASH interview, now it's out he wants to be sure you know and do the proper thing. (Groovy records) PS: Sorry Pete but that check *did* bounce.
- JANE FROM OCCUPIED EUROPE (SWELL MAPS) – Very recent, they have broken up cherish the legacy (Rough Trade)
- WE ARE TIME (THE POP GROUP) – They are also in SLASH, this great collection of earlier and more recent noise proves they are one of the greatest. It's a fact. (Rough Trade/Y)

Then there's the singles, too numerous to even name they will come thru don't get all tense, dozens of them itty bitty things with small holes big holes sleeves and knickers – sorry – the mind boggles when contemplating the job ahead, what do you think this is for Christ's sake a bloody cultural explosion? Is the vinyl free with any choice of two purchases at the liquor counter in your part of town? Who told you there was room in the world for more music, uh? Everytime it's the same thing, give them and inch they take a mile.

PUBLICATION UPDATE
(continued from p. 25)

it's the humble beginnings of yet another mass audience exploitation rag. They're already deep enough into the Flying Lizards/Ultravox/Cuddly Toys fab groove. Readable for how long? Ask them, at 234 Camden High St. London NW1. Finally the piece de resistance as they say in Istambul, the white elephant of the lot, *PRAXIS,* issue 5 being the one that came our way (not complimentary at all – not those guys!) while some of the aforementioned publications are dedicated to Sid, Johnny, or Iggy, *PRAXIS* is dedicated to Bauhaus, and they don't mean the band. Culture, especially the higher echelons of it, is what this jumbo Life-size (the magazine) journal is into, it just happens that around now and here Culture (the higher echelons, I insist) needs its "new wave/punk" trinkets, no two ways about it it's a must you can't be fuckin seen out in the world of galleries, video performance and spontaneous pieces without a hint of that punk stuff if not the music per se one of them funny haircuts with a touch of Krazy Kolor will do, maybe a badge or two, narrow pants, and off we go to Mme Wong or the Museum of Modern Art. *PRAXIS* number 5 costs a fortune but it fills an entire coffee table. There was a single in it that wasn't bad at all for people with this sort of connections, and there was also a giant type of poster thing, very loud op-art like an underwater two-tone test pattern, the reason I lay it on heavy about the attached goodies is that the paper itself leaves something to be desired: all exotic delicacies with elusive taste, no steak no bread no wine, after flipping thru two dozen times and having failed to locate any article, any coherent solid section I started smelling a con job of respectable proportions. Still, after a more thorough search I discovered the bulk of the reading segment: an interview with an old Plaster Caster; which tells us something about these people's perceptions of the underground of today: not exactly on the case, but with the visual bits they can bluff and flash and conceptualize (like white glossy paper of prohibitive costs and just a few fat words to each page) keeping peasants like me puzzled for hours. I am not supplying their address daaarling, I mean they never did fuck all for us. Standards are a funny thing aren't they? Like Praxis is something whose remote yet persuasive existence I consider an *offence* to every thing I do, or wish I was doing. On the other hand our *own* existence (drip-drip-blood-swear-swear-insult liberal causes-praise Chaos and self-destruction-blah-bla) is most assuredly an offence to another batch of truth seekers. Well, truth or kicks, the parallel (but wavy) media is rolling on and the confusion spreads. Do your bit.

PS: Keep sending your words of wisdom,

two copies per issue would be ideal, we'll send you *our* output, later when we know each other better we'll exchange typos jokes over the phone. Remember: the pen is mightier than the sword, but nothing beats a portable bazooka. Don't trust the liberals, don't use printers that work with Scientology and don't wait for the industry to inject its unclean cash into your rag Most of all, don't make a fuckin career out of it for Christ's sake. Wanna look like Lou Grant in a few years???

3 New 45's.....$2.00 each

B.R. 45-111 MAGNETIC HEAD CLEANERS: I Want To Function With You & Mechanical Rights
B.R. 45-112 THE HIT SQUAD: Pictures of Matchstick Men & Thou Shall Not Steal
B.R. 45-114 WILMA & THE WILBERS: Chronic Alkie, The Hole & Poor Little Joey

"...keeps them from going mental I guess..."
Kick
"...but that's only if I think about it..."
Big Bill L' Amato

Break'er Records
P.O. Box 20326
Minneapolis, MN 55420

(NYC cont. from p.16)

PAUL ROESSLER — mini-interview

Before travelling to New York and joining the NINA HAGEN BAND, ex-SCREAMER keyboardist PAUL ROESSLER had become, in his own humble way, quite a kingpin among the L.A. "avent-garde," playing with, at the same time, NERVOUS GENDER, GEZA X AND THE MOMMY MEN, SILVER CHALICE and BENT (the reformed DEADBEATS) as well as occasional ventures into theatre collaboration and session work on the NEW DEAD KENNEDYS' album. This short, hectic little chat took place in the Mudd Club dressing room after a hot NINA performance.

SLASH: Let's dispatch the Screamer involvement straight off . . .

PAUL: The Screamers are doing a very noble thing, concentrating on the software of the video disk future. It's a real "industrial gamble" they're taking. I found it a bit risky, a trifle *too* farsighted. What it meant, really, was that the actual musician no longer held a very weighty position within the Screamer empire — just "one of the crew" really. Not trained in acting, I found myself no longer collaborating well with those individuals at all . . . though I do have to compliment them on a wonderful studio.

SLASH: What attracted you towards those particular avenues, I mean, none of them are exactly major commercial avenues . . . though they each have their own particular charm.

PAUL: Well, even when I was with The Screamers I was dismayed to see all these incredibly creative people, who had all these ideas, all this great material and schemes, yet for one reason or another, if was not getting performed, not getting out. It was ridiculous really.

Like the Deadbeats used to be one of my favorite bands. But they had broken up a year and a half ago and were just sitting out in Burbank looking at each other. They already had drums, sax, bass and vocals, but all they lacked was a chordal element, guitar or keyboard — so when I found out about this sorry gap, brother, I leaped at the chance.

SLASH: What about Nervous Gender?

PAUL: Yeah, there too. Nervous Gender was on the verge of a breakup, a real state of disarray. I'd always been impressed with their sound — they're the best violence-provoking synthesizer band, no wimpy dit-dit-dit new-wave-art band, that's for sure.

So I approached them with a street sign to which I had hooked up piano pickups and modulating gizmos. By beating on the thing you could get horrible car crashes and plane wrecks. In conjunction with Sven (NG's 8 yr. old drummer) we had quite a unique percussive approach.

SLASH: So why did you leave?

PAUL: My willingness to leave these bands came because the reward from playing with them was always internal . . . I think that they were, and still are, some of the best bands playing right now, I really do. But they were going over people's heads for two years and they may just continue going over heads for the next twenty . . . after all, ground-squirrels can't be expected to catch the clouds. I was selling insurance to eat.

Then along comes Nina Hagen, a woman who sells a half million albums in Europe but is still committed to beauty and excellence, and, in fact, still committed to committment. I haven't sold out on the things I believe in, and neither do I have to be a fucking insurance pusher for saps.

SLASH: What sort of artists do you associate yourself with?

PAUL: Well, first off, I can barely associate myself with anyone successful. (at this point we are offered coke, Paul declines)

SLASH: I know it's lame to ask, but what about Eno?

PAUL: Eno? Well, I don't really associate with these people, in the sense of any association is really quite arbitraty, I mean they associate Talking Heads, Devo, XTC, Eno and god knows who else using such shallow criteria, it's really pathetic. I'm more aligned with reggae at the moment, that means a scattered sort of alignment where I might find empathy with certain aspects of one artist, certain aspects of another, but certainly no "school" — this is post-graduate work now. If I were to name the band that most *impresses* me at the moment, it would be P.I.L. I think Eno lost his focus somewhere, but P.I.L. is violently opening the public's ears towards the New, and I respect that. I could even say I align myself with PIL, but PIL's already aligned themselves with EXXON and IBM.

There's one person I could definitely say I'm aligned with, and that's Helen, my wife.

Do you like my dreadlocks?

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THE NEW ADVENTURES OF

Jimmbo

THE ONLY GOOD WAVE IS A DEAD WAVE.

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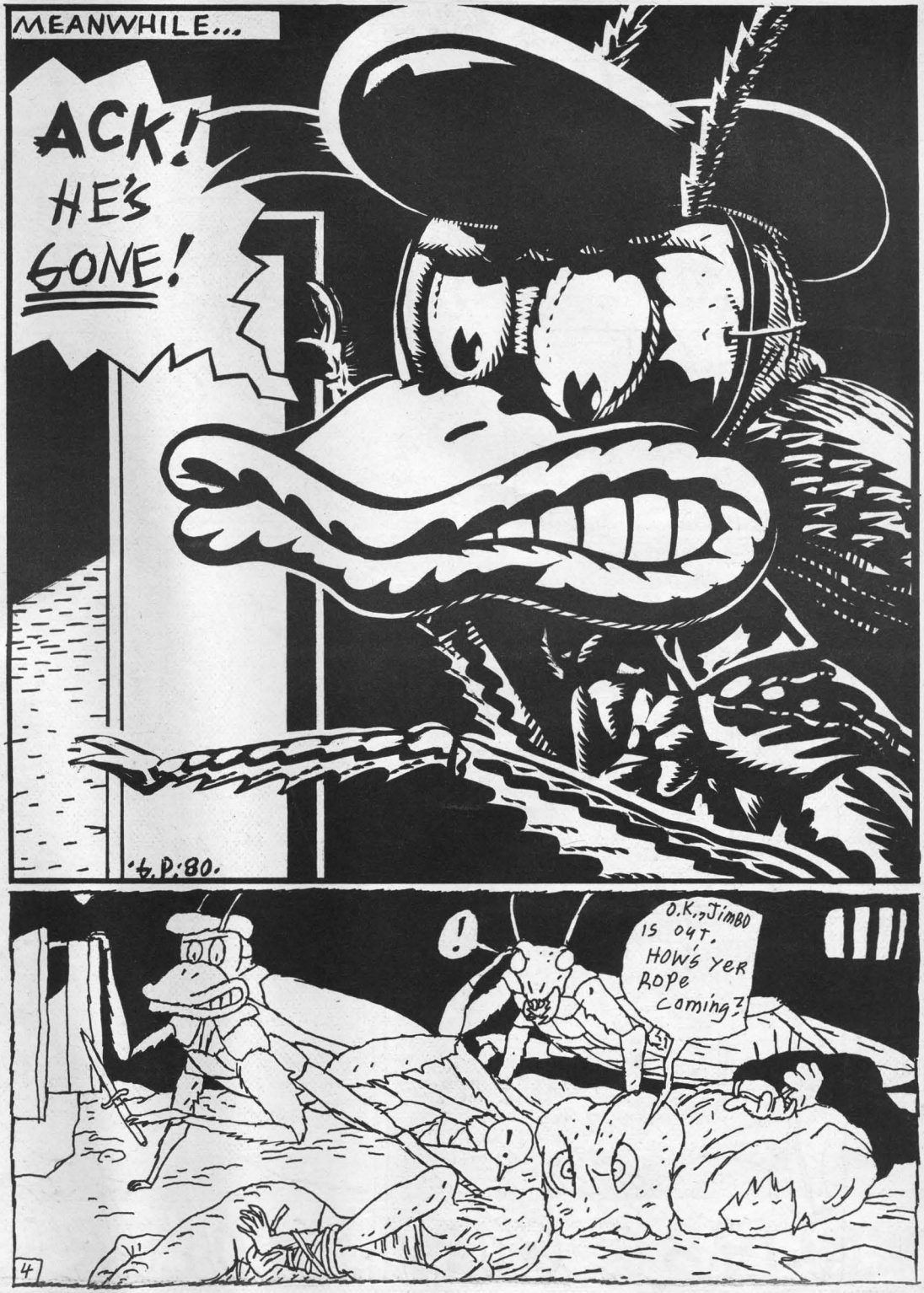
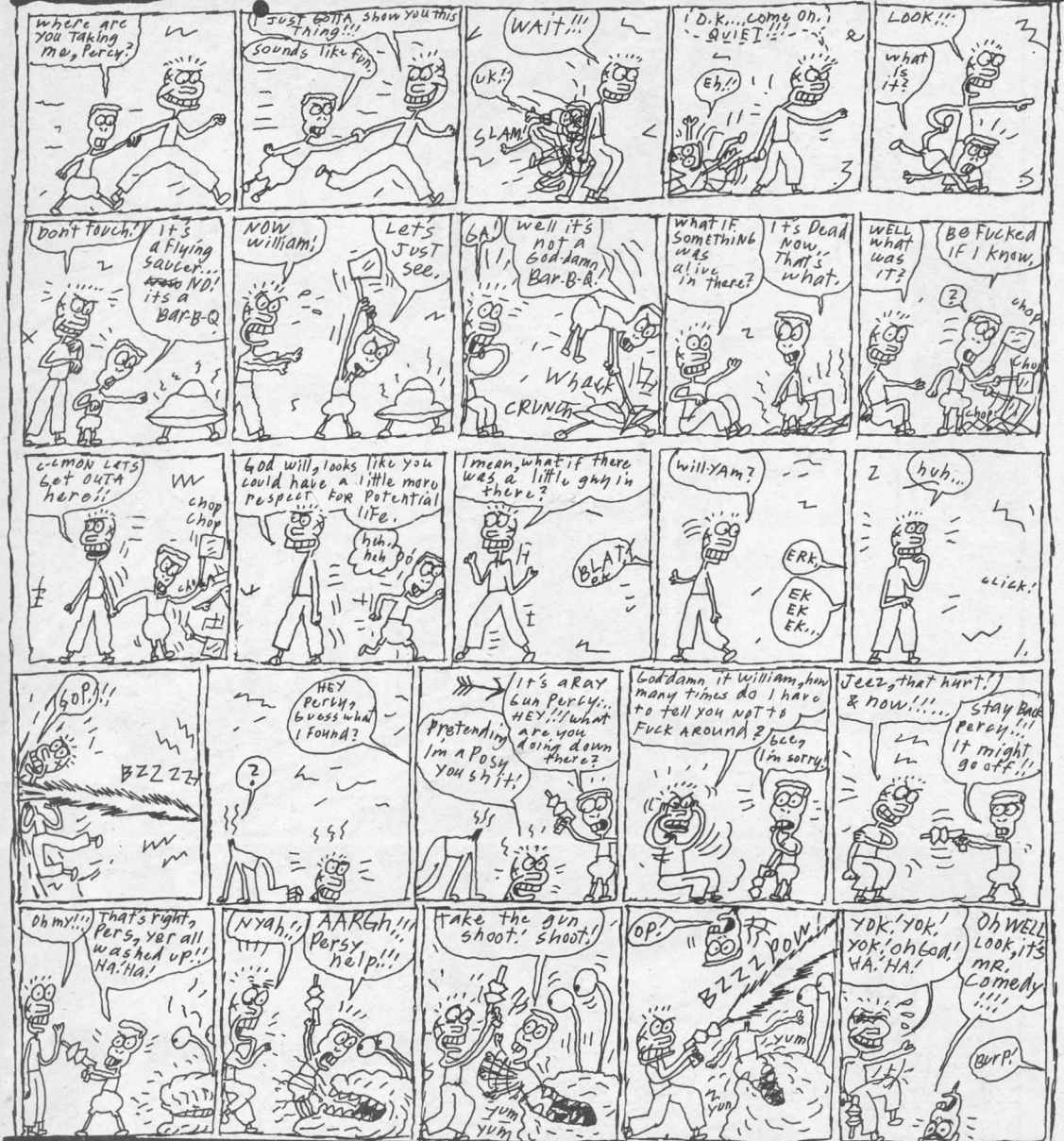
It's no fun Living in a world where nothing happens...
...NOThing happens because I don't do anything. My problem is I learned how to think. IT TAKES up all my time. NO. my PROBLEM IS EVERYBODY WANTS me TO JOIN THEIR CLUB. New wave! new wave! punk! What a bunch of fucking HIPPIES! That's their problem NOT mine!!! my problem is LOUD NEIGHBORS!!! NOW there's a problem. no I think it's my lack of spontaneity or something. God I hate clothes. why can't I go naked? people will think I'm uncool!!!! who cares?!! I'm going NAKED!
So Long Harsh Task-masters Im off to see the world!!
Alterations by Peinter
1 minute later...
OW!!! of Glass.
Well, I guess shoes are O.K. I'm off to see the world!
Alterations by Peinter
1 minute Later...
YIPE!!! RUN!!! AK!
HELP POLICE! A NEKID CRAZY man...!
PINCH Bind.
Oh my NUTS! my NUT SACK! I am surely PERishing WOOOOOhack
Well I guess shoes & underwear is O.K. A man has to RESTRAIN his delicate nutsack!!
O.K.! O.K.! I got cold. But this is definitely all anyone needs to wear!! FRANKLY, I couldn't be more comfortable!
JIMBO 6.P.80.
2

BUT EVEN AS JIMBO PROCLAIMS HIS NEW FREEDOM AND GATHERS HIS GARBLED WITS A DATE WITH DESTINY SPEEDS TOWARDS HIM.
TYRO
Let'see IF I cash in these CANS `SMOGGO I'll have almost ENough FOR the COCK ROACHES RENT, JUDY.
wait am I FORGETING SOMETHING???!!!?
uh...???
I'm having a NERVOUS BREAKDOWN. SOMETHING... SOMETHING About... CANS???
GOD? I WENT CRAZY DIDN'T I?
YES, JIMBO YOU DID.
NOW I KNOW I'M NUTS...
3
JIMBO 6 P.80


MEANWHILE...
ACK! HE'S GONE!
·t.P.·80.
O.K., JIMBO IS OUT. HOW'S YER ROPE COMING?
4

WiLLiAM & PeRCY.



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O.K. YOU GUYS, WHERE'S JIMBO?!
WE PUT THE RANSOM NOTE ON HIM & LET HIM GO... LIKE YOU TOLD US TO, BOSS!!!!
Oh Yeah, I forgot, ...
POW
HEY!
...UNLESS WE RECEIVE ACCESS to ALL RECORDS PERTAINING TO FINANCING & MAINTENANCE OF THE RADIOACTIVE PLANETOID BURGER BAR CORP. WE WILL DETONATE A THERMONUCLEAR DEVICE IN...
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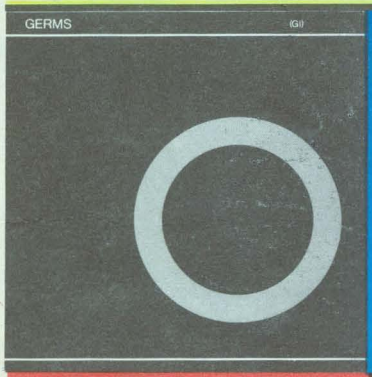
6

SLASH RECORDS

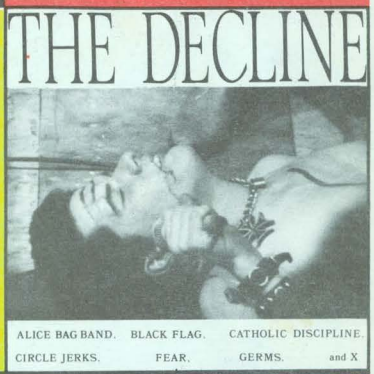


Germs (GI) lp SR-104 Produced by Joan Jett

X "Los Angeles" lp SR-104

Produced by Ray Manzarek

"The Decline...of western civilization" soundtrack lp SR-105
from the feature documentary film of the same title.
Scheduled for a winter 1980 release.



Slash Records future scheduled releases:

single by X, winter 1980

Other releases to be announced soon

New lp by X early spring 1981

Darby Crash Band lp spring 1981

SLASH

SLASH COVER PHOTO BY LAURA LEVINE

LOCAL SHIT

LOCAL SHIT

LOCAL SHIT

Biggest foofahrah (did I spell it right? [*No*...ED.]) at the moment is **Richard Meltzer**'s loads-of-fun-and-profound-profanity-punk-experimental-folksy "Hepcats From Hell" Saturday radio show being canned by the new "2-X-4-up-the-bum" program director at Pacifica's **KPFK.** What has been found offensive could be considered analogous to what the Daughters of the American Revolution might find disturbing. I mean, all that girl from **Castration Squad** was doing was defending herself against some nasty listener on the phone, saying "I fucked your mother and she wasn't so bad!"

But token liberal radio, shivering in its boots whenever someone from the FCC decides to pick their nose, had finally had enough. Freedom of expresson's OK, sure I supported the striking workers in Gallo's vineyards, but I mean *this!* The mind boggles. **Chris Morris,** who co-hosted the 2 to 6 a.m. slot directly after Meltzer's, quit in protest and disgust. Meltzer had been reading a disclaimer at the start of each show for the last six months or so, warning potential listeners that some pretty hairy language might reach their ears if home wireless sets were tuned to the aforementioned call letters. While this is technically all that's necessary, a radio station programmer has the "right" to use his/her judgement (read: "bias") when things have "gotten out of hand."

Audiences/cliques/bands/gangs of ravaging hordes are once again splintering in reaction to the "New Romanticism" – which this writer, himself, believes to be a crock of shit. However, many kids seem unable and/or unwilling to know where to draw the line. For instance, are good ole boy **Adam** and his **Ants** included in this soporific death knell for vitality and raw spontaneity in music? Or should they be considered apart, keeping the wild, literally "tribal" feel in punk while embellishing it with melodies and the flamboyant trappings of showbiz?

I say Adam has about as much to do with **Steve Strange** and **Spandau Ballet** as the **Cockney Rejects.** The Ants' make-up and costumes are bullshit, but their music and (especially) live performances are something else. Who knows, I may think something different in another two weeks...I'll admit that Ant fans, at least here in L.A., are a load of upper middle-class wimps falling into the same trap as Bowie's young followers of the early '70s, and definitely need a good swift kick in their collective glitter butt...While in L.A. Adam got in touch with his former girlfriend, **Tiffany** of the Castration Squad, and treated her to room service. Meanwhile, **Black Flag** fans sat on an opposing hillside preparing their strategy to bring to light Adam's astonishing lack of credibility and general priggishness, namely with such stickers as "Black Flag kills Ants on contact!" plastered all over posters, phone poles and marquees about town. Whether any of these fans actually saw or heard the Ants is not known....Speaking of Black Flag, their first LP is set for tentative June 1 release.

The **Cramps** returned to the Western boards first with a super show in San Francisco with **X** and the **Blasters,** then at the Roxy in L.A. with the **Gun Club.** All were sold out, and the mob scenes were hysterical. Yet most critics have not been getting the punch line, i.e., the non-sequiturs of the Cramps' *Psychedelic Jungle* LP. Whether this is due to general retardage of cerebral juice flow or a complete inability to recognize one of the most blatant psychedelic-*cum*-heavy metal-*cum*-rockabilly masterpieces ever made is not clear...The **Gun Club** have been in the studio with **Tito Larriva** of the **Plugz** (who any moment now are signing with Slash), recording seven songs including "Black Train," "Bad Indian," "For The Love of Ivy" and "Goodbye Johnny" for a possible EP or LP.

Other gigs: **X** played four sold-out nights at the Roxy with a different support band each night, including the **Flesh Eaters,** the **Gun Club,** and the **James Harmon Band** (two nights for the latter). Flesh Eaters also played the Whisky the following week, again to capacity crowds. Second-billed were the fantastic **Thee Undertakers:** baroque, melodic sped-up punk heavy metal from East L.A. This was rumored to be the last live performance of the Flesh Eaters with this line-up (**John Doe** of X and **Bill Bateman** of the Blasters on guitar and drums, **Chris D.,** voice, **Steve Berlin** on saxes). Their second album, *A Minute To Pray, A Second To Die,* has just been released on Ruby Records, a Slash subsidiary. The **Blasters** are also tipped to sign with Slash and record a debut LP during the summer months. Also due in late June or early July on Slash: the last **Germs** LP, *What We Do Is Secret,* including previously unreleased or unavailable tracks produced by the likes of **Joan Jett, Geza X** and **Jack Nitzsche.**

Howard Rosenberg

NEW CHRIS D. MINSTRELS: The Flesheaters in their *Minute To Pray*...lineup, with main man Chris Desjardin at far right.

Other new L.A. releases include the spectacular, cranium-crunching LP by the **Adolescents** on Frontier Records; the re-released **U.X.A.** album; 12" EPs by the **Stepmothers, T.S.O.L., Red Cross** and **China White;** and an LP by the **Crowd,** all on Posh Boy Records. Most popular import single of the moment is **Dead Or Alive**'s "I'm Falling" b/w "Flowers".

MORE GIGS: Folk-punk spectaculars are popping up more and more, with the likes of **Phranc, Ranking Jeffrey Lea** (of the Gun Club), **Tito Larriva, Top Jimmy, Richard Meltzer** (poetry read) and the **Circle Jerks** all performing acoustic sets of late. *(An ACOUSTIC Circle Jerks?...*ED.) BEST TASTE TEST: **Top Jimmy** performing **Jr. Walker**'s "What Does It Take (To Win Your Love)?" live. Meanwhile, ex-Germs guitarist **Pat Smear** has been playing with both the **Adolescents** and the avant-heavy metal horror combo **45 Grave.**

MEDIA COVERAGE: As usual, the little boys and girls of the tube, with fluffy hair-dos and a notarized patent on The Dry Look, have been doing their best to misunderstand and misinterpret the local scene (from hard-core slamfests to Adam & the Ants) on such shows as *Two On The Town, PM Magazine,* and the 11 pm news.

CLUBS: The **Starwood** has closed/opened/closed/reopened more times in the last month than you shake the proverbial billy club at. For the moment, an uneasy armistice has been struck among locals, club patrons and disgruntled "wish-I-could-go-home-and-watch-the-Dodger-game" sheriffs. NOTE: The Supreme Court of California recently overturned the closing of the exclusively punk **Cuckoo's Nest** in Orange County (near Huntington Beach), and once again the likes of the Circle Jerks, Crowd, China White, Adolescents, Stains and Black Flag have been churning out their dirty maelstroms of sound to the great unwashed. Until next time, which is never...

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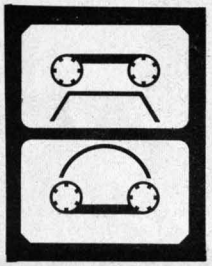

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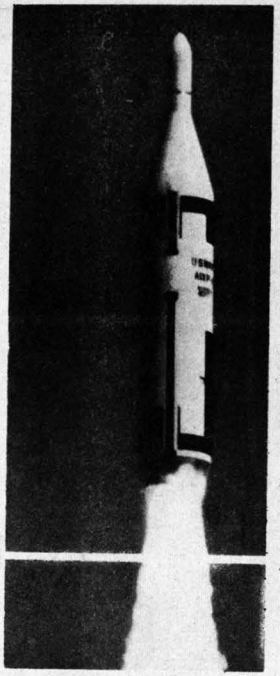

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Mark Trilling

CULTURE: **Joseph Hill, Kenneth Paley, Albert Walker**
SLASH: **Ranking Jeffrey Lea** and **Chris D.**
ALSO PRESENT: **Mike,** Culture's managerial representative.

Slash: *Where're you going on to from here?*
Culture: San Francisco.
Slash: *And did you already do the East Coast?*
Culture: Yes, New York, Washington, Chicago...
Slash: *Who's taking care of the booking out here? Everyone's starting to wonder how reggae groups are turning up on the West Coast. The way things were going, we thought this was just going to be something we HEARD about for the rest of our lives.*
Mike: Well, there's going to be a steady flow from now on. We promote a lot of shows on the East Coast and most of the groups that pass through have been on the East Coast. We've been able to start bringing them here because of this special airline fare...the Burning Spear show was done that way...
Slash: *And the Roxy has been helpful with this?*
Mike: They love it! What other groups get the Roxy to take all their tables and chairs on the floor out?
Slash: *That was a really good show---the best thing around here in quite awhile. Joseph, why did you keep stopping the band?*
Culture: Like, you know...that's our thing...our thing.
Slash: *It wasn't because they were doing anything wrong?*
Culture: No, no, we were just working our thing.
Slash: *Yeah, I've seen it so much in R&B acts, people like James Brown.*
Culture: Yeah, every musician do that. Every singer. Like you are feeling all the tension of the people out there, their spirit. Because you have to work along with the people.
Slash: *Yeah, the tension was really wonderful!*
Culture: Yeah, that's what I'm telling you about. When you do things like those...you bring the tension up, *up, UP.* It's like adjusting a boat tied up tighter...tighter, *tighter,* closer in, tighter still, 'til it's ashore.
Slash: *Were you surprised at how many people came to see you, how many fans you have here?*
Culture: Unh-unh, no. Because...in America we have the least turnout of anyone to see us. It's getting better now. There are thousands and thousands that turn out in France, in Germany, thousands swarming like bees.
Slash: *I talked to the guy who used to run the Rainbow Theatre in London. He was at your show last night, and he said the most intense show he ever had at the Rainbow was when Culture played. Swarms of people were surrounding the place...*
Culture: Yeah, *yeah...*
Slash: *...trying to get in, ramming their way in. People were breaking windows three stories high...*
Culture: What are you talking about! Listen, guys lay down and slip and cut and fold up...and take off shirt and wring it out when it was wet. C'mon, mon, I used to it. It a very tight crowd everywhere, heh, heh...and when many people came down, blacks and whites, and y'know, when it got too much for the poor little place, mon, the police have got to take the dogs and chase everyone about, maybe five hundred people...And they run around saying, "Are you from Jamaica?"
Slash: *So they go around saying there was a riot...*
Culture: Yeah, heh, heh, heh.
Slash: *I know in England you're very popular...*
Culture: We know what to do, when to do it. All we need is the support of the people.
Slash: *Is the audience any different out here?*
Culture: Well, they're a little cooler in spirit. A little cooler.
Slash: *It might be that they're not loose enough.*
Culture: Yeah, yeah. They need to know the music some more. I know. Reggae is much more popular in the European countries than down this side of the world. See, reggae's gone clear but America doesn't know, heh, heh, heh...We got the big guys' music, like the music that would sell. Drive a train from Paris, France through Switzerland, Scandinavia, to get ya down to London, then when they come along, mark you, they wouldn't leave until they got a direct hook on you. Drag you by your foot, come along, heh, heh, heh. Make you all bigger, bigger...wonderful time...We blocked the entrance to one club in the middle of Paris. It's like one day's advertisement—8,000 people. Just get in town the same day!
Slash: *Why do you think it's gotten so popular all of a sudden? This year it's increased...*
Culture: We been workin' the year, it's true. When things were bad, the singers in Jamaica didn't mind 'cause we just said ourselves, "Keep on keepin' on," heh, heh, y'know? Other words, in the studio we never stopped working. Keep on doing more all the time. Most of all with the lyrics, y'know, you can get some satisfaction. The people can get fat spiritually from the lyrics. Because each man has a chest, and behind it is a heart that beats. That to see when it's time to see.
Slash: *Do you think any of the English ska revival helped bring the people out?*
Culture: Well, look...all kind of everything remind you of reggae. If you check the reggae lyrics, you see all kind of everything. And with every turn that you turn your eyes and your hands and your foot to walk...you walk reggae, you look reggae, you *live* reggae. Reggae is the positive lyrics of life. With it you want to be rich, you want to be poor...you don't care. Heh, heh, heh. Whether you want to be white, you want to be black, the same crisis faces, heh, heh, heh. You could be blue, striped, checkered. Heh, heh, heh, heh...
Slash: *What kind of music did you listen to when you were younger?*
Culture: I'm really a lover of music, I must say. And I must say to you that I am an Aquarian. I listened to music from all over the world. I used to be the player for a very huge discotheque.
Slash: *You were a DJ in Kingston?*
Culture: No, Saint Catherine's.
Slash: *Are you guys from different parishes?*
Culture: Two from St. Catherines, one from St. Andrew's.
Slash: *You're from the country, then?*
Culture: We're not one of those who are really mindful of being in town. Too much pollution.
Slash: *Too much danger.*
Culture: Too much danger when it can be dangerous. But look, in the country, you get up in the morning and all you hear is the nice birds. And you take your guitar and you both communicate.
Slash: *Yeah, you guys have got a real roots sound. It doesn't sound like Kingston Music.*
Culture: Roots. You can call that most preachin' songs... That's the way it is. And that's the way it got to be. Message from the King.
Slash: *When did you become Rastafarian?*
Culture: I see Rastafari on high from a long time...even from before my father.
Slash: *I wanted to know because it seems to me there's a lot of kids in Kingston who have dreadlocks and stuff just because it's hip.*
Culture: Yeah, some people.
Slash: *But the people in the country really live it.*

Laura Levine

Culture: Yeah, yeah. Mark you, you could pass along a countryman's house when he's ready to go to bed and hear him praying, asking for forgiveness for his transgressions, if any. You know what I mean sort of thing? He makes that to be a duty. While the man in town, he goes to the bar and he gets alot of rum and when he's driving home – as I heard on a program in Jamaica the other day – a little child says, "Dear Lord, please help my father to stop drinking . . . because when he start driving the car come in at night, it's only because the car know the way, dear Lord." So the man in town is a total different man from I and I.

Slash: *My father used to say that . . . "The car got me home."*

Culture: Yeah, see, you know what I'm talking about so you might say that reggae happens to everybody. Heh, heh.

Slash: *It seems that there's a real difference in sound and styles.*

Culture: Yeah.

Slash: *St. Anne's Bay sounds so different from Kingston, different from Ocho Rios.*

Culture: They are from all over. They are from fearless parishes who participate in this reggae movement, this musical business. With that growth of music you got the birth of very great, great musicians on the earth today. Even the band that opened for us here, Etta James. The drummer with her is a Jamaican, our Roger. Heh, heh, yeah . . . can you see that fire in him? You stand and watch him play. It's very exciting even where he abolishes and from whence he goes and whence he comes . . . When he touch the stick to that skin, it's like gold dropping off it. Heh, heh. Look at Michael Richards, Sly Dunbar, Glen Washington.

Slash: *What is the vocal trio set-up modeled after anyway? Is that after the old Impressions type thing?*

Culture: Look, it's no old Impressions. Look, look at this . . . the person who you can do the best favor for is either me, myself, or I, heh, heh, heh . . . so the trio mean we are this.

Slash: *Where do you play in Jamaica? There's no clubs really, are there?*

Culture: There's quite a few halls down there. The way you people here do it is not the way we do it in Jamaica.

Slash: *I never could understand how anyone could even do a show down there. I went to the movies in Ocho Rios and it was like a riot. It was a horror movie, and everyone was running up and down the hallways and aisles screaming. I thought, "God, if they put on a show with some bands the whole place would come down!" I met Ken Lazarus and he told me that there used to be shows in movie theatres in the old days, like the '60s. He said every time they'd do a show people would rip the seats out and the whole place would be falling apart . . . Where do you live now? Still Jamaica?*

Culture: Yep. I just want to tell a man, look, well . . . this little town [L.A.], I like it. It's quite sunny. Anywhere you go and you can see the sun shine, you can live there. It's for human consumption. Anywhere the sun hides its face, it's a curse. Spoiled. No matter how big or good the natural resources may be, whatever it is in geological measure or scale, it makes no sense.

Slash: *I should think that most reggae musicians have a great deal of respectability in Jamaica now since they're its biggest export. Do you still have any problems with being Rastafarians there?*

Culture: No. Absolutely no.

Slash: *It used to be kind of tense, didn't it?*

Culture: Yeah. That was once ago when the people didn't understand. Between that you must realize that bad guys who was really wretched would try to come on in and be a dread. Naturally, you've got to put out his fire. Right? I mean cool out so even the ice detector in the street could see him and know he's cool. There is nothing that he has done. Because in our thing, no wrongdoers do we accept. We do not.

Slash: *Do you find it disappointing that not very many black people turn out for reggae here?*

Culture: C'mon! I'm not concerned about that. Whoever wants to come out and enjoy that, just come on out. Heh, heh, heh. We are not racially involved.

Mike: If they don't come, it's their loss.

Culture: Good. Heh, heh, heh. Anybody who did not come to that show the other night missed their challenge for enjoyment. Their crop is growing in the wrong rut. Heh, heh, heh.

Slash: *It seems like most of them here don't care . . . Except maybe down in the Crenshaw district where there seems to be alot of West Indians. But everyone else seems lost in the world of funk.*

Clash: I'm going to find them. I'm going to find them. Heh, heh. I've got a light and there's no corner where they can go and hide.

Slash: *I really don't care so much about what they do. I just wish that people would start listening to something that's serious again . . . I think everyone plays blues to an extent when they're honest. I mean it's still all blues, right? It's about your troubles . . .*

Culture: Not really *our* troubles, the *world's* troubles! Heh, heh, heh. Not our troubles. That's why I say if you are black you walk reggae, if you are white you walk reggae, if you are Indian you walk reggae. Troubles come in big and small parcels whether you're rich or poor.

Slash: *You know, I don't think anyone here heard reggae at all until punk rock started. And punk rock people were listening to reggae.*

Culture: That's how it is all over the world. There are thousands that are already gathered for the permanent listening of reggae. Permanent walking . . .

Slash: *Where else are you playing on the west coast?*

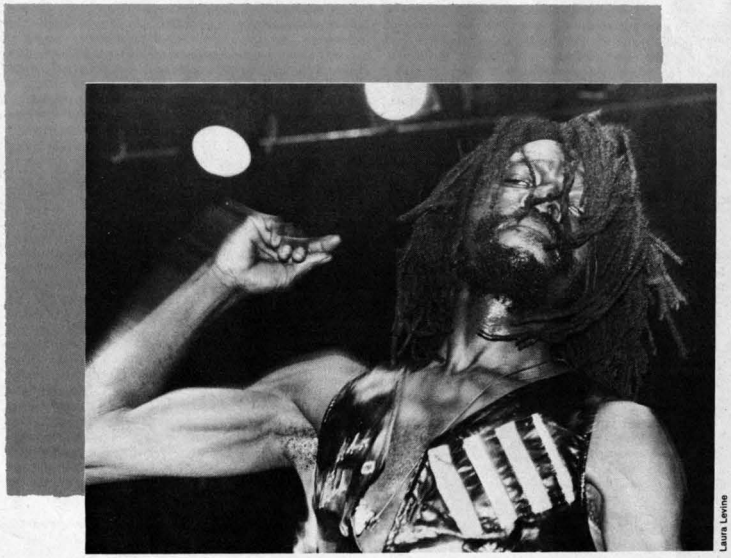
Culture: San Francisco.

Slash: *It'd be very interesting for you to see some other places because L.A. and San Francisco aren't very representative of West Coast towns; they're exceptions because they're so big. There are all kinds of towns that bands usually play when they come along the West Coast . . . Portland, Seattle, San Jose, Sacramento, which are comparatively backward small towns. It's like what America was like maybe as much as 25 years ago. You'd understand how slow things are coming out to the west.*

Culture: Slow but sure.

Slash: *All that English punk stuff that you would've thought would be a big phenomenon among kids didn't even hit here until about two years ago, and it'd been going on for ages. Not even the white styles catch up here . . . you know, they didn't want to book Burning Spear at the Roxy. They took a gamble on it and sold out to the rafters. And everyone was going "Wait a minute! Now we can make money off this!"*

Culture: Ha, ha, ha, ha, see, that's what I want to say to all the music departments of the world. You know, they are too cagey of spending some money. You can't make some money without spending some money. It's a gamble. A man's got that and you've got this and you've got your feelings and all the rest of it. Money will not fall in a pit. It falls from one man's hands to another man's hands. Some people do not want it to run at all . . . Look man, reggae is the Truth, man. What else can the people accept in the Last Days but the Truth. Just take the Truth, take the Truth just so because the Truth shall set you free and no one wants to be bound.



Laura Levine

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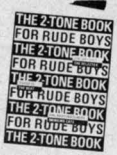

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READ THIS LAST!

UPDATE: WE HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE AND WISH TO KEEP IT TO OURSELVES

Amid rumors of what happened to whom and for how much, Tumbleweeds has closed once again, to no one's great surprise. Rumor has it opening within one to three months, operated by mysterious persons at an undisclosed location. Typically, we sink once more into disgust and apathy. Faces, local steak-and-pizza rock 'n' roll paranoia club, closed its doors to us because of some flying bodies (propelled by unfriendly competition), meninbrown, unwanted graffiti, and chanting jocks brandishing pool cues. Visiting dignitaries the **Subhumans** and **Teardrop Explodes** found refuge in the Cellar, a room of the local university. Kids and skatepunks found the **Urban Gorillas, Seldoms** and **Eaterz** at well-attended gigs at a tiny gallery called The Alternative Image. The kids have more energy than this scene has shown for a year. Who says punk rock is dead?

On other fronts, the mass exodus from town has begun, **Loudness One** (and soon the **Giant Sandworms** as well as some of the **Pills**) have relocated to New York. Members of three late Tucson bands have formed **Johnny 7,** in the '60s punk tradition. The remains of the **Assassinators** have joined an ex-**Menage A Trois** to create yet another reggae-influenced band. **Phantom Limbs** have slunk into the hearts of many, threatened to leave but remain. The **Chromatics** (re-formed Potatos) have emerged even more jazz-damaged than before to reap a mixture of praise and abuse, and promote their new tape. I still think the girls have great voices! The Seldoms and **Killer Pussy** will be featured on Subterranean Records' upcoming *Arizona Disease* EP. Eaterz, gaining popularity but still struggling, opened the last **Black Flag** gig (in March) – the best, most intense affair in a long time.

Slit magazine died a timely death amid disputes and deadline struggles, leaving another void in the void. $E = mc^2$, an attempt to air other opinions, survived for two issues. By far the most memorable of the three was *Guitar XX,* a one-man production by Chris Seldom with political/musical commentary, reviews, humor and irreverance. And the price – 5¢ – was right. Beat that, *NY Rocker!*

UPSETTERS

Priscilla Johnson

LOUDNESS ONE

IN THE SUN: THE

READ THIS FIRST!

by The Nurse

Well, what is this, anyway?? As soon as life looks as if it might be worth living for more than five minutes longer, something else happens. Who, me, complain? It's the general state of affairs everywhere lately...

SOME HISTORY:

Aside from selective rumblings, the great ugly head of '70s version punk and new muzak didn't surface until about '79 in Tucson. Everything was normal (wake up, you assholes!) until a place downtown, Pearl's Hurricane, started featuring bands on the weekends. Then Doc, of local hardrock sleaze club the Night Train, sponsored a weekend of "punk rock". I didn't go, mostly out of healthy skepticism. (Punk here? *No way.*) A bottle got thrown, and out of five or six bands that performed that weekend, only one (the Suspects) were anything even remotely punk.

I saw the **Suspects** shortly afterward at a record store opening and I was sold. They played mostly Sex Pistols and Ramones covers, and a great version of "My Generation," but I loved that band like I have never loved a local band since. In those days, Brian (now vocalist for the Pills) used to go out and rough up the usually rowdy, pogoing audience. Since then, guitarist Cliff has been in, then out of the **Skirts** (which became **Menage a Trois** and are now **Phantom Limbs**). Lee, bassist and nice guy, has seen the rise and disintegration of **White Pages** and **Suzann & the Erotics.** Drummer Penn Pendleton is back and involved in a band or two.

Tucson's other truly great seminal band was the **Pedestrians,** who got to open for a Ramones concert here. After they split, organist Chris joined the struggling **Serfers,** who quickly rose to popularity, notoriety, proficiency. Other bands included **Z-9, Model Patients, Character Reference,** the sub-garage **Channel 88, Jewish Tourist, Loudness One** variations, **Romeo,** many **Memory Product** incarnations (the band never appearing twice with the same lineup) and others. Everybody played everywhere: Pearl's, Night Train, Tumbleweeds (when open), the unlocatable New Deal, people's backyards, you name it. So what's so different today?

The bands still play everywhere. Tumbleweeds closed for a couple of months over a guns-and-butter dispute, not for lack of money or "punk rock violence". It reopened as Tumbles, even though they never changed the signs. Other venues include the Night Train (home of a recently deceased "new wave night"), the Showcase, a steak-and-pizza country bar called Faces, a gay transvestite bar called Jekyll & Hyde's, assorted teen parties and (hopefully) a band-sponsored gig in a local warehouse. The struggle for places to play has been a hard one, and it isn't over yet. Many have retreated to Godzilla movies, drugs, shock treatments, journeys to Phoenix (land of the comatose), drag shows, and long phone conversations.

So what's a typical Tucson weekend like? Well, it varies: sometimes *very* boring, often pretty good, but lately times have been tough. Lots of people dance, some people "dance," and an assorted crowd comes to see the bands. We have the old-timers (there since the early days), the 15 year-olds, the college crowd, the trendies ("Oh, God! She just pushed me! What do I do?"), the hard core, and some old (40?) people. The audience used to be a little more cohesive, but lately the lines of "cool" and "uncool," "new wave" and "punk" have begun to divide the masses. People still come together to catch their favorites among the locals and to check out the out-of-towners. L.A. bands seem enthusiastic about playing Tucson; X, the Gears, Alleycats and Black Flag have all returned to play a second time. The Gears told us that "Tucson people don't applaud, but they sure do fucking dance!" That's how we show our appreciation. After that we're either too tired or too busy looking jaded to do anything else.

LOCAL BANDS

THE PILLS: Well, the EP finally came out and you can find out for yourself that they aren't heavy metal. Who started that rumor? They're pop, with much owed to the N.Y. Dolls and the Heartbreakers (like covers). Visually picture the aftermath of a terrible accident between the Dolls and Sue Saad & the Next. The town has them pegged for punks, which is too bad – they aren't and never claimed to be. Still here and still maintaining a large following. I have no idea why they opened for Black Flag.

SERFERS: A KWFM (local "progressive" radio) compilation LP includes a good song of theirs (and one by the Pills), cut before the band moved to L.A. and became the Krels. After a couple of gigs the group split up, a few members returning to Tucson. Guitarist Danny rumored to be jamming some with Human Hands.

PHANTOM LIMBS: Menage a Trois splits with guitarist Cliff, becomes an actual trio, and promptly changes its name. Still good, consistently improving their set with some songs about girlfriend problems. (One had a face like a cow until plastic surgery; another had spinal meningitis. *"Ever made love to a bedful of kelp?"*) Their sound, sorta low-key, is hard to describe; how about the Velvets' rockabilly children playing with Jimmy Cliff? Close enough! Bass player wears orange paisley jackets and looks like one of the Feelies.

POTATOS: Have gone into hiding, threatening to reappear with a totally original set. Jazz-damaged. God told us to skin you alive.

UPSETTERS: Long-haired white hippies plus a bald-headed black singer doing credible reggae covers, then ruining them with fucking jive-talk ("We Rasta Far-out! We gonna upset you! A hungry mouth is an angry mouth!") in fake JA accents. OK if they just shut up and play!

PHANTOMS: Rockabilly lives some-

PILLS

Michael Hendrickson

GIANT SANDWORMS

SERFERS

Michael Hendrickson

TUCSON SCENE

where in Tucson, but where?

URBAN GUERILLA: Dead Kennedys/D.O.A./etc. corrupted teens form a band, declare war. So far I've only witnessed their combat on the dance floor. I'm still bearing the bruises, but they have a few too.

GIANT SANDWORMS: Includes ex-Pedestrians drummer Billy. They too have just released an EP. This is the usual, plus assorted keyboards, grinding out something they call funk. They're good musicians playing tight music and having a real good time, even if what they play isn't my particular brand of poison. Maybe I have the wrong blood type? Oh well, I'll just go home and put on my Monte Cazzazza tape...

ROMEO: The band that would not die returns to haunt skeptical Tucsonians with the curse of new wave cover versions.

ASSASSINATORS: A new band, fronted by the owner of a local independent record shop and information center, that plays loud and fast punk sort of rock and roll. I've only heard them once and they weren't bad.

LOUDNESS ONE: Consists of Barry (electric violin, synth and rhythm machine), Bob (slides and films) and Doyne (mime). They play virtually unrecognizable covers, some recognizable Gary Numan stuff, some originals. Most of the sound rips across the pain threshold, and the band has been known to throw projectors and tape decks into the audience, wrap spectators in tape, etc. The attraction is Barry, who is some kinda violin player! He just moved to New York (*Just what New York needs—another violin player...* ED),leaving a big space in the experimental/synth side of the scene.

EATERS a/k/a TAMPON EATERS: Recently played their first gig at a drag bar, second at Tumbles. They have two female singers (usually) and play punk rock, folkabilly, electro-flavored originals and some covers of L.A. punk band songs. Name comes from an ad in *Hustler*.

LES SELDOMS: Prefix's Johnny called them "the hope of Tucson's music scene" and I tend to agree! 15 year-olds making primitve punk soundwaves along the lines of Red Cross and Society Dog. Drunmer Chris started out with one snare drum and has moved to three, including a bass to hold up the side. (Is this selling out?) Guitarist Jeff is a natural and fun to watch; bass player Michael is known for tackling people considerably larger than himself and hanging like some kind of fungus albatross around their necks. Les Seldoms have all sorts of problems finding places to play 'cos they're underage. When they do get to play, club owners try to shut them down because they "drive away the customers." Bullshit! Audiences have begun to stand up for the group, demanding that they finish their set, until owners have been forced to relent. Les Seldoms played at the Eaters' first gig, creating an exodus, and just returned from a visit to San Francisco where they actually got to play again.

UPDATE

The secret is out!! San Francisco's **Prefix** is Tucson's old **Memory Product.** Johnny and Dave returned and played a couple of great sets here, and rumors of something on vinyl *soon* are circulating.

Model Patients members Mary and Moises are now in the Phoenix Hate House band, **Deez.** Deez and Phoenix's the Nervous played here last month and caused a lot of trouble—probably the most excitement the old pueblo's seen in months. We'll use any excuse.

SO WHAT ELSE??

In the past four months, **X** and the **Gears** each visited town twice, and the **Go-Go's, Units, Alleycats** and **Black Flag** breezed through, but mostly it was either feast or famine. The first X gig was undoubtedly the event of the season: the normally sedate, subdued crowd crammed in and tried to crush itself to death in time to the music. Michael Seldom became a permanent part of a monitor (saves $$$ on equipment!) and everyone else lost hair, skin, clothes, virginity, you name it.

Weeks later, Axxel of the Gears incited everyone to dance or stay home. Small riots interrupted a great Go-Go's set. The Alleycats jammed with locals. A few of the more hard-core elements wrestled to Black Flag. X returned (still glowing in the dark with the help of nothing artificial) to a less masochistic, still enthusiastic, huge crowd. The Gears returned, better than ever, and had people I didn't even know owned legs off their feet and dancing. Next: the Subhumans return! (Interested bands should contact JoAnn at the Record Room: [602] 884-5979.)

A local Xerox fanzine, *Slit*, has struggled through five issues by now in spite of shit about the name (so what?), accusations of exploitation of the scene (at 40¢ per copy, boy, the money's just *rolling* in!) and differences with one of the writers, a certain obnoxious nurse-type who writes what she damned well pleases. The involved keep arguing and working, making a few enemies in their attempts to inject some guts into the rag. Included are interviews with and stories about Tucson, Phoenix and out-of-state bands, reviews, editorials, and recently a piece on the '60s Tucson punk scene by ex-Erotic Lee. I *wish* it were a money-making effort. Maybe if we put John Lennon on the cover...

What next? Is rock and roll and punk rock and everything else worth living for, dying? Is Tucson splintering? Will Arizona become beachfront property (as the Gears, ready to invest, suggest) of the world's soon-to-be-richest punk band? Will Black Flag become a part of Tucson slang? Will the Pills achieve stardom, fame, a billboard on Sunset Boulevard and a new wardrobe? We've got the Titan missiles here and the New Christy Minstrels, the sound of the apocalypse. Maybe the music will kill us before the Communists, Nazis and AOR radio can. I hope so. I've had it!

CIRCLE JERKS

A HARD ACT TO SWALLOW

by Ranking Jeffrey Lea

"Buttfuckers! Buttfuckers! Tryin' to run my world!"

– Iggy Pop, onstage in 1973

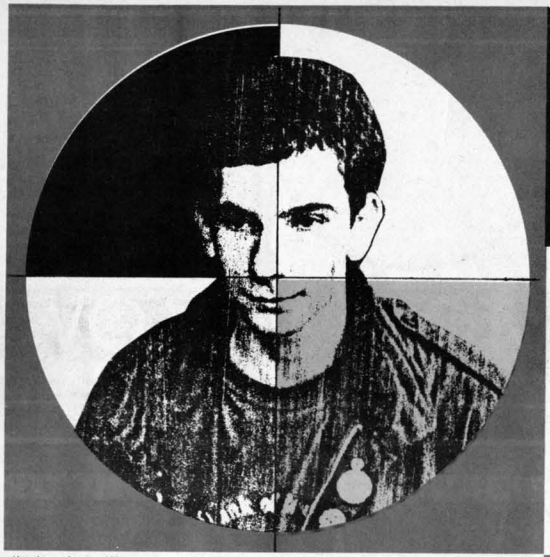
Well, punk rock slithers on. Maybe hiding deep in the crevices of musical chic, but nonetheless alive and active – like an insect always careful to lay its eggs before somebody comes with the Raid. At least in California, it's become a haven for young suburbanites who only last week were listening to Van Halen. What started as an Orange County oddity has now spread to the San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys. It is not at all unusual to see the skin-headed, chain-laden soldiers of the cause at the neighborhood Seven-Eleven. So proud are these kids that they enjoy the daily jeers and insults of fellow citizens and have no fear of coming to fists and kicks over it either. . . .

So here are the Circle Jerks, who along with the Adolescents and Black Flag are the ringleaders of the entire hustle. Formed only a year ago and now one of the biggest drawing bands in L.A. clubs, they are: Keith Morris, mucho charismatic lead shouter and biggest boozer; Roger Rogerson, best musician of the lot and biggest speed-freak; Lucky Lehrer, drummer and one of the first punk law students in L.A.; and Greg Metson, guitarist, formerly in Red Cross, with the most nervous twitch in L.A.

Interview was held on New Year's Eve, 1980, at the office of SLASH records with Chris D. (who asked most of the questions) and Ramblin' Mr. Jeffrey. (who sat in the corner miserable, because he hates New Year's Eve). . . .

* * *

SLASH: *How did you get together with Frontier Records?*
G: Through Posh Boy.
SLASH: *Do you like Frontier Records?*
G: Yeah, it's great. . .
L: We get paid. . . .
R: Lisa Fancher, the girl who put out our record, has been extremely helpful and extremely understanding. In fact, she was even sweet enough to remail things after they'd been lost in the mail. She's a very nice girl and we all loved her. When the next 5,000 copies come out, we're gonna buy her a trophy.
SLASH: *Just go get one in a thrift shop and take the little nameplate off it.*
R: That's just what we were gonna do.
SLASH: *What kind of music do you guys listen to besides punk rock?*
R: Oh, God! *Master of Reality* by Black Sabbath, Blue Cheer. . . .
K: *Love It To Death* by Alice Cooper. . .
G: Link Wray!!
K: Blues! Robert Johnson!!
SLASH: *What was your favorite band in 1973?*
R: Montrose!
G: Creedence!
SLASH: (to Lucky) *What was your favorite band?*
L: The Buddy Rich Swing Band. . .
G: I was only 12 or 13 then. . .
SLASH: *There's so many to choose from, huh?*
K: Gentle Giant!! *(Hysterical laughter at this line)*
SLASH: *Mine was Grand Funk. . .*
K: Good choice! *Good* choice! *(sings)* "I'm your captain, yeah, yeah!"
SLASH: *Keith, I heard your bass player and your girlfriend are having an affair?*
K: They can do whatever they want to. . . as long as he doesn't make her sixty-nine. . .
SLASH: *Why are you always trying to get a gig involving the Blasters?*
K: Because they're fuckin' great!
SLASH: *Do you have any rockabilly songs?*
L: We have some secret rockabilly songs, but we haven't really brought them out yet. . .
K: Token rockabillies. . .
SLASH: *You should do some Creedence.*
G: We were gonna. . .
SLASH: *Do "Fortunate Son."*
G: We were gonna do that one!
SLASH: *Do you ever take drugs on stage?*
K: No, we take drugs before we get on stage.
R: If you don't wanna watch *The Muppet Show*, you don't have to go drink Campbell's soup. . .
SLASH: *Tell me what happens at your gigs?*
L: Last time we played the Starwood, Keith got thrown out during one of the songs. . .
R: What do you mean?! He quit right in the middle of the fucking set! To get some fucking beer!! *I* had to sing for him. Arrogant son of a bitch! Leavin' right in the middle of a fuckin' song, sayin' "I gotta get some beer, see you in a few minutes," and then he can't come back because there's so many people around the fucking stage they won't let him in!
SLASH: *Sound pretty disorganized. . .*
R: We do need a good manager, because supposedly the all-mighty Marshall Berle, who's a fuckhead if you ask me, is our agent. . .
K: Oh no! Here we go. . .
R: He's a fuckhead! He's nothin' but a fuckhead! These guys *(pointing at Greg and Lucky)* waited for two hours for an appointment at that motherfucker's office while he's out walkin' his fuckin' poodle!! Then he says the Circle Jerks can open for the Allycats, the Circle Jerks can open for the Buttfuckers! Fuck that bullshit, man!! That's all I got to say on that. That's all. I apologize already. I apologize, even though he's still a dick! I apologize. These guys went through the time and trouble. . . .
L: I had to stand in the dirty book store for two hours. . .
SLASH: *What a tragedy!*
R: They're ain't nothin' in those places 'cept a bunch of tramps gettin' their pee-pees off and shit! That's a bunch of shit! They had an appointment for 12:30 and they show up, ya know, wearing their good clothes and



"... it's white people's country, and if you don't like it, you can go back... and eat your dog."

they're sober... We were on our best behavior, man!
G: People call us up for gigs. We don't know whether we should take them or not, because our agent has to decide....
SLASH: *Just take the ones that girls offer...*
G: *(to Roger)* Yeah, some girls called me up from Seal Beach, because *you* gave them the number!
R: I was trying to do you a favor, man...
G: Next question!
SLASH: *Er...ah...Do you think our sexual mores are deteriorating?*

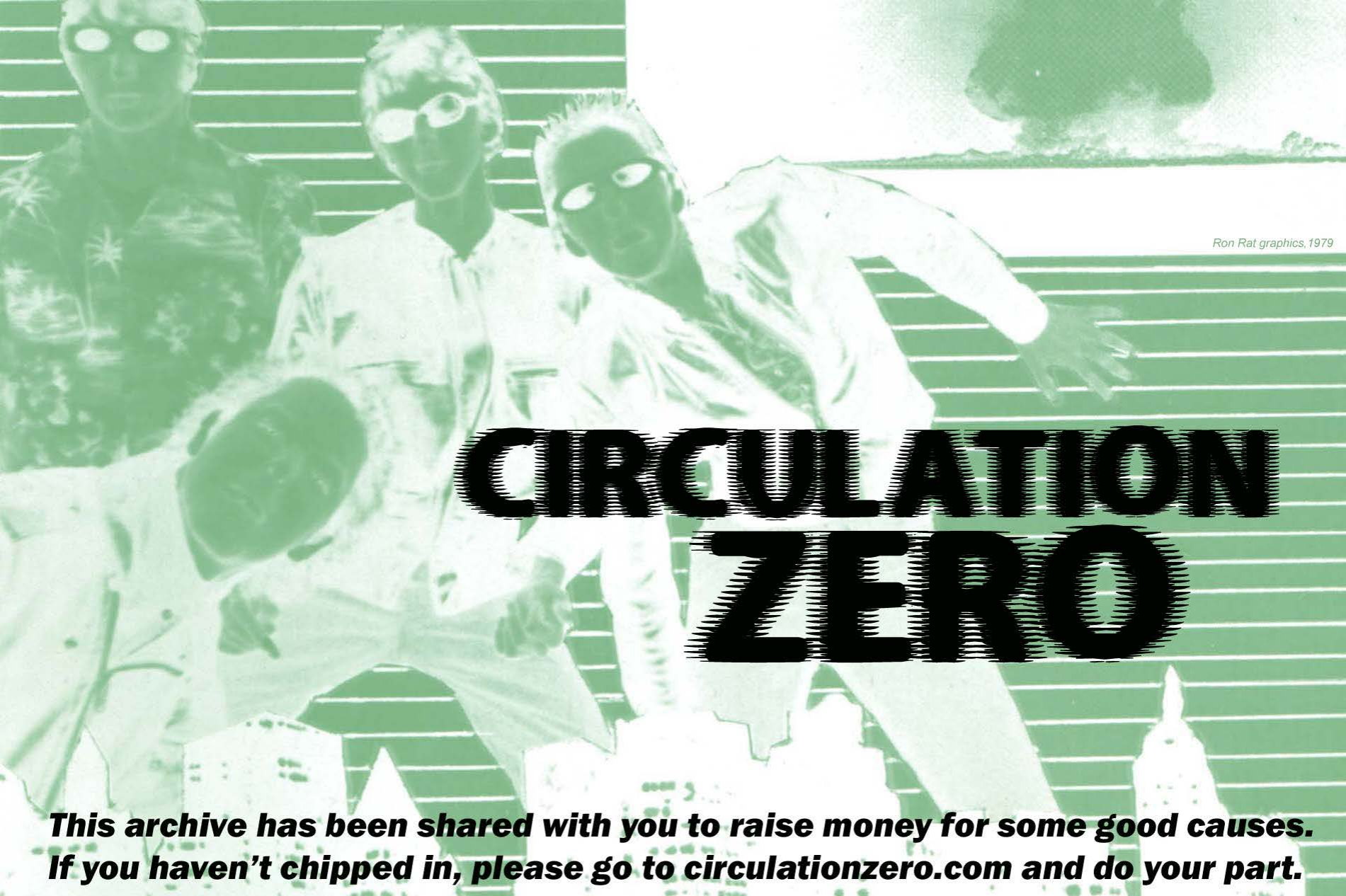
"Ronald Reagan ... and here's Angie Dickinson ... in her little Fredrick's of Hollywood thing ... five minutes later, he's got all the money and he's down in Mexico... 20 niggers workin' for him... that's the kind of man I'd follow anywhere..."

G: Yes, because of you!
K: Sexual morons??
SLASH: *Keith, why do you like Ronald Reagan?*
K: Because I saw him in this movie where he slips into this bank and gets all the money and in the end gets blown away by Lee Marvin...
R: Look, man! I saw this picture with Ronald Reagan, he's got his right arm in a cast with a sling on it. He's got a Colt .38 in one hand with a silencer on it and here's Angie Dickinson sitting down in her little Fredrick's of Hollywood thing with her tits and fuckin' Reagan is sayin', "Hand over the motherfuckin' bucks or your motherfuckin' ass is had!" Sure as shit, five minutes later, he's got all the money and he's down in Mexico on a plantation somewhere, 20 niggers workin' for him. I tell you, that's the kind of man I'd follow anywhere! Wait 'til he levels Iran! Those cocksuckers deserve it! That's right, they deserve it!!
(Keith and Gregg start humming "The Star Spangled Banner")

K: *(sings)* "And the home of the brave!!"
R: That's right, that's right! Ain't nothing but a bunch of sand niggers! Well take the whole place over and turn it into a parking lot for Disneyland, like it should have been in the first place...
G: Roger, you're drunk!
R: I'm not drunk, I'm just being very realistic! Join the fucking party or get out of here! You guys always bitch at me for wearing Nazi armbands. Well, it's white people's country, and if you don't like it, you can go back to your country and eat your fuckin' dog!!
SLASH: *Roger, you mean you wear Nazi armbands when the rest of the band is Jewish?*
K: I think he should wear it on his *face!*
G: I don't care if he does...
L: If he wears it, we'll just quit the band, because it's a symbol of all that's stupid....
R: I just like the way it looks.
G: Give punk a chance!
SLASH: *What was your reaction to John Lennon's death?*
K: I couldn't give two shits...
G: What about Colonel Sanders? Fuck John Lennon! What about Colonel Sanders??? *He* died, you know!!
L: Shut up. Nobody cares about Colonel Sanders...
G: I do! I loved his chicken!
SLASH: *Last question. How do you think the world was created?*
R: Keith, we need more beer...
K: I heard the world was created by an explosion between some woman's legs in a ladies' restroom...
G: Who really cares how it was created anyway...

"... the world was created by an explosion between some woman's legs."

GRAPHICS: MAGNUS
END OF SLASH. R.I.P. (REST IN PUNK)



Ron Rat graphics, 1979

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